

Peachpit will be publishing The Adobe Photoshop Lightroom Book by Martin Evening. Martin has been working with Lightroom from the beginning, providing feedback to Lightroom's development well before the public beta and monitoring the product's development. The Adobe Photoshop Lightroom Book describes Lightroom's features in detail and with photographers in mind. The book is aimed at photographers at all levels: amateurs as well as professionals and will offer a comprehensive guide to everything you need to know about the program. Photographers who routinely work with raw images will find Lightroom—and The Adobe Photoshop Lightroom Book—an indispensable tool in their digital darkroom.

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Introducing Adobe Photoshop Lightroom

Welcome to Adobe Photoshop Lightroom, an image processing and image asset management program that is designed to meet the needs of digital photographers everywhere. This book will help explain all the main tools that are in Lightroom and provide inspiration and advice on how to get the most out of this new program, as well as offering tips on how to setup up your computer and how to get the best results from your digital camera files.

The Lightroom program has been designed from the ground up to provide today's digital photographers with the tools they most need. This is reflected in the way Lightroom separates the various tasks into separate modules, is able to process large numbers of images at once and will let you archive and retrieve them quickly. But before we get into too much detail, let me begin by explaining a little about the basic concept of Lightroom before moving on to an overview of all the main features and how you might go about using these in a typical digital photography workflow.

What is Lightroom?

Lightroom is essentially a high quality image processor and image database management system rolled into one, with a modern interface and fast image processing capabilities. The guiding light behind Lightroom's development is chief architect, Mark Hamburg, who up until recently had been the chief scientist working on Adobe Photoshop. For the past few years Mark and the rest of the team at Adobe have been looking closely at how photographers work digitally and the problems they face when processing and managing large numbers of digital images. Lightroom is the result of this research. Lightroom is not so much a single, monolithic application, but should be viewed more as a suite of application modules which combine to provide an ideal workflow for digital photographers.

Keeping things simple

One of the early aims of the Lightroom project was to remove complexity. Right from the start, the founding principle of Lightroom was to provide 'unreasonable simplicity'. Lightroom's tools are therefore designed to streamline the image management and editing process and to make the user experience as smooth and simple as possible. The program aims to provide photographers with the tools they most need and do away with the need for complicated workarounds. You will find that for the most part, that Lightroom has managed to do this and does not have complex preference dialogs, or demand that you do anything special to optimize the program settings before you can get started. For example, there are no color management settings dialogs to configure, since the color management in Lightroom is carried out automatically without requiring too much thinking from the user. On the whole, I think Adobe have been successful here, but as the program has evolved, these principles have sometimes been compromised with the introduction of more and more options and new features.

Modular design

Lightroom has the advantage of being created from scratch and this has allowed the engineers to build upon their experience and knowledge of how Photoshop works to produce a brand new program that is purpose-built for modern day image processing requirements. The Lightroom program is comprised of individual, self-contained modules built around a core that contains an advanced image processing

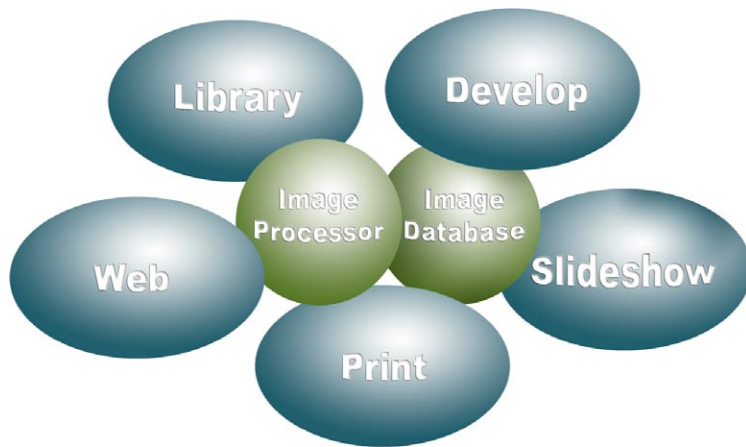


Figure 1.1 *Lightroom is engineered using a modular architecture system. At the heart of Lightroom are its image processor and image database engines. Lightroom is designed so that all individual modules are able to tap into these two core components of the application. This is what gives Lightroom its speed and adaptability.*

engine and image database engine. Each module can be thought of as offering an individual set of functions and in Lightroom 1.0 you will see five separate modules: Library, Develop, Slideshow, Print and Web. This modular approach will make it easier in future to add more new features as well as being easier to maintain. So for example, if at some point it is decided that Lightroom needs to have an image warping module, the Lightroom engineers will be able to design new self-contained module that perform specific, new tasks. From an engineering point of view this enables Lightroom to run more efficiently because each module can have direct access to the central engines at the core of the program. And if there are flaws or bugs in any particular module, these will only show up in the functionality of the module itself – they will not compromise or affect the performance of any of the other modules. One of the reasons why Adobe Photoshop rose to such prominence as an image editing application, was because of the way Adobe openly encouraged third-party companies to create their own filter plug-ins for Photoshop. Lightroom will continue that tradition by providing third party companies with the information they need to create their own modules. It is too soon to tell if this will result in lots of new third party modules for Lightroom, but rest assured that as new modules are added, Lightroom will never risk becoming bloated. Theoretically, it should in the future be quite easy to turn off or remove the modules you don't need.

NOTE

There are a number of filter-like features in Photoshop, such as Liquify and Vanishing Point that have to be implemented via a separate modal dialog. The downside of this approach is that the modal plug-ins do not have access to the central Photoshop image engine to carry out the image processing work. They are like applications that have to work within the Photoshop application and this explains why most modal plug-ins can feel quite sluggish compared to when you are working directly in the main Photoshop program. Lightroom's modular architecture will mean that as new features are added they will all have equal access to the image processing and data management engines in Lightroom.

NOTE

The following shortcuts can be used when switching between individual modules (these are the Mac shortcuts. PC users should use **Ctrl** **Alt** plus the number).

⌘ Alt –1 will select Library

⌘ Alt –2 will select Develop

⌘ Alt –3 will select Slideshow

⌘ Alt –4 will select Print

⌘ Alt –5 will select Web

⌘ Alt **↑** will go back to the previous module.

In addition **G** will select the Library module in Grid mode, **E** will select the Library module in Loupe mode. **D** will select the Develop module.

NOTE

There is certainly no shortage of 'experts' who love to argue that the raw processor program they use produces superior results compared to everything else. I am not going to argue or deny the quality and potential of other raw processing programs, such as Capture One from Phase One and the proprietary software that is bundled with certain digital cameras. Who am I to try to dissuade people of their heart-felt opinions if they are satisfied with the results they are getting? But Adobe Camera Raw does have some unique features not found elsewhere in other raw converter programs. More importantly, the Camera Raw image processing as implemented in Lightroom benefits from a more streamlined workflow.

Lightroom performance

So long as the computer you are using exceeds the minimum requirements that are set out on page 9, you will have all that's needed to get started, although Lightroom performance will be relative to the size of your image captures. The basic specifications may be fine for 5-6 megapixel camera captures, but if you are shooting with an 11-16 megapixel camera you will definitely want to use a modern, dual core processor computer with a minimum of 1.5 GB RAM in order to get the best performance out of the program. With the right computer configuration you can quickly navigate a collection of images, zoom in and out and apply image adjustments with ease. Image library searches are fast and the Lightroom interface is designed to make it easy to update the metadata and narrow down your search selections within the content area. Wherever possible, Lightroom utilizes the cached image data used to generate the previews. Because of this you will find it takes no time at all to generate a slideshow or a Web photo gallery. And when you are in the Print module it will only takes a few seconds to generate the print file to print out a set of contact sheets in draft mode. This is because Lightroom is able to print directly from the high quality image previews, instead of having to re-render each separate image from a master file.

Adobe Camera Raw processing

If you are accustomed to using the Adobe Camera Raw plug-in via the Bridge/Photoshop dialog, then some of the controls in the Develop module will already be familiar. This is because Lightroom shares the same Adobe Camera Raw (ACR) processing engine that is used in Photoshop and Bridge. The Adobe Camera Raw processing engine was originally developed by Thomas Knoll, who with his brother John Knoll, created the original Photoshop program. The Adobe Camera Raw plug-in has since evolved to become one of the best raw processing tools in the market, supporting over 150 different proprietary raw file formats, including most notably the full Canon range of digital SLRs. And Thomas has now been joined by Zalman Stern and Michael Jonsson (formerly of Pixmantec) who have both made a significant contribution with their work on Camera Raw. Michael incidentally, was also the main engineer who worked on the Capture One raw processing application, before going on to create the highly successful Raw Shooter program. Evidence of this collaboration can be seen in the addition of new raw editing features such as the Recovery and Fill Light sliders.

Color controls

The Develop image adjustment controls are easy to access and hitting **D**, will always take you directly to the Develop module. Lightroom is mainly intended for working with raw images, but the image adjustment controls in the Develop module can also be applied to TIFF, PSD or JPEG images that are in RGB, Grayscale or Lab mode (but note that Lightroom image adjustments are always carried out in RGB). The Basic and Tone Curve panels provide intuitive controls with which you can easily adjust the white balance and tones in any photograph. And the Grayscale Mixer offers an adaptable approach to black and white conversions whereby you can adjust the balance of color information that is used to create a monochrome version of a color original. As you dig deeper you will discover that the split tone controls can work well on color images as well as black and white converted pictures and with a little experimentation you can easily produce quite dramatic cross-processed type effects. The Develop module controls also provide a greater range of controls over the colors and tones in your photographs. For example, when you adjust the luminance of a color in the HSL/Color/Grayscale panel, the sliders behave exactly the way you would expect them to, so you can easily darken colors selectively. For example, if you want to darken the color of a sky, you simply adjust the Blues and Aqua Luminance sliders.

It is worth pointing out that all the Develop adjustments in Lightroom are non-destructive and are recorded as edit instructions that are stored with the image. And a single raw master file can be edited in many ways and printed at different sizes without having to make lots of different pixel image versions from the original. Any image edits and ratings you make in Lightroom will also be recognized in a current version of Bridge and Photoshop. The same is true of labels and metadata. Any metadata information that is added to an image via another program that can be recognized by Lightroom will be preserved and updated in Lightroom. So for example, if you add keywords and assign a colored label to an image in Bridge, these changes will be transferred across to Lightroom and updated in the Lightroom library. Although, this does raise the question of which setting is the correct one when a single image has been modified in two separate programs. In this situation, Lightroom will inform you of any conflicts and let you decide (see side note on updating settings in Lightroom).

NOTE

An Adobe Camera Raw adjustment made in one Adobe program will always preview identically in any other Adobe program. If an image is altered outside Lightroom a warning exclamation mark will alert you and let you decide whether to stick with the current image setting or update with the new one that was applied outside Lightroom.

NOTE

We are already seeing smarter ways to search a computer archive, such as the Spotlight feature on the Macintosh system, which bypasses the need to navigate by folders when you are searching for a specific file.

The Lightroom workflow

You will notice how the modules and controls are all presented in a logical order, from the import stage through to managing the images in the Library module, processing them in the Develop module and finally exporting files to an output folder. Or, you can output images via the Slideshow, Print or Web modules.

Managing the image library

Lightroom has been designed to offer a flexible workflow for all types of photographers that meets their different requirements. When you work with Lightroom you begin by explicitly choosing which images you would like to see added to the Lightroom library and from there the way Lightroom manages those images is actually not that much different from working with any other type of browser program. Most browser programs are like a glorified finder and are mainly useful for inspecting the contents on a computer and allowing you to see everything that is on a drive or in a specific folder. The main difference with Lightroom is that you always strictly control which images are imported into the library. Images are either imported from a camera card (or directly from the camera) by copying them to a folder. Or, you simply import images by referencing the folder they are in already. Once images have been imported into Lightroom, any changes you make to the folder or file names, file deletions or moving of files, these actions are all mirrored at the system level. Working with the Folders panel in Lightroom is therefore not too dissimilar to working with a hierarchical folder list tree view in a browser program. Except in Lightroom the list tree in the Folders panel reveals just the images you requested to be in the library and nothing else.

Of course, hierarchical folder management is fine if you know which folders your images are kept in. But when you start working with many thousands of pictures you will soon find it is no longer practical to rely on a folder hierarchy as the main means of navigation. Lightroom can store all your images in neat folders, but its real power as an image asset manager comes when you use the Find, Collections, Keyword Tags and Metadata Browser panels to search for images in the library. And if you get into the habit of entering descriptive information each time you import a batch of images, this too will enable you to search your archive more easily and more quickly by using different criteria to search the archive.

Where does Photoshop fit in?

For many years now, Photoshop has pretty much dominated the pixel image editing market and the program has constantly adapted to meet the varying demands of lots of different types of Photoshop customers, from graphic designers to illustrators to special effects artists working in the motion picture industry. Now although Photoshop is a really powerful image editing program with a wide range of tools to suit everyone's requirements, Photoshop has also become increasingly more complex. When the two Knoll brothers, Thomas and John first created Photoshop, they could hardly have predicted then what Photoshop users in the future would be doing with their program, much less predict the technological demands that would be made upon Photoshop with digital capture. Photoshop started out as a program for editing single images in real time and the legacy of this basic Photoshop architecture has led to various compromises having to be made as the number of features in Photoshop have expanded.

Many Photoshop authors love to write about what they describe as 'simple Photoshop techniques', but then proceed to take up eight pages with step-by-step instructions (before anyone gets too upset, I confess that I have been just as guilty as anyone else when it comes to writing about Photoshop)! And then there are all those bits of advice that appear to contradict themselves, such as 'don't use Convert to Grayscale to convert a color image to black and white,' or 'don't use the Brightness and Contrast dialog to adjust the brightness and contrast'. But sometimes it is almost impossible to avoid going into such detail, because to write any less would only cause more confusion. Plus some features, such as the aforementioned Brightness and Contrast command have been in Photoshop for so long that it would be unwise to remove them now. Lightroom is unencumbered by such legacy issues. You don't have to follow complex workarounds to achieve the best results and the controls in Lightroom do exactly what you would expect them to.

Lightroom also has the advantage of being built from the ground up and this has allowed the engineers to design a program that is more adaptable and can grow more easily in the future. Take for example, image adjustments. If you apply consecutive image adjustments in Photoshop, you progressively degrade the image. Lightroom on the other hand allows you to make as many adjustments and changes as you like, but only applies these as a single adjustment at the point where you export the image as a fixed pixel TIFF, PSD or JPEG image.

NOTE

Once you start bringing images into Lightroom you won't necessarily find yourself locked into working exclusively in Lightroom, the way you are with some other programs. Lightroom is flexible enough to allow you to work simultaneously with Bridge or other image browser programs.

The Adobe Camera Raw plug-in used by both Bridge and Photoshop does provide the same level of flexibility, but only up until the point where you render a raw file as a pixel image to be edited in Photoshop. Lightroom on the other hand, will allow you to preserve an image in its raw state throughout. And you can make prints at any size you like without having to fix the image data as a pixel image.

Integrating Lightroom with Photoshop

At this early stage it is too soon to judge if Lightroom will ever become a complete replacement for Photoshop, but I do believe that Lightroom can currently be used to perform many of the tasks that up until now were once carried out exclusively in Bridge and Photoshop. Lightroom is perfect as a front-end application for importing new images into the computer and renaming them. From there you have all the controls you need for carrying out image edit selections, grouping and renaming them, plus making basic and advanced develop setting adjustments. The speediness of program will allow you to quickly print draft mode contact sheets, run a slideshow presentation or generate a complete web gallery and upload it to your server.

Photoshop is still important for major image retouching and performing other essential production tasks such as CMYK color conversions. Although of course, this may all change in the future. I have found that one way to integrate Lightroom with Photoshop is to use Lightroom to manage all the importing, image selections and initial image adjustments. When I am ready to retouch the master images, I export these in one go using the Export command. From there on I will usually work on the images in Photoshop and Bridge. Once I have completed doing all the retouching and editing in Photoshop, I import the derivative, master files into the Lightroom library using the import by reference method (rather than copying them into the library). This allows me to use Lightroom to maintain a library archive of all the raws and masters and keep the raw and derivative files on separate drives and back each drive up separately. And for printing, I much prefer the Lightroom Print module interface for making the final print outputs.

What you'll need

Lightroom is designed specifically for photographers working with digital photos, so above all you will need a camera of course! Lightroom can process JPEG, TIFF or Raw images, but if your camera is capable of capturing raw images, I advise you shoot in raw mode wherever possible. Lightroom supports over 150 different raw camera formats.

You will require a computer that meets the minimal specifications listed at the bottom of this page. Although it is possible to run Lightroom on a three year old laptop computer with just 1 GB of RAM memory, you will notice a substantial improvement in performance with a more up to date computer. Lightroom will certainly benefit from having as much RAM memory as possible and I therefore recommend you have, if possible, at least 1.5 GB of RAM installed on your computer. Although you don't need much hard disk space on your computer to install and run Lightroom, you will need to give serious consideration to how you are going to store all your image archive files. Some people can easily shoot 5 GB worth of images (or more) in a single day. And if you export some of those files as rendered TIFFs or PSDs, you can see how your storage requirements might grow quite considerably in a short space of time. In Chapter two I will be making suggestions about what type of storage systems you should use.

Macintosh

G4, G5 or Intel Macintosh processor running at 1 GHz or higher

Mac OS X 10.4.3 or later

768 MB of RAM (1 GB recommended)

1 GB or more of hard disk space

Color monitor display with 1024 x 768 resolution or greater

Windows

Intel Pentium 4 (or compatible) processor

Windows XP professional or Home edition with Service Pack 2 (SP2)

768 MB of RAM (1 GB recommended)

1 GB or more of hard disk space

Color monitor display with 1024 x 768 resolution or greater

TIP

To see if the raw files from the camera you shoot with is supported in Lightroom, go to the Adobe Photoshop product page website: www.adobe.com/products/photoshop.

We are also now seeing a few cameras that are capable of capturing raw images using the DNG format and because DNG is a self-contained raw format, it is the ideal format to use when exporting images with the raw data preserved within the file.

NOTE

Lightroom's performance will always be relative to the size of your master image files. The minimum specifications outlined here may suffice if you are only editing raw or JPEG files from a 5 or 6 megapixel camera. If you wish to process files larger than this you almost certainly need a faster computer with a lot more RAM memory.

Introducing the Lightroom interface

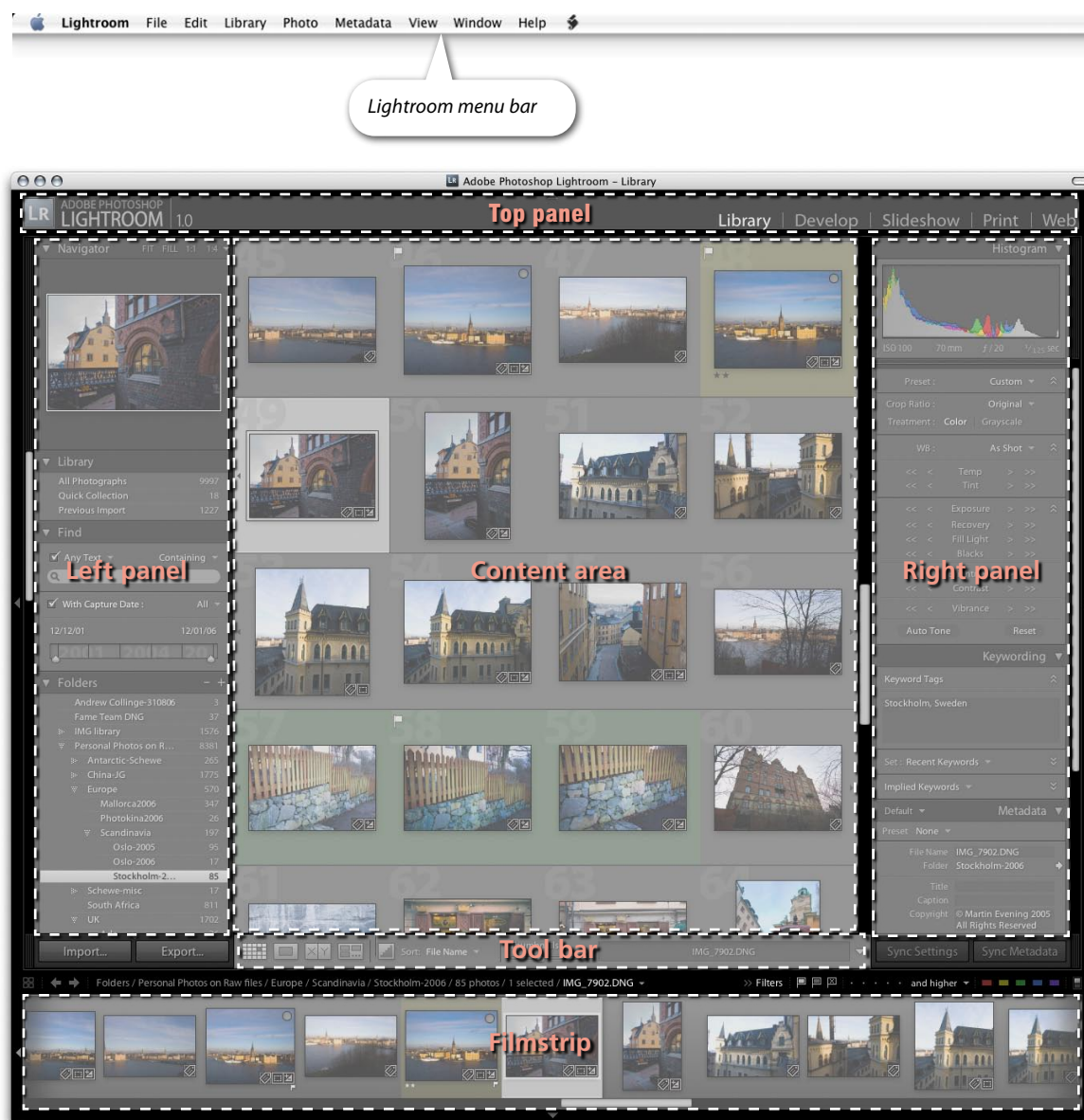


Figure 1.2 The Lightroom interface.

Lightroom interface components

Lightroom menu bar

As with any application, the main menu commands are located in the Lightroom menu bar at the top of the screen. If you are in absolute full screen mode the menu bar will be hidden, but can be revealed by simply rolling the mouse to the top of the screen.

Top panel

The top panel section in Lightroom contains the module picker, which allows you to switch between the different Lightroom modules. The Library module is where you preview and manage your shoot collections. Develop is for processing images. Slideshow enables you to output image collections as on-screen presentations. The Print module is for outputting images to print. And the Web module allows you to generate websites from Lightroom. The top left section contains an Identity plate that you can customize via the Lightroom ⇨ Identity Plate Setup... menu. For example, you can replace the Adobe Photoshop Lightroom logo with your own name or add a company logo graphic instead.

Content area

This is the main portion of the interface where you will work with the images that have been imported into Lightroom. In the Library module Grid mode (as shown on the left) you will see the images displayed as thumbnails in a cell grid layout. In the Library module Loupe mode or Develop module, you will see images displayed at a fit-to-view or 1:1 scale size. In other modules such as Print and Slideshow, you can get to see previews of how images or screen pages will look when they are output from Lightroom.

Tool bar

The tool bar is common to all Lightroom modules and contains various tool options.

Right panel

The right-hand panel will mostly contain the controls for adjusting an image, the information about an image, or image layout settings. In the Library module you can apply Quick Develop settings and synchronize these across multiple images. The Develop module will let you make more advanced image adjustments, while in the Slideshow and Print modules, the right-hand panel will feature all the controls governing the layout and output. The Panel options can be expanded or collapsed by clicking on the Panel bar. [Alt]–clicking on a panel bar will toggle expanding to show the contents of that panel only and expanding to show all panels. You can also use the [⌘] key (Mac), [Ctrl] key (PC) in combination with a keypad number (1,2,3 etc.) to toggle opening and closing the individual panels in the order they are listed from the top downwards.

Left panel

The left-hand panel is mainly used for managing images and preset settings. In the Develop, Slideshow and Print modules, it is used for storing and quickly accessing saved preset settings. So for example, if you are working in the Develop module, you can save custom Develop settings as presets, where they can be readily applied to other images. In the Library module the left panel takes precedence as the main panel for managing folders, collections and keywords plus image filtering and searches.

Filmstrip

The Filmstrip is located at the bottom of the screen and contains thumbnails of all the images currently displayed in the Library, highlighting any that are selected. The Filmstrip thumbnails can be accessed via all the other modules, therefore allow you access to individual images or sub-selections of images, without having to switch back to the Library module.

NOTE

Make sure that you read the ReadMe file and download and install the latest Flash update. You will need this to preview Flash galleries generated from the Web module.

Installing Lightroom

The Lightroom installation process is quick and easy. All you need to do is to load the installation CD disk and start installing Lightroom. **Figure 1.3** shows the Macintosh installation dialog. Simply drag the Lightroom icon across to the Applications icon in the window and the installation process will almost be complete. **Figure 1.4** shows the first dialog in the PC installation process. Keep clicking on the Next button and follow the installation instructions until the final dialog says 'Finish'.

The first time you launch Lightroom you will need to read and click to agree with the terms and conditions of supply. Once you have done that, whether you are on a Mac or PC, the installation process should be fairly swift and straight forward. If you are installing Lightroom and



Figure 1.3 The Lightroom Mac installation dialog.

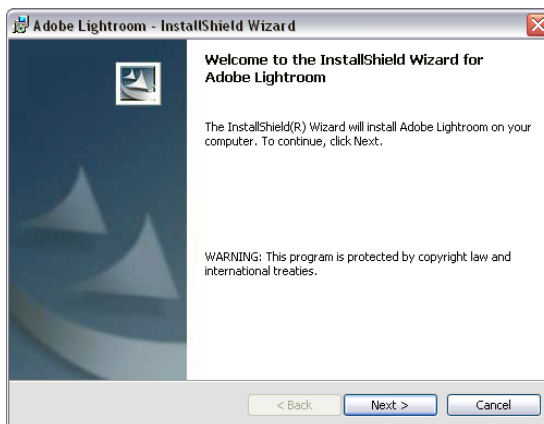


Figure 1.4 The Lightroom PC installation dialog.

updating an existing database, you may be asked at this stage if you would like Lightroom to run a verification process to test the integrity of your current database.

After you have successfully launched the program, you will want to visit the Lightroom preferences in the Lightroom system menu. In the General preferences, go to the **Default Library** section and choose a location for the default library file. This decides where the Lightroom folder containing the Lightroom database, metadata and preview library files will be kept. The default setting will point to the Users Pictures folder on the main hard disk. If you want the Lightroom Library folder to be somewhere else such as on a dedicated external drive, now would be a good time to choose a new folder location. You can choose to have multiple library files and you will notice there is a Choose button that will allow you to switch Libraries via this preference panel (see tip sidebar on choosing a library file during startup). But to start with I suggest you work with just the one Lightroom library. Another important inclusion here is the **Automatic back up library** option. Set this to however often you would like to back up the master library file. In **Figure 1.5** below I have shown the Back up library dialog which will appear every time you need reminding about what to do and where to save the back up library to.

TIP

If you run out of hard disk space you can move the Lightroom Library folder to a new, bigger hard drive. Open the Lightroom Preferences and use the General Preferences to locate the new folder location. You can also select a new Library folder location by holding down the **(Alt)** key (Mac), **(Control)** key (PC) during startup. This will pop a navigation dialog, that will then allow you to set the location for the Library folder.

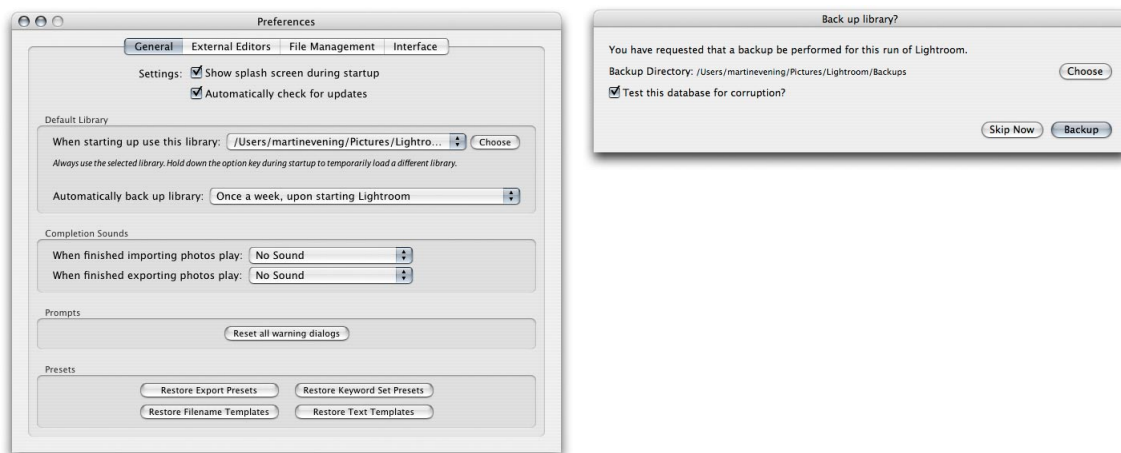


Figure 1.5 In the Lightroom General preferences you have checkable options to display the splash screen during startup and automatically check for program updates. In the Library preferences you can set up an automatic library file backup routine. Below that are the completion sound alert options. You will often see warning dialogs with a 'Don't show again' check box at the bottom of the dialog. If you click the 'Reset all warning dialogs' button here, you can restore all the warning alerts. And at the bottom are various reset buttons that can be used to restore Lightroom settings such as 'all warning dialogs' and 'naming token presets'.

NOTE

The File format options include the native Photoshop, PSD file format or TIFF. The color space can be ProPhoto RGB (which is fairly close to the chromaticities of the native Lightroom work space) or Adobe RGB (which many photographers like using in Photoshop), or sRGB (which is ideal for Web-based output only). The bit depth can be 16 bits, which will preserve the most amount of levels information, but double the output file size, or 8 bits, which is a more standard bit depth, but won't necessarily preserve all the levels information that is obtainable from your master library images.

NOTE

If you select the option to write changes to the XMP sidecar files, this will allow other programs, like Bridge, to read any metadata added in Lightroom such as the image Develop settings image ratings and keywords.

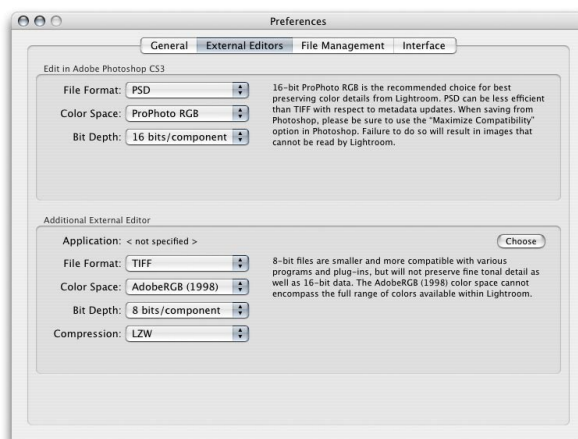


Figure 1.6 In the Lightroom External Editors preferences you can customize the pixel image editing settings for Photoshop plus one other external, pixel editing program (such as Photoshop Elements or PaintShop Pro). These are the file format, color space and bit depth settings that are used whenever you ask Lightroom to create an Edit copy of a library image to work on in an external pixel editing program.

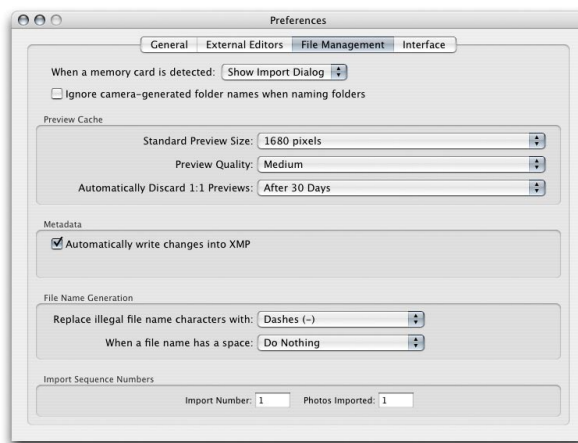
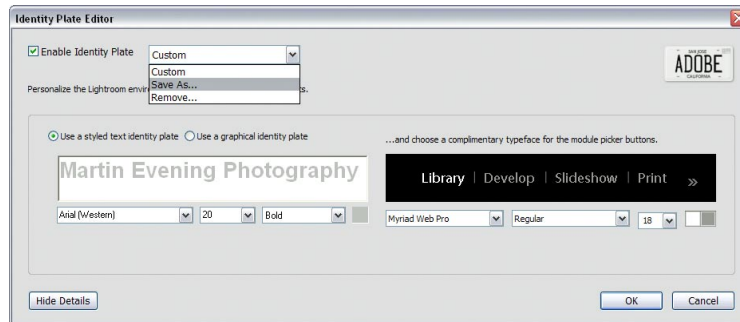


Figure 1.7 In the Lightroom File Management preferences I suggest you set the When a memory card is detected settings to: Show Import dialog. This will force the Import dialog to appear automatically whenever you insert a camera card into the computer. In the Preview Cache section you can set the preview pixel dimensions to whatever would be most ideal for your display size. The preview cache can take up a lot of hard disk space and the size of the cache will be dependent on the default standard preview size and preview quality. Plus, the preview cache will keep growing as you add more pictures to the Lightroom library. The preview cache will also include 1:1 previews and these, being higher resolution previews, take up even more disk space, so there is a preference to discard these after a certain amount of time has elapsed. If you check the 'Automatically write changes to XMP sidecar files' option, this will allow you to synchronize Lightroom settings when exporting files to another computer running Lightroom.

A quickstart guide to Lightroom

Let's get started with a quick overview of how to use Lightroom, beginning with a look at how to customize the interface, followed by an overview of a typical Lightroom workflow.

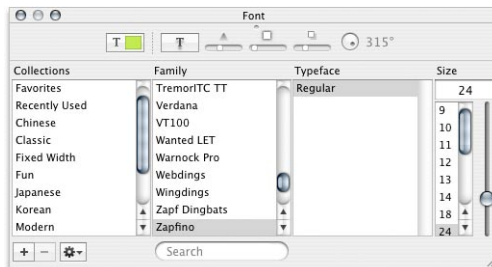
Identity plate options



NOTE

The identity plate can also be utilized by the Slideshow, Print and Web modules and if the Use a styled text identity plate option is selected, the identity plate lettering will print at any size output or resolution selected in the Print module.

1. The top panel in the Lightroom interface contains the Lightroom Identity Plate and module selectors. If you go to the Lightroom menu and select Identity Plate Editor... you will see the dialog shown here. This will allow you to enable the identity plate, which will then appear in the top left section of the Lightroom interface, replacing the normal Adobe Lightroom logo.



2. The standard identity plate will use a text style identity plate that shows the name registered as the computer administrator displayed using a default system font. If you click on the **Font Panel...** button (Mac), this will open a Font dialog that will allow you to choose a different font type and font size. Note that If you are using the PC Identity Plate Editor, you are able to edit the font characteristics within the Identity Plate Editor dialog itself.

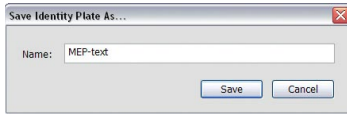
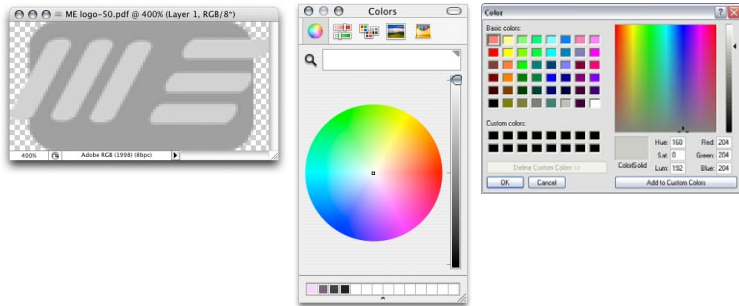
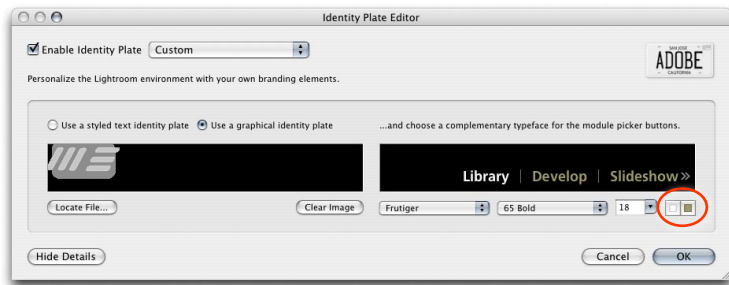


Figure 1.8 Once you have configured a custom identity plate, remember to mouse down on the Custom menu and choose Save As... to save these settings as a saved template design.



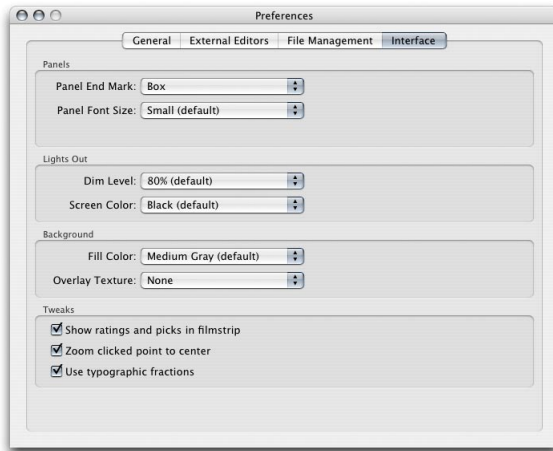
NOTE

PSD files can only be added via the Identity Plate Editor using the Macintosh version of Lightroom 1.0.

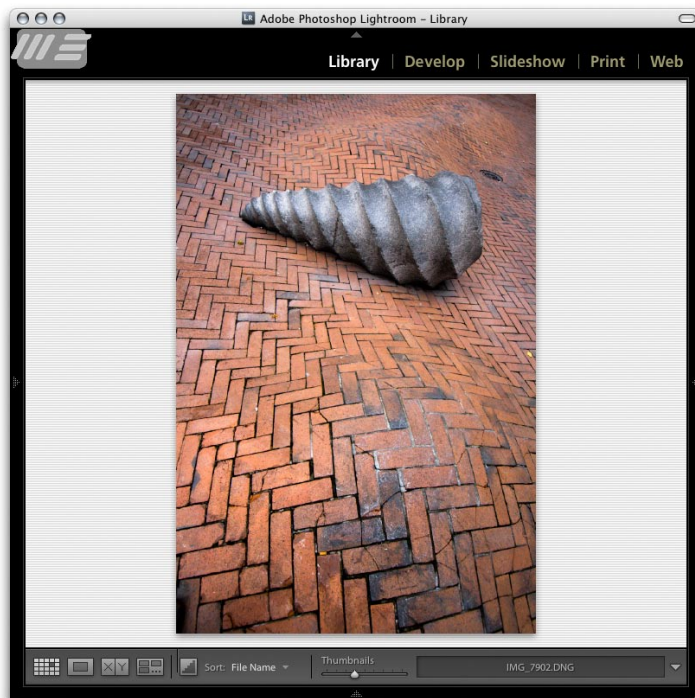
3. If you select the **Use a graphical identity plate** option, you can add an image logo by pasting or dragging a PDF, JPEG, GIF, PNG, TIFF or PSD image into the identity plate area. The logo image you place here cannot be more than 60 pixels tall, but can contain transparent pixels. A graphical identity plate can usefully be added to Slideshow and Web module templates, but be warned that the a 60 pixel tall logo may be far too small for most print layout template designs that use an identity plate (unless you are printing the identity plate really small on the page). You can also customize the appearance of the module selector names by mousing down on the Font menus to select a new font and font size. And if you click on the two little color swatch icons (circled), you can change the font colors as well.



4. Now let's take a look at how the top panel looks after customizing both the identity plate and Lightroom module selectors.

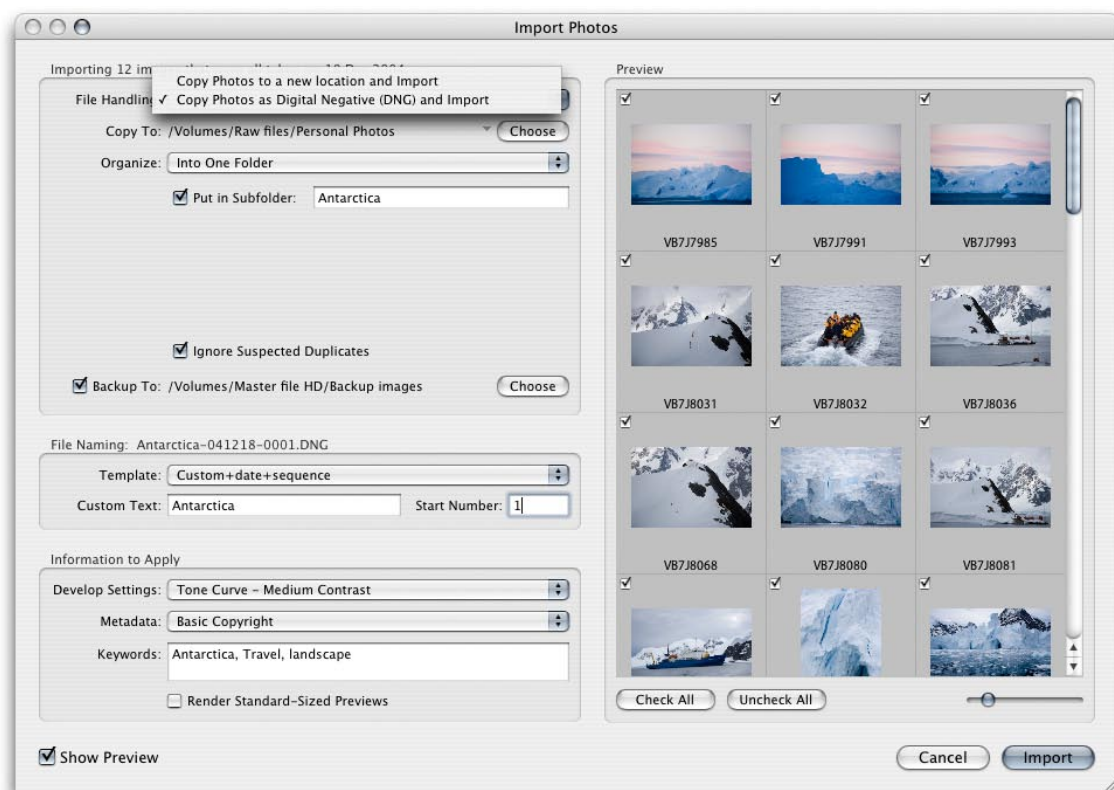


5. With the Lightroom Interface preferences you can customize the appearance of the interface when using the lights dim mode (discussed later in **Step 13** on page 24). You can also customize the background appearance when viewing an image in Loupe mode.



6. In the example shown here, I set the Background **Fill Color** to a White with the **Overlay Texture** set to Pinstripes.

Importing images into Lightroom



NOTE

There is a whole chapter in this book devoted to importing images. But for now, I should just point out that there are two main ways of bringing images into the Lightroom library. Copying or moving files will physically make a copy to the Lightroom library folder. You mostly use this method to import images from a card. A copy by reference will let the images stay where they are and merely create a reference of where they are stored. You mostly use this method to import images that are already on the computer hard disk.

7. To get images into Lightroom, click on the Import button in the Library module. This will open the Import Photos dialog shown here (there is a Lightroom preference that will automatically open the Import Photos dialog when a new camera card is detected). If you are importing from a camera card you can decide whether to make a straight copy of the images from the card or convert them to DNG files as they are copied. Images can also be renamed and backed up to a second drive at the import stage. You will notice that Lightroom encourages you to enter a Subfolder name. Giving imported shoots meaningful names plays an important role in the way Lightroom can help you keep track of your image files. The same is true if you add keywords and other metadata at this stage. This will all further help with the management of your Lightroom library. Once you have finished configuring the dialog, click the Import button to start importing.

Library views



- The imported images are now shown here in the Library module with the Grid view selected. The activity viewer in the top left corner indicates that Lightroom is actively carrying out background processes such as importing images or building thumbnails. If more that one operation is taking place at a time, you will see the grouped status indicator (see **Figure 1.9**). If you click on the arrow to the right, you can toggle the status indicator between each of the tasks that are in progress and the grouped indicator. The imported images will appear in order of preference within the Grid cells and you can make selections of images by using either the Library Grid or the Filmstrip at the bottom. Plus you can rearrange the order of the images in the Grid by dragging and dropping, and the order sequence will be carried through to the other modules.

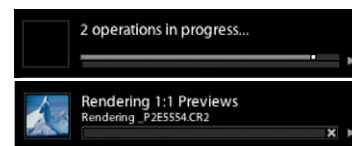


Figure 1.9 The status indicator shows the progress of background processes such as importing images or rendering previews.



TIP

You can open and close the Lightroom panels by clicking anywhere on the panel tab. If you **[Alt]-click** on a panel tab you can switch to a solo mode of operation, where clicking on an individual panel tab will open that panel only and close all the others and opening all panels in the current module. **[Alt]-click** a panel again to restore the normal panel behavior.

- Now let's switch to viewing individual images one at a time using the Loupe mode where we can toggle viewing the images in Loupe mode at a base magnification that can be set to either **Fit** or **Fill** the width of the content area. And the magnified loupe view can be set to anything from a **1:4** to a **11:1** zoomed pixels view (yes, Lightroom goes to 11!) You can switch modes by clicking on the Loupe view mode button or by hitting the **E** key. Or, just double-click an image to switch from the Grid view to seeing the selected image displayed in Loupe mode. The arrow keys on the keyboard will let you quickly shuttle through all of the images in the current image selection. To scroll through a selection without scrolling the images, drag the scroll bar in the Filmstrip.

Simplifying the interface



- 10.** Now let's look at ways to make the Lightroom interface simpler to work with, plus how to hide interface components and place more emphasis on the images. Start by pressing the **[Tab]** key. This will temporarily hide the two side panels and allow more room for the image to be displayed in Loupe mode. But you can still access the side panels by rolling the mouse cursor over to the side edges of the screen. Do this and the panels will be revealed one at a time, and you will notice how the panels temporarily overlay the image below, but you can still access the panel controls as usual. If you click on the little arrow on the side of the screen in the middle, you can lock these panels independently, in which case the image will center adjust to reveal the entire image area again. Press **[Tab]** and both panels will be revealed once more. Panel rollover behavior can be modified via the contextual menu (see above).

TIP

The default side panel behavior is **Auto Hide & Show** – the side panels will auto reveal and hide as you roll the cursor to the side of the screen. The **Auto Hide** option will hide the panels and they will only be revealed (overlying the image) when you click on the side arrow, cycling through hide/overlay/reveal and resize the image in the content area. In **Manual** mode you can toggle between hide/reveal and resize the image in the content area.

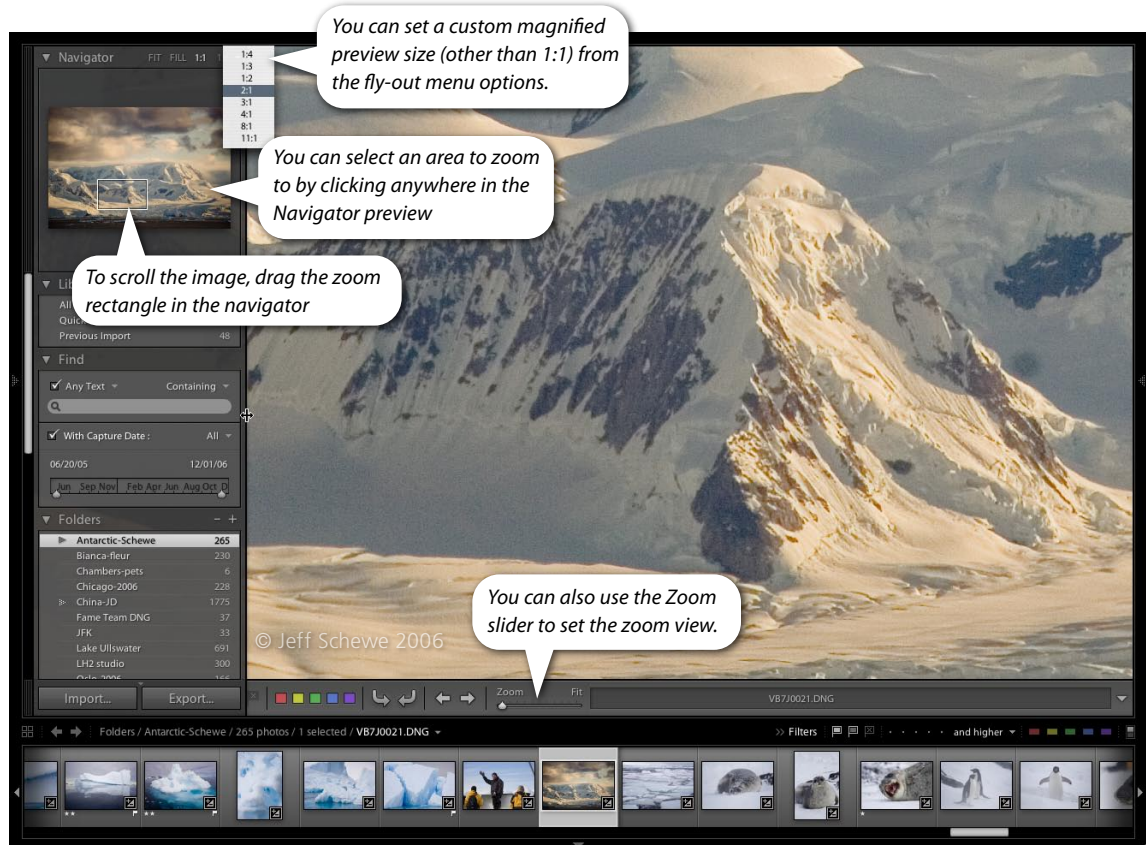


TIP

If you ever get stuck in a situation where you need to reset the interface layout, hit **⇧ Shift Tab** a couple of times and this will restore everything back to the default layout.

11. We have so far been working with the Lightroom interface in document window mode. If you press the **F** key, the interface will switch to full screen mode and expand to fill the whole of the screen. Press **F** a second time and the interface will switch to absolute full screen mode where the system menu bar will disappear and Lightroom will override any operating system rollover behaviors. For example, on the Macintosh, the absolute full screen mode will override the Dock appearing as you roll the mouse cursor to the bottom or side of the screen. But you can still access the system menu bar by rolling the mouse cursor to the top of the screen. Now try pressing the **F5** key to toggle hiding and showing the Lightroom menu bar (as shown above). Next try pressing the **F6** key to toggle hiding and showing the Filmstrip at the bottom. And lastly, use **⇧ Shift Tab** to toggle hiding and showing everything!

Zooming in

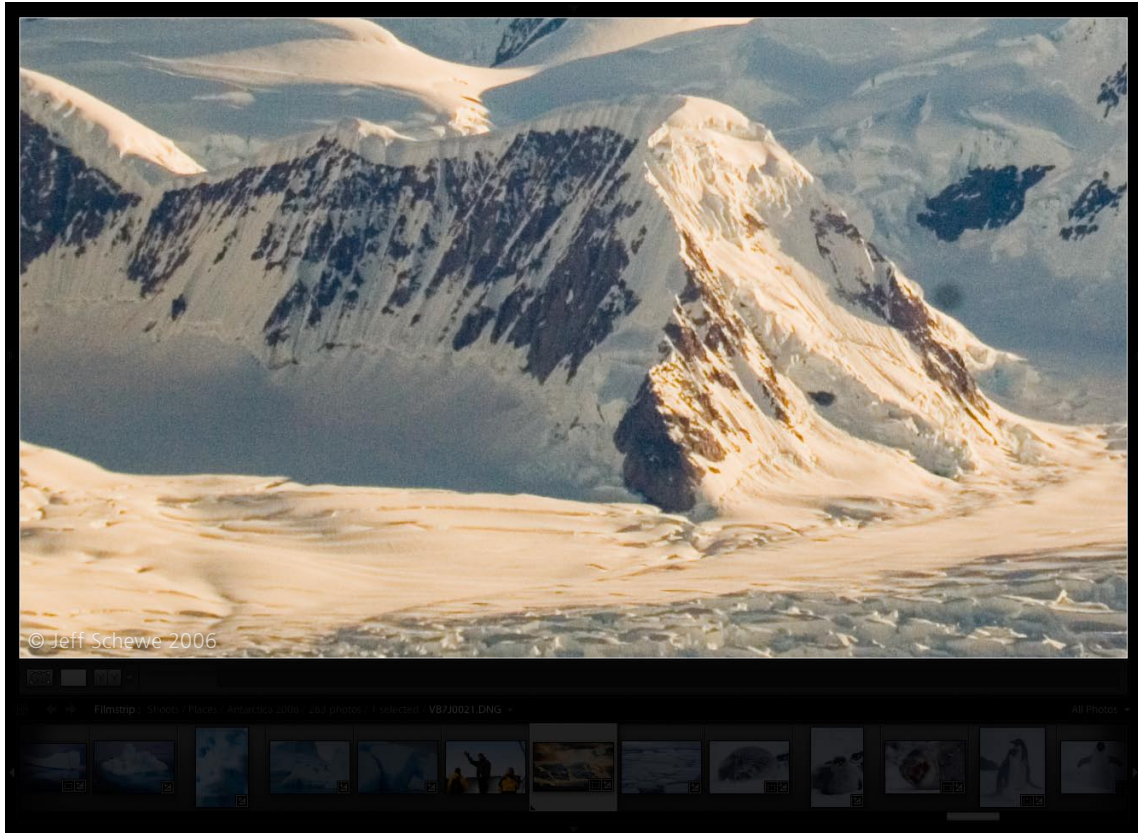


12. We shall stay in the full screen Loupe mode with the side panels hidden and roll the mouse over to the left of the screen to reveal the left hand panel, which can be locked in position (see Step 10). Make a single-click anywhere in the picture and the image will zoom smoothly to a 1:1 or custom magnified pixels view. Click on the image again and it will return to the fit to the normal screen view. You can also use **⌘** + to zoom in and **⌘** - to zoom out. Use the tilde key (~) to toggle between the Grid and Loupe view modes. And whether you are in Grid mode or Loupe mode, if you press **Z**, the image will instantly be displayed at the 1:1 (or custom) magnified view mode. Press **Z** again and the image will revert to the Library Grid view. In the **Navigator** panel, you can click inside the image preview to select an area to zoom to and drag the rectangle within the navigator to scroll the image.

TIP

You can also use the Spacebar to toggle between the standard and magnified Loupe viewing modes.

Dimming the lights

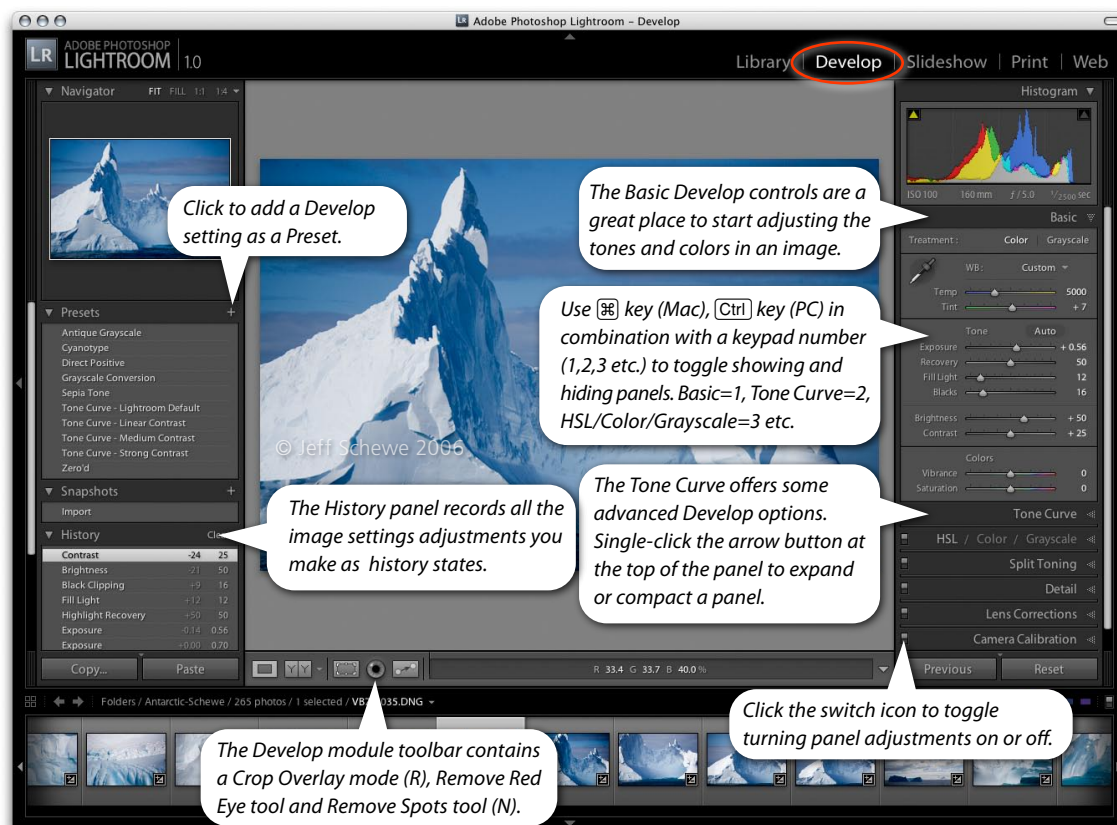


NOTE

The default lights dim and lights out modes use varying opacities of black. If you go to the Lightroom preferences you can set the Lights Out screen color to a shade of gray and adjust the dim level opacity. This is useful if you would prefer to view your images isolated against a neutral gray instead of a solid black.

13. Lightroom has a **Lights Dim** and a **Lights Out** mode. These two viewing modes allow you to dim or hide the interface so that you can focus more on the photographs, yet still have easy access to the interface when you need it. To see how this works, press the **L** key once. This will switch Lightroom to Lights Dim mode (you could go to the Window menu and choose Lights Out ⇌ Lights Dim, but hitting the **L** key is easier to remember). The Lights Dim mode just darkens the interface so you can still see (and access) all the Lightroom controls and menu items. Press **L** a second time and this will take you to the Lights Out mode and pressing **L** one more time will take you back to the default viewing mode. Note that if you roll the mouse to the top of the screen, you will always be able to view the menu bar at normal brightness.

Develop module



14. If you now click on Develop this take us to the **Develop module** where you can start adjusting things like the color, the tonal range, image cropping and sharpness. If you are accustomed to working with the Adobe Camera Raw plug-in in Bridge and Photoshop, you will already be familiar with the **Basic** controls and there is a lot you can do to correct an image by using just these Basic panel adjustments. But also in Lightroom are the **Tone Curve**, **Crop & Straighten**, **HSL/Color/Grayscale**, **Split Toning**, **Detail**, **Lens Corrections** and **Camera Calibration** panel controls. Favorite Develop settings can be saved as **Presets** that can then be applied to other images. With Presets you can choose to save everything or save selected items only and Lightroom ships with a small selection of Develop presets to help you get started. Try rolling over the list in the **Presets** panel to see how these look in the preview before applying them to the actual image.

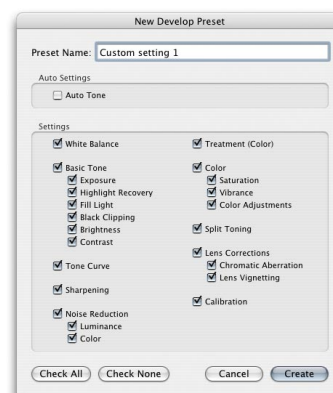


Figure 1.10 Favorite Develop settings can be added by clicking on the Add button below the Presets panel.

Retouching a photograph



15. The Develop module toolbar contains some basic image editing tools for retouching photographs with. When the crop tool is selected (use **R** as a shortcut to select the crop tool), the **Crop & Straighten** panel will become active and you can apply a crop to an image and use the straighten tool to straighten horizon lines in a picture. The **Remove Red Eye** tool can be used to simply drag across the eyes wherever there is red eye in a flash photograph and remove it. And shown here is an example of the **Remove Spots** tool being put to use in **Heal** mode. These tools can be used to carry out basic image spotting, just as you would do normally in Photoshop, except the spotting you do is recorded as 'edit instructions'. Essentially what this means is that after you do any retouching, you have the freedom to make further changes to any other Develop module settings, such as change the white balance.

Synchronizing the Develop settings

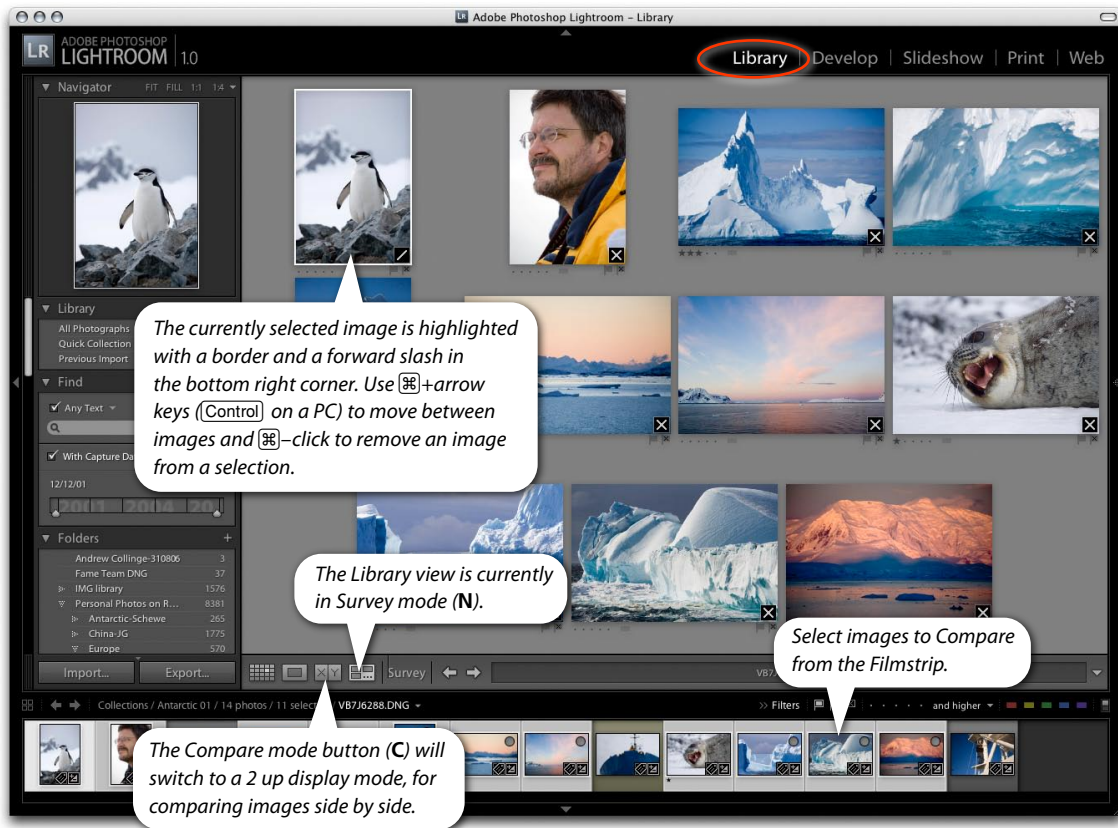


16. Once you have made a few adjustments to an image you may want to synchronize those settings with other photographs that were taken from the same shooting sequence. To do this, select all the images you want to synchronize via the Filmstrip. Make sure that the image you want to synchronize from is the 'most selected' image and then click on the **Sync** button to synchronize all of the selected images with this image. Note that Lightroom offers unlimited undo options, so you can always use the Edit ⇨ Undo or **⌘-Z** any time you need to revert to a previous step. And if you want to redo a step, use **⌘-⇧-Z**. The **History** panel offers even more flexible control, allowing you to preview and select specific history steps to go to, which also remain stored with the image. Selected history states can also be saved as snapshots via the **Snapshots** panel.



Figure 1.11 Develop settings can be selectively synchronized across other images, including the spot removal and the crop and straighten settings.

Reviewing images



TIP

Remember that the tilde key (~) can also be used for toggling between the current and previous view mode.

TIP

Use **⌘-D** (Mac), **Control-D** (PC) to deselect a Library selection of images and use **⌘⇧-D** (Mac), **Control⇧-D** (PC) to select the most selected (or active) photo only.

17. If you want to compare a select group of images, go to the Library module and make a selection of photographs either from the Grid or from the Filmstrip and click on the **Survey** mode button (or press **N**). Note that if you are in the Library module and make a multiple-image selection via the Filmstrip, Lightroom will automatically switch to displaying the images in the Survey mode. While you are in Survey mode, the selected images will auto-resize to fit within the working area. If you want to inspect a particular image in close-up, double-click to open it in Loupe mode and double-click or press **N** to return to viewing it in Survey mode again. And when you are in Survey mode you can **⌘-click** (Mac), **Control-click** (PC) on an image to remove it from the current selection. The **Compare** mode (**C**) lets you compare a most selected image with all others in the selection in a 2 up display mode.

Assigning ratings and Quick collections

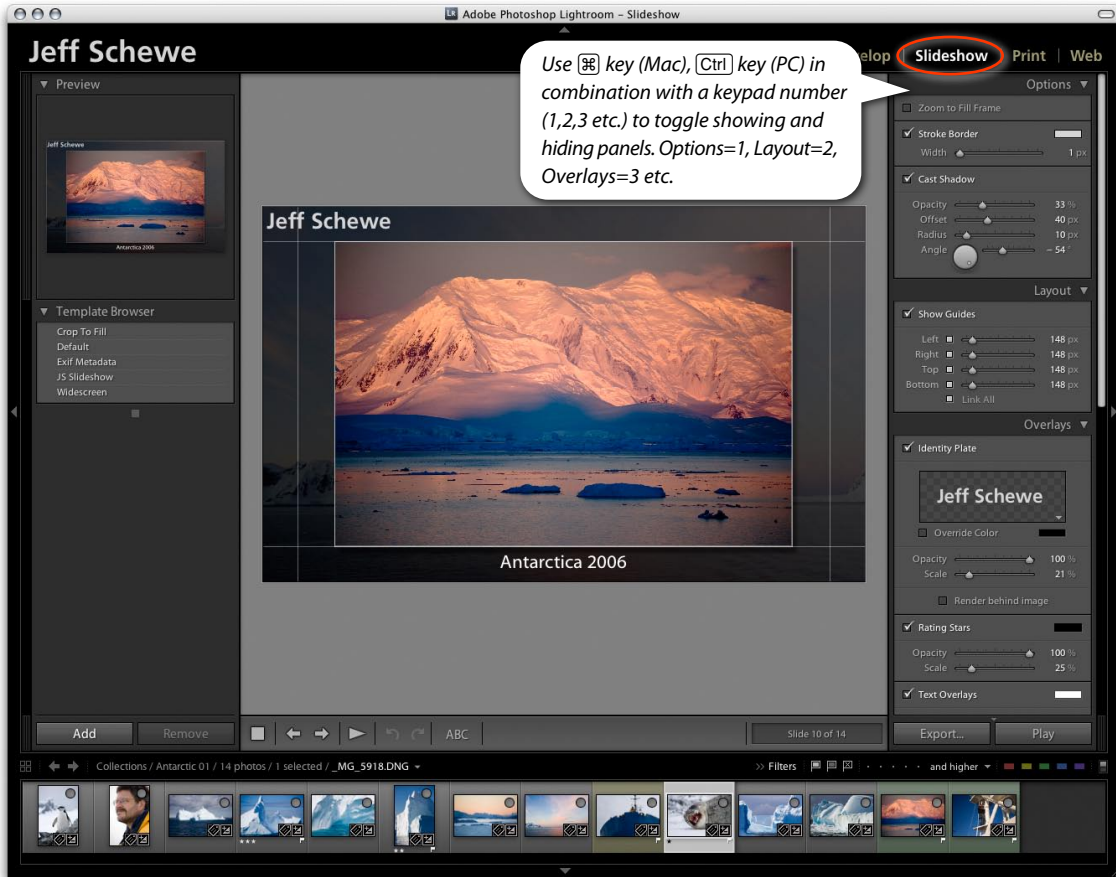


18. So let's assume you have now made a selection of images, but you wish to refine them further. You can do this by making them into a **Quick Collection**. If you return to the Library Grid view, the currently selected images will be highlighted and you can save this current selection as a Quick Collection by hitting the **B** key. Quick Collections are useful for marking favorite images and for combining selections from different, separate folders. You could now go back to **Step 9** and inspect the images one at a time in Loupe mode, but this time assign number ratings to the shots. You can do this by hitting **1** to **5** on the keyboard or use the **]** key to increase the current file rating or **[** to decrease the current file rating. You can also use **6** through **9** to assign color labels to images. In the example shown here, the selected image and one before it were both assigned a yellow label.

NOTE

The Find panel will let you filter images by conducting a text-based search for any matching metadata. The calendar view section will let you narrow down a search using date criteria. And lastly, in the Filmstrip you can use the Filters controls (circled) to filter images in the content area by ratings higher than, lower than or by a specific rating only. Or, filter by flagging or color labels.

Prepare a presentation



19. So having created a collection of images, let's now look at how a collection can be used to create a screen presentation. The **Slideshow** module has a **Template Browser** with a choice of ready-made templates that can be used for making an on-screen slideshow. And there are plenty of options here that will allow you to create your own custom templates. The **Options** and **Layout** panels let you decide how to present, position and embellish the image frame area. You can use the **Overlays** panel to add an image to the background and the **Backdrop** panel to add your Identity Plate logo and you can even choose music to accompany a slideshow via the **Playback** panel.

Create a web photo gallery



20. The **Web** module can generate web photo galleries using HTML or Flash gallery styles. This screen shot shows a preview of the current Quick Collection using a custom template based on the HTML Gallery template, which I selected from the **Template Browser** panel. As with the Slideshow module, the Web module options allow full control for you to modify and create your own web photo galleries. The preview displayed in the content area will only take a second or so to generate and is actually showing you a web browser view of a fully coded website. When you are happy with the way the site is looking, you can click on the **Upload...** button to tell Lightroom where to upload the complete site files and folders. You only need to configure the FTP settings for your server once and then add this as an FTP preset. After you have configured your server settings and saved them as a preset, it becomes a nice and easy process to upload new web photo galleries to a saved favorite server location.

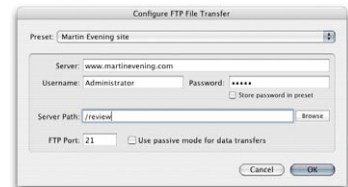


Figure 1.12 The Configure FTP File Transfer dialog.

NOTE

When you select one of the Flash templates, Lightroom will check to see that you have the latest Adobe Flash Player version 8.0 installed, and if not, will provide a link for you to install it.

Contact sheet printing

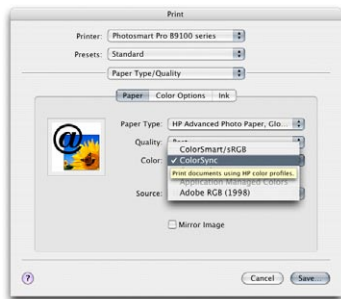
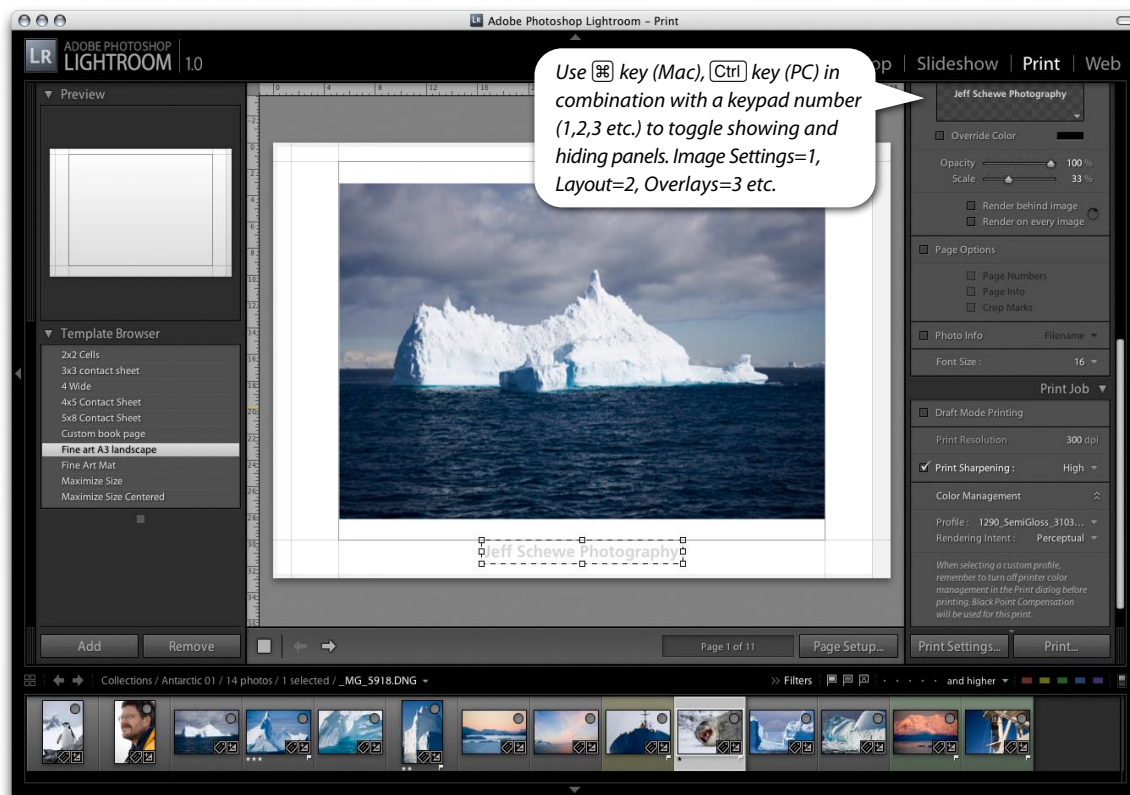


Figure 1.13 Here is a view of an HP print dialog, where because the **Managed by Printer** option was selected in Lightroom, I made sure the correct media type was selected, and that **ColorSync** (Mac), **ICM** (PC) was switched on.

21. Now over to the Print module. In the example shown here, I kept the same selection of images active and then selected a modified contact sheet template from the **Template Browser** panel. Lightroom will display a preview of the contact sheet, that contains the currently selected images. The Info overlay indicates that we are looking at page one out of two printable contact sheet pages. For speedy printing, go to the **Print Job** panel and check the **Draft Mode Printing** box, which is ideal for fast contact sheet printing. The simplest way of making a color accurate print is to leave the **Profile** setting set to: **Managed by Printer**. Then click on the **Print...** button and make sure in the following system print dialog that the **ColorSync** option (Mac), **ICM** (PC) is switched on in the Color Management section, along with the correctly matched media/paper type in the Print Settings.

Making a final print

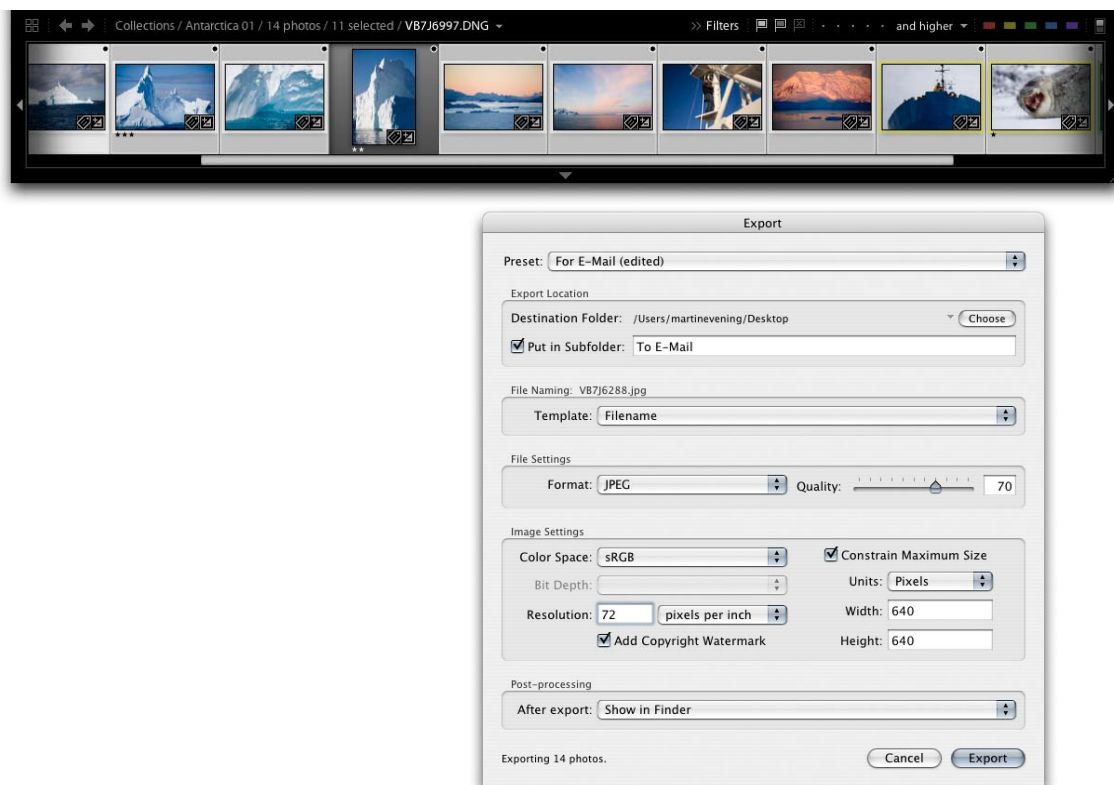


22. If you want to make a high quality print output, try selecting one of the single page templates. Depending on how you want the image to appear on the page, you may wish to click on the **Page Setup** button to configure the printer for landscape or portrait printing. When you go to the **Print Job** panel, you will need to disable the draft mode printing and choose a sharpen setting suited to the type of output you are making. You could continue to make a print using the same settings as before, but if you happen to have a custom print profile for your printer, you can mouse-down on the **Profile** options to select the desired print/paper profile. Click on the **Print Settings** and enter the same system print settings that were used to create the profile target (with ColorSync/ICM switched off). This will lock the print settings to the current setup. Now [Alt]-click the **Print...** button to bypass the system Print dialog and go straight to making a print.

TIP

As you create custom print settings, these can be saved with the **Print Templates**. Hold down the **(Control)** key (Mac only), or hold down the right mouse button (both Mac and PC) and then select a print preset and choose 'Update with current settings' from the contextual menu. This will permanently save the page setup and print settings to the print template preset. This can really make printing a lot more fool-proof – once you have saved all your print settings to a template, there is no need to reconfigure them when you select that template again.

Exporting images



- 23.** Export can be used whenever you wish to apply the Lightroom settings to an image and export that photograph (or collection of images) as a JPEG, PSD, TIFF or DNG file. To export from Lightroom make a selection of images either in the Library Grid or in the Filmstrip and then choose File ⇒ Export (or click the Export button). This will open the **Export** dialog, where you can determine which folder the images are exported to, how you might want to rename them and the file format you want the files to be in. Note that when the TIFF, PSD or JPEG options are selected you can choose which RGB color space to use, constrain the pixel dimensions and set the pixel resolution for the exported images.

Working through the book

This more or less concludes the introduction to working with Lightroom. In the remainder of the book I will be exploring each aspect of the program in greater depth. Lightroom has been designed almost exclusively for digital photographers. This makes my task slightly easier, because being a photographer myself I have a clearer idea of what other photographers will find important and useful to know. To this end I have structured the book to match a typical workflow, starting with the import and export of images out of Lightroom. At the beginning of this chapter I described how the philosophy behind Lightroom was to offer ‘unreasonable simplicity’. If Adobe have been successful in this mission then you should find that much of the Lightroom program is fairly self-explanatory. For example, if you go to the Help menu you will see a Shortcuts item for whichever module you happen to be using at the time. **Figure 1.14** below, shows the shortcuts for the Library module. In keeping with the spirit of Lightroom I have tried as much as possible to avoid discussing the technical workings of the program, and stick to discussing what Lightroom does best: managing, editing and printing photographs. And if you really want to know more about how Lightroom works, then I have reserved a technical section at the back of the book in the appendix to elaborate on things like the Lightroom native RGB space. I have also included several pages devoted to side topics that relate to working in Lightroom, such as how to choose an optimum setup for your managed photos folder and you will find lots of quick tips are included in the page margins.

Library Shortcuts	
View Shortcuts	
~	Toggle between Grid and Loupe
Esc	Return to previous view
Return	Enter Loupe or 1:1 view
E	Enter Loupe view
C	Enter Compare mode
G	Enter Grid Mode
Command + Return	Enter Impromptu Slideshow mode
F	Cycle to next Screen Mode
Command + Shift + F	Return to Normal Screen Mode
L	Cycle through Lights Out modes
J	Cycle Grid Views
Panel Shortcuts	
Tab	Show/Hide the side panels
Shift + Tab	Hide/Show all the panels
T	Hide/Show the toolbar
Command + F	Activate the search field
Command + \	Return to the previous module
Ratings Shortcuts	
1-5	Set ratings
6-9	Set color labels
0	Reset ratings to none
[Decrease the rating
]	Increase the rating
Command + Up Arrow	Set Ranking to Flagged
Command + Down Arrow	Set Ranking to Neutral
Photo Shortcuts	
Command + Shift + I	Import photos
Command + Shift + E	Export photos
Command + [Rotate left
Command +]	Rotate right
Command + E	Edit in Photoshop
Command + -	Zoom out
Command + =	Zoom in
Z	Zoom to 100%
Command + G	Stack photos
Command + Shift + G	Unstack photos
Command + R	Reveal in Finder
Delete	Remove from Library
Command + Delete	Move photo to Finder trash Also removes from the Library
Command + Shift + C	Copy Develop Settings
Command + Shift + V	Paste Develop Settings
Command + Left Arrow	Previous selected photo
Command + Right Arrow	Next selected photo
Quick Collection Shortcuts	
B	Add to Quick Collection
Command + B	Show the Quick Collection
Command + Shift + B	Clear Quick Collection

Figure 1.14 It is always worth selecting the Shortcuts item in the Help menu: **⌘-I** (Mac), **Ctrl-I** (PC), to find out more about the shortcuts for each module.