



Adobe Photoshop Lightroom CC/6 - The Missing FAQ

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The Missing FAQ

Real Answers to Real Questions asked by Lightroom Users

Victoria Bampton

Lightroom Queen Publishing

Adobe Photoshop Lightroom CC/6—The Missing FAQ

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Cover photo - Quilters Vault, Southampton, UK. Built in the late 1200's, this wine vault is the largest of the merchant's vaults beneath Southampton. The photo was shot as 2 images, one exposed for the highlights and one for the shadows, and then merged to HDR using Lightroom CC/6. The resulting file was tone mapped in the Develop module, converted to B&W and a blue tone added using the Split Toning panel.

00-acknowledgments

Acknowledgments

A lot of people have contributed to this project, and although I'd love to thank everyone personally, the acknowledgments would fill up the entire book. There are some people who deserve a special mention though.

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And finally I have to thank you, the Reader. Yet again, many of the changes in the book are based on the suggestions and questions that you've sent in. It's your book. The lovely emails I've received, and the reviews you post online, make all the late nights and early mornings worthwhile—so thank you.

Victoria Bampton—Southampton, UK, May 2015

01-intro

Introduction

Adobe® Photoshop® Lightroom™ 1.0 was released on February 19th 2007, after a long public beta period, and it rapidly became a hit. Thousands of users flooded the forums looking for answers to their questions. In the years that have followed, Lightroom has continued to

gain popularity, becoming the program of choice for amateur and professional photographers alike.

Google now turns up more than 30,000,000 web pages when you search for the word Lightroom. So when you have a question or you get stuck with one of Lightroom's less intuitive features, where do you look? Do you trawl through thousands of web pages looking for the information you need? Perhaps post on a forum, wait hours for anyone to reply, and hope they give you the right information? From now on, you look right here! Adobe Photoshop Lightroom CC/6 - The Missing FAQ is a compilation of the questions most frequently asked - and many not so frequently asked - by real users on forums all over the world.

Unlike many 'how-to' books, this isn't just the theory of how Lightroom is supposed to work, but also the workarounds and solutions for the times when it doesn't behave in the way you'd expect. We're going to concentrate on real-world use, and the information you actually need to know.

I know you're intelligent (after all, you chose to buy this book!), and I'll assume you already have some understanding of computers and digital photography. Unlike the other books, I'm not going to tell you what you 'must' do. I'm going to give you the information you need to make an informed decision about your own workflow so you can get the best out of Lightroom.

Two of my favorite comments about this series of books are "it's like a conversation with a trusted friend" and "it's like having Victoria sit next to you helping." That's my aim - I'm here to help.

A Major Rewrite

I've spent the last two years completely rewriting the book, so if you've read previous versions, you'll notice some changes. (All good, I hope!)

Easier for New Users

When I wrote the early FAQ books, they were designed as a reference book for experienced photographers moving over from Adobe Camera Raw in Photoshop and trying to get used to working with a database. Over the years, Lightroom's audience has changed. There's now a wide range of photographers using Lightroom, from those just starting out to others who shot medium format film. As a result, my primary focus with this release is to make the information accessible to less experienced users, without losing any of the advanced geeky detail, so the book's useful to you throughout your whole Lightroom journey.

A Complete Reference

Over the years, the books have grown organically. As new features have been added, I've delved into them in detail for upgraders, but some of the original output modules were missing information for beginners. I've been through the whole program with a fine tooth comb, ensur-

ing that all of the sliders are explained in this release, so you have a complete reference. The main entry for each slider name is in bold to make it easy to spot when you're in a hurry.

Workflow Chapter Order

As the books started out purely as an FAQ, the questions were grouped by module and topic, and you had to skip around the book following the cross-references to find related information. With this release, the chapters follow a typical workflow so most of the related information is grouped together. There are still a few clickable cross-references in the text, but they refer to whole chapters or sections of information that would be redundant if repeated.

Color Print

As with my previous books, I'm still self-publishing, having turned down multiple offers from publishers. This means I have full control over the content, and can offer upgrade discounts and free eBooks, which wouldn't be possible with a large publishing house. A workable solution for color print and distribution has finally become available, so I'm thrilled to be able to release this book in color print. They're still printed on demand in the US and UK, so it's not a glossy paper, but it's a huge step up from the previous black and white print.

Easier to Find

It's a big book, so we've spent many weeks working on a brand new index to make it easy to find the information you need. (And if you go hunting for a word that isn't in there, let me know so I can add it!)

The Book Format

Let's just do a quick guided tour so you can get the best out of the book...

The Fast Track for Beginners

Lightroom's a big program these days, and when you're just getting started, it can be overwhelming. Have you heard of the Pareto principle or 80/20 rule? In short, the idea is that 20% of the effort creates 80% of the results. But when you're just starting out, it's hard to know which information you need to understand, so I've done the work for you.

Starting on page 7, the Fast Track weaves its way through the book, giving you the essential information you need to get started. At the end of each Fast Track section is a page reference and clickable link which takes you to the next Fast Track section, so you can either read the book cover to cover, or you can follow the Fast Track to understand the basics, and then dive into the rest of the book to round out your knowledge, or use it as a reference when you have a question.

Starts on page 7

Workflow Order

If you read the book cover to cover, I'll lead you through a typical workflow. It begins with getting your photos and videos into Lightroom, then viewing them, selecting the best photos,

grouping them, adding metadata and filtering the photos. Next, we move on to editing your photos, both in the Develop module and external editors, and then outputting the photos as individual images, emails, publishing them on social media websites or creating slideshows, prints, web galleries and books. Finally, we discuss how to access your photos on multiple computers or mobile devices.

Index

If you're using the book as a reference, you can find the information you need in index at the back of the book. In the eBook formats, you can also use the search facility or bookmarks to find the specific words, and you can add your own bookmarks and notes too.

Appendix

In Appendix A, which is only available in the eBook formats, we explore the pros and cons of the DNG format and other geeky topics such as how to use the DNG Profile Editor and Lens Profile Creator, how to hack the TranslatedStrings.txt file and how to import from other software. Appendix B contains a list of the new features added to each Lightroom release over the years, in case you've skipped a version or two. These lists are also available on my website at <http://www.Lrq.me/whatsnew/>

Shortcuts

Many controls can be accessed in multiple different ways—buttons in the UI, menu commands, context-sensitive menus and keyboard shortcuts. If I listed every single one, you'd be bored stiff, so I've noted the most frequently used (and most easily remembered) options and listed the shortcuts in the sidebars. You can download the complete keyboard shortcuts list from <http://www.Lrq.me/keyboard-shortcuts/>

Sidebars

In the sidebars, you'll find additional useful information, links to plug-ins and other add-ons to speed up your workflow.

Links

The links in the eBooks are all clickable. In order to keep the website links current, and make them easy for you to access, I've used my own short-url domain <http://www.Lrq.me> (that's LRQ.ME) to handle the redirections. There's a full list of links at <http://www.Lrq.me/lr6-links>

Multiple Formats

You can choose how you wish to read the book - PDF, ePub, Kindle, Paperback, or all 4! You might want the PDF version on your computer for searching while you work with Lightroom, the Kindle version for reading cover-to-cover while relaxing in the garden, and the paperback for scribbling extra notes. It's up to you.

eBook Images

The ePub or Kindle versions are optimized for viewing on eReaders, and many eReaders also allow you to click on screenshots to see a larger view. If you're viewing on a computer, I'd recommend using the PDF format, because window scaling can make the screenshots difficult to read, and Amazon apply additional compression to images in the Kindle format. I've retained the real page numbers for all page references, so you can easily check them in the paperback edition as well as the eBooks.

Windows or Mac?

It doesn't matter whether you're using the Windows or Mac platform, or even both. Lightroom is cross-platform, and therefore this book will follow the same pattern. The screenshots are mainly of the Mac version because I'm writing on a Mac, but the Windows version is almost identical in functionality, and any significant differences will be explained and illustrated.

Where keyboard shortcuts or other commands differ by platform, both are included. The exception is the shortcut to view a context-sensitive menu, which is right-click on Windows or Ctrl-click on Mac. I'll keep that simple and just refer to right-clicking. If you use a trackpad on a Mac, right-click is a two-finger tap and dragging two fingers up or down the trackpad is the same as scrolling.

Talk to me!

This book is based entirely around user feedback, so I'd love to hear the things you like about this book, and anything you feel could be improved. You can email me at members@lightroomqueen.com (start the subject with LRCC/6 Kindle). I do reply!

If you enjoy the book, posting a review on Amazon or your favorite online bookstore would make my day, and would help other Lightroom users find it too. Thank you!

Now, where shall we start...?

Help Shortcuts

Lightroom Help Files

F1

Module Help

Ctrl Alt // Cmd Opt /

Main Module Shortcuts

Ctrl // Cmd /

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02-before

Before You Start

If you're anything like me, the first thing you want to do with a new program is dive right in. Who wants to read an instruction manual when you can experiment? If you're nodding in agreement, that's fine, but do yourself a favor and just skim through the Fast Track before you jump in head first.

Lightroom's designed around a database, so it doesn't work in the same way as most other image editing software. You'll save yourself a lot of headaches by understanding the basics!

Designing Your Workflow

Before we start using the software itself, let's talk briefly about workflow. It's one of the most popular topics among photographers, but why? What does it actually mean?

The term workflow simply describes a series of steps undertaken in the same order each time. For photographers, this workflow runs from the time of shooting (or even before), through transferring the photos to your computer, sorting and selecting your favorites, editing and retouching them, and then outputting to various formats, whether on screen or in print.

The initial aim for your workflow is consistency. If you do the same thing in the same order every time, you reduce the risk of mistakes. Files won't get lost or accidentally deleted, metadata won't get missed, and you won't end up redoing work that you've already completed (Figure 2.1)

There is no perfect workflow for everyone, as everyone's needs are different. The Fast Track sections of this book guide you through a simple workflow, but outside of the Fast Track, we'll also consider other workflow variations and the thought processes behind them, so you can start to build your own ideal workflow. I've also included a diagram of my personal workflow to help get you started. (Figure 2.2)

Once you've settled on a good workflow, that isn't the end of the story. You'll likely find that you continue to tweak it, finding slightly more efficient ways of doing things. It'll continue to build with time and experience, as well as with the introduction of new technology. The principles, however, remain the same.

For now, though, let's take a quick overview of the path we'll take...

Basic Workflow Elements

Figure 2.1 These are the basic workflow elements.

My Personal Workflow

Figure 2.2 This is my personal workflow. Your workflow won't look exactly the same, but it'll share the same principles. (Tap or double tap to enlarge on most eReaders)

Installing Lightroom

Just in case you haven't installed Lightroom CC/6 yet, we'll briefly run through the installation and upgrade processes, as well as extending Lightroom using plug-ins. If you're already up and running, you can move on to the next chapter starting on page 23.

Lightroom 6 is available as part of the Creative Cloud subscription or as a standard perpetual license. The program itself is essentially the same in either case. It's just the installation and update process that differs.

Subscription vs. Perpetual License

Subscription

Perpetual License

\$10 per month

\$149

Free upgrades

\$79 upgrade for new releases

Includes Lightroom & Photoshop

Lightroom only

Includes LR Mobile Sync Space

LR Mobile not available

Download only

Download/boxed (updates are downloads)

Some parts (Develop, Map, Mobile Sync) stop working when you stop paying

Continues working indefinitely

New features in dot releases

Bug fixes and new camera/lens support only

Minimum System Requirements

The minimum system requirements for installing Lightroom CC/6 are:

Windows

Intel® Pentium® 4 or AMD Athlon® 64 processor
DirectX 10–capable or later graphics card
64-bit versions of Microsoft® Windows 7 with Service Pack 1 or later
2 GB of RAM (4 GB

minimum recommended)2 GB of available hard-disk space1024x768 displayInternet connection required for Internet-based services

Mac

Multicore Intel® processor with 64-bit support (that's all Intel Macs apart from the original Core Duo)Mac OS X 10.8 (Mountain Lion) or later (Mac OS X 10.9 (Mavericks) or later required for GPU support)2 GB of RAM (4 GB minimum recommended)2 GB of available hard-disk space1024x768 displayInternet connection required for Internet-based services

That is the absolute minimum required in order to actually install Lightroom, but it is likely to 'walk' rather than run on these specs! Lightroom does benefit from higher specification hardware.

GPU support

Many GPU's, from integrated graphics to high end cards, can benefit from the new GPU support in the Develop module, although buggy drivers and underpowered cards may force Lightroom to disable GPU support or cause performance problems. The benefits are most noticeable on high resolution screens, such as 4K and 5K displays.

There is a point of diminishing returns. If you're looking to buy a new graphics card for a Windows machine, a recent generation 2 GB mid-range graphics card is an excellent choice. At the time of writing, these include the AMD R9 2XX series and Nvidia GeForce GTX 700 and 900 series. On a recent Mac, integrated graphics will work great as long as you have enough RAM available, but a discrete graphics card is a better long term investment.

Installing Lightroom

If you want to trial Lightroom CC/6 before purchasing, visit <http://www.Lrq.me/cctrial> and follow the instructions on screen. The trial uses the Creative Cloud app to manage the installation.

If you have a Creative Cloud subscription, click on the Creative Cloud icon in the System Tray (Windows) / Menubar (Mac) and select the Apps tab. Scroll down to Lightroom and press Install. (Figure 2.2)

Figure 2.2 The Creative Cloud Desktop app allows you to easily install and update Adobe software.

If you don't have the Creative Cloud desktop app installed, log in to your account at <http://creative.adobe.com> and select the Desktop Apps from the menu. Find Lightroom and click the Download button. It prompts you to install the Creative Cloud desktop app, and then you can follow the previous instructions.

If you've purchased a perpetual license, you can convert the Lightroom CC trial to a Lightroom 6 perpetual version by following the instructions here: <http://www.Lrq.me/lr6activate>

If you don't have the trial installed, a download link is provided with your purchase. This skips the Creative Cloud app and provides a basic installer (a .exe file for Windows or a .pkg file inside a .dmg file for Mac).

Opening Lightroom

On Windows, go to the desktop and double-click on the Adobe Lightroom shortcut or single-click on the Adobe Lightroom tile in the Start screen (Windows 8).

On Mac, go to the Launchpad and click on Adobe Lightroom, or go to the Applications folder, click on the Adobe Lightroom folder and then double-click on the Adobe Lightroom app to open the application. Once it's open, right-click on the icon in the dock and select Options menu > Keep in Dock if you prefer a dock icon.

Languages

Lightroom's not just limited to English—it's also available in Chinese Simplified, Chinese Traditional, Dutch, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese, Spanish, or Swedish.

To switch to another language, go to Edit menu (Windows) / Lightroom menu (Mac) > Preferences > General tab, select the language you want to use and then restart Lightroom.

Some keyboard shortcuts don't work on international keyboards. In Appendix A starting on page A-22, you'll find instructions for editing the keyboard shortcuts. If that looks a little daunting, there's a plug-in called Keyboard Tamer, which not only allows you to change existing keyboard shortcuts, but can also create some additional keyboard shortcuts. <http://www.Lrq.me/armes-kbtamer>

Activation

Lightroom CC/6 now requires online activation, and it allows activation on two machines at any time (although you can have it installed on more computers). The activation process runs automatically while installing Lightroom, and all you need to do is remain signed in to your Adobe ID.

You don't need to remain connected to the internet after activation, so even traveling to remote areas isn't a problem. If you have a subscription, Lightroom needs to be able to 'phone home' at least every 99 days. If you have a perpetual license, Lightroom remains activated until you deactivate it.

If you need to switch computers, you can go to Help menu > Sign Out to deactivate a computer, but if you forget, don't worry. When you try to activate on a third computer, Lightroom warns that you're already activated on two machines and offers to deactivate them remotely.

Desktop App Usage Information

When you start Lightroom for the first time, it warns you that it'll send some usage information back to Adobe, to help them improve the program. This includes information about your Lightroom usage, but not your photos or other personal information.

If you don't want to share this information with Adobe, go to Help menu > Manage My Account, log in, and select Desktop App Usage Information under Security & Privacy, then uncheck the checkbox.

Creating Your First Catalog

Once Lightroom's installed, there are very few differences between the Windows and Mac versions, apart from the slightly different appearance. We'll carry on using the Mac version for screenshots, but where there are notable differences, we'll show both. Let's get started...

Upgrading?

If you're upgrading from a previous Lightroom version, skip to page 17.

If you haven't used Lightroom before, it asks where to store the catalog and how to name it. (Figure 2.3) This is important, because the catalog contains your Lightroom edits. By default, the catalog is called Lightroom Catalog.lrcat and it's stored in a Lightroom folder in your main Pictures folder.

Figure 2.3 Lightroom asks where to store your new Lightroom catalog.

Next to the catalog, Lightroom creates a Previews folder (Windows) / file (Mac) called Lightroom Catalog Previews.lrdata. The previews folder/file contains a small JPEG preview of all the photos you import so it can grow very large.

If you have plenty of space on your boot drive (usually C:\ on Windows or Macintosh HD on Mac), click Continue to select the default location.

If your boot drive's low on space or you'd prefer an alternative location for your catalog, click Choose a Different Destination and select your chosen folder and catalog name. (The catalog must be stored on an internal or external hard drive, not network storage.)

Either way, make a note of the catalog name and location you choose, as you'll need to ensure these files are backed up.

Do I have to use a catalog?

Lightroom always creates a catalog, but you can add the files at their existing location, so it doesn't have to turn your existing workflow upside-down. It's also possible to write some of the settings into the files themselves, or sidecar files for proprietary raw files, using a metadata format called XMP.

Multiple Computers

Lightroom's license agreement is cross-platform (both Windows and Mac) and it allows the main user to use Lightroom on two computers, for example, a desktop and a laptop.

Lightroom isn't designed to be used over a network. The Lightroom catalog needs to be stored on a locally attached drive (internal or external), and can only be used by one person at a time. The photos, however, can be stored on a network drive or NAS unit.

There are options for using your catalog on multiple machines, such as between your desktop and laptop. We'll explore the options in the Multiple Computers chapter starting on page 481.

A Clean Slate

If you're just getting started with Lightroom, you may be 'playing,' and then decide to start again with a clean slate for your primary catalog. Rather than deleting everything from the catalog, consider storing that catalog somewhere safe, in case you want to go back to it, and create a new catalog using File menu > New Catalog.

If you later decide to delete the original catalog, simply find it in Explorer (Windows) / Finder (Mac) and delete the *.lrcat and * Previews.lrdata files, and any related backups too.

If you have a subscription or you're running the trial, Lightroom asks whether you want to sync your photos. We'll come back to these options in more detail in the Sync chapter starting on page 565. If in doubt, turn it off for now.

Lightroom's main interface opens with some initial tips in the center of the screen. (Figure 2.4) These tips give you a quick guided tour of Lightroom. Press Next to view the tips or click anywhere else on the screen to hide them.

Figure 2.4 Tips appear in the center of the screen.

continues on page 23

Upgrading from Earlier Versions

If you're upgrading from a previous version (Lightroom 5 or earlier), you'll need to upgrade your catalogs in addition to upgrading the program. The good news is that's an easy process and any release version catalogs (1-5) can be upgraded to the Lightroom CC/6 catalog format.

How do I install the Lightroom upgrade?

If you have a Creative Cloud subscription, open the Creative Cloud app and click Install next to Adobe Lightroom CC (2015).

If you prefer a perpetual license, you'll need to purchase the discounted upgrade license from Adobe's website (it's well hidden, but it is there!) and run the provided installer.

Installing the upgrade doesn't affect your existing Lightroom program installations or update your shortcuts/dock icons. You can choose to uninstall older versions when you're ready.

How do I upgrade my catalog for use in Lightroom CC/6?

Before you open Lightroom CC/6, make sure you have a current catalog backup, just in case something goes wrong. Proper measures have been put in place to avoid disasters, but you can never be too careful.

When you open Lightroom CC/6, it automatically finds your last-used Lightroom catalog and asks for permission to upgrade it. (Figure 2.5) This creates a copy of your Lightroom catalog, adds -2 to the end of the catalog name, borrows the previews files from the earlier version, and upgrades the catalog format.

Figure 2.5 When you try to open an older Lightroom catalog, Lightroom asks for permission to upgrade it to the current format.

Your original catalog remains untouched, so you may want to move it to your backups folder once the upgrade is complete.

If Lightroom doesn't automatically find your catalog, or you want to upgrade a different one, go to File menu > Open Catalog.

Backwards Compatibility

Once you've upgraded your catalog, you won't be able to open the upgraded catalog in an earlier release. You'll still have your earlier catalog untouched, however if you work on the upgraded copy in Lightroom CC/6, for example, using a trial version, and then decide to go back to Lightroom 5 or earlier, the changes you've made to your photos in version 6 will not show up in your earlier catalog.

Skipped a Version

If you're upgrading from Lightroom 4 or earlier, the upgrade process may take a while as it adds additional information to the database, for example, the bit depth and color profile. Note that if the original files are offline, for example, on disconnected external hard drives, then that extra metadata will not be added to the catalog and can't easily be added later.

Dot Releases

Lightroom's usually updated with new camera and lens support on a 3-4 monthly basis. The updates also include bug fixes, particularly in the early dot releases such as 6.1, so it's worth staying current with these updates.

How do I check which version I'm currently running?

To check which version you're running, go to the Help menu > System Info and the first line confirms the version and build number. (Figure 2.6)

Figure 2.6 The System Info dialog shows your current build number.

How do I update to a newer Lightroom dot release?

If you have a Creative Cloud subscription, the updates appear automatically in the Creative Cloud system tray/menubar app.

If you have a perpetual license, Lightroom automatically checks for updates on a regular basis, or you can go to Help menu > Check for Updates at any time, to see if a new version has been released. Unlike earlier versions, the updates are now a patch installer rather than the whole program, so the downloads are much smaller.

How do I uninstall Lightroom?

If you have the Creative Cloud app, the easiest option is to click the cog icon to the right of Adobe Lightroom and select Uninstall. (Figure 2.7)

Figure 2.7 To uninstall, click the cog icon in the Creative Cloud app.

Otherwise, on Windows, Lightroom uses a standard uninstaller, so just select Control Panel > Programs & Features, select Adobe Lightroom and click Uninstall.

Mac users are used to just dragging the app to the trash. Don't do that with Lightroom CC/6! That's fine for older versions, but Lightroom CC/6 now requires an uninstaller, and just trashing the app can create a mess. If you can't use the Creative Cloud app to uninstall, navigate to the Applications folder > Adobe Lightroom and select Uninstall Adobe Lightroom to run the uninstaller.

Installing Plug-ins

While we're talking about installation, we must also mention plug-ins. Plug-ins allow third-party developers to add additional functionality to Lightroom. They're written in Lua, and the SDK (Software Development Kit) is freely available from: <http://www.Lrq.me/sdkdownload>

There's a wide variety of plug-ins now available, doing everything from adding a List view to the Library module, to adding borders while exporting photos, to automatically uploading photos to various websites. I've mentioned my favorites in sidebars through the book, but you can find a longer list at <http://www.Lrq.me/links/plugins>

How do I install a plug-in?

Having downloaded the plug-in of your choice, you need to install it.

If the plug-in has a .zip extension, double-click to unzip it, and store it somewhere safe. Go to File menu > Plug-in Manager to show the Plug-in Manager dialog. (Figure 2.8) Click on the Add button in the lower-left corner. Navigate to the .lrplugin or .lrdevplugin folder/file for the plug-in you would like to install. On Windows, you need to select the folder, rather than its contents, whereas .lrplugin files are a single package file on Mac. Some plug-ins have additional instructions, for example, the LR/Mogrify plug-in also needs you to install the Mogrify application. Most developers include full installation instructions.

Figure 2.8 Plug-ins are installed and uninstalled using the Plug-in Manager dialog.

Where should I store my plug-ins?

It's a good idea to keep all of your plug-ins in one place, to make them easy to find, update, transfer, back up or delete. Creating a Plug-ins folder alongside the other presets folders would be an ideal place, and you can find that folder easily by going to Preferences dialog > Presets tab and clicking the Show Lightroom Presets Folder button.

How do I uninstall a plug-in?

To remove any plug-ins that you've installed by means of the Add button, simply select the plug-in in the Plug-in Manager dialog and press the Remove button. The Remove button isn't available for plug-ins stored in Lightroom's own Modules folder, such as the Tether plug-ins, in case you want to reinstall them later.

How do I use a plug-in?

Once you've installed the plug-in, it's ready to use. The way you access it depends on the individual plug-in, but each developer should provide instructions.

Some plug-ins that export directly to a different destination, such as LR/TreeExporter, show in the pop-up menu at the top of the Export dialog, where it usually says Hard Drive. They may also create their own panels in the Export dialog. (Figure 2.9)

Figure 2.9 Some Export plug-ins appear in the pop-up at the top of the Export dialog. Other plug-ins create their own section in the bottom left corner of the Export dialog.

Some plug-ins, such as LR/Mogrify and Metadata Wrangler, appear in the Post-Process Actions section of the Export dialog, below the Export Presets. From there, you can choose which options you want to make available for your current export, for example, on LR/Mogrify, a single border. The plug-in panels that you choose then appear beneath the normal export panels.

Publish Service plug-ins appear in the Publish Services panel, like the built in Facebook and Flickr plug-ins. (Figure 2.10)

Figure 2.10 Plug-ins for Publish Services appear in the Publish Services panel.

Most other Export Plug-ins have a menu listing under the File menu or Library menu in the Plug-in Extras section instead (yes, there are two different menus with the same name!).

Custom Splash Screen

The splash screen shows when you start Lightroom, (Figure 2.11) but if you'd prefer to display your own photo, create a folder called Splash Screen in the following locations, and put the photo inside.

Windows—C: \ Users \ [your username] \ AppData \ Roaming \ Adobe \ Lightroom \ Splash Screen

Mac—Macintosh HD / Users / [your username] / Library / Application Support / Adobe / Lightroom / Splash Screen

If you add multiple photos to this folder, Lightroom cycles through them.

To turn it off completely, uncheck Show splash screen during startup in Lightroom's Preferences dialog.

Figure 2.11 The splash screen displays when you start Lightroom.

Plug-in Shortcuts

Plug-in Manager

Ctrl Alt Shift , / Cmd Opt Shift ,

03-import

Getting Photos & Videos into Lightroom

As Lightroom is built around a database, the first thing you need to do is add the information about your photos and videos to this database. This process is called Importing, but don't let that confuse you. Although it's called Importing, the photos don't go 'into' Lightroom. A better word to describe the process might be reference, link, or register.

Importing the photos simply means that the metadata about the photos and videos is added to the database as text records, along with a link to that file on the hard drive and a small JPEG preview. It's like an index of the books in a library. (Figure 3.1) The library catalog tells you a little about the book and which shelf it's stored on, and maybe even gives you a preview of the cover, but it doesn't contain the book itself.

Figure 3.1 Like a manual library card catalog, Lightroom keeps track of where your photos and videos are stored, and information about them, but it doesn't contain the photos/videos themselves. © James Steidl | Dreamstime.com

While you're importing the photos, Lightroom can copy or move the photos to a new location of your choice, but that's not required—if the photos are already safely on your hard drive, Lightroom can reference them at their existing location instead.

Don't worry, importing photos into Lightroom doesn't mean you're locked in to using Lightroom forever. Your photos remain accessible to other software, most of the metadata can be written to the file in a standardized format that other software can understand (excluding Develop settings), and you can export the edited photos to standard image formats. You're in control.

What is Metadata?

Metadata is often defined as 'data describing data'.

As far as photos are concerned, metadata describes how the photo was taken (camera, shutter speed, aperture, lens, etc.), who took the photo (copyright) and descriptive data about

the content of the photo (keywords, caption).

Lightroom also stores all of your Develop edits as metadata, which means that it records your changes as a set of text instructions (i.e. Exposure +0.33, Highlights 30, Shadows +25, etc.) instead of applying them directly to the image data. This means you can edit the photo again later without degrading the image quality.

When you initially open the Import dialog (Figure 3.2), it may look a little overwhelming, but don't worry, it's simpler than it looks. There are three main decisions to make: where to find the photos (the source), how to handle the photos (copy/move/add) and if you're copying or moving the photos, where to put them (destination). The rest of the options are, well, optional!

Figure 3.2 Photos are added to Lightroom's catalog using the Import dialog.

First, we'll step through the basics of getting your photos into Lightroom, and then we'll go back through the individual elements of the Import dialog in more detail. Although we'll mainly refer to importing photos throughout the chapter, the instructions apply to videos too. Let's get started...

Importing Your Photos

If you're importing from a memory card, insert your memory card into the card reader or attach the camera to the computer. Card readers usually work more reliably with Lightroom than USB camera connections. By default, the Import dialog displays automatically when inserting a memory card.

If you're importing from your hard drive, open the Import dialog by going to File menu > Import Photos and Videos or by pressing the Import button in the lower left corner of the Library module.

On the left of the Import dialog is the Source panel, with memory cards at the top and hard drives listed below.

If you're importing from a memory card, click on its name. If you only have a single device (i.e. card reader, camera or phone) attached, it's selected automatically.

If you're importing existing photos, navigate to the location of your photos in the lower Files section of the Source panel.

If the photos are stored under a single folder, such as the My Photos folder in Figure 3.3, select that folder and check the Include Subfolders checkbox. If you have thousands of photos to import, it can help to break the import into smaller chunks, for example, 10,000 at a time.

If your photos are spread across multiple folders, hold down Ctrl (Windows) / Cmd (Mac) while clicking on each folder, or hold down Shift while clicking on the first and last folder in a

series of consecutive folders.

Figure 3.3 Select the memory card or folder of photos in the Source panel.

Thumbnails start to appear in the central preview area. They may take a while to appear if you have thousands of photos, but you don't need to wait for them to finish appearing before continuing. It's possible to view and check/uncheck photos in the Import dialog, but it's easier to sort through them in the Library module after import. At the top of the Import dialog (Figure 3.4), decide how to handle the files you're importing.

Figure 3.4 Select Copy at the top of the dialog to copy the photos to your hard drive, or Add to leave them in their current location.

If you're importing from a memory card, select Copy, Move and Add are automatically disabled when importing from a memory card.

If you're importing from a hard drive, you have a choice: do you want to leave the photos where they are, or copy/move them to a new location?

To reference the photos at their existing location, select Add. This is a good choice if your photos are already arranged in a tidy folder structure that you'd like to keep. To let Lightroom move the photos to a new location and automatically reorganize them, select Move. This is most useful if your photos are spread across your hard drives in a slightly disorganized fashion. To leave the original photos alone and create a copy in the location you choose in the Destination panel, select Copy. You'll need twice as much hard drive space if you choose this option, as you'll be duplicating all of your photos, but it leaves your current system intact.

On the right-hand side of the Import dialog are a variety of different settings you can apply while importing the photos. We'll use some default settings to get started, and explore the options in more detail later in the chapter. In the File Handling panel (Figure 3.5), set the following: Build Previews—Standard. If you're importing thousands of photos, select Embedded & Sidecar instead. It's quicker initially but stores lower quality previews. Build Smart Previews—unchecked. Don't Import Suspected Duplicates—checked. Make a Second Copy—If you're importing existing photos, leave it unchecked. If you're importing from a memory card, check it then click on the file path and choose a location on another hard drive as a temporary backup. Add to Collection—unchecked.

Figure 3.5 In the File Handling panel, choose your preview size and temporary backup location.

In the File Renaming panel (Figure 3.6), if it's available, leave Rename Photos unchecked or turn to the File Renaming panel section starting on page 37 to learn more.

Figure 3.6 In the File Renaming panel, set a new file naming template, or leave it unchecked to retain the camera filename.

In the Apply During Import panel (Figure 3.7), set the following: Develop Settings—None. Metadata—None or turn to page 42 to learn how to create your copyright metadata preset. Keywords—leave it blank.

Figure 3.7 In the Apply During Import panel, add your copyright metadata.

If you've set the import type to Add, your work is done—press Import and allow Lightroom to register all the selected photos in the catalog. If you've chosen Move or Copy, you need to choose where to put the photos. By default, Lightroom copies your photos into the Pictures folder in your user account, but you can choose another hard drive by selecting a folder in the lower half of the Destination panel. Then you need to decide how you're going to organize the photos. The options at the top of the Destination dialog allow you to set the folder structure. As you try different settings, the folders in the lower half of the Destination panel update, so you can test different options to see what will happen. The folders in italic will be created by your import settings.

To copy/move the photos directly into the folder you've selected, select Into One Folder in the Organize pop-up.

To create a subfolder for the photos, check Into Subfolder, enter the name of the new subfolder, and select Into One Folder in the Organize pop-up (Figure 3.8). This is useful when copying photos from a memory card into a manually-created folder structure.

Figure 3.8 When copying from a memory card, you can create a new subfolder to store the photos.

To create a date-based folder structure automatically, select By Date from the Organize pop-up and a folder structure from the Date Format pop-up. If you're not sure which to select, the YYYY/YYYY-MM/YYYY-MM-DD option is a good default. (Figure 3.9) We'll go into more detail in the Destination panel section starting on page 43.

Figure 3.9 Alternatively, you can automatically create a dated folder structure based on the metadata of the selected photos.

Finally, press Import. The Import dialog closes and the new photos start to appear in the Library module. The photos are grouped in a special collection in the Catalog panel called Current Import (which then changes to Previous Import) (Figure 3.10), and their folders also appear in the Folders panel.

Figure 3.10 The photos are grouped in a special collection called Previous Import.

Congratulations, your photos are now cataloged by Lightroom! If you're itching to start using Lightroom, you can now skip on to backing up your photos (page 61) and then viewing them in Lightroom (page 85), and come back to the rest of this chapter later. If you're still with me, let's go back and explore the individual elements of the Import dialog in more detail.

continues on page 61

Import in Detail

In Lightroom, there are usually multiple ways to accomplish the same task. For example, to open the Import dialog you can go to File menu > Import Photos, press the Import button at the bottom of the left panel group in the Library module, or use the keyboard shortcut. (The keyboard shortcuts are listed in sidebar boxes throughout the book.) Lightroom can also open the Import dialog automatically when you insert a memory card.

Automatically Opening the Import Dialog

There are two different behaviors involved in the Import dialog opening automatically: whether Lightroom opens the Import dialog when the program is already open, and whether the program launches by itself even though it was closed.

To change this auto-open behavior, go to Lightroom's Preferences dialog > General tab and check or uncheck Show Import dialog when a memory card is detected. (Figure 3.11)

Figure 3.11 The Show import dialog when a memory card is detected checkbox in the Preferences dialog > General tab controls whether the Import dialog automatically opens when a device is connected. On Windows it also launches Lightroom if it's closed.

On Windows, this checkbox controls whether the Import dialog opens automatically when a card is detected, and also whether the program launches from closed (using Windows Auto Play).

On a Mac, the checkbox only controls whether Lightroom opens the Import dialog when the program is already open. To set Lightroom to launch from closed, insert the memory card or plug in the device. Go to the Applications folder, open the Image Capture app, and select the memory card or device on the left-hand side. In the lower left corner, click the arrow, and select Lightroom as the program to automatically open when that device is detected. (Figure 3.12)

Figure 3.12 On Mac OS X, Image Capture controls whether Lightroom opens.

The same logic applies, not just to card readers and cameras, but also to mobile phones and tablets, USB keys, printers with card readers, and various other devices.

Check the Eject after Import checkbox to automatically eject the device when the import finishes.

Source panel

When importing photos into Lightroom, you first need to select the source of the photos using the Source panel. (Figure 3.13) Remember, at the top of the panel are your devices—cameras, card readers, mobile devices, and so forth—and below that are the hard drives attached to your computer, as well as any mounted network drives. To select a source, simply click on the folder or device of your choice.

Figure 3.13 The Source panel on the left of the Import dialog allows you to select the folder or device to import.

Import from Other Programs

As a keen photographer, you likely already have a large number of photos stored on your hard drive. Those older photos can also be imported into your Lightroom catalog, either at their current location or while copying/moving them to a new location.

If your photos are already cataloged using other software, for example, Photoshop Elements, Aperture or iPhoto, read Appendix A starting on page A-28 before continuing.

Why do the folders keep jumping around when I click on them?

When you click on different folders in the Source panel (and later in the Destination panel too), it can appear to have a mind of its own, with different behavior depending on whether you single-click or double-click, but it's actually a useful feature.

If you navigate around by single-clicking on the folder arrows or folder names, the navigation behaves normally. If you double-click, or if you right-click and choose Dock Folder from the context-sensitive menu, you can collapse the folder hierarchy to hide unnecessary folders. (Figure 3.14) It makes it easier to navigate through a complex folder hierarchy, especially if it's many levels deep and the panel is too narrow to read the folder names. If you collapse it down too far, just double-click on the parent folder to show the full hierarchy again. (Figure 3.15)

Figure 3.14 With the My Photos folder docked, the parent folders are hidden.

Figure 3.15 When the folders list is undocked, the folder list can become very long and folder names can be clipped.

How do I import from multiple folders or memory cards in one go?

If all the photos you want to import are in subfolders under a single parent folder, for example, within a Photos folder, then you can select that parent folder and check the Include Subfolders checkbox. All the photos from the subfolders display in the preview area, ready to be imported.

If your photos are spread around multiple folders, hold down Ctrl (Windows) / Cmd (Mac) while clicking on each folder. (Figure 3.16) The multiple folders don't even have to be on the same drive as long as they appear in the Files section of the Source panel. If the folders are

consecutive, hold down Shift while clicking on the first and last folder in a series to select them without having to click on each one.

Figure 3.16 You can select multiple folders for import.

Multiple selections are limited to folders shown in the Files section. You can't import from two separate devices in one go, for instance, two card readers. However if the operating system sees the memory cards as two drives in the lower Files part of the Source panel, you can Ctrl-click (Windows) / Cmd-click (Mac) on the folders to import both at once.

Can I use the operating system dialog to navigate to a folder instead of using Lightroom's Source panel?

If you're more comfortable using the operating system dialog to select a folder, click on the large button in the top left corner of the Import dialog. (Figure 3.17) (Yes, those corners are large buttons, even though they don't look like it!) The Other Source option in that menu displays the operating system dialog. It also lists shortcuts to popular folders such as Desktop and Pictures, as well as recent sources. When you select a folder using any of these options, the Source panel automatically updates to display that folder.

The top right corner behaves the same way, except it updates the Destination panel.

Figure 3.17 Click on the top corners of the Import dialog to view a menu of recent sources and to access the operating system dialog.

Previewing and Selecting Individual Photos

Having selected the source of the photos, the photo thumbnails start to populate the central preview area. In this grid, you can view the photos and select the ones you want to import.

A photo count displays in the bottom left corner of the dialog, showing how many photos are checked and how much hard drive space they fill. (Figure 3.18)

Figure 3.18 A photo count displays in the bottom left corner..

How do I select only certain photos to import?

The checkbox in the corner of the thumbnail controls whether the photo is included in the import. They're all checked by default. The Check All and Uncheck All buttons below the grid check/uncheck all the photos in one go, or you can click the individual checkboxes to select or deselect specific photos.

To check or uncheck a series of photos, hold down Ctrl (Windows) / Cmd (Mac) while clicking on photos to select non-consecutive photos, or Shift-click on the first and last photo to select a group of consecutive photos. Once you have the photos selected, shown by a lighter gray surround, check or uncheck the checkbox on a single photo to apply that same check-mark setting to all of the selected photos.

Why are some photos unavailable or dimmed in the Import dialog?

You might notice that some of the photos appear dimmed in the Grid. Photos shown with a vignette are unchecked photos, but they can be selected for import by toggling the checkbox. (Figure 3.19)

Dimmed photos that don't have a checkbox are unavailable for import, either because they're already in your current Lightroom catalog at that location, or they're already in your catalog at a different location and you have Don't Import Suspected Duplicates checked in the File Handling panel.

Figure 3.19 Dimmed thumbnails without a checkbox aren't available for import. Thumbnails with a vignette are unchecked and can be imported by checking the box.

How do I change the preview size?

On the Toolbar below the grid, to the right, the Thumbnails slider adjusts the size of the thumbnails. The thumbnails embedded in the files are usually small and low quality, but there's also a larger JPEG preview embedded in most photos. These larger previews aren't used for the Grid view as they're slower to load, but the Loupe view allows you to take advantage of the larger preview.

To show the larger Loupe view of a photo, select any thumbnail and press the Loupe button on the Toolbar (Figure 3.20) or double-click on the thumbnail. (If it doesn't work, the file may not include a larger preview, or Lightroom may be having trouble reading it, so go ahead and import the photos and view them in the Library module instead).

Figure 3.20 Below the thumbnails or preview are Grid and Loupe buttons for switching between these views.

Below that Loupe preview is the checkbox to include or exclude the photo from the Import. Press the Grid button on the Toolbar or double-click on the photo to return to Grid view again.

As these previews are embedded in the files, it can be a faster way of doing any initial selections than waiting for Lightroom to build previews. (Figure 3.21) However, if you accidentally close the Import dialog before importing, you can lose all the work you've done selecting files, whereas marking photos in the Library module saves as you go along.

Figure 3.21 The Loupe view allows you to see a larger preview of the photo before importing.

Can I change the sort order?

Also on the Toolbar is the Sort pop-up (Figure 3.22), which allows you to sort the thumbnails in the Grid.

The options are:

Capture Time sorts the photos based on their capture time. Checked State displays the checked photos first, followed by the unchecked photos. Filename sorts the photos in al-

pha-numeric filename order. Media Type displays the videos first, followed by the photos. Off disables sorting.

Figure 3.22 At the bottom of the Import dialog grid, you'll find the sort order pop-up and thumbnail size slider.

Can I filter the photos?

As well as changing the sort order, you can filter the photos shown in the Grid using the Filter bar above the thumbnails. (Figure 3.23)

All Photos—displays all the photos in the selected source. New Photos—hides any photos that have already been imported and are recognized as duplicates. Destination Folders—breaks up the grid into sections based on the folder structure you set in the Destination panel, for example, by date. These grid sections can be collapsed by clicking on the triangle on the left, and whole groups of photos can be checked or unchecked using the checkbox on the dividing row.

Figure 3.23 Along the top of the Import dialog grid is a Filter bar. Clicking on Destination Folders divides the thumbnails into groups.

Selecting Specific File Types

You can't filter for specific file types, for example, just the raw files, using Lightroom's Import dialog. One solution is to import all the photos into Lightroom and then filter them using the Library module's Filter bar and remove specific photos. We'll come back to that in the Finding & Filtering Photos chapter starting on page 179.

Alternatively, you can make use of your operating system's sort by file type in Explorer (Windows) / Finder (Mac). Select the files you want to import and drag and drop them onto Lightroom's icon in the Dock (Mac only) or directly on the Grid view in the Library module (Windows or Mac). The Import dialog opens with these specific photos already selected, ready for import.

Import Method

Having selected the photos, you need to decide how to handle them. While importing, you can copy them, move them, or leave them where they are. (Figure 3.24) These options are found at the top of the Import dialog.

Copy as DNG copies the photos to a folder of your choice, and converts the copies of any raw files to DNG format, leaving the originals untouched. Copy also copies the photos to a folder structure of your choice but it doesn't convert them to DNG format. As it's duplicating the pho-

tos, it takes up additional hard drive space, so it's primarily used when copying photos from a memory card or other device, rather than importing existing photos from the hard drive. Move copies the photos to the folder structure of your choice but it also removes the files from their original location. The Move option is particularly useful if you want Lightroom to reorganize your existing photos while importing, as it doesn't take up additional hard drive space. Add leaves the files in their current folder structure with their existing filenames, and references them, or links to them, in that original location. This is a great option for importing existing photos if you already have an organized filing system. You'll note that the File Renaming and Destination panels on the right are missing, since they don't apply when adding photos without moving them.

Figure 3.24 At the top of the Import dialog, choose how to handle the files.

Explore DNG

DNG, or Digital Negative, is an openly documented raw file format. Some cameras create DNG files natively, and other raw files can also be converted to the DNG format. It's worth understanding the pros and cons so you can make an informed decision. In the Appendix starting on page A-1, we explore all the benefits and disadvantages, as well as how DNG can be integrated into your workflow.

Delete from a memory card

When you're importing from a device such as a camera or card reader, Lightroom disables the Move and Add options to protect you from accidental loss. Most file corruption happens during file transfer, and if you moved the files instead of copying them, you would no longer have an uncorrupted copy on the card. Also, if you use Add to reference the photos directly on the card, you could format the card believing that the files are safely imported into Lightroom, only to discover that Lightroom can no longer find the files.

For that same reason, there's no delete photos from memory card once uploaded option, because it's good practice to verify that the data is safe before you delete the files. Formatting the cards in your camera, rather than the computer, also minimizes the risk of corruption.

File Handling panel

Further file handling options appear in the File Handling panel on the right. (Figure 3.25) Using this panel, you choose the size of the previews to be created after importing, how to handle duplicate photos, and whether to copy the photos to a temporary backup location.

Figure 3.25 The File Handling panel on the right of the Import dialog allows you to set initial preview size, duplicate handling, temporary backups and collection membership.

Why do I have to create previews? Why can't I just look at the photos?

The first option in the File Handling panel is Build Previews. All raw processors create their own previews because raw data has to be converted in order to be viewed as an image. Lightroom creates previews of all file types, so that non-destructive edits can be previewed without damaging the original image data. These previews also allow you to view the photos when the original files are offline, for example, when your external drive is disconnected.

What size previews should I build?

There are four preview size options:

Minimal—stores the thumbnail preview embedded in the file. It's a quick option initially, but it's a very small low quality preview, usually with a black edging and about 160px along the long edge, so you then have to wait for previews to build as you browse. Minimal previews aren't color managed. Embedded & Sidecar—stores the main preview embedded in the file (approx. 1024px or larger), so it's also quick to import, but gives you something to look at while waiting for Lightroom to build its own previews. Standard—builds the previews immediately after import, so it takes time initially but it's much quicker when you're viewing the photos. 1:1—builds full size previews. They're slower to build, and take up more space on the hard drive, but they're much quicker when browsing if you need to zoom in to check focus.

There's also a Build Smart Previews checkbox. Smart Previews are primarily used for editing the files when the originals are offline, for example, when the original files are on a disconnected external drive. If your original files are always accessible, you can leave this unchecked. We'll come back to Previews & Smart Previews in more detail starting on page 102.

What does Don't Import Suspected Duplicates do?

Next in that panel is Don't Import Suspected Duplicates. If it's checked, Lightroom matches the photos that you're importing against those that are already in the catalog, to see whether you're trying to import duplicates.

For example, if you forget to reformat the card in the camera before shooting more photos, it recognizes the photos that are already in the catalog and skips them rather than duplicating the files. It's worth leaving checked unless you're intentionally importing duplicate photos.

To be classed as a suspected duplicate, the files must match on the original filename (as it was when imported into Lightroom), the EXIF capture date and time, and the file length (size).

If it doesn't recognize the duplicates, make sure you've inserted the card before opening the Import dialog, as it can be more temperamental if you open the Import dialog first. It also only works if the photos are still in the catalog, so if you've deleted some, they will be reimported.

ted from the card. It also won't recognize photos that you've re-saved as an alternative format—only exact duplicates.

What does the Make a Second Copy option do?

When using one of the Copy or Move options, the Make a Second Copy To checkbox becomes available in the File Handling panel. This backs up your original files to the location of your choice, in a dated folder called "Imported on [date]". If you choose to rename your files while importing, these backups are renamed to match, but they always remain in their original file format, even if you're converting the working files to DNG while importing.

The Second Copy option is useful as a temporary backup, while the photos make their way into your primary backup system, but it's not a replacement for good primary backups as it doesn't replicate your working folder structure. We'll consider backup systems in the next chapter starting on page 61.

How do I add imported photos to a collection while importing?

While you're importing the photos, you can also add them to a collection. This is particularly useful if you use Lightroom mobile sync, your workflow is designed around collections, or you're importing photos from an event that spans multiple days such as a vacation.

Enable the Add to Collection checkbox to display and select your existing collections and collection sets, or click on the + button to create a new collection. You can only add the photos to a single collection while importing, although you can add them to additional collections once the import completes.

File Renaming panel

Most cameras use fairly non-descriptive file names such as IMG_5968. The problem with these names is, over the course of time, you'll end up with multiple photos with the same name.

Using the options in the File Renaming panel (Figure 3.26), you can rename your photos while you're importing them. (If your Import dialog is set to Add, you won't be able to rename while importing. Either change to one of the Copy or Move options, or wait until the photos are imported and rename in the Library module.)

Figure 3.26 The File Renaming panel allows you to rename the photos at the time of import, which means that all versions and backups of the photos will have the same name.

How will you name your photos?

The main thing to consider when naming your files is how you'll make the names unique. If a file doesn't have a unique name, and it's accidentally moved to another folder, other photos could be overwritten.

The date and time works well as a unique file name, for example, YYYYMMDD-HHMMSS (year month day—hour minute second). If you regularly shoot in sub-second bursts or you

prefer to keep to the camera file name, YYYYMMDD-original file number (and a camera code if you're shooting with more than one camera) can work well with a low risk of duplication.

Others prefer a sequence number combined with some custom text, for example, Vacation2015_003.jpg. Don't add the words Vacation2015 into the template itself, otherwise you'll have to go back to the Filename Template Editor each time you need to change it. Instead, use the Custom Text and SequenceNumber(001) tokens, so you can enter Vacation2015 directly in the Import dialog.

You can rename the files at any time, as long as you do it within Lightroom, but doing so while importing means your initial backups will have the same names as the working files. This can be invaluable if you have to restore from import backups.

Filename Characters

It's sensible to only use standard characters, such as plain letters and numbers, and use underscores (_) or hyphens (-) instead of spaces when you're setting up your filenames, so your filenames will be fully compatible with web browsers and other operating systems without having to be renamed again. Some characters, such as / \ : ! @ # \$ % < > , [] { } & * () + = may have specific uses in the operating system or Lightroom's database, causing all sorts of trouble, so those are best avoided.

For more information on recommended filename limitations, check <http://www.Lrq.me/cv-filenames>

How do I rename the files while importing?

To rename the files, check the Rename Files checkbox and select a template from the pop-up to the right. There's a selection of templates built in to Lightroom, but if you select Edit in the Template pop-up, you can create your own template using tokens in the Filename Template Editor. (Figures 3.27, 3.28 & 3.29)

Figure 3.27 Use the Filename Template Editor to build a filename structure of your choice.

Figure 3.28 The Windows version displays the tokens as curly brackets rather than lozenges.

Figure 3.29 These are a few example filename templates. The first one becomes 20150124-092816.jpg. The second one becomes 20150124-001.jpg. The last one becomes London2015-0001.jpg.

How do I build a filename template?

In the Filename Template Editor, click in the white field and delete the existing tokens. The tokens appear as text in curly brackets on Windows, or blue lozenges on Mac.

Below the white field is a selection of pop-ups, each containing different types of tokens. There's a huge selection to choose from! The tokens are grouped into pop-ups. The first contains filename tokens (i.e. current filename), then there are 3 pop-ups for numbering tokens (i.e. sequence numbers) with 1 to 5 digits, then date-based tokens (i.e. YYYYMMDD, and metadata-based tokens (i.e. camera model, star ratings, etc.). Finally there are Insert buttons for two custom text fields—Shoot Name and Custom Text.

To add a token, click the Insert button next to one of the pop-ups or select a different option from a pop-up. Repeat to add additional tokens. You can type directly into the white field to add punctuation such as hyphens and underscores between tokens. You can also add text such as your initials. Add a custom text field for text that changes regularly, such as the name of the shoot or other descriptive text. Finally, save it as a preset by selecting the Preset pop-up at the top of the dialog and choosing Save Current Settings as New Preset and giving it a name. Press Done to close the dialog, and check that your new preset is selected in the File Renaming panel.

Renaming Options

The available options differ slightly between the Import dialog and the Library module. Import has a Shoot Name token, which isn't available in the Library module, but the Library module gains tokens such as Folder Name, Original Filename, Copy Name, slightly different sequence number options and additional IPTC metadata. The basic principles remain the same.

How do I add additional padding zeros to sequence numbers?

In the Numbering pop-ups, such as Sequence #, you'll note that there are options from (1) to (00001). (Figure 3.30) Some programs can have problems sorting in intelligent numerical order, so they sort files as 1, 10, 11... 19, 2, 20, 21. The solution is to add extra padding zeros to set the filenames to 001, 002, and so forth.

To use a padded 3-digit sequence number, select Sequence # (001) instead of Sequence # (1) from the pop-up menu.

Figure 3.30 Lightroom offers a range of numbering systems, including a standard Sequence number which you set in the Import dialog.

What's the difference between Import#, Image#, Sequence# and Total#?

While you're looking at the Numbering pop-ups, you'll notice that there are a number of different types of sequence number available.

Sequence # is the most useful, and the most familiar type of numbering. It's an automatically-increasing number which starts at the number you set in the File Naming panel in the Import dialog or in the Rename Photos dialog in the Library module. Import # increases with

each batch of photos you import. The first time you use the token during import, it's set to 1, then the next time it's 2, etc. It's only available while importing photos. Image # increases with individual photo you import. The first photo is set to 0, then the next is 1, etc.

Both Import # and Image # have starting numbers set in Catalog Settings > File Handling tab, with Import Number used for Import # and Photos Imported used for Image #. (Figure 3.31) If you don't use these tokens, the count doesn't increase. Later, when renaming in the Library module, Image # always starts at 1 regardless of the Catalog Settings.

Total # refers to the number of photos it's renaming in one go, so if you're renaming 8 photos, the Total # token is replaced with 8. It's only available in Library module Rename Photos dialog.

Figure 3.31 In Catalog Settings > File Handling tab, you can set the Import Sequence Numbers which are used for the Import # and Image # tokens.

Where do I enter custom text and start numbers?

After creating your filename template, the availability of the additional fields in the File Renaming panel (Figure 3.32) depends on which tokens are used in the selected template.

Figure 3.32 If a template includes Custom Text or Shoot Name tokens, they can be updated in the File Renaming panel.

There are two custom text fields—Custom Text and Shoot Name—which allow you to add custom text into your filename without returning to the Filename Template Editor each time you want to change the text. The arrow to the right of each field displays recent entries.

Start Number is used with the Sequence # token, allowing you to set a starting number of your choice. For example, you may want your numbering to start at 1, or you may want to carry on from a specific number such as 253.

The Extensions pop-up sets the case of the file extension (i.e. .jpg, .JPG, etc.). The default is Leave as-is, but you can change it to uppercase or lowercase if you prefer. That choice is personal preference.

At the bottom of the File Renaming panel is the Sample filename, which allows you to double check you have the correct template selected.

Number Per Day or Folder

Lightroom can't automatically restart the numbering for each day (i.e. day3-001.jpg) or remember the last number used in a folder (i.e. start at London-253.jpg). To use that type of numbering system, rename the photos in chunks in the Library module, using the Sequence # token and setting a start number manually for each batch.

Apply During Import panel

Next in line is the Apply During Import panel (Figure 3.33). These options allow you to apply settings to the photos as they're imported—Develop Settings, Metadata or Keywords. The settings apply to all the photos in the current import.

Figure 3.33 The Apply During Import panel allows you to apply initial Develop settings to your photos at import, as well as adding any Metadata or Keywords that will apply to all of the selected photos.

Applying Different Settings

You can't apply different settings to different photos in the same import. You could start the first import with selected photos, however doing so runs the risk of missing a photo or two. It's easier to import all the photos in a single process and then add the different settings, or move photos into different folders in the Library module once they've all finished importing. All the settings that are available in the Import dialog, such as Metadata and Develop presets, can also be applied in the Library module.

What Develop settings should I apply in the Import dialog?

The Develop Settings pop-up allows you to apply a Develop preset to the photos while importing, for example, you may always apply a specific preset to all studio portraits as a starting point. None just applies the default settings to new photos but preserves any existing Develop settings stored with the files, so it's the option to choose if you're ever uncertain. Be careful not to confuse None with Lightroom General Presets > Zeroed which sets every slider back to zero even if there were existing settings.

How do I add copyright metadata to my photos?

Import is the ideal time to apply copyright metadata to ensure that all of your photos include this vital information. To create a metadata preset:

Select New in the Metadata pop-up and the New Metadata Preset dialog appears. (Figure 3.34) At the top, enter a name for the preset such as "Copyright Preset". Enter your copyright information below. Only checked fields are saved in the preset.

In many countries, the copyright notice requires the copyright symbol ©, the year of first publication and then the name of the copyright owner, for example, © 2015 Victoria Bampton. Copyright laws vary by country, so please check your local laws for exact specifications. You may also want to include personal details such as your name, address, website and other contact details.

Press the Create button to return to the Import dialog, where your new preset is automatically selected.