

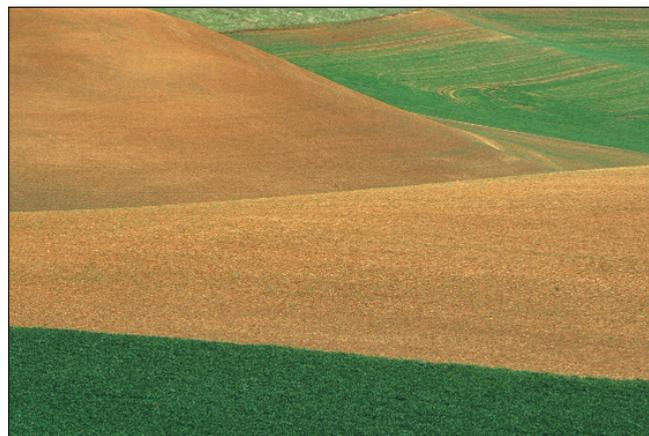
O'REILLY DIGITAL STUDIO

Covers
Photoshop CS

Professional Tips & Workflow Strategies for Using
Photoshop to Enhance Your Digital Photography Skills

Digital Photography

Expert Techniques



O'REILLY®

Ken Milburn

Bringing Out the Best Picture

3

So you've taken the shot. Is that it? Certainly not. In the world of digital photography, you can use a wide variety of techniques to "bring out" the best picture possible from the shot you've taken. You might be wondering, "How is that possible?" Well, in order to explain that, we should provide some background on how cameras differ from our own brains.

The human brain can process more color range at any given instant than a computer monitor or a digital print can display. Our eyes don't actually see more range than film or digital sensors; rather, our brain instructs our eyes to composite different areas of the image into a single whole. The brain does this "multiple-exposure" blending so quickly that we think we are looking at only one image.

The camera, on the other hand, doesn't have our brain inside. It records only one instant in time, which is why we are often so disappointed when we look at a base picture. ("That's not how I remember the color and the details!") And it gets worse: cameras are notorious for losing all the little details in the highlights and shadows of a shot. Thankfully, we can use the camera and the computer to minimize these deficiencies, and bring out a wider range of brightness and colors in each of our digital photographs.

For example, compare the differences between [Figures 3-1](#), [3-2](#), and [3-3](#). [Figure 3-1](#) shows a landscape shot using the color range that you would expect from a camera that saves to JPEG. As we mentioned in the previous chapter, RAW files capture a far greater range of colors—you can see an immediate difference in the color range of [Figure 3-2](#). [Figure 3-3](#) shows what the same photograph looks like after applying several of the techniques in this chapter to bring out more detail.

In this chapter

Using the Photoshop File Browser

Using image management programs

Making accurate corrections

Keeping original images intact

Using layers

Minimizing duplicate files

Using special names

Maintaining file information

Archiving



Figure 3-1. A landscape photo as a JPEG image sees it.



Figure 3-2. The same image as a RAW file sees it. Again, look to the darkest and lightest areas to see more detail.



Figure 3-3. The same image after applying some of the exposure techniques below. This picture has a tremendous amount of detail.

Getting Started

Here are two tips that will get you the best results in any situation:

1. If you use RAW files (and I hope you do), get in the habit of slightly underexposing your shot. Then, adjust the RAW image using computer-based software to show the widest range of brightness possible.
2. No matter what file format you use, make Photoshop exposure corrections before any other image modifications.

Let's look at these tips one at a time.

Underexposing and adjusting RAW images

If you shoot in RAW mode, *you always want to underexpose the shot*. This may seem counterintuitive, but when you set the camera for slight underexposure, you minimize the chances that important details—such as the highlights in backlit hair or the brightest clouds in the sky—will be washed out to solid white. See [Figures 3-4](#) and [3-5](#) for a nice example of this. In that case, I set my camera to underexpose by a half-stop. With this underexposed shot, I can then bring up details in the shadows by using either the Levels (Adobe Photoshop and Adobe Photoshop Elements) or the Curves (Adobe Photoshop only) tool when first opening an image.

Super CCDs

The “Super CCD” sensor, pioneered by Fuji and featured in several of their latest prosumer cameras and the new S3 Pro, uses two sensor cells for each pixel position—one to record highlights and the other for shadows. These two “exposures” are then blended by the camera to automatically produce dynamic range similar to that described in the procedures on these pages.



Figure 3-4. An image shot using the camera's recommended exposure. Note the lack of detail in the whitest petals.



Figure 3-5. An image shot at -5 exposure compensation. Although the shot may appear a bit dark, the RAW file converter can correct the overall exposure without losing detail in the highlights.



Figure 3-6. An image saved from the RAW file converter with no adjustments.



Figure 3-7. The same image after choosing settings in the Photoshop Camera RAW plug-in.

Figures 3-6 and 3-7 show another example of a RAW file image as it came from the camera, and how it can be corrected using the Photoshop CS Camera RAW plug-in. As you may recall, I talked about the Camera RAW plug-in just briefly in the previous chapter. Now it's time to use it to bring out the best in your RAW shots.

The Adobe Photoshop CS Camera RAW plug-in is by far the most widely used application to interpret RAW images. Yet another example of the power of this plug-in is shown in Figures 3-8 and 3-9. If you're not using it, I'd give serious consideration to getting your hands on it (it's built into Photoshop CS). Here's why:

1. It handles RAW files in a more versatile and friendly manner than any other interpreter I've seen. It's also much faster than the run-of-the-mill RAW file interpreter.
2. It handles RAW files from a variety of cameras, so if you have multiple cameras (even from different manufacturers), you won't be forced to use different RAW interpreters for each of them.



Figure 3-8. This image, shot in a Berkeley bar, as a preadjusted RAW file.



Figure 3-9. The same image after making the adjustments recommended in this section.

Different Standards

Unfortunately, RAW files differ from one camera manufacturer to the next. Unlike JPEG and TIFF, the file format that the data is stored in is not yet standardized. Hopefully, this will change soon.

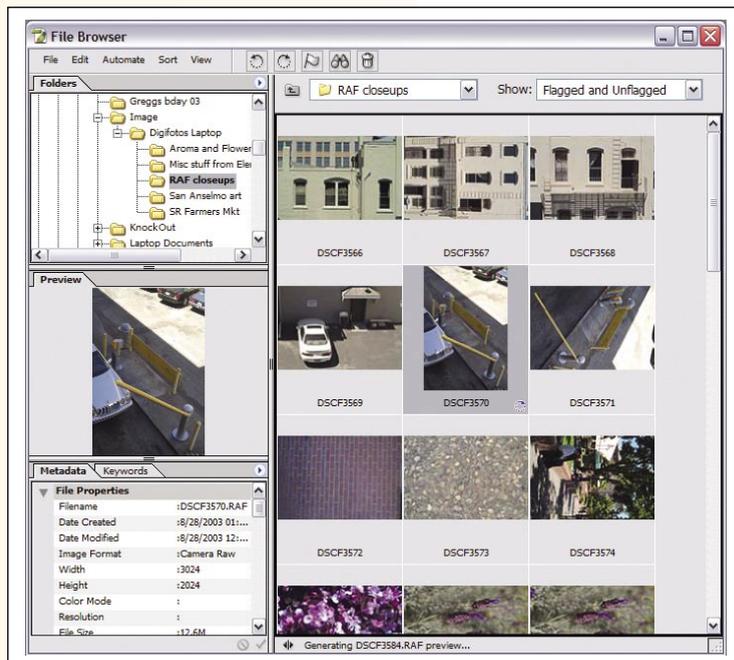
The cameras currently supported by the Adobe Photoshop CS RAW plug-in are shown in [Table 3-1](#).

Before You Go Further...

You may want to make sure that your monitor is properly calibrated. See the beginning of [Chapter 11](#) for more details.

Table 3-1. Cameras recognized by the Adobe Photoshop CS RAW plug-in

Canon	Fujifilm	Nikon
EOS-1D	FinePix F700	D1
EOS-1Ds	FinePix S5000 Z	D1H
EOS 10D	FinePix S7000 Z	D1X
EOS-D30	FinePix S2 Pro0	D100
EOS-D60		D2H
EOS 300D (Digital Rebel/Kiss Digital)	Kodak	Coolpix 5700
PowerShot 600	DCS 14n	Coolpix 5000 (with firm- ware version 1.7)
PowerShot A5	DCS720x	
PowerShot A50	DCS760	Olympus
PowerShot S30		E-10
PowerShot S40	Konica Minolta	E-1
PowerShot S45	DiIMAGE A1	E-20
PowerShot S50	DiIMAGE 5	C-5050 Zoom
PowerShot G1	DiIMAGE 7	C-5060 Zoom
PowerShot G2	DiIMAGE 7i	
PowerShot G3	DiIMAGE 7Hi	Panasonic
PowerShot G5		DMC-LC1
PowerShot Pro70	Leaf	
PowerShot Pro90 IS	Valeo 6	Pentax
	Valeo 11	*ist D
	Valeo 22	
	Leica	Sony
	Digilux 2	DSC-F828



Using the Adobe Camera RAW plug-in

Here are step-by-step instructions using the Camera RAW plug-in:

1. Open the Adobe Photoshop CS File Browser (File → Browse) and navigate to the folder to which you've downloaded your RAW files. Wait a moment (these files are about 10 times larger than JPEGs) and the thumbnail images for those files will start appearing. See [Figure 3-10](#).
2. Rotate any vertical images to their proper position. (This doesn't affect the file itself, but it makes it a lot easier to judge the photograph without having to lie on your side.) To rotate 90 degrees, click the Rotate Left or Rotate Right icon.

Figure 3-10. The Photoshop CS File Browser.

- Right-click on any image you want to delete, then choose Delete from the in-context menu. RAW files are very large; it's a good idea to get rid of losers before the task of finding the image you want turns into a lifetime project.
- Use Batch Rename (Automate → Batch Rename) to rename all the images with meaningful, abbreviated filenames that describe the subject by category, name, and an alpha character for each different point of view on the same subject. The Batch Rename dialog is shown in Figure 3-11.
- Double-click a RAW image, or just drag it into the Adobe Photoshop CS workspace. The Camera RAW plug-in dialog will open. Older versions of the plug-in will appear similar to Figure 3-12, while the Photoshop CS version looks like Figure 3-13.

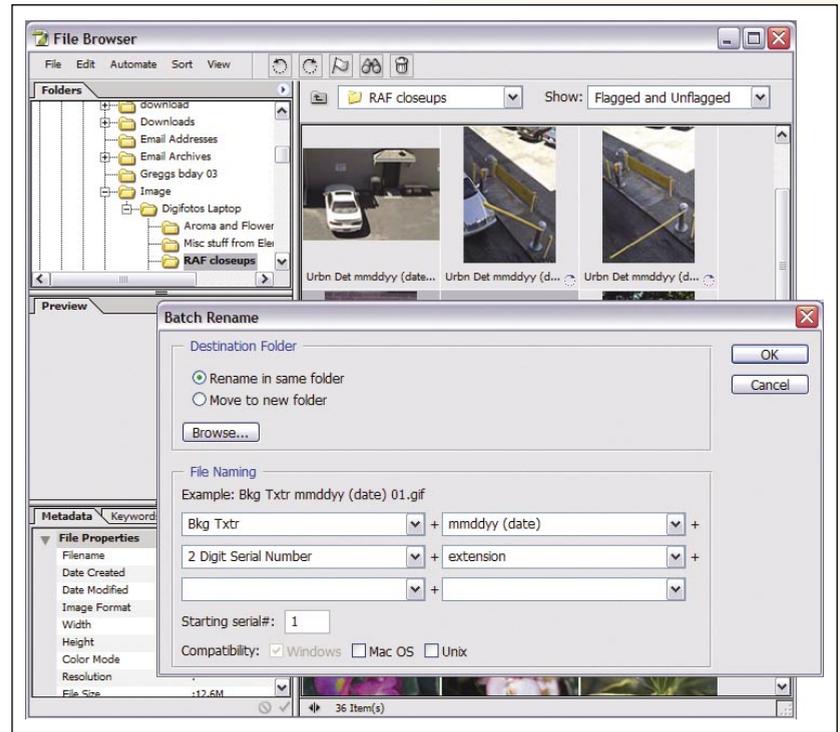


Figure 3-11. The Batch Rename dialog. You can see some renamed files in the background.

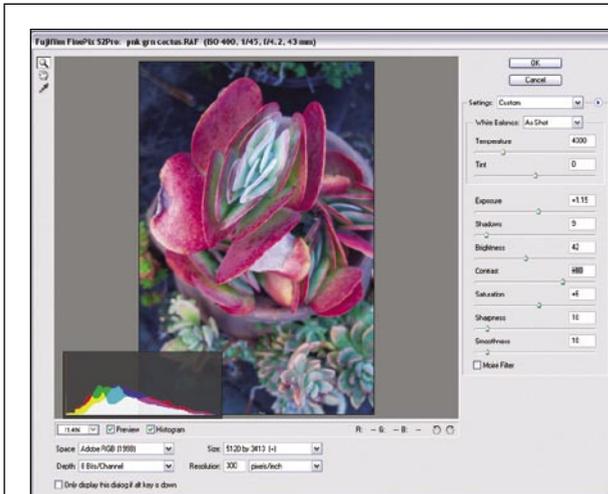


Figure 3-12. The Camera RAW dialog for older versions of the Photoshop Camera RAW plug-in.

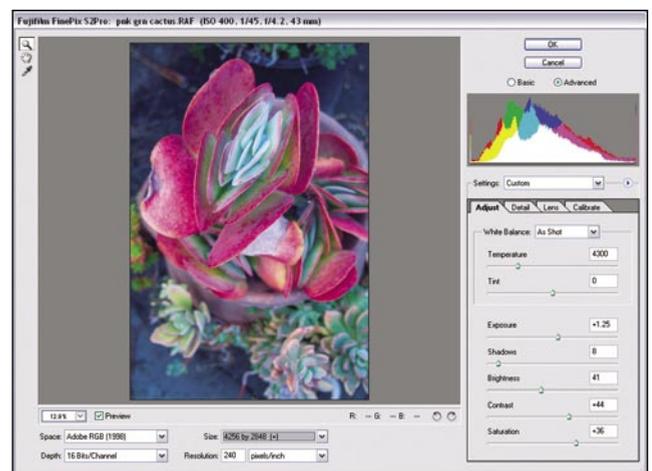


Figure 3-13. The Camera RAW dialog for Photoshop CS.

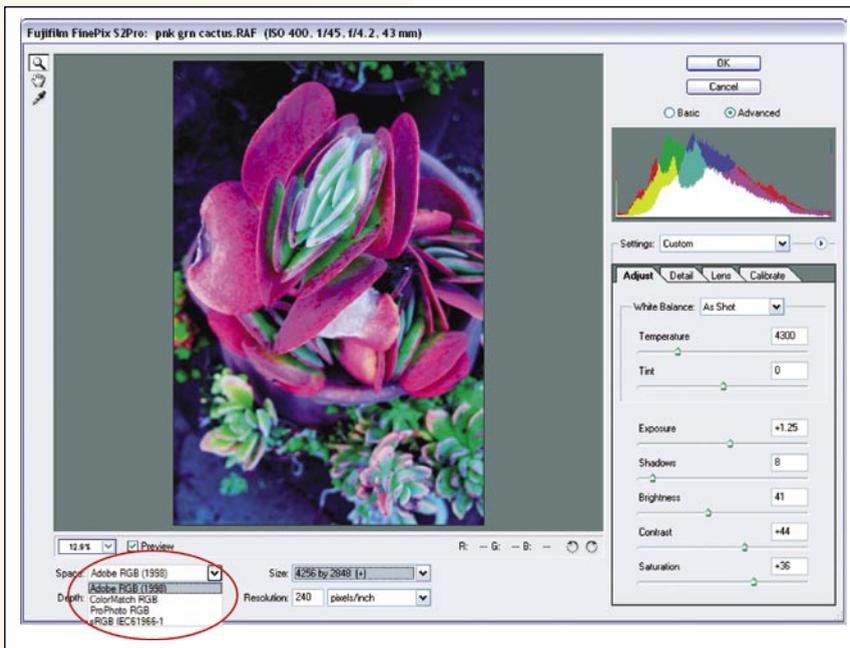


Figure 3-14. The Space Menu.

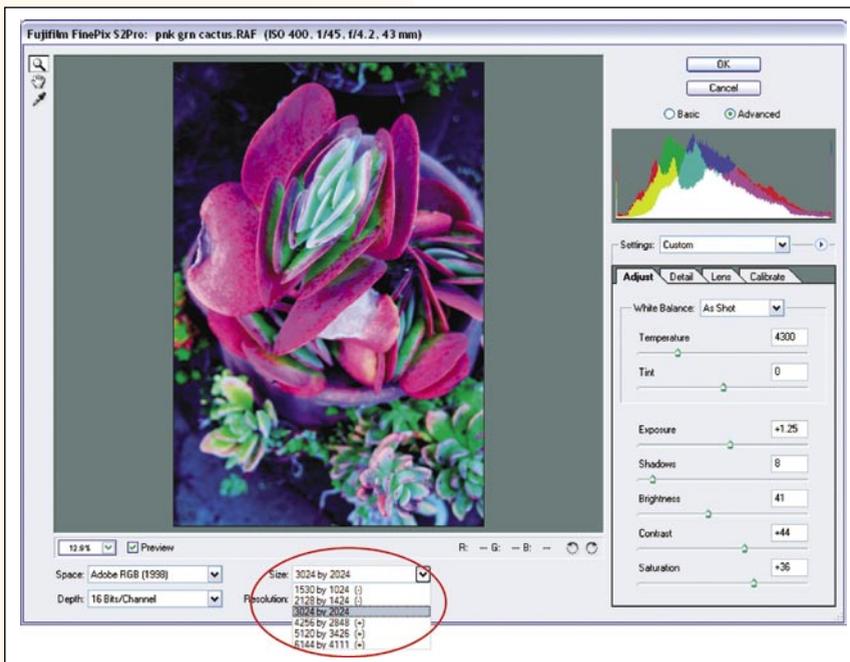


Figure 3-15. The Size menu.

6. Choose 16-bit from the Bit Depth pull-down menu. This will allow the image to open in Adobe Photoshop in 16-bit color mode so that you can do your exposure corrections *before* you have to throw out all that data.
7. Check the Histogram box at the lower right of the Preview window. (In the Photoshop CS version of Camera RAW, the histogram is permanently visible.) The histogram shows the image's distribution of pixels over the full range of brightness. This is a great aid in "scientifically" judging the brightness levels in the image you will export from the RAW file.
8. From the Space pull-down menu, choose the Adobe RGB (1998) color space, as shown in Figure 3-14.
9. From the Size pull-down menu, choose the largest image size the program permits for your camera (see Figure 3-15). I recommend you do this because any adjustments or retouching you do is less obvious if you start with a large image. You'll also be less likely to destroy image information by repeatedly having to enlarge and reduce (resample) the image.

- Set the resolution to 300 dpi if most of your images go to print, or 240 dpi if they go to a color inkjet printer for display. (If you also create web images, don't worry about size right now; you'll be drastically resampling and optimizing them at a later stage.) See [Figure 3-16](#).

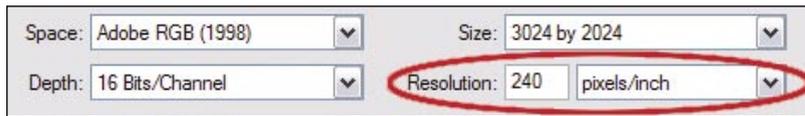


Figure 3-16. The Space, Depth, Size, and Resolution fields.

- Set the brightness of the brightest significant highlight area by pressing Opt/Alt and dragging the Exposure slider until a light spot appears on the background. The smaller the light spot, the better. The preview image becomes much brighter at this stage.
- Set the darkness of the area that you want to see as a solid (or near solid) black by pressing Opt/Alt and dragging the Shadows slider until the areas you want to turn dark start appearing against the white background.
- Drag the Brightness slider to adjust the midtones until you like what you see. There is no scientific “must” for this setting; it’s a matter of personal taste.
- Play with the Contrast and Saturation sliders. They give you a lot of interpretative leeway.
- Sharpness and Smoothness default to a setting of 25, but I prefer to reduce them to about 10. On the other hand, I have a talented friend who is happier with a setting of 5, so you may want to experiment a bit to find what you like. The idea is to lower these settings so that you can better control edge sharpness and noise (smoothness) using more sophisticated tools, which we’ll talk about later.
- Finally, zoom in to 100% using the Zoom pull-down menu at the bottom left of the Preview window.

And that’s it! Click OK to export the image as you see it in the Preview window. Or, if you want to start all over again, press Opt/Alt and click the Cancel button when its label changes to Reset.

NOTE

Note that the suggestions above for setting lightness and darkness simply give you the best possible starting point to ensure that you have maximum detail in both highlights and shadows. If you later decide that you want deeper shadows or washed-out highlights, you can always change these settings. However, I recommend making these “interpretative” adjustments after you’ve made all the others as suggested here.

Do your Photoshop exposure corrections first

The second step is very important: *always do your exposure corrections in Photoshop first*, before any of the other corrections or effects you'll find later in this book. If you don't, you'll find that correcting exposure is extremely hard (if not impossible) to do. For example, look at the difference that exposure correction makes between [Figures 3-17](#) and [3-18](#).



Figure 3-17. An image after corrected export from the Camera RAW plug-in.



Figure 3-18. The same image after further exposure corrections in Adobe Photoshop.

Here's how to do exposure corrections in Photoshop. If you're not using the Adobe Camera RAW support, make sure your camera's RAW file conversion software saves in 16-bit format. Next, open Photoshop, load your image, and use the following routine.

1. As soon as you've opened a new file in Photoshop, choose Image → Duplicate. In the Duplicate Image dialog, add “-cor” (short for “exposure corrected”) to the filename (see [Figure 3-19](#)). Then click OK.
2. When the duplicate file window appears, select the original file window and click the Close button. You'll be asked if you want to save the file. Since the purpose of this workflow is to keep the original undisturbed, click No. This is especially true if the image is a JPEG that may deteriorate each time it's saved due to repeated image compression.
3. Press Cmd/Ctrl-L (or do it slowly and painfully by choosing Image → Adjustments → Levels). The Levels dialog appears, as shown in [Figure 3-20](#).
4. The first thing you should do is spread the histogram across the visible spectrum of brightness values. If you do this for each color channel independently, you will simultaneously perform a color correction to the image that can be adjusted to suit your preferences with minimum hassle and maximum chances for success. So, press Cmd/Ctrl-L to first isolate the histogram to the Red channel.
5. Drag the shadow slider at the left of the histogram (for the Input Levels, not the Output Levels) to the first point that shows pixels in the histogram. Some image's histograms will show quite a rise at the very end. If there is no empty space at the shadow (black slider) or highlight (white slider) end of the histogram, don't move the slider for that end. *Do not* move the midtone (gray) slider for any of the color channels at this time.
6. Repeat this for the other color channels (i.e., green and blue). When you have adjusted all of the channels according to the instructions in Step 5, press Cmd/Ctrl-~. You will see the histogram for the composite RGB channel. In the rare case that there is still a gap between the shadow or highlight end of the histogram and the histogram window, adjust the slider for that end of the histogram. See [Figure 3-21](#).



Figure 3-19. The Duplicate Image dialog.

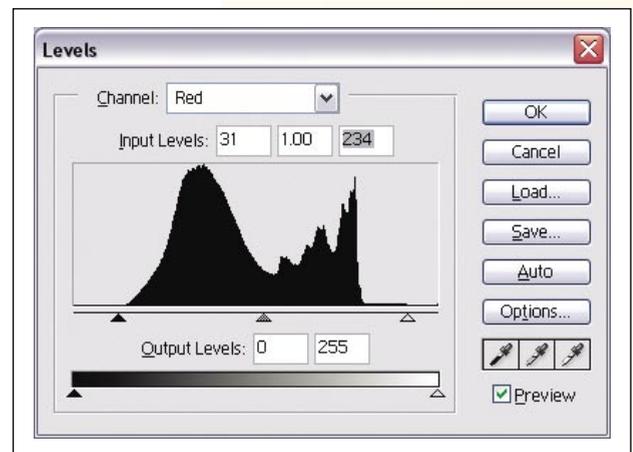


Figure 3-20. The Levels dialog as properly adjusted for the Red channel.

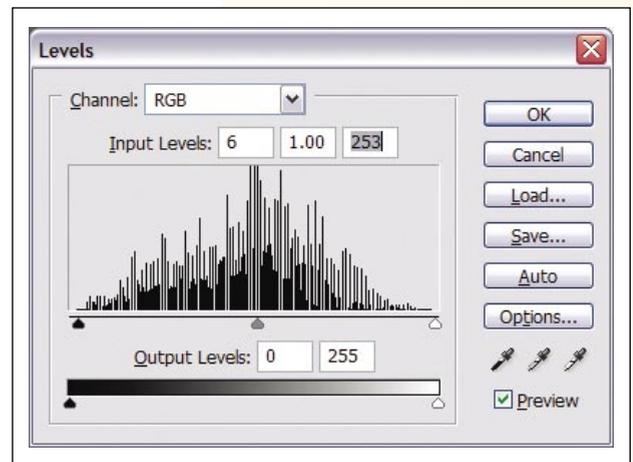


Figure 3-21. The Levels dialog after properly adjusting the composite (RGB) channel.

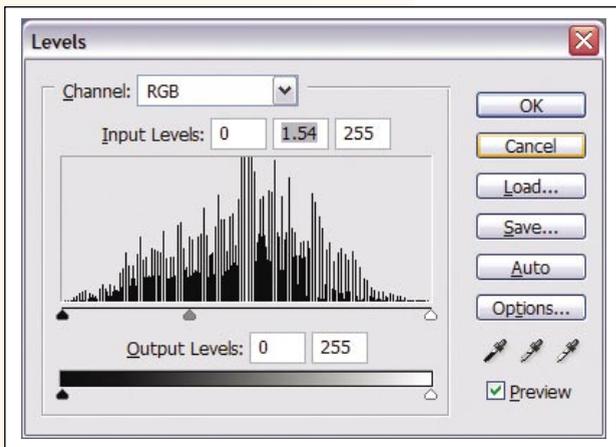


Figure 3-22. The Levels dialog after adjusting for brighter midtones.

EXPERT ADVICE

Using Autocolor...or Not

You could perform essentially the same operation by choosing Image → Adjust → Autocolor. However, if you perform the process manually, you'll learn how to adjust an image according to your own interpretative preferences. Of course, if you're in a big rush, the Autocolor command is a viable shortcut.

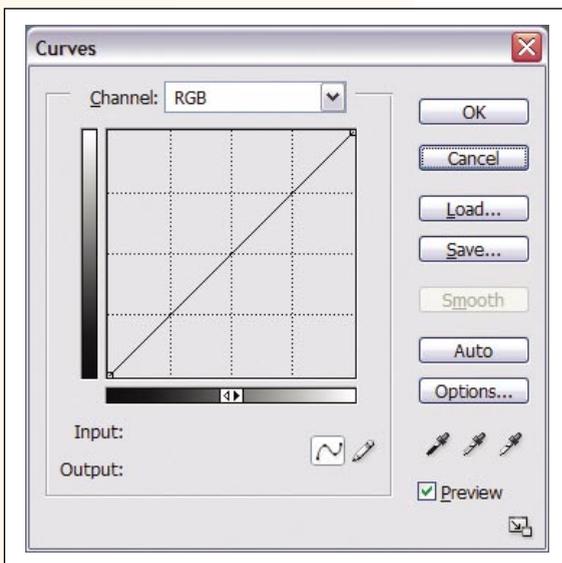


Figure 3-23. The Curves dialog before making any adjustments.

- Now you can adjust the midtone brightness of the image using the gray slider. If you want to force higher contrast in the image, move the highlight and shadow sliders in toward the center until you get the effect you are looking for. See [Figure 3-22](#).
- Lastly, you may need to change the overall color balance using the Levels command, even though your adjustments up to this point have made the color balance “theoretically correct.” Perhaps you shot the image too far off-balance to achieve correct color balance without forcing it. Or you may want to create a certain mood by giving the image a cooler or warmer color-cast. You can do this by doing what I told you not to do before: move the midtone of the primary color(s) that are most likely to shift the color in your preferred direction. Dragging any color channel’s midtone slider to the right will intensify that primary color, while dragging it to the left will intensify its opposite (in the Red channel, dragging the slider to the left will add Cyan; in the Green channel, it will add Magenta). So if you want a cooler (bluer) image, press Cmd/Ctrl-3 to access the histogram for the Blue channel and then drag the midtone slider to the right. If you want a warmer tone, drag the midtone slider to the left. About 85% of the time, you can get the color balance you want by adjusting only one primary; if you don’t, there’s no law to prevent you from tweaking the other two.

You now have an image with almost perfect exposure correction. But “almost perfect” isn’t quite perfect enough. So there are a couple more things you can do using the Curves and Hue/Saturation commands. First, press Cmd/Ctrl-M to bring up the Curves command, shown in [Figure 3-23](#). (Note that this command is not available in Adobe Photoshop Elements 2.0.)

- Use the Zoom tool (or enter a Zoom Level in the small box at the left end of the Status bar) to make the image small enough so that you can see the entire image in addition to the Curves dialog.
- Move the cursor over the image (notice that the cursor turns into an eyedropper). Find a specific tone that you want to lighten or darken (perhaps you want to darken the shadow side of a face or brighten the leaves on a tree), and Cmd/Ctrl-click directly over that area.

A black dot will appear on the curve line at the point that precisely represents the area you want to brighten. See [Figure 3-24](#).

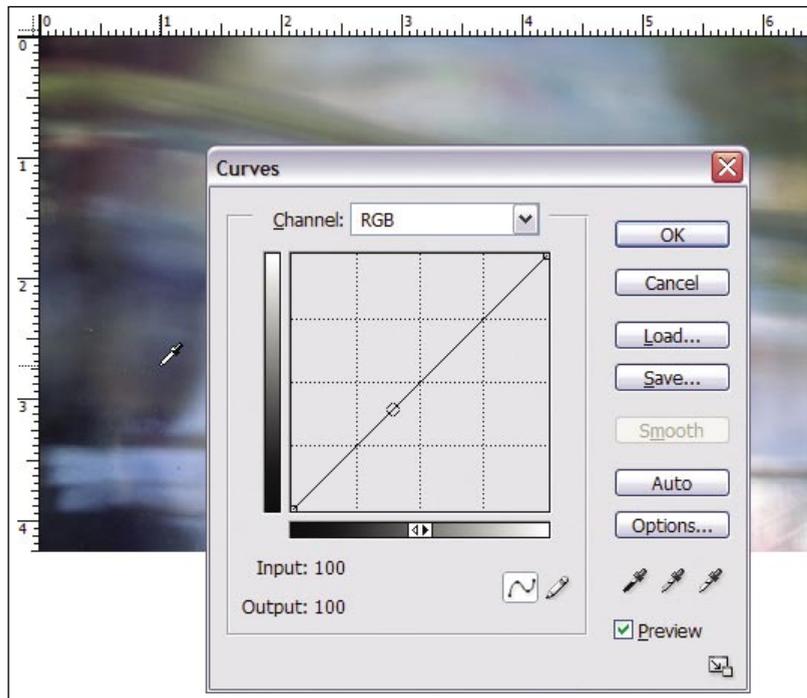


Figure 3-24. The circle on the diagonal line shows the exact level of brightness under the point of the cursor (eyedropper) in the image.

11. Place a point on either side of the dot. This will anchor the curve line so that it doesn't move when you adjust the area that you highlighted above.
12. To brighten the chosen area, drag its dot up; to darken it, drag its dot down. For example, in [Figure 3-25](#), the dot was dragged down slightly.

You're done! Save the file and, if you're curious, compare the original with the corrected version to see what you've done.

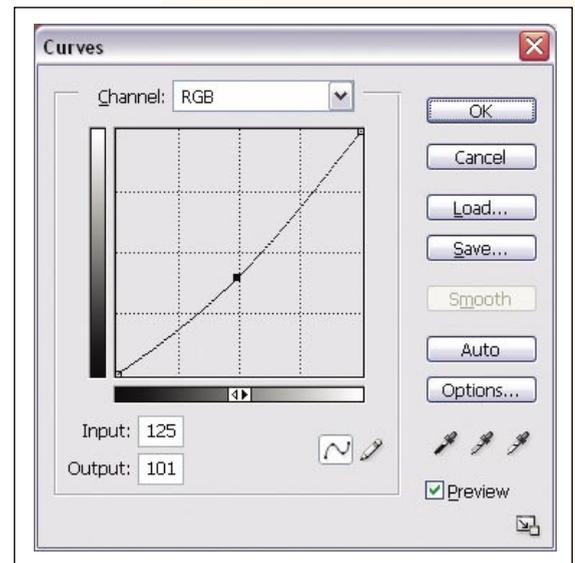


Figure 3-25. Dragging up the dark dot in the center brightens the shades between the dots that were placed on either side. You can manually control specific areas of brightness by adding and dragging more dots.

Tip 1: Get to Know the Photoshop File Browser

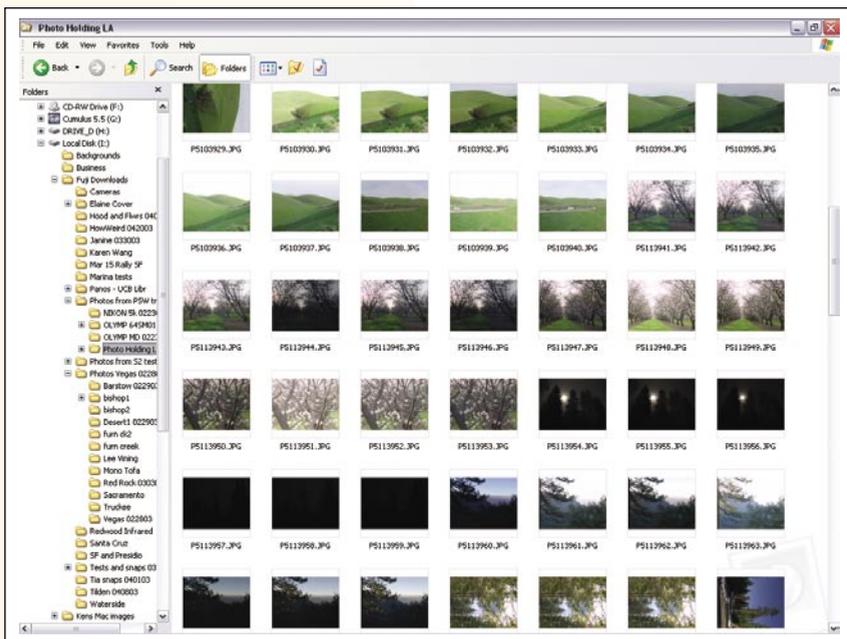


Figure 3-26. The Windows Explorer file browser for XP.

We used the Photoshop File Browser earlier to load our RAW files. However, there's so much more that you can do with this File Browser that using it is our number one tip for this chapter.

The file browsers native to the latest Windows and Mac operating systems have been updated to make them a bit more useful for managing image files. (The Windows Explorer file browser for XP is shown in [Figure 3-26](#).) You can now see images as thumbnails, instead of as simply file-names and types. However, neither Windows nor Mac OS X does much to help you rename cryptic camera filenames efficiently, you can't rotate thumbnails without rotating the image, you can't sort by rank so that you can see all the good shots at the top of the browser, and you can't see any file info alongside an image.

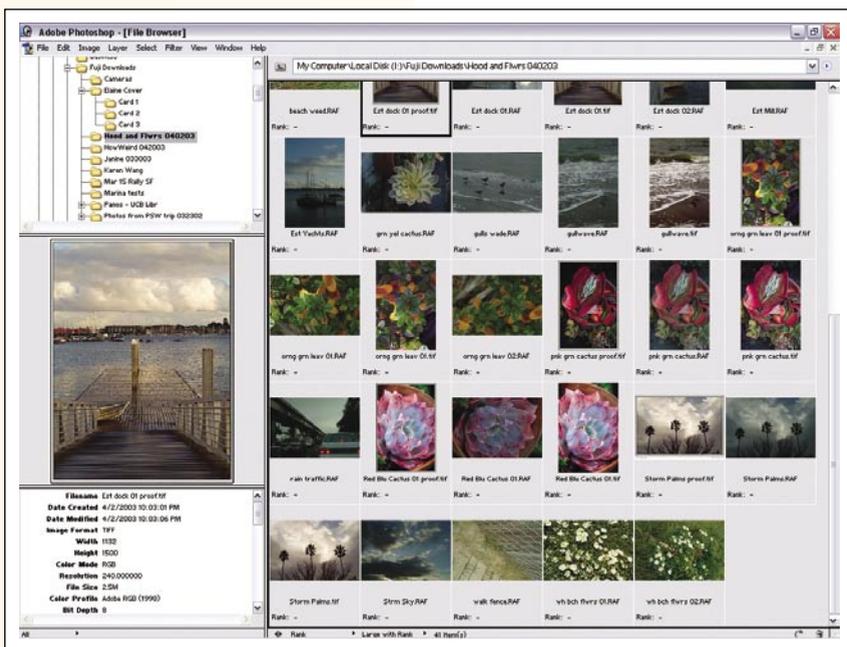


Figure 3-27. The Adobe Photoshop File Browser.

This is where the Adobe Photoshop File Browser, which comes with Photoshop and Photoshop Elements, comes in. Here are some of the common problems that the Photoshop File Browser (shown in [Figure 3-27](#)) will help you to solve. Each task is named in the order in which you should perform it.

Batch renaming. One of the most powerful features of the File Browser is Batch Rename. If you want to change the entire contents of a folder to have a common filename, you can simply select all the files in that folder, enter the part of the filename that the files will have in common in the first field, leave a space after that name, ask for a

serial number to be added in the next field and the file type extension in the last field, then click OK. All the files will be uniquely named with the same starting filename almost instantly. (As mentioned in [Chapter 1](#), you should do this as soon as you open a new folder of recently downloaded images.)

Ranking images. By choosing Large with Rank from the View By pull-down menu at the bottom of the File Browser palette, you will see the word Rank under each thumbnail. If you haven't assigned a rank, Rank will be followed by an underline (____). Click the underline, and an entry field will automatically appear. You can enter up to 15 alphanumeric characters, but I suggest you just enter one of the first four or five letters in the alphabet, like school grades. Then, when you sort by ranking, you'll see the images that you like best at the top of the browser instead of having to poke around through dozens of thumbnails.

Rotating images. After renaming, the first thing you should do when you download images is open the File Browser and rotate all vertical images to the proper orientation (unless your camera rotates them automatically). The File Browser doesn't actually rotate the image, just the thumbnail. It also inserts an instruction into the file header telling Photoshop to rotate the image as indicated every time it is opened. This is such a valuable data-saving feature that I wonder why Photoshop Album doesn't do exactly the same thing.

Viewing details. If you turn on the Expanded View portion of the File Browser, you can size that view to see a greatly enlarged version of the currently chosen thumbnail. I leave it on by default. Above it, you will see the browser path to show where in the directory the file is located. The File Info will appear immediately below the image preview.

Seeing the file info. You can see all the pertinent information about the photograph by clicking the Expanded View icon at the bottom of the File Browser. Choose All from the pull-down menu that appears when you click on the arrow just under the image info. Scroll down, and you'll see all the information you entered for the image. See [Figure 3-28](#).

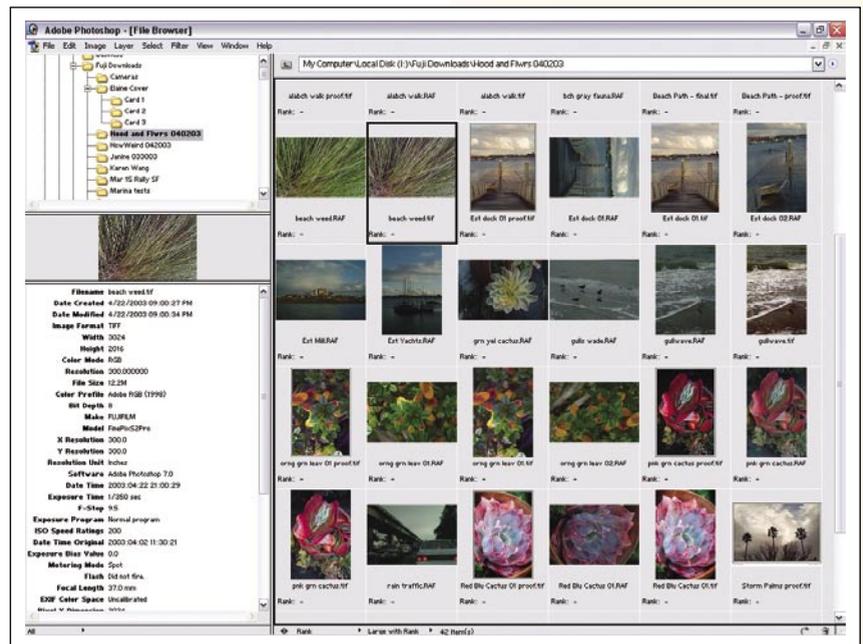


Figure 3-28. The File Browser, showing all the image information (see lower left).

EXPERT ADVICE

Getting the Grade

I always give finished images an A ranking so that when I browse to a given folder, anything I've already finished and that's ready to print or send out is at the top of the browser page. I can then highlight all of them at once, drag them into the workspace, and tell the printer to print them all while I'm editing other images or having dinner with the family.

TIP

Create Individual Folders for Shoots

If you've just returned from a shoot where all images were shot with the same digital camera, download all the files into the same folder. This makes it easier to both locate and rename all the files with the greatest efficiency with the Photoshop File Browser.

Tip 2: Use Your Image Management Program Wisely

Three image management programs were introduced in [Chapter 1](#): iPhoto, Adobe Photoshop Album, and Canto Cumulus. No matter which application you like, there's a certain process that you should always follow when you start to use these programs.

If you have either Adobe Photoshop Album or iPhoto 2, be sure to do the following to avoid headaches:

1. **Eliminate duplicates.** It is a good idea to rid yourself of all duplicate files on your system before you create your first catalog. Otherwise, you'll have many more files to manage, which can suck up all the time you should be spending hiking, going to movies, or getting quality time with the family.
2. **Create a catalog.** In the terminology of these two programs, a **catalog** is a database of image thumbnails, as well as user-supplied information such as captions, notes, and tags. You can have the program catalog all the image files on your system, or you can specify that only certain drives or folders be included. For example, I create one catalog for all my screen shots, book illustrations, and business graphics and another exclusively for photographs. This makes it much easier to sort and find what I am specifically looking for. Unfortunately, catalogs only *reference* images throughout the system. Both programs will lose track of files if you delete them or move them to a different location, or inadvertently change a drive letter.
3. **Tag files by category and subcategory.** The idea behind tagging is to get all your images, regardless of their location, organized by category and subcategory. Only Photoshop Album specifically uses tags, but you can accomplish the same thing with iPhoto 2. Each tag is simply a descriptive reference to that file—it does not alter the file itself. Photoshop Album has a fixed set of category tags, but you're allowed to create subcategories and new categories. You can also assign multiple category tags to a photo. For example, you can have a category called Women, and subcategories called Women in Business, Glamour, Girls, etc. Then, when you want to create a project that will involve only certain images within a limited number of categories, you can display only the images with that tag by simply clicking on the tag. This becomes extremely powerful when it comes time to create projects (see [Chapter 14](#)) because you can quickly

find just the photos that are best suited to that project and drop them into the Workspace window. Album 2.0 also has Catalogue tags that allow you to place files from any number of tag categories into any special-purpose collection of images.

4. **Add captions and titles.** Both programs allow you to add captions and titles. You can also do this inside the Adobe Photoshop File Browser. If you're using iPhoto, you need to add captions at this stage so that you can find and display files by category.
5. **Archive the files by tag.** At this point, you will find it good organizational practice to use the program's archiving capability to move all the files with a given tag to a dedicated folder. In Photoshop Album, you do this by displaying the items with a given tag and choosing File → Export. In the Export dialog, create the file folder you want to export to after clicking the Browse button. Leave all the other settings at their defaults and click OK. When the operation is complete, close the dialog; the tagged items you selected will still be displayed. Choose Edit → Select All and then press Delete. Be sure to check the "Also delete selected items from the hard disk?" box before clicking OK in the Confirm Deletion from Catalog box. Now, immediately delete the original files and their thumbnails and create a new catalog. It may take a few hours to create the new catalog, so I'd suggest you do it before leaving the studio for the day.
6. **Use the Workspace to create projects.** If you select a few files, you can drag them into a project window. In Photoshop Album, this window is called the Workspace. It's where you can gather files from a variety of tags or other search criteria, do minor editing on them such as one-click exposure and red-eye correction, and then incorporate them into a project.
7. **Archive the projects.** Since you might want to reuse or repurpose a contact sheet or slide show by putting it on a web site or submitting it as a portfolio, it's a good idea to simply store everything you need on a well-labeled CD-ROM. We'll discuss that later in this chapter.

Table 3-2 shows suggested subcategories for tags or titles. Suggested abbreviations for these categories are handy if you want to incorporate them in filenames. iPhoto doesn't have predefined categories, but you can still use these as guidelines. I strongly suggest that you make a similar chart, add every category and subcategory you can think of, then print it out and keep copies in all the places where you might add names to files (e.g., with your laptop, by your computer, etc.). This will ensure consistency and greatly ease all your other file-management chores.

iPhoto Albums

In iPhoto, the equivalent of *tags* is *albums*. Instead of assigning tags to images, you drag thumbnails from the main catalog into albums, which can be named for categories.

The default categories are Favorites, Hidden, People, Places, Events, and Other. See Table 3-2 for some quick suggestions to speed you along.

EXPERT ADVICE

Classification Abbreviations

You may want to add classification abbreviations to the ends of filenames while you're working in your album application. The tags or titles help you to keep these filename additions consistent with one another and with their tag names, and they help others to identify specific files, especially if you have to send them to a publisher or client.

Table 3-2. Suggested file categories and abbreviations

Category	Notes	Abbreviation
Favorites	Use for anything that pertains to a particular job or personal interest.	Invent your own
Hidden	I use this category for things that are so job-specific that I'm unlikely to use them as stock photos or for any other purpose.	hd
	Camera	cm
	Photo Accessories	paccs
	Screen Shots	ss
	Book Illustrations	bi
People		ppl
	Candids	cndd
	Friends	fnd
	Family	fam
	Glamour	glm
	Kids	kdz
	Babies	bab
	Executives	exc
	Workers	wkr
Places	This is for anything that has more to do with location than population. I duplicate tags when categories overlap, such as People and Russia. If I've photographed a particular place (Country, state, city, neighborhood) extensively, I add a specific tag for it.	plc
	Urban Landscape	ulnd
	Suburban Landscape	slnd
	Urban Detail	udt
	Suburban Detail	sdt
	Mountains	mtn
	Creeks	crk
	Beaches	bch
	Water	wtr
	Nature (also subdivided into plants, flowers, animals, scenes...)	nat
Events		evt
	Nightlife	nte
	Public Gatherings	gth
	Festivals	fst
	Party	pty
	Opening	opn
	Trade Show	tdsw
Other		otr
	Clouds	cld
	Surf	srf
	Backgrounds	bkg
	Textures	ttr
	Objects	obj

Canto Cumulus 5.5

As I mentioned in [Chapter 1](#), I really like using Canto Cumulus 5.5. So why not just forget Photoshop Album and its competitors and jump straight to Canto Cumulus? Well, it's mostly about cost. Photoshop Album costs \$50, and some of its competitors cost even less. Canto Cumulus 5.5 Single User Edition sells for \$100. The Workgroup Edition sells for closer to a thousand dollars, and each additional seat is \$295. In my experience, however, even a low-volume professional photographer will find that the Single User version pays for itself several times over in time saved.

Here are some of its advantages:

- One big advantage of Cumulus is the way it puts albums (“collections”) together. Instead of just asking you what files and drives you want to include, Canto actually shows you thumbnails of any directory, and you can either ask for all the files in that directory or simply drag and drop the files you want to catalog into the collection. There is an immense amount of flexibility in how you can put the collection together, too.
- Cumulus uses categories instead of tags. You can create categories and subcategories, then just drag files into them from directories in the Cumulus browser. There's no limit to the number of primary categories you can have or how you name them, and you can establish subcategories any way you want. You can also assign multiple categories to any image. Canto suggests assigning them by Image Type, Project, and Subject as the root categories. Not a bad idea.
- You can drag and drop categories, either by dragging the image file to the category or by dragging the category to the image, much as you do in Photoshop Album. You can search for an image by anything you type into its record fields. Record fields are automatically filled in with any data that is already in the file, such as EXIF data or the data you entered in Album or in the Photoshop File Info interface. You can then add additional fields in Cumulus if you wish.
- You can create collections of files by searching for any piece of information that exists in an image's data fields. This is one of the most amazing things about Canto Cumulus. For example, say you wanted to put together a collection of finished versions of red flower images photographed in the springtime. No problem—just search the right fields for the right data and you'll have your collection in an instant.

EXPERT ADVICE

Creating Web Portfolios Easily

Canto Cumulus can automatically create a web portfolio from a preselected collection of on-disk photos. This is, in my opinion, well worth the money alone. Files are sized and optimized automatically in a matter of minutes. Many of these programs will also create frames and automatically title the images. Of the programs mentioned in this chapter, Cumulus and Photoshop Album are best at this because they allow you to add meaningful titles to the file data and therefore don't have to depend on cryptic filenames. It's then very easy to individualize the style of the gallery by going into the HTML and changing things such as type fonts, background colors, and even the positioning of the individual files.

- Like Photoshop Album, Cumulus can also create slide shows and HTML web pages that catalog your photo collections. Cumulus creates a QuickTime slide show instead of a PDF slide show, regardless of the platform you're working on. You can move assets from one disk or directory to another, something you can only dream about in Album. You can also move assets to an FTP site if you need to share files with others.

When it comes to image management, it may seem as though you might do okay to use the file-browsing capabilities built into your operating system. However, these don't give you nearly the power and flexibility of a full-featured image management program. It's more difficult to change the size of thumbnails, and you certainly couldn't undertake the archiving operations mentioned later.

Given the power of Cumulus, you might be wondering whether there's any point in using Photoshop Album. I feel there is. Album excels in building projects such as slide shows, web galleries, books, CDs, and gifts, thanks to the ease with which you can tag files, view them visually, and drop them into the workspace window where they can be ordered for use in a project.

Tip 3: Use a Gray Card to Make Instant Accurate Corrections

If you are shooting in a shaded area next to an intensely colored wall, shooting with mixed lighting, or using fluorescent tubes that vary in color from their stated color balance (a maddeningly common occurrence), you may have a hard time adjusting color balance using some of the techniques described at the beginning of the chapter. This is because you have to guess at the proper changes in more than one color channel.

One way to help is to start by taking a test shot that includes an 18% gray card (or other item that is 18% gray), as shown in [Figure 3-29](#). These cards reflect 50% of the light cast on to them. Kodak's 18% gray card is very popular and can be found at most pro camera stores. Microstar's 18% gray lens cleaning cloth is compact, inexpensive, and serves multiple purposes. Personally, I like to order several cards at a time (they're easy to lose) and it's a good idea to have one in every camera's carrying case so that you don't forget it when you venture out to shoot.



Figure 3-29. The subject has a bluish cast. An 18% gray lens-cleaning cloth has been placed in the frame.

If you place your camera in spot-meter mode and set the white balance to automatic, you increase your chances of getting the proper color balance in the image when you take the shot. Unfortunately, the camera will probably pick another color balance as soon as you move the gray card or cloth from the picture. The best way around this is to keep the shutter button half depressed to lock in the settings, have someone else remove the gray card, then press the button all the way to take the shot.

If you can't do that, the gray card still serves a purpose, as it can be used by Photoshop as a basis to balance the overall color and exposure, yielding a photo such as [Figure 3-30](#). Here's how you do it.

1. When you get the image with the gray card/cloth into Photoshop or Photoshop Elements, open either the Levels or Curves dialog. (The Curves dialog is shown in [Figure 3-31](#).) At the lower-right side of the dialog, you will see three eyedroppers: black (shadow), gray (midtone), and white (highlight). Choose the gray eyedropper, click on the gray card in the photo, and presto! The color balance in that image is instantly perfect, yet your overall exposure doesn't change.
2. In the dialog, click the Save button. This will save the settings used to correct the image. When the Save dialog appears, give the .acv file a category name that describes all the images you want to correct according to the same setting. Save and close the gray card file.
3. Drag all the other files you want to color-correct into the workspace so that they're all open at the same time. Click each in turn to make it active, then press **Cmd/Ctrl-M** to open the Curves dialog. Click the Load button (it brings up a standard "File Open"-type dialog) to load the .acv file you saved for the gray card exposure. When the file loads, the color balance will automatically correct. If this is the last curves adjustment you need to make for this image, just click **OK** and then **Save As**, and add "clr corr" to the filename just before the final serial number.
4. Repeat Step 3 for all the other images in the series. If you have created an action, just highlight it in the Actions palette and click **Play** to do everything in this exercise with a couple of mouse clicks.

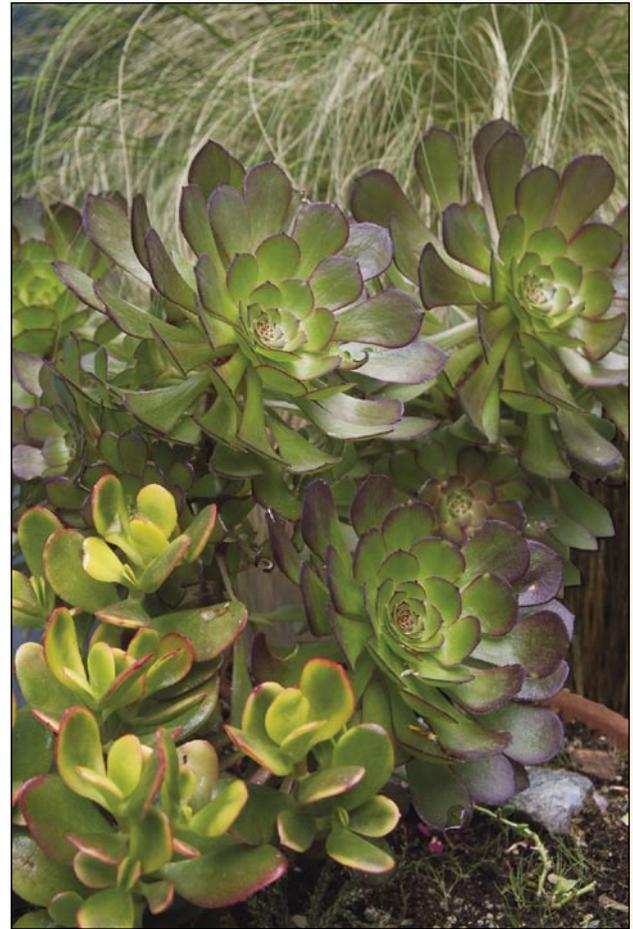


Figure 3-30. This image has been color-corrected with the same settings used to correct [Figure 3-29](#). The color corrections were made in the Curves dialog, and the exposure corrections were made at the same time.

EXPERT ADVICE

Using Actions

The gray-card routine works even faster if you create a Photoshop action for it. All you have to do is create a new action. Name the action in the resulting dialog and click **OK** to start recording. Then perform these steps and click the **Stop** icon at the bottom of the Actions palette when you've completed the routine.

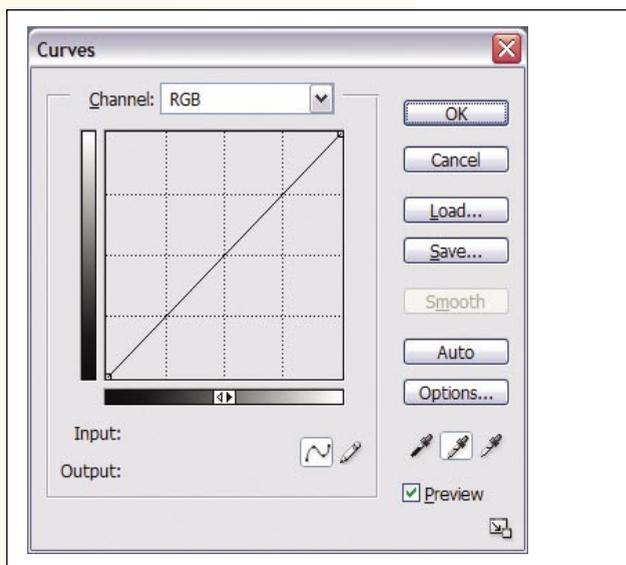


Figure 3-31. The Curves dialog with the gray eyedropper tool highlighted.

Experimenting with Eyedroppers

The black and white eyedroppers can also correct color balance if you can find an absolutely black or white object in the picture, but they will also likely change the overall exposure. It's worth experimenting with these options at least once, as there may be times when they are useful. However, they should be used only as a last resort or an intentional deviation meant to create a "mood."

Sadly, it's not practical to stick a gray card into every shooting situation. All too often, you simply need to shoot first and ask questions later. Thankfully, Photoshop lets you correct color balance in numerous ways, so with a little bit of effort you'll likely produce a perfectly acceptable result. For instance, you can use the technique described earlier when setting levels; you can color-correct specific areas of brightness by using the Curves dialog on one or more color channels; and you can even break down and use the Image → Color Balance, Image → Hue/Saturation, or Image → Variations dialog to change the color balance. If you've shot RAW files, you can also make adjustments with the Temperature and Tint sliders in the Adobe Photoshop Camera RAW plug-in dialog.

EXPERT ADVICE

Don't Forget Photoshop Adjustment Layers!

If you use the Levels or Curves command as an adjustment layer, you can instantly adjust other images shot in the same conditions. To do this, open the original image and its Layers palette and link all the adjustment layers. Next, open any image in which you want to make identical adjustments. Make the first image active and then drag the linked adjustment layers to the image you just opened. The original adjustment layers instantly appear in the Layers palette of the new image, and the layers are automatically adjusted.

Tip 4: Keep the Original Image Intact When You Start Making Modifications

One of the great things about digital photography is that it accelerates your ability to meet your deadlines. In a rush, however, it's easy to forget that once you've modified an image—particularly if it's an already-compromised JPEG—you have lost image quality data that you can *never* retrieve.

There's an easy solution: *never make modifications to the original file*. I always add the abbreviation "orig" to the original interpretation of any file, especially if that interpretation is a JPEG image. Most originals, such as Figure 3-32, are destroyed simply because the photographer or the assistant forgot that a



Figure 3-32. The original photo.



Figure 3-33. One of many interpretations that has the same file size.

duplicate should be made before making modifications to the image (such as the zoom and color correction in [Figure 3-33](#)).

As I hinted at earlier, you can also protect the original by rotating the thumbnail representation of the file in the Adobe Photoshop CS File Browser before you open it inside of Photoshop. This saves a rotated proxy of the image and leaves the original completely unscathed. It also tells Photoshop how to rotate the image as soon as the file is opened. As long as you save the file with a new name when you're done working with it in Photoshop, it never needs to be rotated again. To rotate the image in the File Browser, click the Rotate icon in the bottom left margin of the File Browser. (Click Opt/Alt simultaneously to rotate counterclockwise.)

Because many of their browsing functions overlap, it's difficult to know when to use the File Browser versus the OS browser versus applications such as iPhoto, Photoshop Album, or Canto Cumulus. Here's what I do: use the Photoshop File Browser with the Camera RAW plug-in to open your RAW files, to name images as soon as they're downloaded from the camera, and to rotate images. Once you've done that, it's easier to keep your ducks in a row if you start working in iPhoto, Photoshop Album, or Cumulus.

EXPERT ADVICE

Immediate Duplication

It's a good idea to get in the habit of choosing Image → Duplicate the *minute* you open an image (you probably noticed that we did that earlier). A dialog will appear asking you to name the duplicate; you can substitute the "orig" suffix for one that describes how you'll be interpreting the image. Then close the original file (you don't need to save it) before you've done anything more to it.

EXPERT ADVICE

Instantaneous Clout

Believe it or not, one of the best reasons you should keep all your layers intact is to impress and win over your boss, client, or editor. Using layers allows you to keep alternative versions of the same image in the same file. You can show these different versions simply by clicking the Layers palette's Show/Hide box for the appropriate layers.

Tip 5: Keep Layers 'Til the End

Once the layers in an image have been flattened and the file has been closed, you can't make a change to one of the layers without starting over from scratch. This is true when it comes to correcting exposure as well as the effects used on objects. The problem is, the more layers you have, the larger the file size (with the exception of adjustment layers, which add virtually nothing to file size). In fact, each layer can increase file size by as much as 100% of the size of the background layer. Compare [Figure 3-34](#) with [Figure 3-35](#) to see all the layers that were added to the original photograph. [Figure 3-36](#) shows the actual layers in the Layers palette.

This brings me to another valuable tip: *keep those layers*. There is a wealth of advantages to keeping layers for as long as possible before flattening the image. You should flatten or merge layers only when you're sure that you'll no longer need them, or when the file size is so large that every little edit takes minutes instead of seconds.



Figure 3-34. Starting from scratch.



Figure 3-35. There are six layers in this image, including correction layers, the helicopter, the birds in the foreground, and the birds shadows.

When you are ready to send the file elsewhere and *don't want it to be altered*, choose Image → Duplicate. Then flatten and rename the duplicate to reflect the purpose for which it will be used. I recommend saving it as a TIFF file.

Many people are too miserly when it comes to saving hard drive space, a hangover from the days when it wasn't affordable or easy to add drive space to an existing computer. Today, FireWire and USB 2.0 ports allow you to daisy-chain numerous drives together for about \$1 per gigabyte. Since those drives are also hot-pluggable, they can be stored offline when they're used to hold older projects or to archive images. In other words, there's no practical limit to how much hard drive space you can easily attach to one computer. Don't sell yourself short.

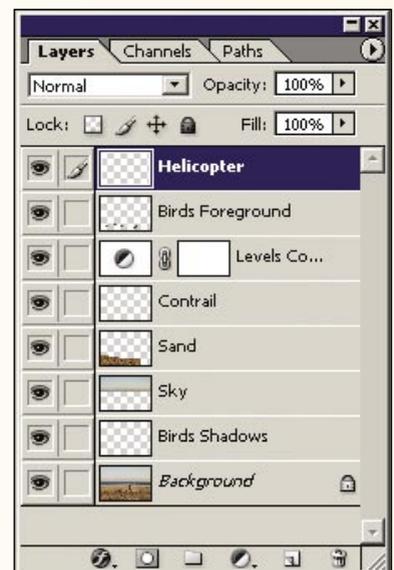


Figure 3-36. The Layers palette for the photo in Figure 3-35.

To remedy this problem, you need to employ both of the following solutions:

1. Create good habits for naming, tagging, and storing files as you create them.
2. Immediately get rid of all the useless duplicates on your system before you start using file-organizing software such as Adobe Photoshop Album.

Note that getting rid of duplicate files is not a repeat of the advice to delete all the mistakes from your camera cards before you download them. The problem here is that it's too easy to create numerous copies of the same file *after* you've downloaded it. You may create various versions because you've exported them to different computers within your office system. Or you may just forget where you stored the file and end up saving it again. I once found myself with 45,000 photographs on my main computer when I tried to consolidate all my image files and about four-fifths of them turned out to be duplicates. Trust me: getting rid of all those duplicates is one of the most tedious, boring, and time-consuming jobs on the planet!

The traditional way to get rid of duplicate files is to search for all the image files with a given filename using the search facilities built into the operating system. Some image management software, such as Adobe Photoshop Album, Canto Cumulus 5.5 (the traditional pro favorite), Picasa, and even the Adobe Photoshop and Photoshop Elements File Browsers can help in getting rid of duplicates because you can see the images. However, this just takes *way* too long if you've been collecting digital images for a year or more and haven't carefully managed your accumulation of dupes.

What you really need is a “de-duplication utility.” My personal favorite is a \$24 program appropriately called DeDupe (see [Figure 3-38](#)). If you're a Mac user, you can run DeDupe with the aid of VirtualPC. If you want, download the full version from www.technopundits.com/dedupe.htm and put it to work right away.

When you set up DeDupe, you can specify which drives and directories you want to search, as well as what file types you want to search for. Then, just click the Run icon and the program does a thorough search. On my system, which contains over a terabyte of files, this can take over an hour, but when the search is finished all the files are sorted alphabetically by name. DeDupe automatically makes the first file with a given name the “primary” file, codes it with a gray bar, and then lists all the duplicate files beneath it. (Files with different filename extensions are not treated as duplicates.)

WARNING

Exercise extreme caution when trying to de-dupe files that have the original serial numbers given to them by the camera. It is entirely possible that multiple files have exactly the same name and are exactly the same size. Be sure to rename these files as soon as you download them so that you can avoid this problem (see [Tip 1](#) for more on using the File Browser for batch renaming). If you already have hundreds of serialized files downloaded, it wouldn't be a bad idea to use the File Browser to batch-rename them all before de-duping.

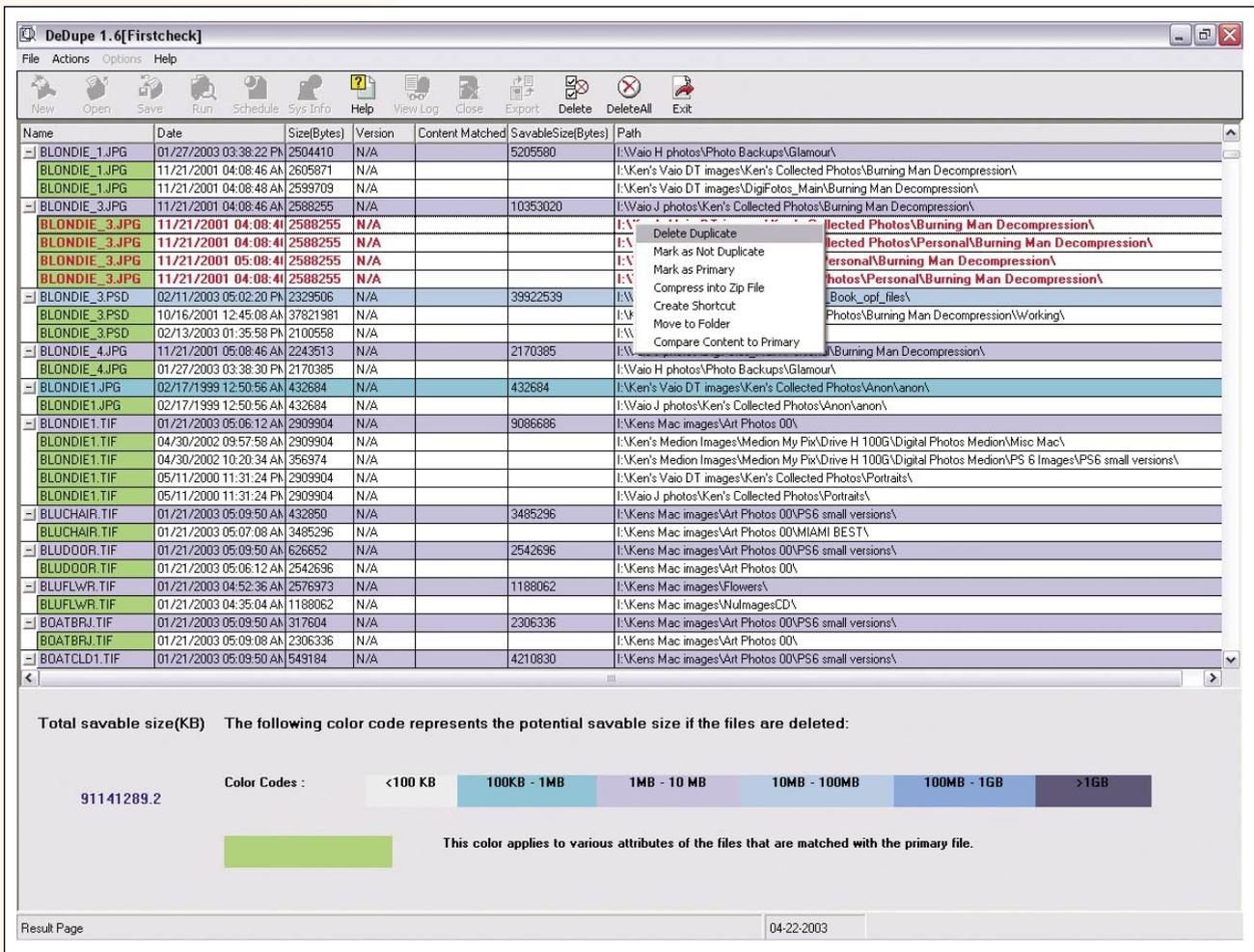


Figure 3-38. The DeDup file duplicate search interface.

Here's the most efficient routine I've found for eliminating unnecessary files using DeDup:

1. Scroll down until you have an entire screen of real duplicates.
2. Mark the primary file for each list of duplicates. Use the Return/Enter key to fly through the cautionary dialogs.
3. Shift-click to highlight the entire list.
4. Ctrl-click to deselect the primary files.
5. Double-check to make sure that all the highlighted files are actually duplicates (with the same file size and date). Deselect any that aren't.

6. Right-click to choose Delete Duplicate, then press Return/Enter twice to fly through warning dialogs.
7. Scroll up until you have a whole new page of duplicates.

Columns can be narrowed or widened by dragging the vertical table line. Do this to ensure that you can see all the data you need to see to determine if the file is actually a duplicate.

If you follow the suggestions in [Tip 2: Use Your Image Management Program Wisely](#), you should never need to use DeDupe. However, if and when you do need it, DeDupe can be a lifesaver. However, DeDupe does lack some capability that I'd like to see added: the ability to preview a thumbnail, the option to delete all files of a given name, and the option to rename files on the spot in case a duplicate isn't really a duplicate (e.g., a web, proof, or small version of the file, or a version that has been edited but hasn't been cropped or resized).

As noted earlier, if you're a Mac user, you won't be able to use DeDupe unless you own the version of Virtual PC that's appropriate to your operating system.

Tip 7: Use Special Names

Adobe Photoshop and Photoshop Elements give you an impressive list of file formats that you can save to. They then complicate matters by adding a variety of options as to what to include with a file when you save it. If you don't pay attention to how you name your files when you're choosing those options, you'll either needlessly increase the number of duplicate files on your system or you'll start deleting files that you spent hours editing. Compare [Figure 3-39](#) and [Figure 3-40](#) to see examples of a magnified JPEG and a magnified TIF, based on various settings that we've given the files when we save it. (These are two separate images, each magnified to 400%.)

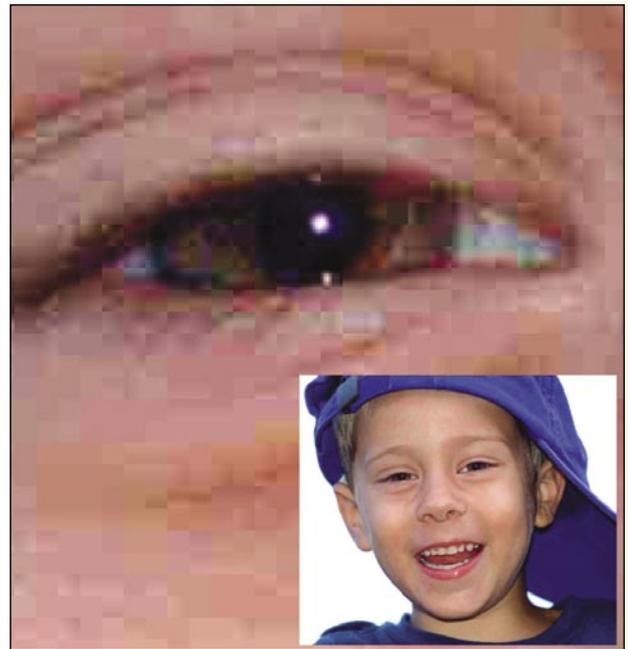


Figure 3-39. Detail of a JPEG file with moderate compression (magnified to 400% of original image). Note the blockiness.



Figure 3-40. Detail of a TIF file (magnified to 400% of original image). Note how much better the image quality is compared to a JPEG.

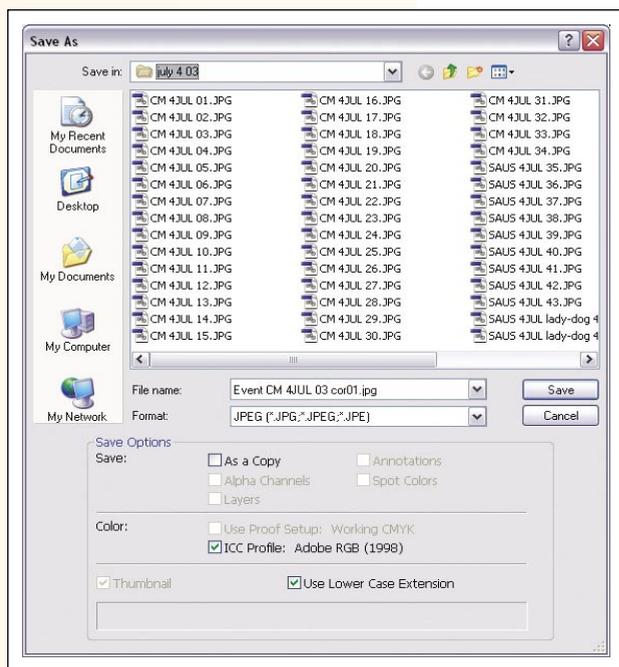


Figure 3-41. Note the abbreviation that has been inserted at the end of the filename.

The solution to this problem lies in doing two things:

1. Choose your save options carefully and purposefully.
2. Add information to the filename that lets you know how and why the file differs from the original enhanced file.

Naming files so that you know how and why they differ from other versions of the same photo makes it much easier to distinguish different versions of the same files from others that are simply duplicates. As mentioned previously, this is best done by adding a short abbreviation as the very last element of the filename when the Save or Save As dialog appears. Photoshop always shows the current name of the file in the File Name field. Place your cursor just ahead of the dot that precedes the file extension and then type in the abbreviation. [Table 3-3](#) shows a list of abbreviations that I use to show the important characteristics of a file; these should be added to the abbreviations that designate the file's purpose. I also add a serial number to the original in order to track different versions of these operations.

Table 3-3. Helpful Photoshop abbreviations

Abbreviation	Meaning
cor01	The primary exposure-corrected file; nothing else has been done to this image. You will want to go back to this file if you decide to explore a whole new route to enhancing the image. The serial number indicates further corrections.
fx01	Special effects have been added to the original.
cmp01	Additional images have been composited into the original.
sm01	This is a small 1024 × 768 version of the file that can be used for presentations, CD albums, project printing, etc. Using smaller images saves time when a prototype project involves numerous images.
wb01	The image is web optimized.
pub01	The image is sized and profiled for offset printed publication.
lg01	The image is flattened and sized for an exhibit print.

See [Figure 3-41](#) for a practical application.

There are literally dozens of image file formats, so it's a good idea to limit your formats to those you're most likely to use. Unless you have an application that requires a peculiar format in order for you to do a job, you should convert all of these weird formats to the four that are most universally accepted across the various computer platforms. Doing so will save a lot of confusion later on. [Table 3-4](#) shows the most common Photoshop extensions, and some recommendations on using them.

Table 3-4. Common Photoshop extensions

Extension	Purpose
.psd	The Adobe Photoshop multilayer file format, which can also be read by most other image-editing and paint applications. Always use this format for works in progress, including those that you may want to further alter at some later date.
.tif	The most cross-platform and cross-application compatible file format for single-layer lossless images. Use this for anything that you are shipping as a finished file for publication or for service bureau printing.
.jpg	The most widely accepted full-color format for photo-quality web images or for any other application where files must be highly compressed in order to save storage or data transmission space. Do <i>not</i> use this format to archive files that must maintain maximum quality.
.gif	The best web format for animations and colored text, drawings, and flat-color illustrations.

The Save As dialog

You may find it helpful to make use of the following features in the Photoshop and Photoshop Elements “Save As” dialogs. Most of these options should already be turned off, unless you have created that entity (e.g., annotations or layers) before saving the file. Some of these options are not available with Photoshop Elements.

As a Copy. This option lets you save a version of an image that you’ve altered to a different filename. You can also change the filename by adding the distinction codes listed in the preceding section.

Alpha channels. Any time you spend more than 10 minutes making a selection, it’s a good idea to save that selection so that you can recall it if you decide to make more changes to an image (choose Select → Save Selection). The saved selection takes the form of an alpha (transparency) channel, which will be bundled with the file if the Alpha Channels checkbox in the Save As dialog is checked. The downside of saving each selection is that it increases the file size by approximately one-third from the original RGB file. So you don’t want to save alpha channels if you won’t be using them again for a final version of a file or for a file that has to be web-optimized. We’ll talk more about this in [Chapter 5](#).

Layers. Each image layer can easily double the file size. However, you should save layers whenever reasonable. If disk space is a worry, you might be better off biting the bullet and buying more drives instead of having to re-create the entire editing process just to make a slight change in exposure or re-create a special effect or composite.

HINT

Saving for the Web

Choosing File → Save for Web gives you extensive control over the optimization of the image. Optimization is the process of making the best compromise between image quality and image size. See [Chapter 13, Sell It on the Web](#), for more information.

Annotations. Many people don't know that Adobe Photoshop CS lets you add both voice and text annotations to an image. These annotations can be a big help if you're part of a crew that is working on an image, or if you want to collaborate with someone else. They're also useful as notes or reminders of something that you might want to teach or write about later on. On the other hand, annotations can add quite a bit to file size and won't work in all file formats, so don't save annotations if you don't need them. To make an annotation, simply choose the text or voice annotation tool from the Toolbox and click when the cursor is over the part of the image that you want to annotate. You can open and close the annotation at any time. If you make all annotations on a separate layer, you can hide that layer anytime you want to see the image without the annotation markers.

Spot colors. Spot colors are process colors that are printed with a dedicated ink—usually to ensure a perfect match with a client's logo or product color (think Coke red or Master's Tournament green). If you've specified them in a file to be used by the client whose color it is, be sure that the color stays with the file.

Color profile. Be sure to embed the color profile if you want the destination printer to print the file as you envisioned it.

Image Preview options. If you check this box, you will save the thumbnails. I'd recommend doing this unless the file is being sent to an Internet destination where file space is important.

Try to make the Photoshop Save/Save As dialogs the only place where you set and change the options described above—even if other utilities allow you to change them. Keep in mind that if you don't conscientiously stick to the plan, your efforts at effective file management will have a less consistent payoff. You'll start wondering if it's really safe to eliminate what you think is a duplicate, and you'll start designating primary files that really should have been eliminated.

Tip 8: Add and Maintain File Information

You need a way to record the circumstances and feelings that surrounded the taking of the photograph, or the technical information about how the picture was taken (known as EXIF data), or the relevant categories and keywords that might help you locate files that are suited to a particular market.

Photoshop allows you to enter and save various kinds of information with a file any time you open it by using the File Info command (shown in both [Figure 3-42](#) and [Figure 3-43](#)). This command is located on the crowded File menu, which makes it very easy to overlook when saving and retrieving information about your image. So make it a habit of choosing File → File Info as soon as you use Photoshop to open a file for the first time.

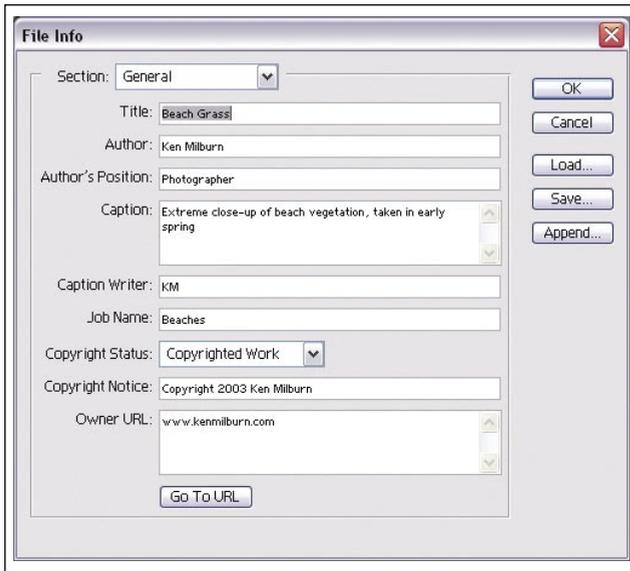


Figure 3-42. Screenshot of user-entered general file information.

At a minimum, add a title that relates the file to the shoot it was taken for (e.g., “Telegraph Ave – student bookstore façade”). Later, you can use the search capability of other file management programs to locate all the Telegraph Ave photos. If you’re getting paid for the shot, name it after the client and assignment. In any case, be sure the name of the shoot is descriptive enough and standardized enough to help you relate it to other shoots of the same type. Then, create a macro that will open the file and append the information from a saved file to the file info for each image in the folder (you’ve created a separate folder for each shoot, right?). Now all you have to do is open the file info for each file and add whatever information is unique to that file, such as a caption or certain keywords.

It would be nice if you could use this information to find certain files from within Photoshop and then have them show up in the browser, but unfortunately that can’t be done yet. But at least you can use the File Info dialog to see all of a file’s information or add more information.

Note that if you maintain the file info, you can use some image management programs, such as Canto Cumulus. See [Tip 2: Use Your Image Management Program Wisely](#) for more information.

Tip 9: Archive Regularly to CD or DVD

This may seem obvious, but there are many reasons why you should consider archiving your work. First of all, your photos are extremely valuable—but you probably don’t need to be told that. You may also find yourself needing to keep collections of certain types of subject matter on a media that is easy

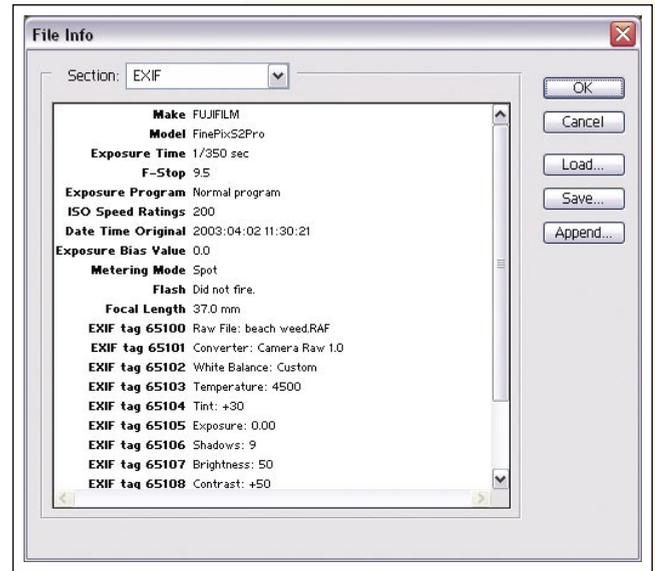


Figure 3-43. Screenshot of EXIF data that comes with a file. This is often provided by the camera.

to duplicate and ship. (Of course, you can simply use either Windows XP or Mac OS X to move image files to a folder, but it's tough to find, edit, and organize photos for a particular purpose when you're in a hurry.) Also, you may want to be able to include some way of presenting the images on the CD, such as a slide show. Finally, hard drive space isn't infinite, even if you have dozens of 250 MB hard drives daisy-chained to your computer.

Once again, the solution for avoiding an organizational mess is to establish a logical workflow using an image management program, such as iPhoto, Adobe Photoshop Album, or Canto Cumulus. The following workflow provides a good starting point that you can customize to your own needs and preferences. Here's a method to offload projects to CDs that you can find easily and ship anywhere at a moment's notice without having to worry about Internet download times.

EXPERT ADVICE

Organizing by CD

If I make up a portfolio, I place all the files to be printed into a workspace and then make a CD of those images. Then, any time I want to duplicate the portfolio, book, or presentation, I can just mount the CD, open all the files in Photoshop, and then print them. Be sure to have the printer profile (we'll discuss this in [Chapter 11](#)) on the CD, too. That makes it easier to find the correct profile for that particular group of images if you intend them to be printed on a specific printer/paper/ink combination.

1. **Use iPhoto 2 or Photoshop Album to select the files.** You really want to use your image management program to do this. If you've already tagged files by category and subcategory, it should be easy to quickly collect all the candidates for a particular project by displaying only images that are tagged with the appropriate categories. Try not to use another program such as the Adobe Photoshop File Browser. You could end up skipping over some files that belong to more than one category.
2. **Drop the files into a Workspace window.** Highlight or search for only the tags that suit the project you're working on. You'll probably want to eliminate any apparent duplicates and be sure you've chosen versions that are appropriate to your project (i.e., the final exposure-corrected and layer-composited versions). It's much easier to make these choices when you can see both the image data and notes and the image itself. When you find the exact image you want, simply drop it into the Workspace window. See [Figure 3-44](#).
3. **Export the project images to a CD.** It may be that all you want to do for this project is create a CD that contains only the images you want to work on or send to a team member.

To create a CD of all the files you've placed in the workspace, just use the Export command. (In Photoshop Album, click the Command button in the Taskbar at the top and choose Export from the pull-down menu.) When the Export dialog opens, choose the file type and photo size (be sure to choose Original if you don't want the image resized before exporting), click the Browse button to locate and name the CD or folder you want to export the images to, and then choose whether you want to add a common base name or simply use the original filenames. If you choose a common base name, each file will have a serial number added to it.

You may want to create another CD of slide-show files to preview a project or to create a low-cost portfolio. This can be very useful, as portfolios are often not returned because potential clients want to keep them for future reference, so you likely won't want to spend several hundred dollars on a portfolio case, mounting boards, and custom prints. A CD slide show is much more affordable. It also provides a great way to test the contents of a portfolio before you go to the expense of making up a hard-copy portfolio.

To create a CD slide show from the images in the workspace, click the Start Creations Wizard button and choose Slideshow from the Creations Wizard window (see Figure 3-45). Now all you need to do is follow the instructions in the Wizard. You can choose to create your slide show as hard copy for print, export it to a self-playing CD-ROM, email it to someone, or use it to order prints online. If you want to do more than one of the above, simply go back and continue to push buttons on the fifth page of the Creations Wizard.

4. **Print a contact sheet that can be stored with the CD.** While you're still in the Workspace window, you can also print the images to a contact sheet that contains the captions, filenames, and dates for each photo. I would like to see the individual images be somewhat larger, but you can control that to some extent by the

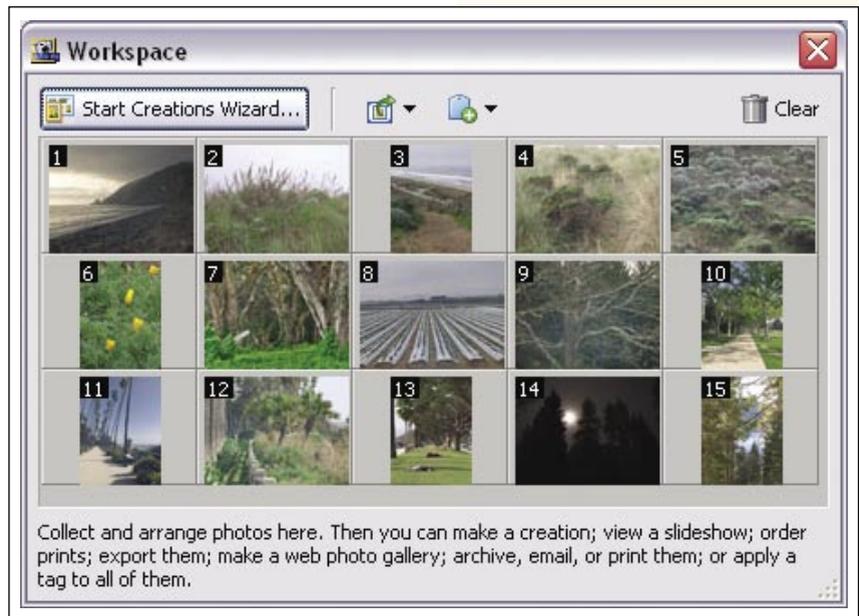


Figure 3-44. The Photoshop Album Start Creations Wizard. The images you see in the window have been dragged from the album workspace and will be used in whatever creation or export you choose to make.

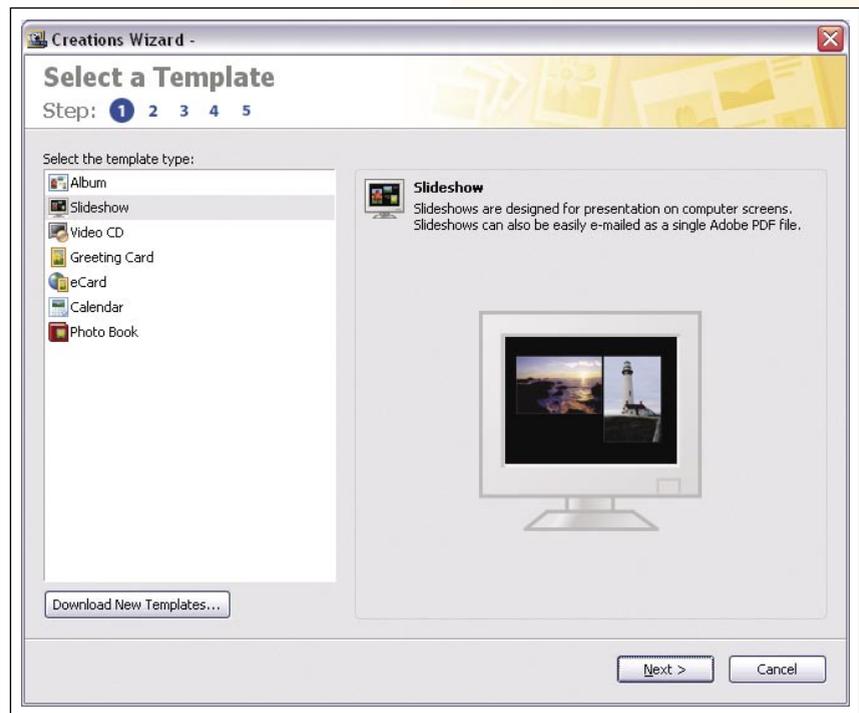


Figure 3-45. The Creations Wizard.

EXPERT ADVICE

Use Glossy Paper for Professional-Looking Shots

I buy 100-sheet packages of Epson or Kodak glossy paper at my local discount or office supply warehouse for about \$20 a package. This is not archival paper, but it certainly lasts long enough to present a contact sheet to a client for preprinting markup and image approval. Also, the images look professionally photographic—which is not the case if contact sheets are printed on standard-weight office-size photo papers.

Slide Shows and Email

Photoshop Album and iPhoto also let you create emails and email-able slide shows. The process for doing this is essentially the same as for creating a slide show except that you choose email as a destination. Also, if you're producing a slide show on disk, there's no need for the program to optimize files for the Internet, so your images can be enlarged to fit whatever size screen the viewer has available.

fact that you can choose any number of columns. You can also choose Individual Prints rather than Contact Sheet in the Print Workspace Window (see Figure 3-46), and the program will automatically fit as many prints as possible on the page, given the size of the print you've chosen. The only problem with this is that there's no identifying filename or caption, so you could lose track of exactly which print the client had chosen. I sometimes present the prints both ways, so that the client can see somewhat larger prints for making final annotations and choices, while using the contact sheets as a reference. You may want to rotate images so that you can view both landscape and portrait images without having to physically rotate the page. That's up to you, but remember that Photoshop Album can't rotate a proxy. It resamples the image and could therefore cause some data loss, which is especially worrisome if you're rotating JPEGs that are already lossy.

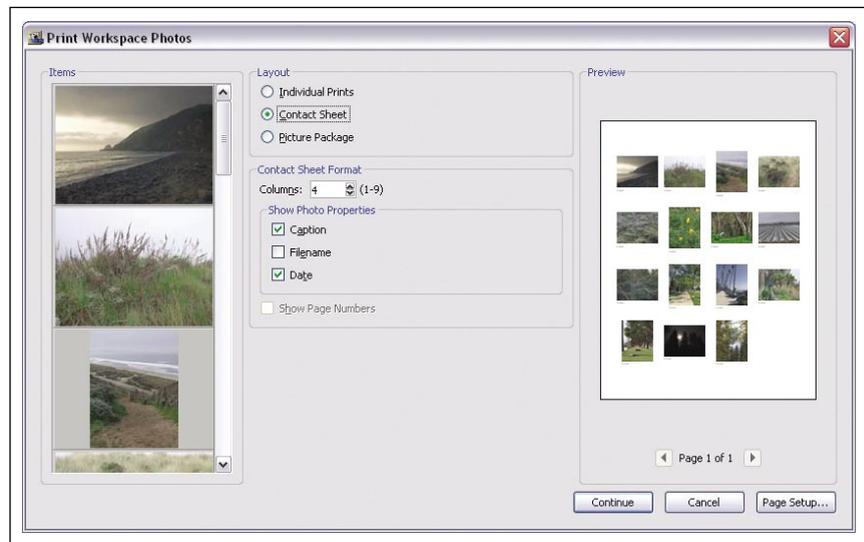


Figure 3-46. The Print Workspace dialog in Photoshop Album.

There are, of course, many other programs and methods that let you accomplish all of the tasks in this section. However, I tend to use the workspace in Photoshop Album to organize the images that will be placed in those programs or used in those methods, just because it's the easiest way to keep all the appropriate images in one easy-to-find place—preferably a CD. I just wish there were a way to put multiple CD projects on one disk. This would let you export both the slide show and the files you might want to print or archive.