

THE IMAGE-SPACE

LIGHTROOM 2

TIPS AND TRICKS

Volume 2

Joe Barrett



*A second volume of
Lightroom Tips from the
Image-Space.*

*Includes Lightroom 2 tips
plus a bonus section on
Lightroom Techniques*

*As before, all in one easy to
read and printable collection.*

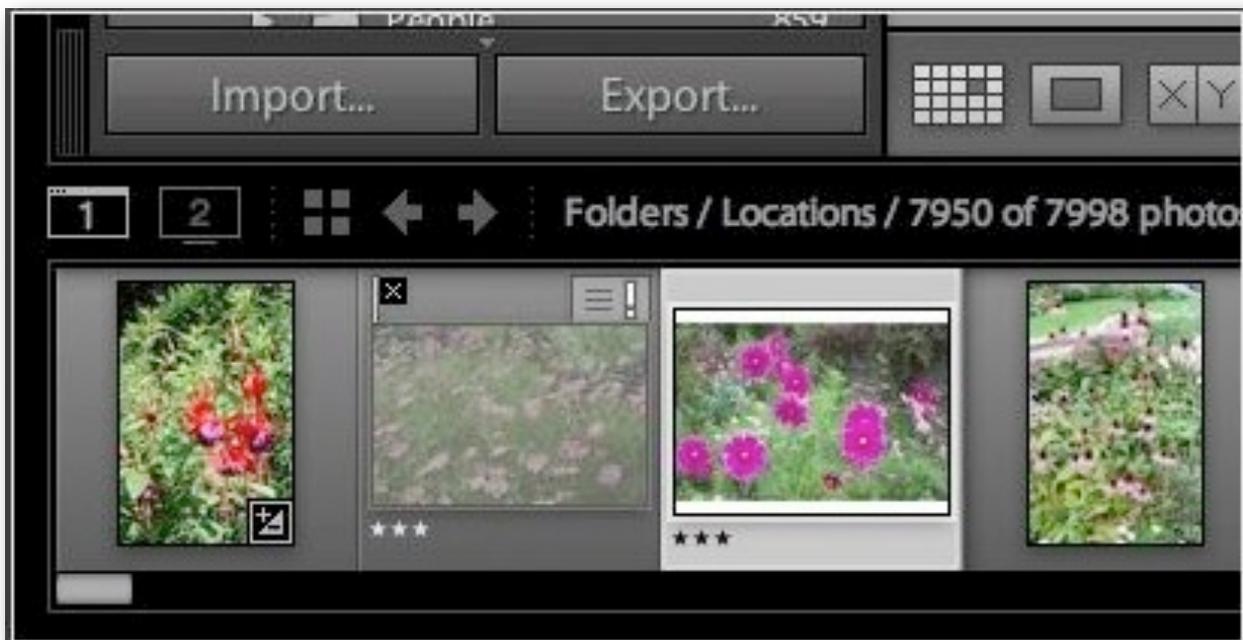
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REJECTED PHOTOS ARE SHOWN AS DIMMED IN FILMSTRIP

Lightroom 2 has a new feature which allows you to identify rejected photos visually. I noticed this as I was working through my latest shots. Press X to reject a photo.

Then in the filmstrip the rejected photos will be shown dimmed so they can be easily identified. See the second from the left in the Filmstrip below.



Lightroom Web Module output settings

This is new for Lightroom 2 and is very useful.

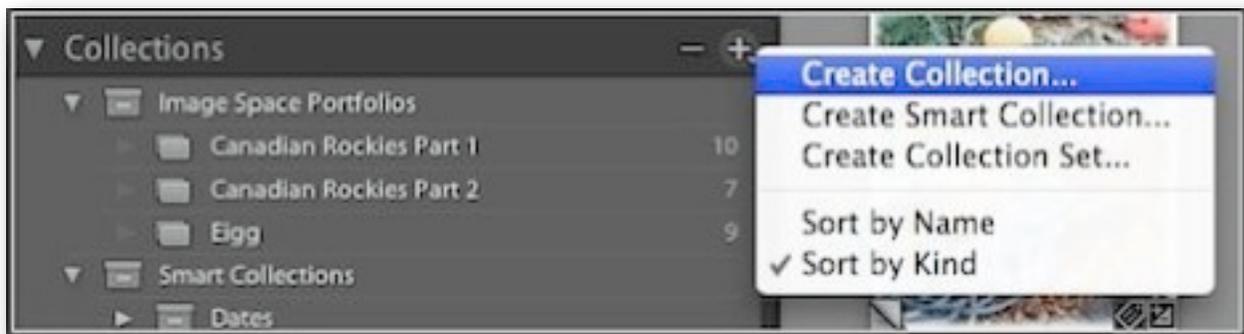
Note that the photos dim down in the Library Module Grid view as well.

VIRTUAL COPY COLLECTIONS

Lightroom has a powerful Collections capability which allows you to select a subset of images and view them as a named collection.

A very useful option for preparing a set of images for later printing, using in a slideshow or to be shown as a web gallery.

Creating a Collection containing virtual copies rather than a reference to the master image allows you to make edits to the new version in the collection without affecting the master image.



To create a collection. Highlight and the images you want in the collection and then click the *plus* sign next to the *Collections* panel in the left hand side of the Library Module.

You will then have an option to create a normal or a smart collection. This Lightroom tip works with the normal collection so select *Create Collection ...* from the drop-down menu.

A dialogue will box open which will allow you to name the collection as well as to choose to add it to an existing collection set.



Choose *Include selected photos* and *Make new virtual copies*.

Lightroom will create a new Collection which contains only virtual copies. You can then work on these copies cropping them before printing, etc., without affecting the master image.

RELOCATE MISSING IMAGE FILES

Occasionally Lightroom will display a preview or thumbnail but will not be able to find the original image file in the Catalog. When this happens you will see an error message like the one shown on the image below:



In addition, the thumbnail of the image will have a rectangular icon with a question mark in the top right hand corner. This icon indicates that the original image cannot be found.

If you click on the missing image icon a dialog box will open which will allow you to locate the missing image file.



This is great for a single image, but will become tiresome if you have many missing image files.

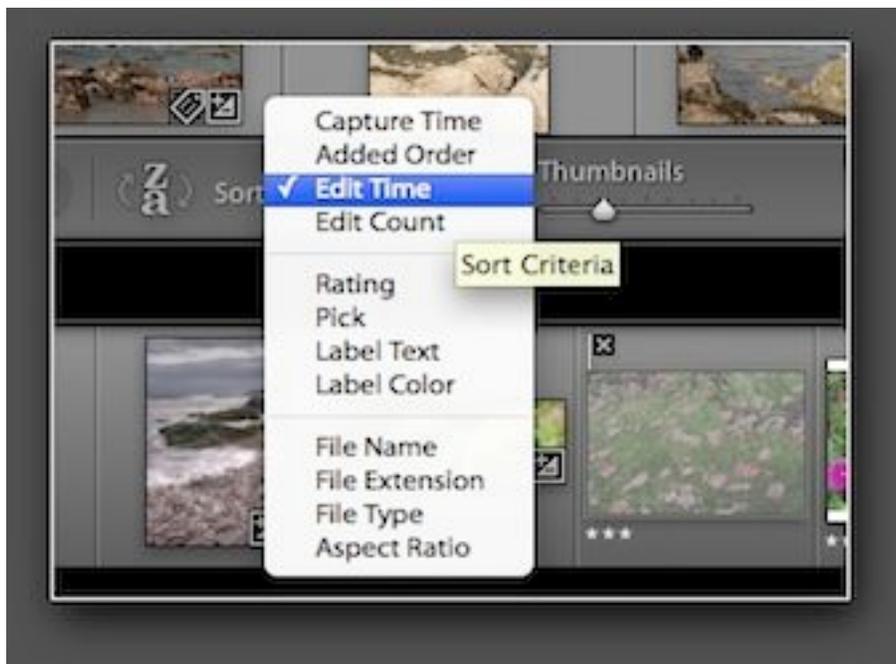
If this is the case you can synchronize any folder in the catalog in one operation.

See the [Image-Space Website Lightroom Tip](#) on how to [Synchronize Folders](#) for how to do this.

SORT IMAGES BY EDIT TIME

In the Library Module there is a very useful sort option called *Edit Time*.

Sorting the grid view by *Edit Time* will display the thumbnails in the grid view with the most recent ones at the top.



Lightroom Sort Options shown in Library Module Grid View

This is an easy way to select all the photos that have had any form of editing applied. Note that adding keywords counts as editing.

There is a second sort option: sort by *Edit Count*. This is not so useful as it orders the images according to how often an editing operation has been performed on the image.

KEY-WORDING PARTIALLY KEY-WORDED IMAGE SETS

There is a quick and easy way in Lightroom to ensure that you have applied the same keyword, or set of keywords, to a group of images.

An easy way to be sure that all the images are key-worded correctly is to look for the asterisk (*) symbol following a keyword in the keyword Tag window.



In the example above all the thumbnails have been selected and a summary of the keywords which have been used is shown in the bottom right Keyword Tags box.

Note that there is an asterisk (*) following all the keywords except the word Devon.

What this is telling us?

- The images have been tagged with Devon
- Keywords which are followed by an asterisk have been applied to only a selection of the images.

So how do you quickly apply the keywords to the whole selection?

Simple. Just select the asterisk for each keyword that you want to apply. Delete the asterisk and press *Return*. This will apply the keyword to the whole selection of images.

This is very useful in a situation when you want to mark a whole set of images as being shot at a specific location.

STACKS DUAL SCREEN WORKFLOW

Lightroom beta 2 has a Secondary Display mode, which as you would expect, allows you to use two displays. Note that Lightroom versions before 2.0 did not support dual displays.

I have been playing with the Secondary Display option and have found a really useful configuration for working with Lightroom image Stacks.

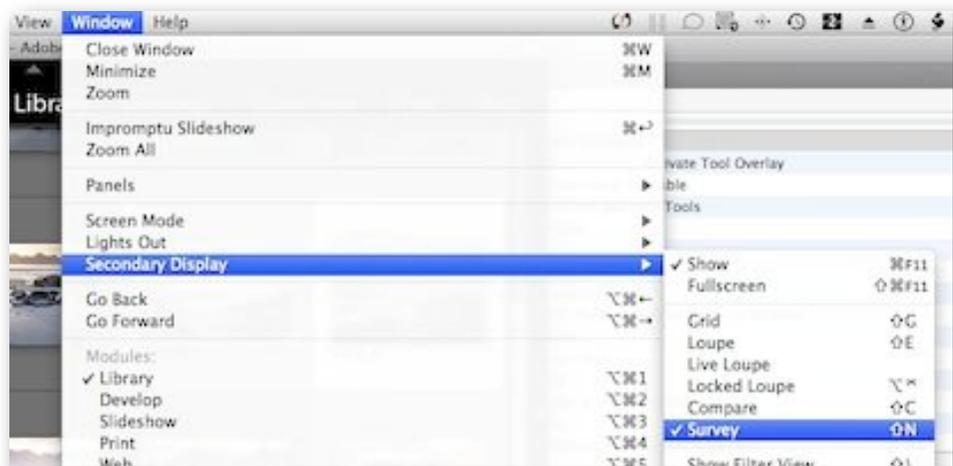
Open Lightroom in Library Module mode and bring up a screen full of thumbnails which includes some Stacks.



Lightroom Secondary Display Menu

Set the Secondary Display mode to Survey as shown below.

As long as you are in the Survey Mode you will get a secondary display window which shows all the images in the Stack. This is a fully working Survey window which you use as normal. i.e click the X in the bottom right to reject an image.





If you click on a Stack thumbnail you will get a single large version of the image which is at the top of the Stack.

Now, click the numbered Stack Icon in the top left of the thumbnail. All the images in the Stack will now be shown on the Secondary Display view.

This setup at last makes Stacks work well in Lightroom.

FIVE QUICK TIPS FOR NEW LIGHTROOM USERS

I have been asked the following questions many times. These short tips should be of use to new Lightroom users.

1. Where does Lightroom save my edited images?

Lightroom does not modify your original image files. The original image files do not change.

When you make a series of edits in Lightrooms' Develop or Library Modules, all that happens is a description of each of the individual edits that have been performed are stored in a separate linked file. The only time your edits will be applied is when you print or export the final image.

2. How do I get back to the Thumbnail View?

Press G at any time. The thumbnail view in the Library Module will appear.

3. I cannot find the Top Menu?



Press Shift and Tab

All of Lightrooms panels will appear. Including the top menu.

This is a really good one to learn.

Pressing just Tab will hide and show only the side panels.

4. Where are the missing photos that I know should be in my folders?

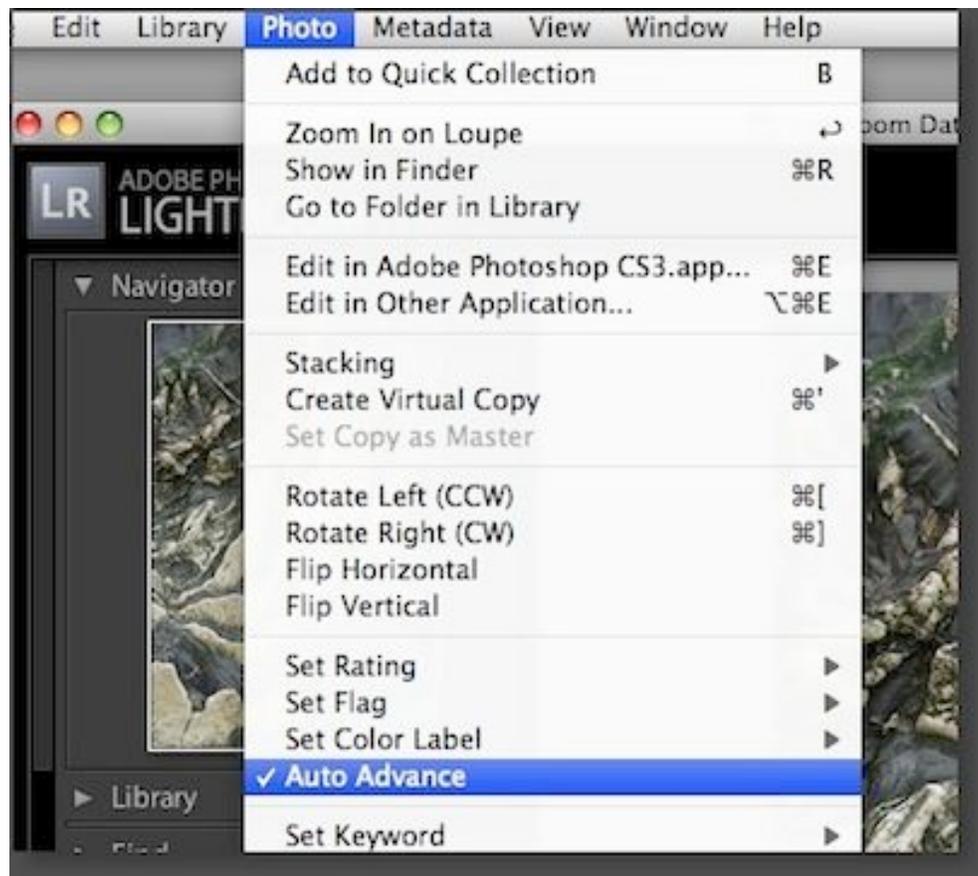
Turn on Include Items from Subfolders in the Library Modules Library Menu. You will then see thumbnails for the selected folder and all of it's subfolders.

5. I cannot see my Thumbnail Star Ratings. How do I get them back?

In the Library Module, press the J key. You will cycle through the thumbnail view modes.

SPEED UP RATING BY USING AUTO ADVANCE

If you want to speed up the rating and flagging process try turning on Auto Advance setting in the Photo menu.



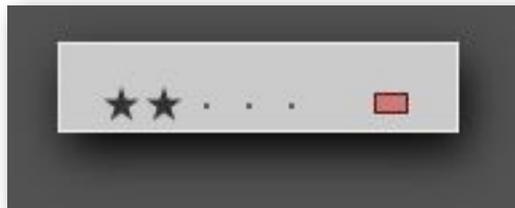
Now every time you rate, pick, unpick or set a flag the current image will be tagged as normal, but the filmstrip will auto advance by one image.

This works in both the Library and the Develop Modules. It also works even if the filmstrip is not visible.

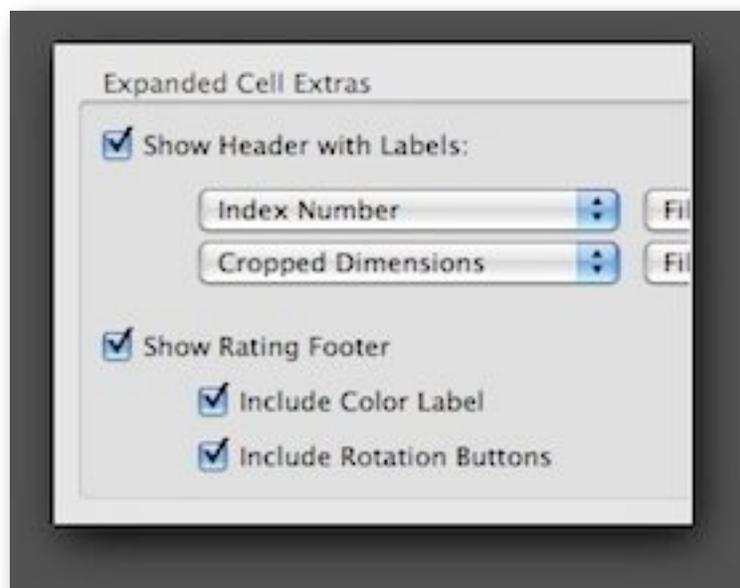
USING LIGHTROOM COLOR LABEL SETS

I would guess that most people do not use Color Labels.

They can be useful, as Lightroom allows you to edit and prepare custom color label sets. Color Labels allow you to add an extra level on information, say for flagging images to be printed, deleted or archived.



Make sure that the Color Labels are turned on for your thumbnails by checking *Show Rating Footer* check box in the *View / View Options* menu.



Select Show Rating in the Expanded Cell settings

Once selected you will see the square Color Label icon underneath the thumbnail. Note, you may have to cycle through the thumbnail modes using the J key to see them. Now click on the square icon. A pop up list appears which will allow you to quickly assign a color flag.

You can assign a color flag in a number of different ways. The quickest way is to use the numerical keys, 6 through 9, though for some reason, only the first four color labels have shortcut keys!



If you want to assign your own color labels you can do so using the menu item *Metadata / Color Label Set / Edit*. A dialogue box will open which allows you to define your own set of five labels. The default alternative ones are also worth playing with.

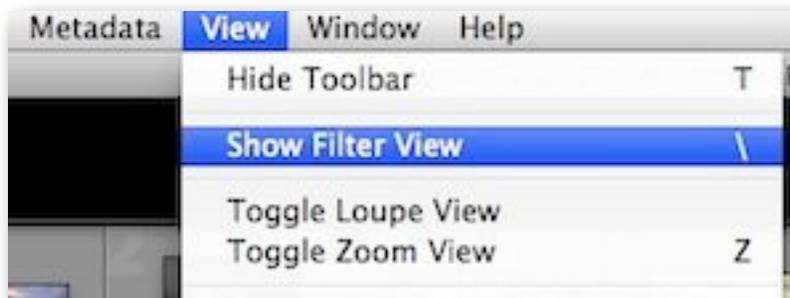
LIGHTROOM 2 NEW SEARCH AND FILTER TOOLS

Lightroom beta 2 brings considerable improvements to the task of filtering and image searching.

To bring up the Filter options from the Library Module select Show Filter View from Lightrooms' View menu or press the ' \ ' shortcut key.

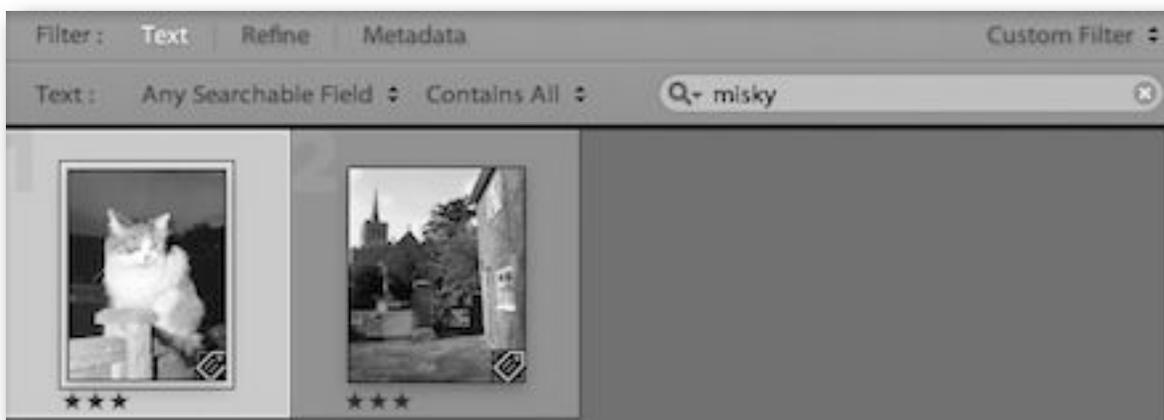
You will then see a resizable Filter selection menu. The results of any of the filters which follow will depend on what you have selected as your starting point in the Library Module side panels. i.e selecting All Photographs in the Catalog Panel will obviously allow you to filter on the whole catalog.

The basic operation is simple and easy to use.



There are three filter modes.

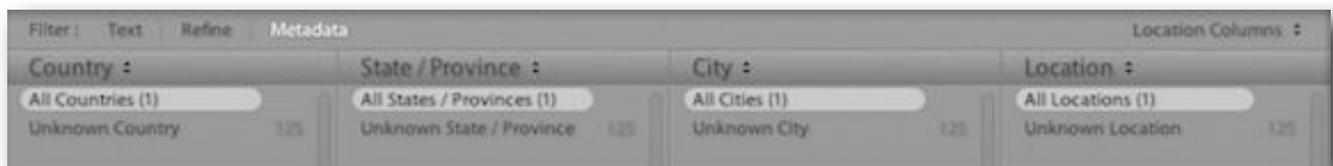
The first, Text, allows you to enter a text search term.



The second, Refine, will allow you to further target your search by using combinations of the familiar flag, star ratings, color flags, etc.



Finally Metadata, allows you to set a Metadata filter on any one of four displayed columns. Images are filtered according to your column heading choices. You can turn them all off, if you want, or select None to use less than the full four column filters. You can further target the metadata search by adding the text and refine options as above.

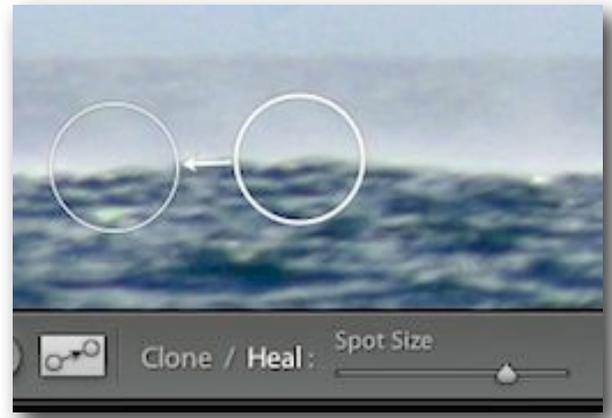
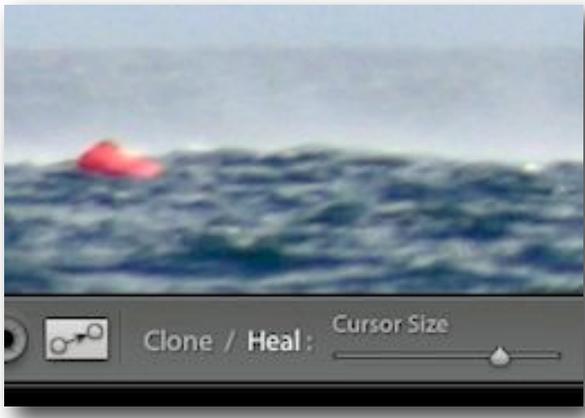


Simple to use and very powerful.

SWITCH BETWEEN CLONE AND HEAL TOOLS

When using Lightrooms' spot healing tools it is worth experimenting with both the Clone and the Heal tools to see which gives the best result.

As an example look at removing the red object in the portion of the sea in the image below.



The result with the Heal tool does a good job. Now lets right click within the source region. This will bring up a menu which will let you switch between the Heal and the Clone tools. Note you can also select either tool in the toolbar.

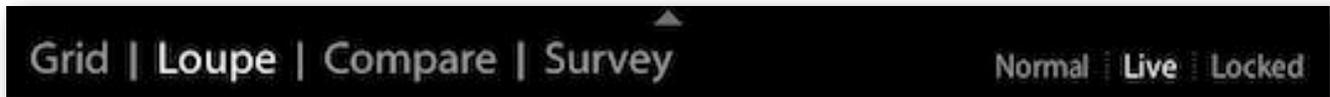


In this case the Clone tool has done a better job of matching the sea. The Heal tool produced distracting light areas. The Heal tool is usually selected as it samples the color and texture of the target area and attempts to blend in the results. The Clone tool just copies the pixels.

Try both methods rather than just rely on one.

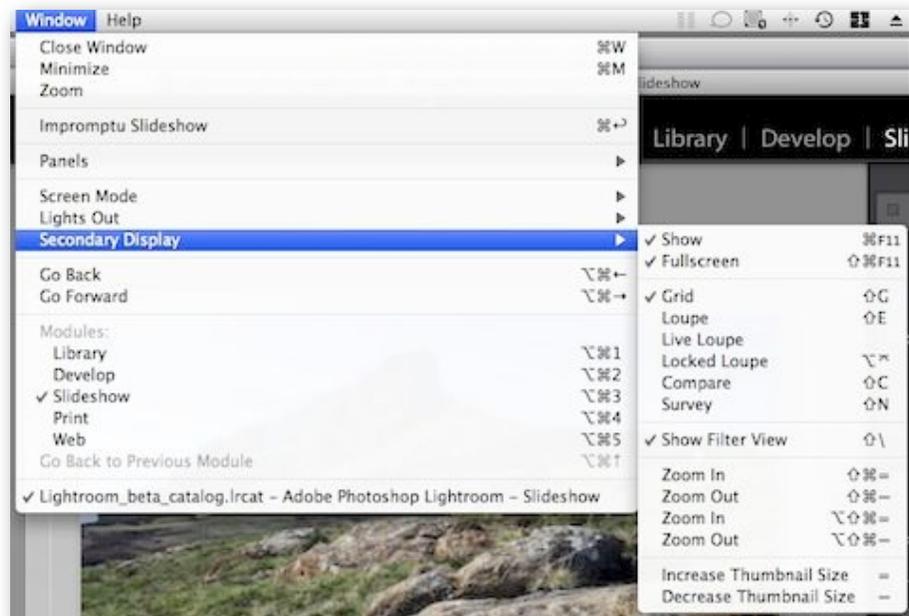
LIVE LOUPE MODE

The new Lightroom beta 2 has a long awaited Secondary Display option. A really useful way to use this is in Live Loupe mode. When you select Live Loupe you get the one shown below.



With Live Loupe as your selection, change to 1:1 mode. You will then see a magnified version of the main image which will update in real time as you move your cursor.

The magnification of the Live image can be changed by choosing a value from the bottom right of the secondary viewer window.



Lightroom Live Loupe Mode

Note that Live Mode works in the Library, Develop and Slideshow modules. It will also show the detail of the thumbnails in the film strip or the Library viewer; much like the loupe functionality of Apples' Aperture.

The Secondary Display option works in a windowed or full screen mode and you can have multiple windows open as well.

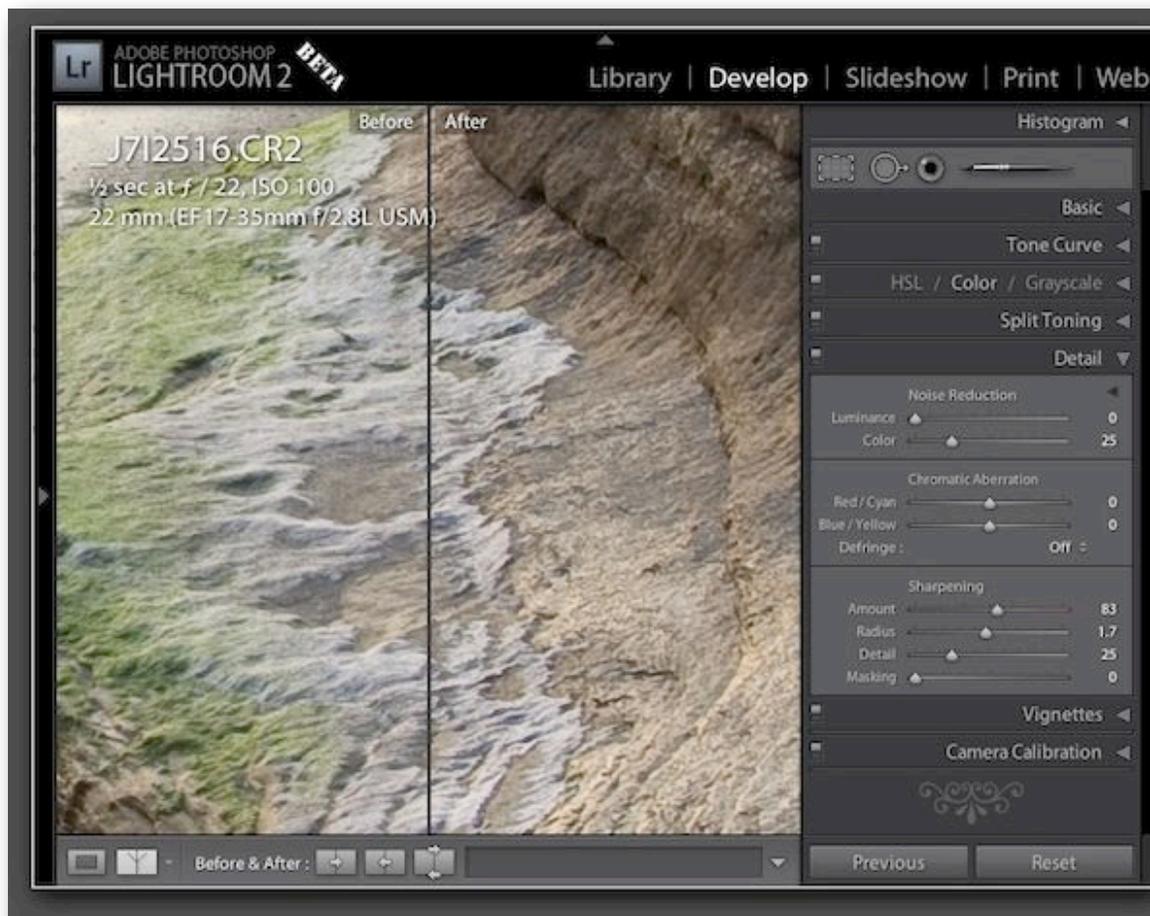
A good use of the Live mode is to quickly scan around an image whilst looking for dust spots. To be able to just move the cursor around the main image whilst viewing the live version at 1:1 allows you to quickly find any spots or areas that need to be corrected.

BEFORE & AFTER SHARPENING VIEW

When sharpening in Lightroom I now use a *Before & After* Develop view as my working space.

I find the vertical *Before & After* view works well as it allows a large viewing window and you can see at once the effect of your sharpening settings.

Normally when sharpening in Lightroom you are looking at a single, full size, view of the sharpened image and toggling the preview back a forth. This way you get to compare the result in real time.



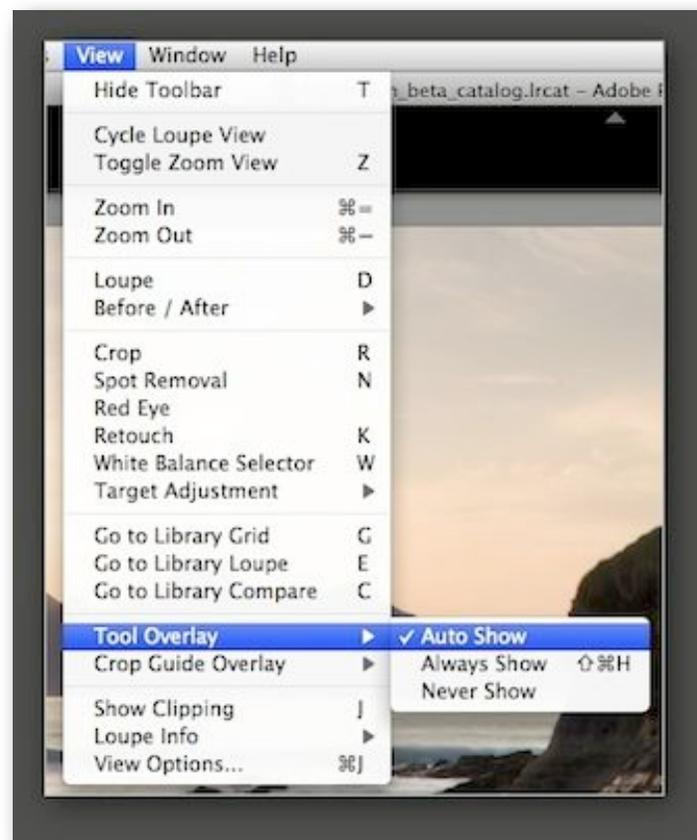
I try to sharpen across an area of the image which falls across the middle of the display. In the example above the curving white rock allows me to easily see the amount of sharpening that has been applied.

SELECTIVE CORRECTION USING THE TOOL OVERLAY

Lightroom 2.0 has an excellent Selective Correction brush tool. This allows very precise corrections to be made.

I recently had a problem using this tool in that I could not see the effect of the edits or where they had been made. It turned out that I had accidentally turned off the Tool Overlay!

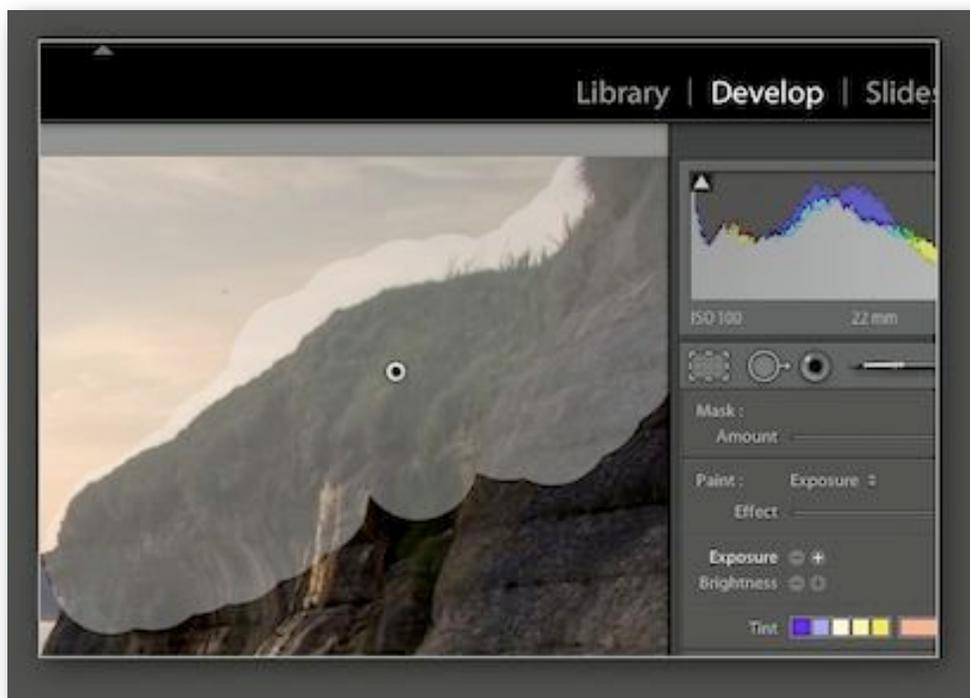
Turn the Tool Overlay back on using the View menu.



You can select *Auto Show*, *Always Show*, or as I had *Never Show*. I find *Auto Show* to be the most useful as the edit points will be hidden when the cursor is moved away from the image area.



The pin makers show where your edits have taken place. If you now hover your cursor over one of the edit pins the area that has been affected by the correction brush will be shown outlined in white. See below.



Finally, to remove an edit, position your cursor over the pin mark and press the delete key. The edit will be removed along with an animated effect.

COLOR PICKER BACKGROUND SAMPLING

I have found the new Color Picker tool in Lightroom 2 very frustrating.

Whilst using the Lightroom 2 I managed only to choose colors that were within the Color Picker palette. Try as I might I could not select a color from my image.

At last I have found out how to select a background color.



Lightroom Color Picker Tool

It is quite simple. Click anywhere in the Color Picker palette whilst keeping the left mouse button held down. Now move the eyedropper tool anywhere over the image. You can move the eyedropper to your Desktop and select colors from any open application. Note the picture above does not show the eyedropper as my screen capture program does not show the cursor!

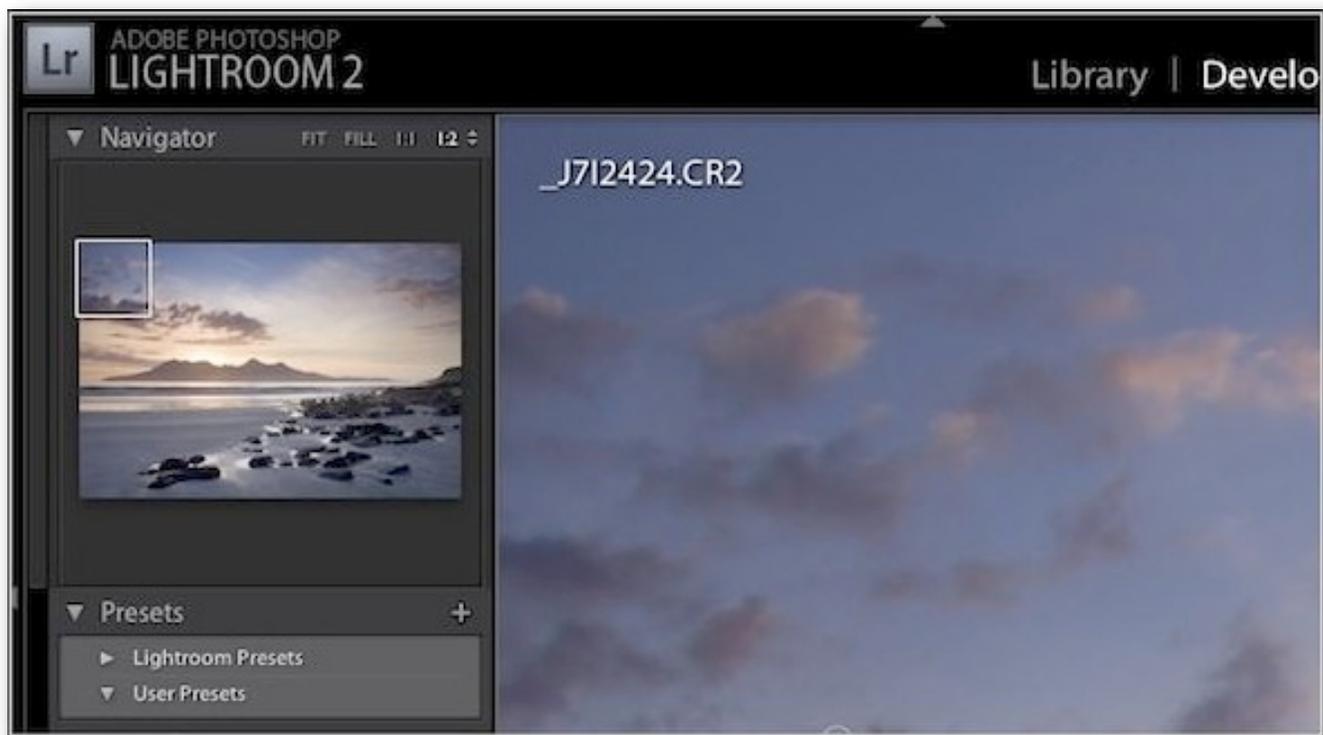
The above method of background color sampling will work anywhere in Lightroom 2 that the Color Picker tool appears. As well as in the Develop Module, it also works in the Print, Web and Slideshow Modules.

PAGED DUST SPOTTING

When using the Spot or Clone tools to remove dust spots you often want to make sure you cover the whole of the image. Even if you are just spotting the sky it is good to examine and correct all of it.



In Lightroom 2 you can use the Page Down and Page Up keys to methodically move around the whole of the image.



Top left hand of the image selected to start the spotting

Here is how I do it:

- Open the Navigator viewer and choose your magnification level. Above I have chosen 1:2
- Now position the magnified area at the top left of the screen
- Use Page Down to step down the screen in chunks
- When you reach the bottom of the first column the Navigator viewport will jump to the top of the second column

Spot as you go and keep paging down to cover the whole image.

KEEP THE ADJUSTMENT MASK ACTIVE

The default way the Adjustment Brush works in Lightroom 2 is to show the adjustment mask only when you hover over one of the edit pins, the circle with the black dot in the picture below. When you move the cursor off the pin the mask disappears.

Selecting the O key will keep the mask displayed all the time. Keeping the mask displayed allows you to make sure you have covered the area that you want to be corrected.



Lightroom Web Module output settings

You can change the color of the mask by pressing *Shift O*. You can then cycle through red, green and white mask colors.

Having the mask displayed all the time is useful if you want to erase areas of the adjustment.

Hold down the Alt key with the adjustment tool selected and the erase mode will be made active. The cursor shows a minus sign to show you are in erase mode. You can then erase any areas of the mask as required.

NEW WAYS TO WORK WITH PHOTOSHOP

Lightroom 2 has four new ways of working with Photoshop. You can now send individual or multiple files to Photoshop for specific editing tasks.

The options available are found in the Library or Develop Module under the Photo / Edit In menu.



Lightroom Edit-In menu

You can now:

- Open an image as a Smart Object in Photoshop
- Merge multiple images into a Panorama
- Merge multiple images to HDR
- Open multiple images as Layers in Photoshop.

Opening an image as a Smart Object allows you perform initial edits in Lightroom and then be able to access Camera RAW in Photoshop to make further RAW adjustments. Note that Lightroom will not automatically add the final Photoshop image back into the library when it is saved.

Merge to Panorama and *Merge to HDR* are much the same as found in Adobe Bridge. Multiple images are sent to a Photoshop action which in turn allows you to modify the Merge or HDR settings before generating the final image.

Opening multiple images as Photoshop layers for exposure blending, or just to make cool effects, becomes very quick and easy.

Good timesavers for Lightroom users who want to do further processing in Photoshop.

RECOVER CORRUPT LIGHTROOM CATALOG

I recently had a Lightroom catalog problem when I found that many my images were all messed up. I feared that many damaged thumbnails meant that my files could be damaged. Scary!

No problem. Just return to recent backup you say. Well, yes, but I had pruned my backups, and my last two backups had the same problem.

I tried relaunching and optimizing in Lightroom but it did not fix the problem either.

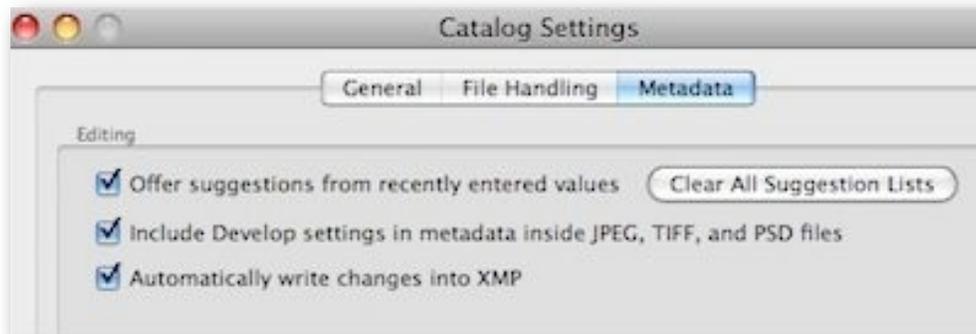
So how did I get out of this mess?

First I made sure that I could not use any of my backups. Then tried resynchronizing the top level folder; that did not work either.

I now created a new empty Catalog and then imported my folder structure using the File menu item Import Photos from Disk.

I expected to have to re-rate and reedit hundreds of images. I did not have to!

The reason being that I had retained my previous ratings and edits was because I had selected Automatically write changes to XMP in my catalog settings.



Automatically write changes option in Catalog Settings

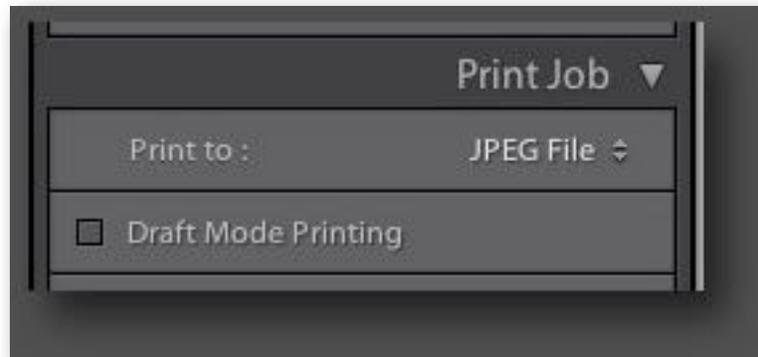
The primary purpose of Auto writing XMP changes is to keep in sync other XMP compatible software such as Bridge. However, it also writes all the rating and editing information as well into the XMP file. So when my import was completed I was in good shape.

The only data I have lost are my Collections. Keywords and keyword tagged images are fine. All my Develop Module edits are intact. Collections are not hard to re-create.

So make sure you turn on that XMP setting as well as keep backing up.

PRINT TO A JPEG FILE DIRECTLY FROM THE PRINT MODULE

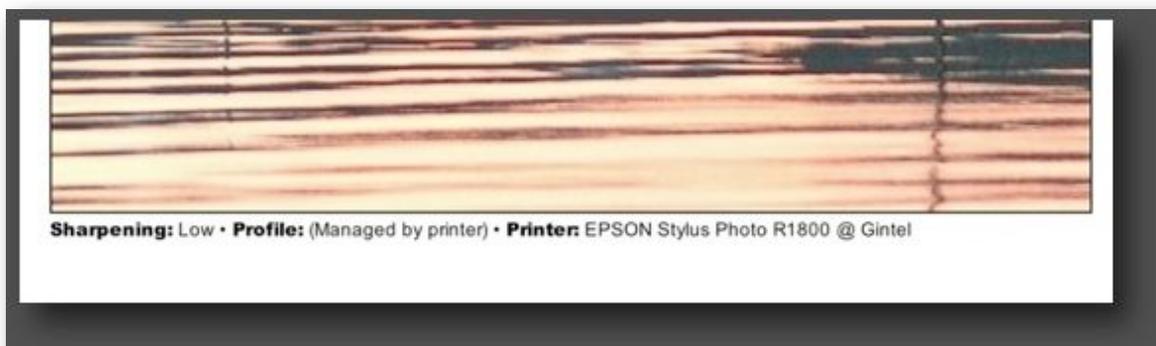
The new Lightroom 2 has many useful new features. Here is one I am excited about.



The ability to print to a JPEG file directly from the Print Module.

This new feature allows you to add identity plates, star ratings and other text decorations. It is then possible to save your print session as a composite JPEG file which includes all the additions you have made to the image.

This is good, but what is really powerful is that you can also select *Photo Info* from the Overlays panel and print out a version which includes details of your print settings - Including sharpening.

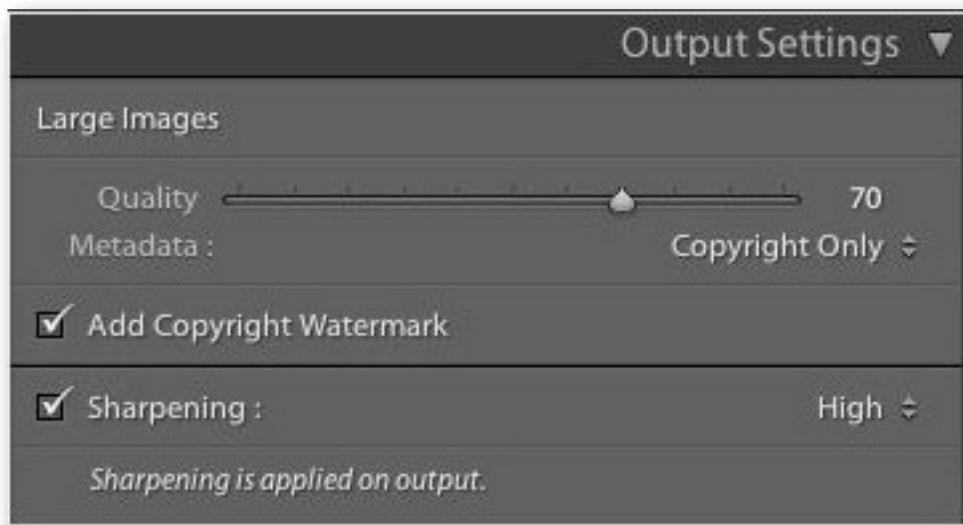


The above shows how the saved JPEG image has been stamped with the print session details.

SHARPENING WEB GALLERY IMAGES

Lightroom 2 has a new Output Sharpening option available in the Output Settings of the Web Gallery Module.

Previous versions of Lightroom did not perform sharpening on export leaving you to do your own sharpening outside of Lightroom.



Lightroom Web Module output settings

There are three sharpening settings: *High*, *Medium* and *Low*. I would suggest *High* for web gallery work.

Note that you will not see the sharpened effect in lightroom. You must view the exported web gallery in your web browser after trying the different sharpening settings to determine which is right for your images. I have recently re-exported a few of my older Lightroom 1 web galleries and will be using Lightroom 2 for my web sharpening from now on.

Note that the above applies to the Web Galleries in Lightroom 2 supplied by Adobe. Third party galleries may not have the Output Sharpening option.

FIX LIGHTROOM MEMORY CARD AUTO START

Lightroom should automatically launch and display the contents of memory card or other connected device such as a camera.

You can find that this no longer happens. If you are having to force Lightroom to read your media cards rather than them open automatically the read on.

To restore the auto launch behavior just do the following:

On a Mac

Run the application Image Capture.

Select Preferences and under the Camera setting set Lightroom as the default application to open when a new USB connection is established.



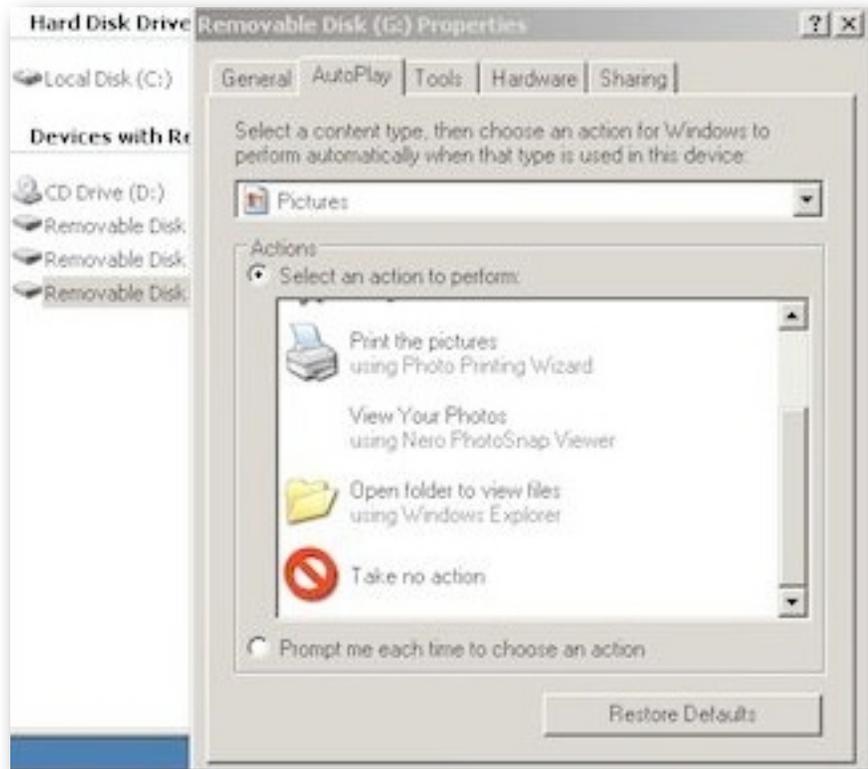
Image Capture preferences showing Lightroom selected

Make sure the Show import dialog when a memory card is detected box is checked under the Import tab in Lightrooms' Preferences.

On a PC

Under Windows XP select the Removable Drive icon which corresponds to your memory card whilst in My Computer. Then right click and choose Properties.

Select the AutoPlay tab, choose Pictures from the drop down menu and then click the Restore Defaults button.



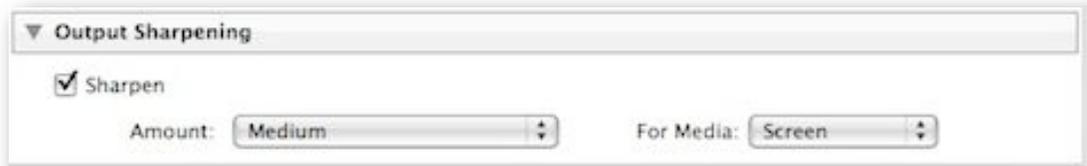
Windows XP AutoPlay dialog box

Now when you insert the memory card, Lightroom will Auto Run. You must also have the Show import dialog when a memory card is detected box checked under the Lightrooms' Preferences for this to work.

LIGHTROOM 2 - NEW EXPORT FEATURES

Lightroom has many new features in the Export dialog box.

The new export capability has an option for *Output Sharpening* as well as a many changes to the previously available export options. Output Sharpening allows you to select the amount to apply, as well as the target for the sharpening. Matt or glossy paper as well as for screen use.

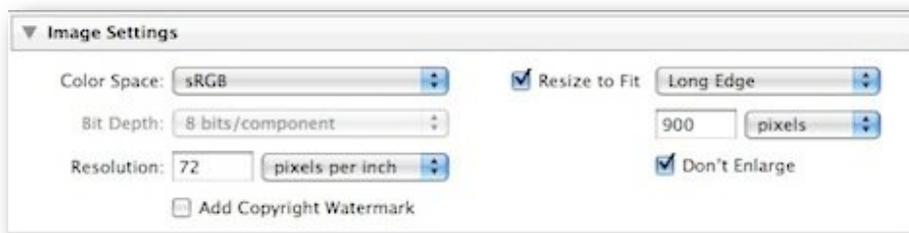


Lightrooms' Output Sharpening settings

Export Location has a new *Add the Exported Photo to the Lightroom Catalog* which is great if you want to automatically have your exported images appear back in the catalog along with all the export options applied. It just saves time. You can also choose to stack them with the originals.



Image Settings has a new *Add Copyright Watermark* as well as allowing you to select the bit depth and color space of the exported Image.



The post processing section has a new *Open in Another Application* after export and allows you to select the application which will then open the exported images.

Much has changed. What I like best are the targeted Output sharpening and the ability to automate adding the exported images back into the catalog.

Overall a significant improvement.

MOUSE CONTROLLED SETTINGS

The mouse-wheel can be used in Lightroom to make very small and controlled edits.

Just move, and hover, the cursor over a text value you want to finely adjust. The cursor will change into an up pointing hand with an arrow on either side.



You then click and hold the left mouse button. Now keep holding the mouse button down and move the mouse slowly left and right.

The value in the box you have selected will change as you move. You will see the effect of the change in the main image editing window.

This works on most of Lightrooms' controls, including the Histogram and the Tone Curve. When used with the Targeted Adjustment Tool this trick becomes really powerful.

I find this method of fine tuning very useful and often use it instead of the sliders.

RELOCATE THE LIGHTROOM CATALOG

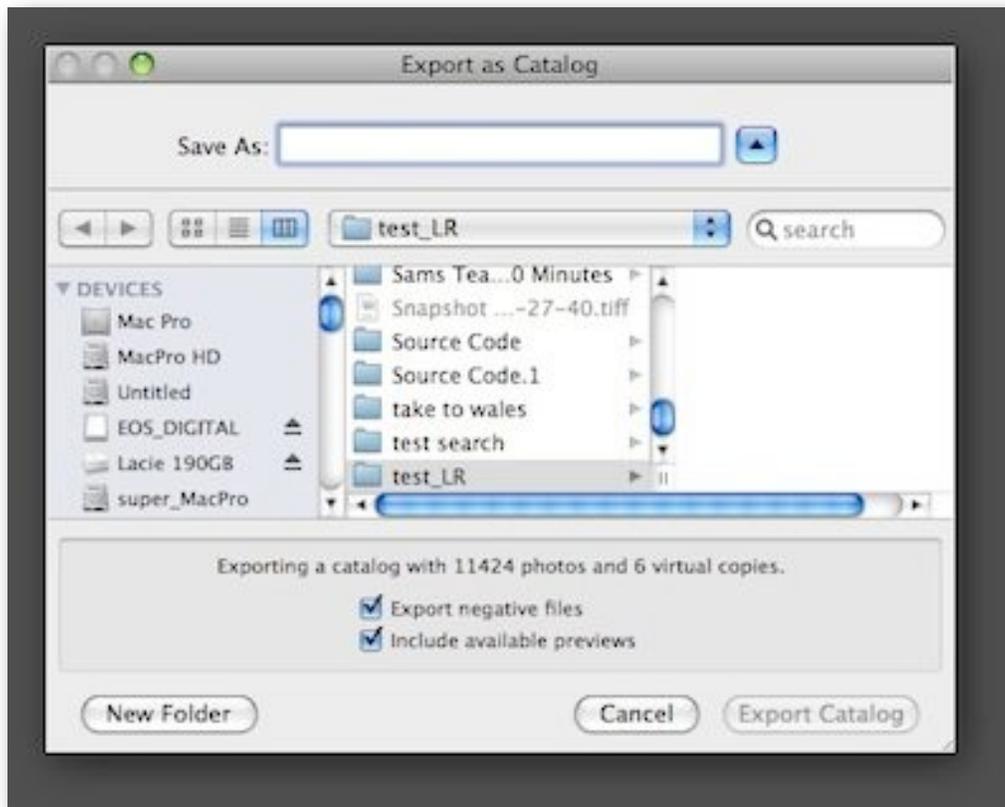
I often get asked 'How do I move my Lightroom catalog from one disk to another and keep all of my ratings, edits and keywords'.

An easy way in Lightroom is as follows:

- Open your original Lightroom catalog on the old disk
- Change to the Library Module Grid View
- Make sure you Include Photos from Subfolders which is selected in the Library menu
- Then Select All from the Edit menu to highlight all the thumbnails in the catalog
- Now choose Export as a Catalog from the File menu.



In the dialog box that appears (shown below), select Include available previews and Export Negative Files.



Now set the destination to the Lightroom Pictures folder on your new drive. Finally, open the newly exported catalog on the new drive in Lightroom.

Note you can also use this method for importing a new catalog which could be from your Laptop whilst out shooting, to your main Catalog on your home machine.

SHARPENING IN LIGHTROOM

How Lightroom displays sharpened images

A new user to Lightroom will probably notice that images look soft and unsharpened when displayed at anything other than one hundred percent. The reason being that Lightroom only shows the effect of sharpening on an image when viewed at full size. This is in contrast with a program such as Photoshop which will provide an approximation of the sharpened image. I would guess the Lightroom designers decided not to provide a compromised sharpening view.

To see the effects of sharpening on your image you have to export outside of Lightroom and then view in your final application in a printed form.

Sharpening Modes

Lightroom performs sharpening in a number of different places:

- Capture sharpening in the Develop Module
- Export sharpening; always available from the Export menu
- Print sharpening in the Print Module
- Web sharpening of exported web galleries

Capture Sharpening

You apply capture sharpening in Lightroom using the Detail section of the Develop Module. All digital camera RAW images will require some sharpening when taken straight from sensor.

Lightrooms' sharpening controls now include a small view port which shows you a portion of the image at 100%. The small square icon in the top left-hand corner when selected will allow you to move your mouse cursor over the image and select the point which will be viewed at 1:1.

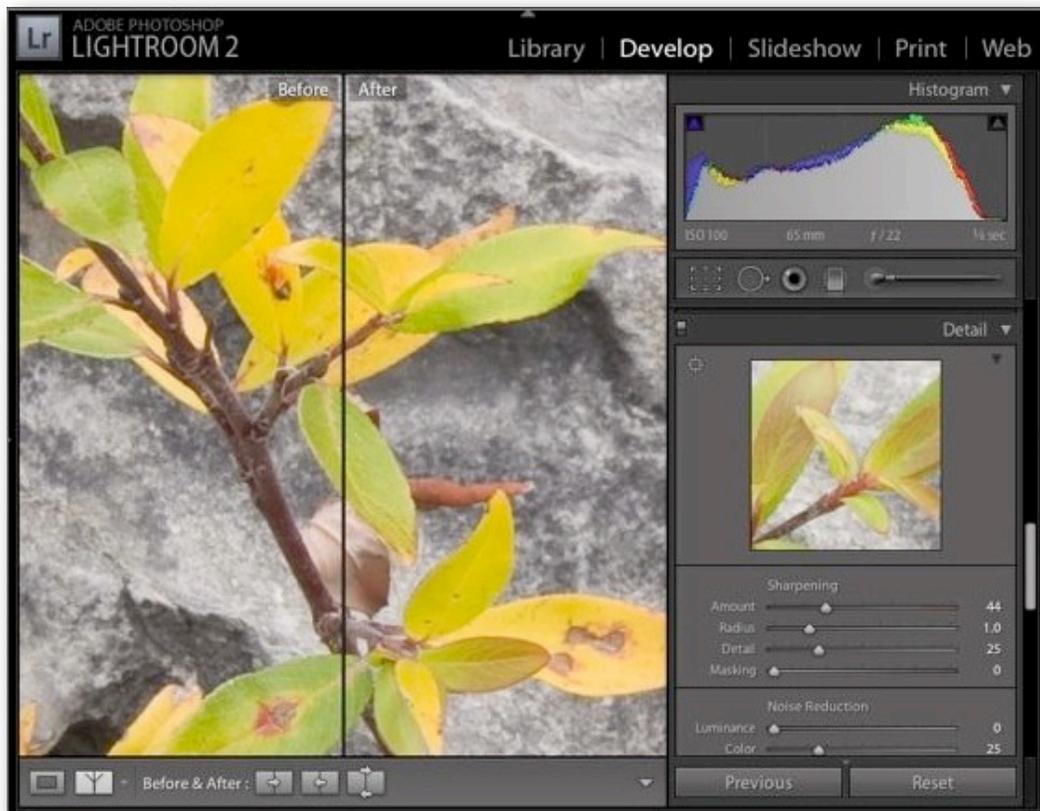


The Amount Slider

The Amount Slider sharpens using Luminance data only. If you hold down the alt key you get a threshold view. Using this view it is easier to judge the sharpening effect. The view is a grayscale and is somewhat easier than looking a colour view. Make sure your image looks good when viewed at 100%.



A good Lightroom setup is to zoom the image to 1:1, maximize the viewing window and use the before and after view (Y key) as shown below.



Lightroom Sharpening Workspace

Avoid over sharpening here. I find that between 40 and 50 is a good starting point.

The Radius Slider

This works in a similar way to the Unsharp Mask filter in Photoshop. It sets how far outside of the edge in pixels the sharpening affects. A setting of about 1 is fine. Season to taste!

The Detail Slider

The Detail slider can be used to reduce the halos that form as the sharpening is increased. You should try to avoid visible halos at 1:1. Use the alt key trick again to if needed but you will see the halos better in a colour view.

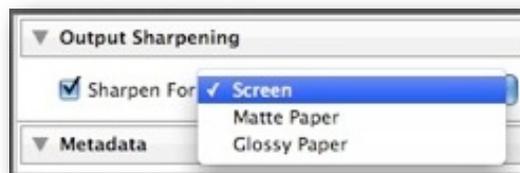
The Mask Slider

The Masking slider will allow you to target the sharpening to edges of the image. This is a really powerful tool as it will stop the sharpening being applied to the solid blocks of colour and target the edges. Use the alt view here again.

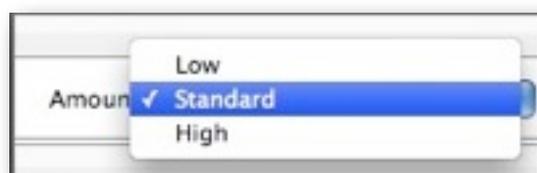
So this is Capture sharpening. What about the Export and Print sharpening?

Export Sharpening

The Export dialogue box allows you to specify the target for output sharpening. You can now set this for screen (web) or for Matte or Glossy paper.



You also have the option to set the level of sharpening from low, standard or high. In most cases standard should be the choice here.



Print and Web Sharpening

You will see similar sharpening options in both the Web and the Print Modules. In the Print Module the sharpening is found under the Print Job section on the right hand side. In the Web Module it is found under Output Settings.

Links to related Lightroom Sharpening Tips

[The Visual Sharpening Mask](#)

[Before | After Sharpening](#)

MULTIPLE IMAGE DUST SPOT REMOVAL

Lightroom has useful clone tool which can be used to remove dust spots caused by small particles on the camera sensor. This can be time consuming if you have many images to clean up.

You can use Lightrooms Copy function in the Develop Module to semi-automate the removal of sensor dust spots from multiple images. Note this works best with similar images such as those taken for blended or HDR exposures. It is better to use shots with similar proportions of sky and mid or foreground.

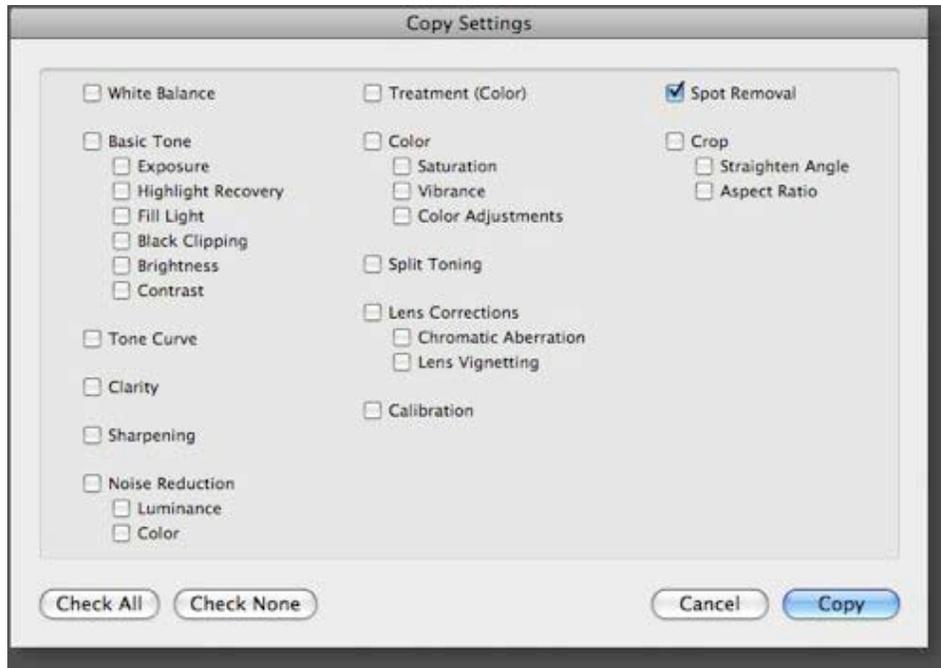
Here is what you do

Select the images you want to clean up. Ideally group them together in a stack as you will want to move between each one in turn using the left or right arrow key.



The example above is one of a number of images which have a large amount of sky and have a series dust spots in the same place which I have cloned out; shown by the circles.

Once you have finished cloning click on the Copy button, in the lower left hand side, and the dialog below will open.



Copy setting dialog box

Applying Corrections to Multiple Images

- ☑ Select just Spot Removal as shown and close the dialog box by clicking *Copy*.
- ☑ Then move to the next photo using the left or right arrow.
- ☑ Finally click the *Paste* button and the same clone edits will be applied to the new image.

This trick works because the sensor dust spots are in the same position on each image.

You have to be a bit careful in case a portion of the foreground is unintentionally corrected.

LIGHTROOM WHITE BALANCE USING A GRAY CARD

Correct white balance is important in digital shooting and most cameras will do a good job when set on Auto White Balance. You are however at the mercy of the camera electronics.

My approach is to leave the camera set on Auto White Balance (AWB), then shoot in RAW mode and choose the white balance later in the RAW converter: Lightroom, CS3 or whatever tool you prefer.

This is fine but when accurate color work is required it pays to have a more precise method of determining the white balance.



Gray Card

Keep a small gray card in your bag. Take a shot of the gray card during the shoot. You can either fill the whole frame or just lay the card in the shot.

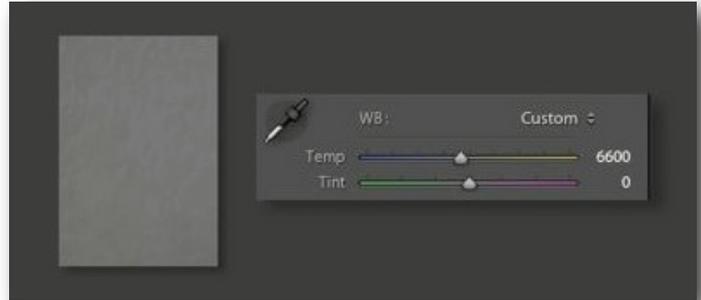


I took the three images above on a beach in flat light. The blue color of the first image looks wrong as the rock was a black slate. The third image is of my gray card and again looks bluish.

Using the eye dropper

Next I select the white balance, eye dropper, tool and click on the gray card image. You can see immediately, assuming your monitor is profiled, that the image now has a much better gray color.

Now note the white balance values, Temperature and Tint, and apply them to the image that you want to correct. In Lightroom this can be easily done in a number of ways. The way I prefer is to create a *Develop Preset* of the corrected Gray card white balance.



You then note the white balance values, temperature and tint, and apply them to the image that you want to correct. In Lightroom this can be easily done in a number of ways but the way I prefer is to create a Develop Preset based on the Gray Cards' corrected white balance.

This is how I do it in Lightroom

In the Develop module I save the white balance settings for the gray card image as a Preset.

- Click on the little plus sign to the right of Presets.
- Then choose *Copy Settings* from the main Lightroom *Settings* menu.
- Uncheck all the settings except for white balance.
- Select only the white balance and then save as a Develop preset.
- Save your user preset with a meaningful name.

The advantage of saving the Gray Card white balance setting as a preset is that you can use it on any image you like in your library.

The images left, after Gray card correction, are much more pleasing to my eye!

