



Adobe Photoshop Lightroom™

Daniel Brown > www.downloadculture.com / daniel@downloadculture.com

Class Notes

Lightroom > What it is

You can think of Adobe Photoshop Lightroom as a blend of Adobe Camera RAW, Adobe Bridge, and a few tools from Photoshop such as the crop tool (though much better), the Clone and Healing Brush tools (though slightly weirder), Web Photo Gallery (on steroids), Image Processor (far more intuitive), and a few features all its own. While Photoshop is generically aimed at just about anyone who works on a digital image of any kind, Lightroom is aimed specifically at professional photographers and the needs of their workflow.

Lightroom > What it is not

Lightroom is not (and was never intended to be) a substitute for Photoshop. Its editing features are designed to be “non-destructive” - meaning that you can always go back and change an adjustment later, and it also means that the “History” of a file is always maintained even after you “close” the file. Lightroom’s editing tools are meant to take care of the most common “flaws” found in images such as dust on the sensor, small items in need of removal via cloning, or straightening/cropping. Photoshop and Lightroom “speak the same language” for the most part, but for a Lightroom image to be edited in Photoshop to work in layers, for example, the file must be “converted” to a PSD. This non-destructive editing environment applies to RAW files, PNG files, JPEGs, and TIFF files.

The Lightroom Environment

- Editing in Lightroom is broken up into “Modules”, shown in the upper-right corner of the screen - Library, Develop, Slideshow, Print, and Web.
- The panels on the left and right sides of the application present the tools and options available within each module. As you move through the modules, the panels are automatically updated. The “arrows” along the side of the screen, when clicked, will hide or show that list of panels. The **Tab** key will toggle visibility of the panels, or you can roll-over them to reveal as needed. The goal here was to only show you the tools you need when you need them.
- The **Filmstrip** along the bottom is smaller version of the Grid view. It remains visible as you move through the modules allowing you to work with different images without returning to the Library.
- Many keyboard shortcuts found in Photoshop also work within Lightroom. For example, the Tab key hides the panels, **Shift + Tab** hides the panels as well as the Filmstrip and Modules. Tapping “**F**” will cycle through the full screen modes.

The “**L**” key triggers the “Lighting” controls which are used to dim the interface allowing you to focus on the image rather than the interface. Hitting L once will dim the screen slightly, tap it again to hide the interface completely. One more tap, returns you back to viewing the interface at full brightness.

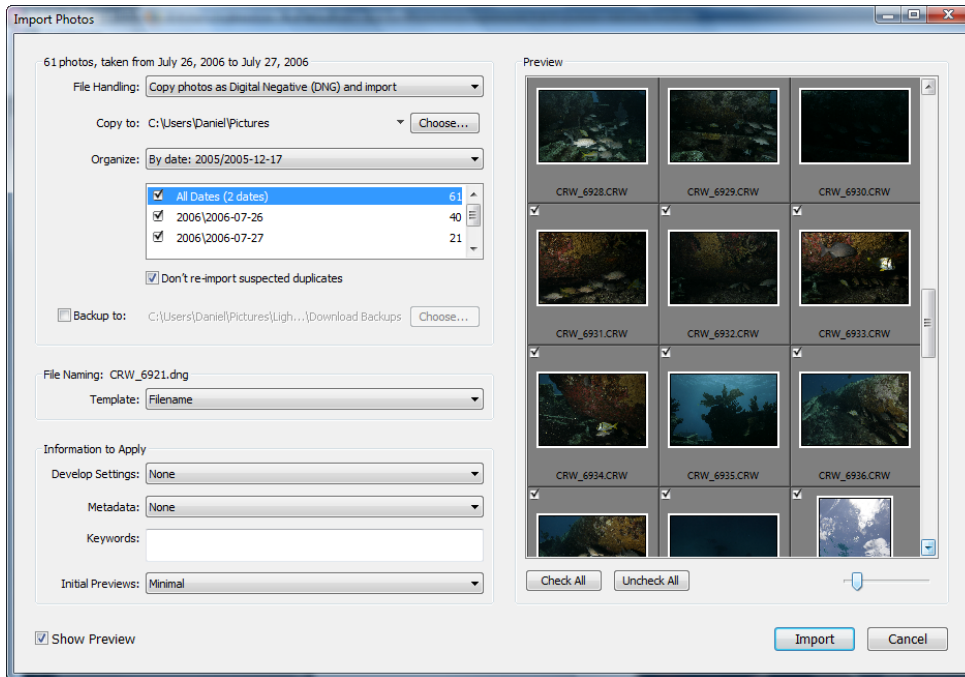
A list of shortcuts for each module is available under the Help menu, though this list is not complete.

Importing images

Importing can take place from either a device connected to your computer such as a camera or card reader (provided your computer can “see” it), or from an internal or hard drive.

The term “Importing” is somewhat misleading; the files aren’t necessarily moved; you have the option of making Lightroom “aware” of the images where they currently reside (great for DVDs or external hard drives), or by copying the images to a central location (of your choosing) first, and THEN creating a catalog of the images.

- To import images into Lightroom, select File > Import. In the Open dialog box, navigate to the folder that contains your photos and click “Choose”.



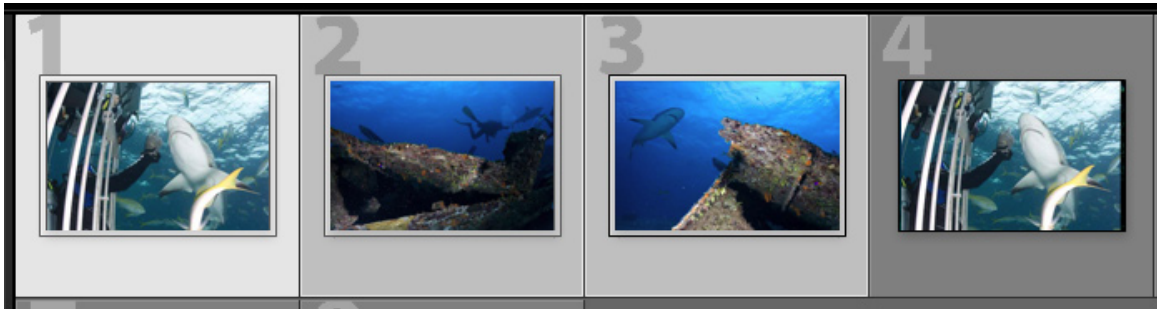
- If you’re copying files from a **device**, Lightroom will assume you want to copy the files to a new location first before importing.
- For a **connected hard drive**, you can either copy them to a new location, or leave them where they are and simply make Lightroom “aware” of them. The Import Photos dialog box, under “File Handling”, choose “Copy photos to new location and import”.
- The other two sections in the Import dialog box allow you to apply templates to the files on import. These can be for a filenames, camera RAW settings, metadata templates, and keywords. You can also specify how much “work” Lightroom does on import in creating previews. If you’ll be away from the computer for a while, set this to 1:1 which will allow Lightroom to create smaller previews as needed.
- If you’d like to attach a keyword location to all images being imported (such as “Bonaire” and/or “Shootout”, enter them in the Keywords area. Additional keywords can be added after importing as well.
- To add metadata to images (for example, copyright and contact information), choose “New” from the Metadata drop down menu, name the preset, and then add the desired information. Click “Create”.
- Click “Import”, and thumbnails will begin to appear in the Library grid.

After importing, Lightroom defaults to only displaying the last images imported, rather than the whole library, allowing you to sort through only the new ones. You can also choose to view all images, and then return to the Last Import option to resume editing.

The Library Module

Grid View

- Grid view is the default “sorting” view in the library. You’ll see a series of image thumbnails along with the index number. You can always get to the Grid view by typing “G”.



- In Lightroom, there are THREE different “select” modes for images (shown above) indicated by three different brightness levels - **4** is “unselected”, **2** and **3** are “selected”, and **1** is “more selected”. The reason for this is you may want to synchronize several images based on the develop or metadata settings of an individual image. “More Selected” allows you target that one image among several selected images, and copy its settings to the others.
- To rotate an image, place your cursor over the image and the rotate controls will appear below the thumbnail. Simply click the arrow pointing in the direction in which you’d like to rotate the image. Selecting multiple images and clicking the rotate icon on any of the images will rotate all selected images. Command (Mac) / Control (Win) [or] will rotate an image counter-clockwise, or clockwise respectively.
- **Double-clicking** an image in the grid places the image in “**Loupe**” view focusing on that one image. **Clicking** on the image zooms in to the scale set above the “Navigator” pane
- **Clicking** again returns to the previous zoom mode. **Clicking and dragging** while in the zoom mode will pan the image without returning to the previous zoom mode.
- **Double-clicking** the image again will return you to the **Grid View**.
- Command (Mac) / Control (Win) + or – also works to zoom in or out on an image.
- **NOTE:** The distinction here between single-clicking (clicking) and double-clicking is important. Lightroom will respond differently to a double-click versus a single click at various times and it’s important to know what it’s doing and why.

Compare View

- If you select more than one image in the Filmstrip along the bottom of the screen, and choose Window > Secondary Display > Compare, you will enter “Compare Mode” which allows you to see 2 or more images enlarged at one time. Command (Mac) / Ctrl (Win) Shift-C will also enter Compare Mode. Deselecting an image will remove it from this view and let you focus on only the remaining images.
- Command (Mac) / Ctrl (Win) - clicking on other images in the Filmstrip will add (or subtract) them to the compare window. Shift-clicking allows you to add or subtract a range of images.

Folders

- The folders function represents the physical location of the image on your hard drive. **Note that only directories that contain images are listed in the Folders panel.** By moving images between the areas in Folders, you are physically moving the files on disc, and Lightroom is simultaneously keeping track of their locations. If you move an image in your operating system, on the other hand, Lightroom will be unaware the move. If you attempt to view the image, Lightroom will ask you to locate the file.

Ratings (stars) and Flags

Let’s face it, not all images are created equal and you may want to keep all of the images you shot, but probably not. You will most likely want to prioritize the images that you shoot. There are two ways of rating images, “Ratings” - 0 to 5 stars, and “Flags” which are none (haven’t been reviewed), Pick (you’re keeping it) or Reject (you plan to delete it.).

Flagging is a good “quick sort” of the images into unseen, keepers, or duds. This is a good “first-pass” before performing the star ranking process.

Obviously, the approach to ranking and sorting images is a very individual process so feel free to mix-and-match the approaches shown here to match your workflow.

Ratings are handled via the **number keys 0-5**, **Flags** are chosen as **P - Pick, U - Unflagged, and X - Reject**. When several rejected images have been chosen, **Command (Mac) / Ctrl (Win) - Delete** will set the view filter to only show rejected images, and ask if you’d like to delete the rejected images.

The Develop Module

If you’re familiar with Camera Raw in Adobe Photoshop, then you’ll be right at home in the Develop Module. It is here where you to process your files for color balance, contrast, exposure, etc. with none of the modifications being “destructive” or permanent regardless of file type. Any changes that you make using the options in the panels are captured as sets of instructions which can be refined at any time (or removed if desired) leaving the original image unchanged.

Options in Develop

- Use the Basic option to adjust color (including White Balance, range, and tone. Note: if you know a value in the image to be neutral, you can use the White Balance eyedropper (displayed below the lower right of the image preview) to set the white balance of the image.
- Adjust the tonal balance with Exposure, Recovery (brings back highlights lost to over exposure SOMETIMES), Fill Light and Blacks. Brightness and Contrast in Lightroom are okay, if somewhat limiting, options - very different from the older Photoshop equivalents of the same name.
- Clarity adds sharpening to areas with some detail (rather than sharpening noise). This is identical to running Unsharp Mask with a large radius.
- Vibrance adds saturation to areas that are not already saturated. This prevents oversaturation by rich colors while trying to increase muted color saturation.
- The HSL / Color / Grayscale options allow for targeted color adjustments. The Grayscale option allows for custom, and very powerful, Grayscale conversions.
- To activate the Crop and Straighten tools, enable the “Show Crop Overlay” option or tap the “R” key. Drag the corner points to adjust the crop. Click and drag within the crop boundary to adjust the crop position. Enable “Constrain Aspect Ratio”, and select an aspect ratio from the list if desired. Click and drag outside the crop area to rotate the crop area. There is also a “Crop Tool” for those that are more accustomed to, and prefer Photoshop’s equivalent.
- Once a crop has been chosen, simply disable the “Show Crop Overlay” option (By typing “R”) to view the results and move on to other tools.

Convert images to Grayscale

- Check the box next to the Grayscale Mixer option. Use the color range sliders to customize the conversion.

Add a color wash to an image - the Split Toning option

- Option (Mac) / Alt (Win) - dragging the Hue slider will preview the saturation at 100% and allow you to choose the desired color. Then, use the Saturation slider (with no modifier key) to dial in the amount of color.
- To recreate a traditional sepia tone effect, use the Shadows sliders.
- For a “cross-processing” effect, try using both Shadows and Highlights set to different Hues.

Note: Split toning will work on both color and black and white images.

HSL Color Tuning

- To make changes to the Hue, Saturation or Lightness of a color range (or ranges) use the HSL Color Tuning options.

Applying Settings to Multiple Images

- You can apply the same changes to multiple images by adding them to your selection in the filmstrip (Command (Mac) / Control (Win) and by making sure the “Master” image (with the changes) is More selected than the others. (See selection tips above.) With the images selected, click the Sync button, choose which options to sync and click OK.
- Note that any combination of settings can be saved as a preset and applied to other images, including applying as the image is imported into Lightroom.
- The second icon from the left just under the left side of the image window will let you step through various versions of “Before and After” - side by side, split vertically, split horizontally, etc..
- Nested with the Presets panel on the left side is the History panel where you can go back in time (multiple undo). Unlike Photoshop, these changes are permanent and stay with the file. You can choose to save the “landmark” moments and delete the other steps if you like. Mousing over the history states shows a preview of them in the Navigator window.
- The Reset button in the lower-right corner will return all adjustments to their default values.

The Slideshow Module

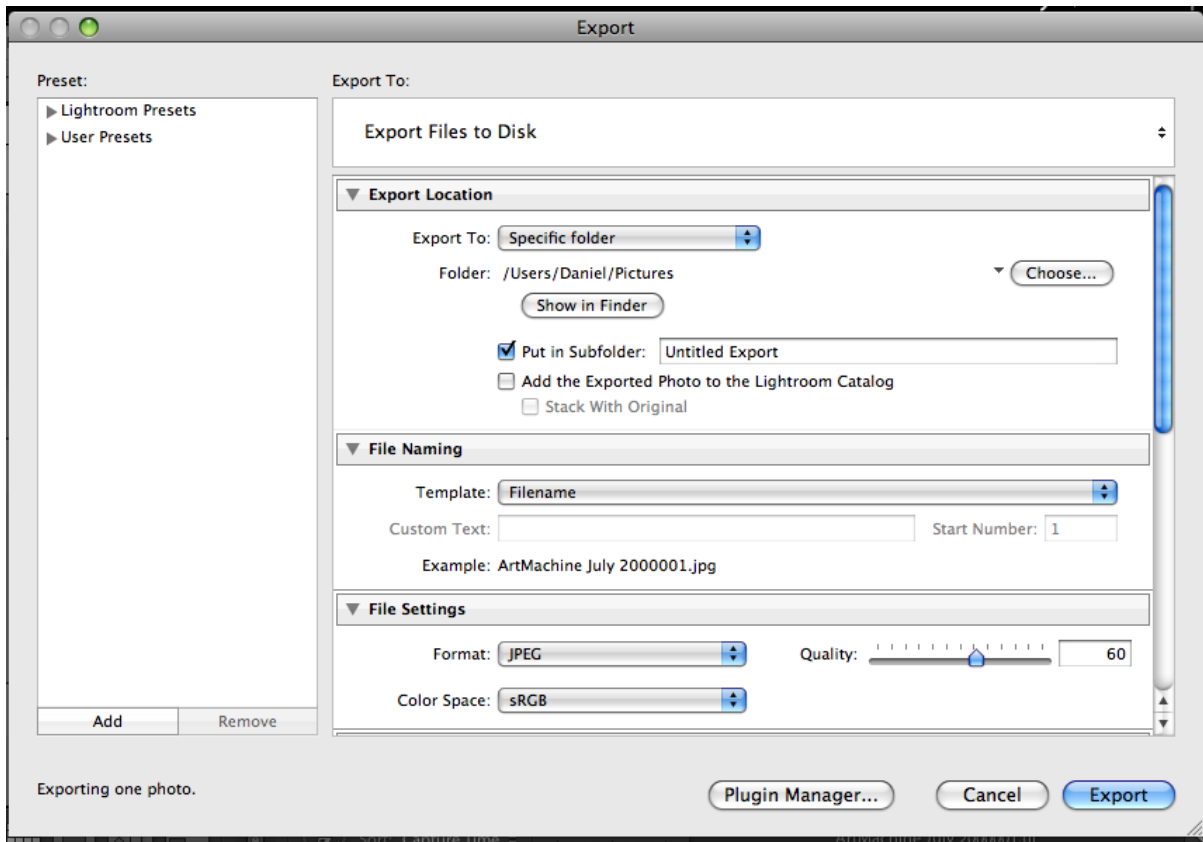
Once the images have been developed, it’s time to showcase them. Lightroom has separate modules for creating Slideshows, Printing and creating Web Photo Galleries. Today we only have time to focus on creating a slideshow to share images with your peers.

- With your selects chosen in the Library module, move to the Slideshow Module. If desired, click and drag individual thumbnails in the Filmstrip to change the sequence of your images.
- Use the Image Settings options to add a stroke and/or cast a drop shadow behind your images. Use the Backdrop Settings options to change the background color, add a gradient, or add an image.
- In Slide Layout Tools, you can change the size and position of the images. Or, in the Slide Editor view, simply click and drag the guides. Note: you must unlink the margins to offset the placement of the images.
- In the Overlay Options, enable “Show Identity Plate” to carry your name throughout the presentation. You can use a simple text identity plate, or use a custom graphic such as your logo and/or contact information. You can also choose to display ratings as well as custom text items such as file name, copyright and additional information about the image. To customize the identity plate, choose Lightroom > Identity Plate Setup, and check “Enable Identity Plate”. Refine as desired.
- The Playback Setting offers duration sliders for each slide and transition time as well as the ability to add music.
- Use the Play button to display the slideshow full screen. Spacebar will pause the slideshow. Arrow keys navigate forward and backward while paused. Tapping the spacebar again will resume the slideshow.
- Just as in the Develop module, you can use the default presets, or create and save your own.

Exporting Files

Because Lightroom has image management as part of its functionality, exporting multiple images to a particular file format is really easy. Filter, search, or select the images you wish to export, and choose “File > Export...”

The export window not only allows you to export images to a particular file format, it also lets you specify size and file naming/renaming conventions. These choices can then be saved as a preset and used for subsequent exports. Lightroom ships with several common formats such as “Export for Email”, “Burn (to a CD or DVD) full-sized JPEGs”, etc.) but you can also specify your own custom presets.



If you're exporting a library to go from, say, a laptop on a dive trip to your desktop computer when you get home (anyone?), you'll want to export the images as a Catalog (under the File Menu). This will retain all of the settings, keywords, etc. that you made to the images on the laptop in the resulting images on your desktop.