

VISUAL QUICKSTART GUIDE



Adobe Photoshop Elements

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© INCLUDES FREE WEB EDITION WITH VIDEO

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Managing Photos in the Organizer

Digital photography can be a double-edged sword. Ironically, its greatest advantage to the amateur photographer—the ability to quickly and easily capture a large number of images, and then instantly download them to a computer—can also be its greatest source of frustration. Once hundreds of images have been downloaded, photographers find themselves faced with the daunting task of sorting through myriad files, with incomprehensible filenames, to find those dozen or so “keepers” to assemble into an album or post online for friends.

The Organizer workspace comes to the rescue with a set of tools and functions to help you locate, identify, and organize your photos.

Because we need some source material to work with, this chapter jumps right into importing photos from a digital camera and opening images already on your hard disk.

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Import Images

Often, digital cameras come with their own software to help you browse and manage photos—but don't bother. Access your camera from within Photoshop Elements and then import your images from the camera, or copy photos first to your hard drive and then open them in the Organizer.

To import images from a digital camera (Standard dialog):

1. Connect your digital camera to your computer using the instructions provided by the camera manufacturer, or connect a card reader containing the camera's memory card.

If the Photo Downloader launches automatically, skip to step 3. If you don't see the Photo Downloader, continue to step 2.

2. If you're in the Home screen or in the Editor, click the Organizer button to launch the Organizer.

If you're in the Organizer already, click Import and choose From Camera Or Card Reader (**FIGURE 3.1**). You can also choose File > Get Photos And Videos, or press Ctrl+G/Command+G.

The Photo Downloader dialog opens in its Standard mode (**FIGURE 3.2**). For more importing options, see "To import images from a digital camera (Advanced dialog)," just ahead in this chapter.

3. Your camera or card will likely be selected in the Get Photos From menu, but if not, choose it.

Listed below the menu are the number of pictures, and their combined size.

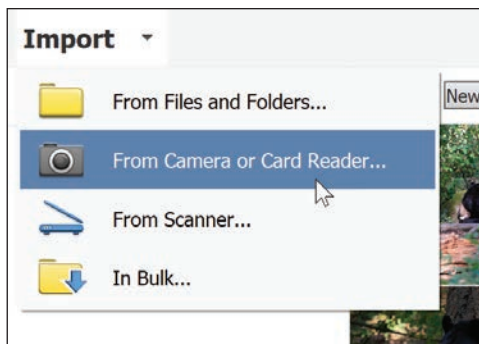


FIGURE 3.1 Choose From Camera Or Card Reader to download photos from your digital camera.

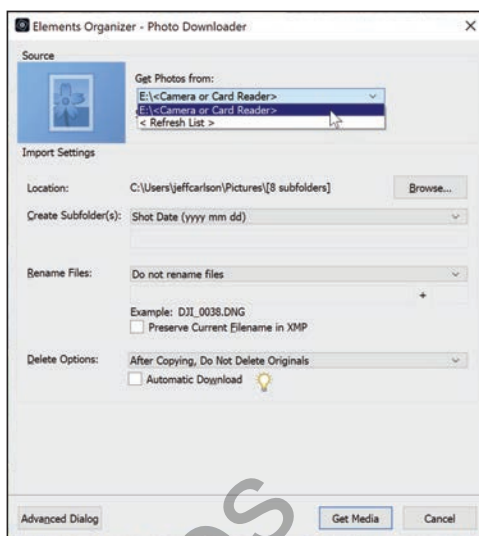


FIGURE 3.2 The Photo Downloader's Standard dialog makes it easy to import all photos in one fell swoop.

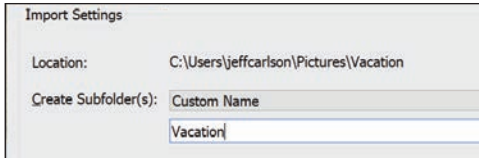


FIGURE 3.3 To make it easier to find images on disk later, specify a custom name for subfolders.

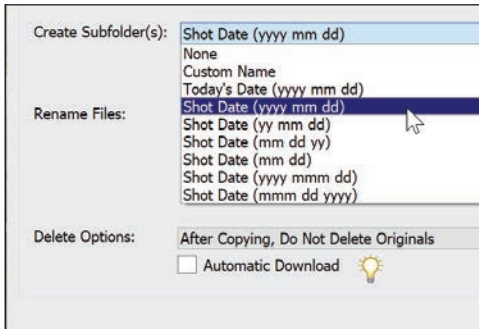


FIGURE 3.4 Choose a date format for naming subfolders with the images' capture dates.

Where the Image Files Exist

To keep track of the images in your library, the Organizer creates a *catalog*, typically located in the Pictures folder on your computer. When you import photos into your library, the image files are saved in the same location as the catalog. See “Work with Catalogs,” later in this chapter, for more information.

- By default, the Photo Downloader saves images to your Pictures folder; hold your pointer over the path listed next to Location to view the full destination if it's truncated.

If you want to save the files to a different location, click the Browse (Windows)/Choose (macOS) button and select a folder or create a new one. Then click OK.

- By default, the Photo Downloader creates new subfolders to store each batch of imported images, named according to the shot dates. From the Create Subfolder(s) menu, you can customize this behavior by choosing one of the following options:
 - ▶ **None** saves the files in the folder specified by Location, normally your My Pictures folder.
 - ▶ **Custom Name** creates a folder with a name that you enter (**FIGURE 3.3**).
 - ▶ **Today's Date** automatically creates a folder named with the current date.
 - ▶ **Shot Date** creates folders with the date the images were captured; choose your preferred date format from one of the options (**FIGURE 3.4**).

- Choose an option from the Rename Files menu to automatically name the imported files something more descriptive than what your camera assigns.

For example, your camera's default naming scheme is probably something like IMG_1031.JPG. With a Rename Files option selected, you can name and number a set of photos “Vacation,” for instance. Then your photos will be saved and named Vacation001.jpg, Vacation002.jpg, and so on.

continues on next page

7. In the Delete Options area, choose what happens to the files on the memory card. Just to be safe, I recommend leaving the option set to After Copying, Do Not Delete Originals, and then erase the card in-camera later.

In the Windows version of the Organizer, the Automatic Download option is useful if you want to offload pictures onto the computer without going through the Photo Downloader. Images download automatically when a camera or other device is attached. You can turn it off later in the Organizer's preferences.

8. Click Get Media to download the selected images to your computer.

Your photos first appear in their own Organizer window. Click the Back button (which sometimes reads All Media, depending on context) to return to the main Organizer window (**FIGURE 3.5**).

To import images from a digital camera (Advanced dialog):

1. Follow steps 1 through 8 in the previous sequence, but in step 2 click the Advanced Dialog button to view the Advanced options (**FIGURE 3.6**).
2. Click to deselect the box under any photos you do not want to import. By default, the Organizer assumes you want to download every image.
3. In the Advanced Options area, choose to enable or disable the following (**FIGURE 3.7**):
 - ▶ **Automatically Fix Red Eyes** attempts to find and correct red eye problems in your photos as they're downloaded.
 - ▶ **Automatically Suggest Photo Stacks** groups similar photos together for easy organization and review later

To view your entire photo library, click the Back button.

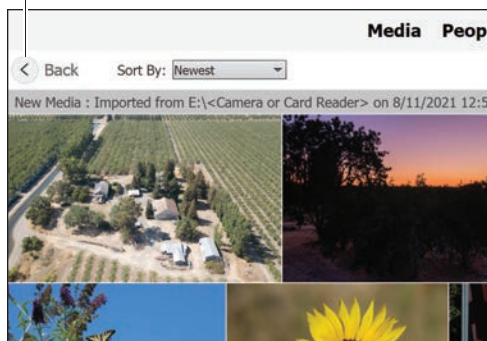


FIGURE 3.5 Photos downloaded from the camera or memory card appear in the Organizer.

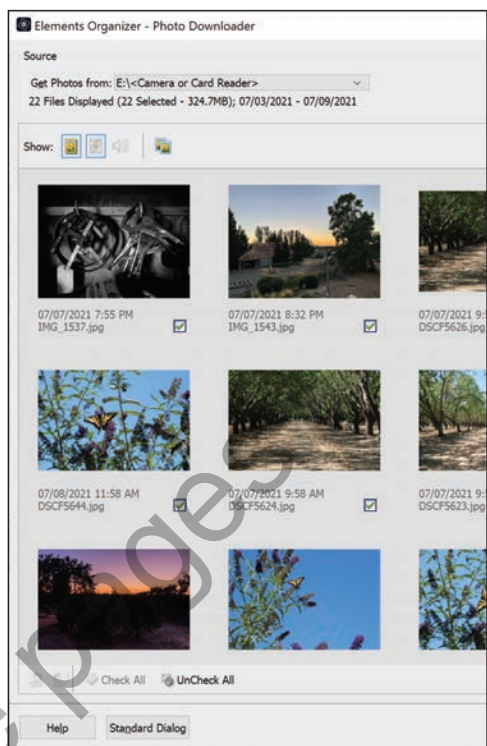


FIGURE 3.6 Preview all photos on your camera before importing them in the Advanced dialog (the left side of the window is shown here).

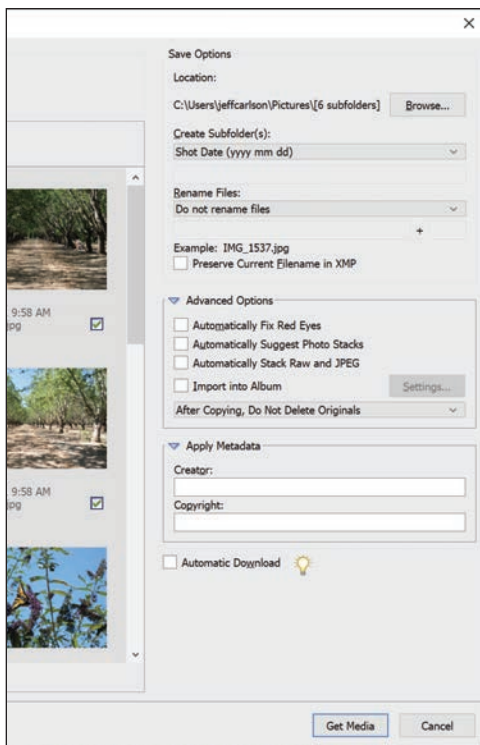


FIGURE 3.7 Further customize the importing process in the Advanced dialog (right side of window here).

Rotate buttons

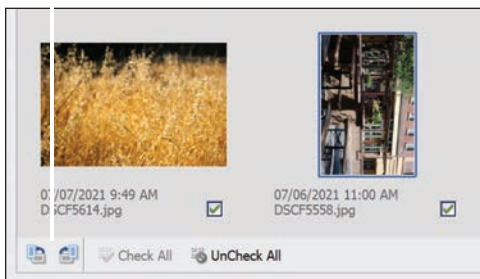


FIGURE 3.8 Rotate images during import so you won't have to do it later.

(see “Use Stacks to Organize Similar Photos,” later in this chapter).

- ▶ **Automatically Stack Raw And JPEG** pairs both image files captured when your camera is set to Raw+JPEG.
- ▶ **Import into Album** assigns the photos to a photo album you've previously set up (see “Use Albums to Arrange and Group Photos,” later in this chapter).

4. Type your name (or the name of whoever took the photos) and a copyright notice in the Apply Metadata fields. This text is embedded in the image files (but not visible in the image itself).
5. To rotate an image as it's imported, select it and click the Rotate Left or Rotate Right button at the lower-left corner (**FIGURE 3.8**).

TIP For a fast way to select just a few photos for import, first click the **UnCheck All** button, and then click the photos you want—don't worry about clicking their individual boxes. Then, with the images selected, click just one box to enable the boxes of your selections.

TIP The Organizer can import photos stored in cameras' Raw formats, which are the unprocessed versions of the captured images. Raw enables more adjustment possibilities than JPEG (which is processed and compressed in the camera). When you edit the photo in the Editor, it first opens in the Camera Raw dialog to set initial edits before continuing in the Editor. For more information, see Chapter 9.

TIP The contents of the Creator and Copyright metadata fields are applied to all photos imported in that batch. If you want different authors, for example, either import them in several batches or edit the metadata after they've been added to the catalog.

To import images from files or folders:

1. In the Organizer, click Import and choose From Files And Folders.
In Windows, if you insert media that contains photos, you may be asked what action you'd like to take (if you haven't specified it already). Click the icon labeled Organize And Edit Adobe Elements 2022 Organizer, which opens a dialog to locate files.
2. Select the files you want to import (**FIGURE 3.9**); Shift-click to select a consecutive range of files, or Ctrl-click/Command-click to select nonconsecutive files.
3. If the images are stored on removable media and you want to import only low-resolution versions, disable the Copy Files On Import option and enable the Generate Previews option (see the sidebar for more information).
4. As in the Advanced dialog mentioned on the previous pages, select from the processing options below the preview.
5. Click the Get Media button to import the photos. If the photos already include keyword tags, you have the option to import them.

TIP Now that we've gotten those import steps out of the way and you understand what's going on, here's a much quicker method: Simply drag image files from a folder on your hard disk to the Organizer's window. Elements imports them without fuss.

TIP If you know some photos exist on your hard disk but can't find them, let the Organizer hunt for them instead. Click the Search button in the upper-right corner and enter criteria about them.

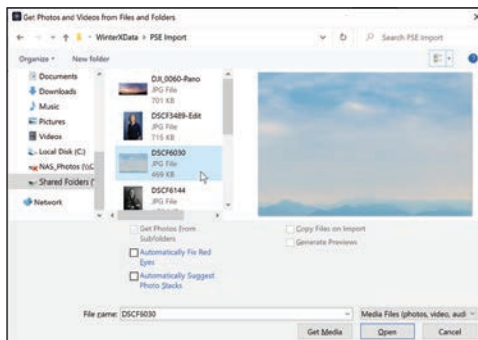


FIGURE 3.9 Import images from other areas of your hard disk or from removable media.

Working with Offline Images

With removable media, you have the option of importing just a low-resolution file to the hard disk. This feature can save hard disk space, especially if lots of files are stored on a shared network drive or on several CDs or DVDs. Importing them as offline images allows you to view and track your entire media catalog.

Offline images are designated with an icon in the upper-left corner of the image in the Organizer (**FIGURE 3.10**). You can apply tags, build collections, and perform other tasks. However, if you want to edit the image, the Organizer asks you to connect the original media. If it's not available, you can still edit the low-resolution proxy, but the results won't look good. Once you make the original available again, Elements copies the source image to your catalog as an online image.



Offline icon

FIGURE 3.10 Offline images are denoted by a corner icon.

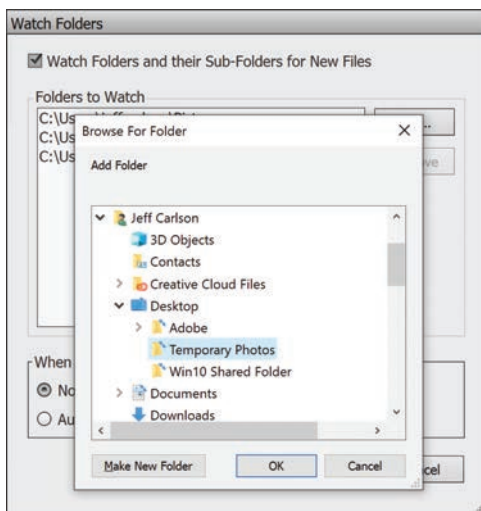


FIGURE 3.11 The Organizer can keep an eye on one or more folders and automatically import photos when they're added.

Remove or Stop Watched Folders

Watched folders can be helpful, but they're enabled by default. As a result, the Watch Folders dialog always interrupts what I'm doing. You can remove a folder from the list of watched items, or turn off the feature entirely.

To remove a folder, choose File > Watch Folders, select the item in the list, and click Remove.

To turn off the feature, deselect Watch Folders And Their Sub-Folders for New Files.



VIDEO 3.1 Work with HEIC/HEIF Images in Windows

To import images using Watch Folders:

1. You can specify one or more folders that the Organizer watches in the background for new files. Choose File > Watch Folders.
2. Click Add and navigate to the folder you wish to watch (**FIGURE 3.11**). Repeat for as many folders as you'd like.
3. Select an action under When New Files Are Found In Watched Folders; the Organizer can notify you when files are found or add them to the library automatically.
4. Click OK when you're done.
5. When you add photos to your watched folder, you're asked if you want to import them (if you opted to be notified in step 3). Click Yes to add the photos, which are moved from the watched folder to the directory where the Organizer stores your catalog.

To scan an image into the Organizer (Windows only):

1. Connect a scanner to your computer using the instructions provided by the scanner manufacturer.
2. In the Organizer, click the Import button and choose From Scanner. Or, you can choose File > Get Photos And Videos > From Scanner (or press Ctrl+U).
3. Choose your scanner software from the Scanner menu.
4. Select an image format and quality level.
5. Click OK. The Organizer hands off the actual scanning duties to the scanner's software for you to complete the scan.
6. When you complete the scan and exit the scanner's software, the image is imported into your catalog.

Understand the Organizer Work Area

The Organizer is dominated by the Media Browser, which is used to find and view thumbnail representations of your photos. It's flanked by two panels that you use to group and organize your image files (**FIGURE 3.12**); the panels can be hidden to make room for more photos.

The Media Browser

Every digital photo or video downloaded into the Organizer is automatically added to the Media Browser. Resizable thumbnails in the Media Browser window make it easy to scan through even a large number of images.

Media is usually organized by the dates the photos or videos were captured, but you can also view images grouped by the people in them, by places where they've occurred (using geotagging information embedded in the files or locations you've specified on a map), or by time-based events. I cover each mode in this chapter.

The Folders panel

The panel at left includes multiple ways to display an overview of your image collection. Clicking Albums shows the albums you've created (discussed later in this chapter), and clicking Folders reveals where the files are stored on disk (**FIGURE 3.13**). Click a folder name to view its contents.

You can also click the button at the top-right corner of the Folders panel to expose your disk's structure as a list or in a Tree view that reveals the folder hierarchy (**FIGURE 3.14**). In this view, for example, you can move images between disks (which ensures that the Organizer properly keeps track of them).



FIGURE 3.12 The Organizer workspace makes it easy to browse your entire photo collection.

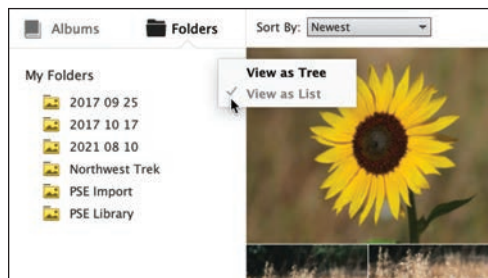


FIGURE 3.13 The My Folders list reveals directories where your imported photos are located.

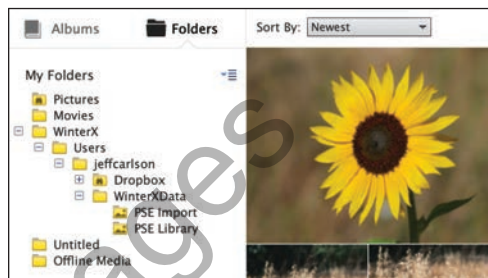


FIGURE 3.14 The Tree view shows folders in their hierarchies on disk.

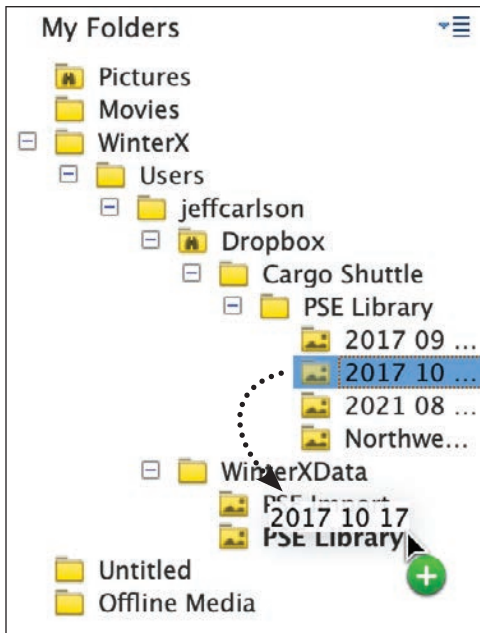


FIGURE 3.15 Move photos or folders using the Folder Hierarchy List.

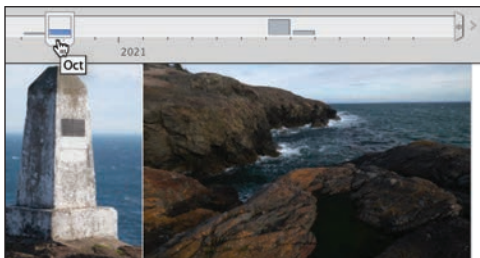


FIGURE 3.16 Click a month marker in the timeline to view that month's photos on the Media Browser.

To move folders in the Tree view:

1. Choose View As Tree from the button at the top right of the Folders panel.
2. Drag a folder to a new location (**FIGURE 3.15**).

Or

Select images in the Media Browser and drag them to a folder.

The folders and their files are moved in the Explorer (Windows) or Finder (macOS), not just in the Organizer.

The timeline

An optional, but helpful, way to quickly navigate your photos by date is the timeline, located just above the Media Browser. Choose View > Timeline or press Ctrl+L/Command+L. The timeline uses date and time information embedded in each image to construct bars (month markers) to represent sets of photos taken within specific months and years. When a month marker is selected in the timeline, that month's photos are displayed at the top of the Media Browser (**FIGURE 3.16**).

Sample pages

Work in the Media Browser

Throughout this chapter I'll cover a variety of ways to work in the Media Browser to label, identify, and organize your photos. But first it's important to know how best to select, sort, and display the image thumbnails.

To select photo thumbnails:

Do one of the following:

- Click to select a thumbnail in the Media Browser. The frame around it becomes light blue and gains a checkmark, indicating the thumbnail is selected (**FIGURE 3.17**).
- Ctrl-click/Command-click to select nonconsecutive thumbnails at once (**FIGURE 3.18**).
- Shift-click to select a group of consecutive thumbnails (**FIGURE 3.19**).
- Choose Edit > Select All, or press Ctrl+A/Command+A to select every thumbnail in the Media Browser.

To deselect photo thumbnails:

Do one of the following:

- Ctrl-click/Command-click to deselect a single thumbnail.
- Choose Edit > Deselect, or press Ctrl+Shift+A/Command+Shift+A to deselect every thumbnail in the Media Browser.

TIP You can tweak the appearance of the Media Browser. Choose View > Details to reveal information such as grid lines, file-names, ratings, and timestamps (**FIGURE 3.20**).



FIGURE 3.17 A selected thumbnail appears with a light blue frame around it and a box.

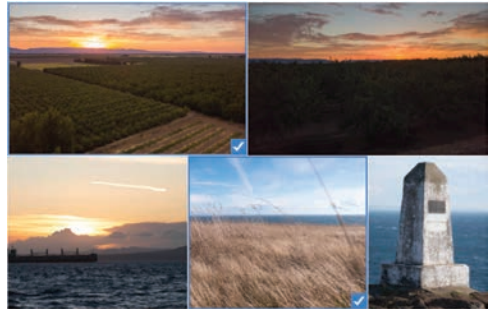


FIGURE 3.18 Ctrl-click/Command-click to select thumbnails that are not consecutive.

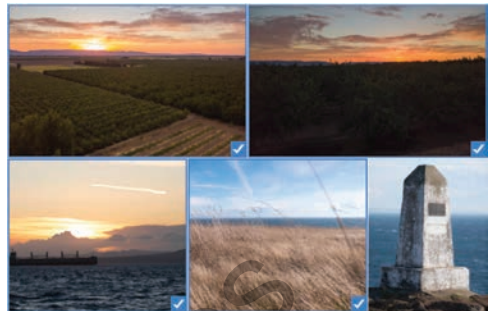


FIGURE 3.19 Shift-click to select thumbnails that are consecutive.

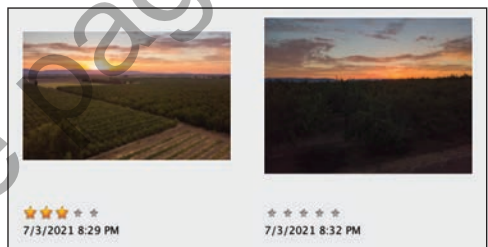


FIGURE 3.20 When you choose to view details, the Media Browser gives each photo more space and displays additional information.

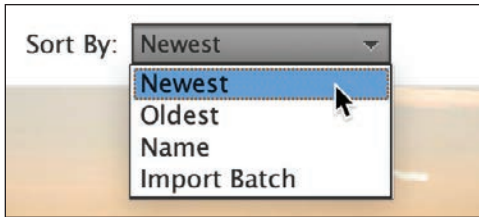


FIGURE 3.21 Select an option to sort thumbnails in the Media Browser.

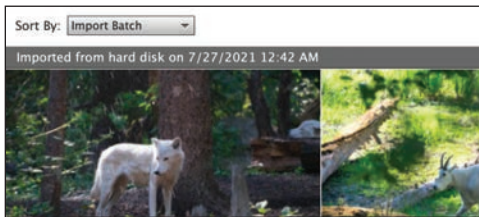


FIGURE 3.22 When you select the Import Batch option, the Media Browser displays thumbnails in grouped batch sets.

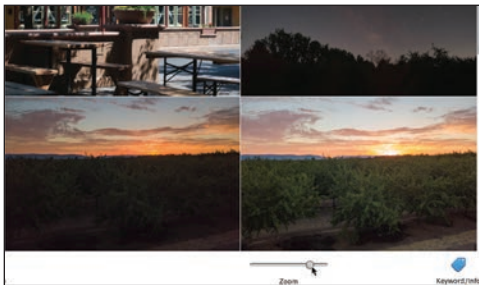


FIGURE 3.23 When you drag the Zoom slider to the right, the thumbnails grow larger (top). When you drag the slider to the left, they become smaller (bottom).

To sort photo thumbnails:

- From the Sort By menu above the Media Browser, choose a sorting option (**FIGURE 3.21**):
 - ▶ **Newest** displays the most recent photos at the top, based on the images' creation dates.
 - ▶ **Oldest** displays photos chronologically, with the oldest at the top.
 - ▶ **Name** sorts images in ascending alphabetical order based on their filenames. To make the names visible, choose View > Details, and then choose View > File Names.
 - ▶ **Import Batch** groups photos into the batches they were imported in (**FIGURE 3.22**).

To resize photo thumbnails:

- Below the Media Browser, drag the Zoom slider to the right to increase the size of the thumbnails, or to the left to make them smaller (**FIGURE 3.23**).
- Click the far left of the Zoom slider to display the thumbnails at their smallest possible size.
- Click the far right of the Zoom slider to display just one large photo thumbnail at a time (also known as Single Photo view).

TIP Double-click any thumbnail to change to Single Photo view. Double-click the image again to return to the Grid view.



VIDEO 3.2
Essential Organizer
Techniques

Rate Photos

The number one method I use to organize my photos is rating them. By applying star ratings, I determine the shots that are worth keeping, the ones I want to edit later, and the ones I'm ready to share with others. Pairing ratings with other metadata, such as events for example, I can immediately view the best photos captured during a particular vacation or holiday.

To rate a photo:

- In the Media Browser, with View > Details enabled, click the gray stars that appear below a photo to set a rating from 1 to 5 (**FIGURE 3.24**).
- Select one or more images and click the stars under one of the photos to apply the same rating to them all.
- Select one or more images and press a number key between 1 and 5 corresponding to the rating you want to apply.

TIP Star ratings are arbitrary—assign any value you like—but in general a 5-star rating indicates an excellent photo, while 1 star suggests one that is barely passable. The scale that I personally use works like this: A 1-star rating means the image is fine—often not exciting, but not out of focus or immediately worth deleting. A 2-star rating is for photos that show promise during my initial review; usually I'll revisit these photos during editing. A 3-star rating is for images that have been edited to my satisfaction. A 4-star or 5-star rating is reserved for photos that I think stand out above others.

TIP I know it's tempting to jump straight to editing, but I recommend taking a few minutes to do a quick rating pass on your photos after you've imported them. Doing so makes it easier to pick out which ones to work on first.



FIGURE 3.24 Apply a rating to identify your higher-quality photos.

Mark Photos as Hidden

If some photos seem to be cluttering up the Media Browser, use the Hidden attribute to keep them out of sight until you need them. Select a photo and choose Edit > Visibility > Mark As Hidden (or press Alt+F2/Option+F2) to make the image disappear from view.

To view hidden photos, choose Edit > Visibility and choose either Show All Files or Show Only Hidden Files. An eye icon with a strikethrough mark appears on the face of each hidden photo's thumbnail. Hide them again by choosing Edit > Visibility > Hide Hidden Files.

To make a hidden file permanently visible again, choose Edit > Visibility > Mark As Visible, which removes the attribute.



FIGURE 3.25 The full-screen review includes panels that automatically hide when you're not using them.

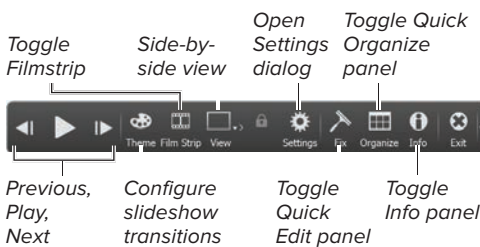


FIGURE 3.26 The full-screen control bar

Full-Screen Slideshows

The full-screen review feature is good even if you're not reviewing. Use it to play quick slideshows, including background music and transitions. Click the Play button in the control bar (or press the spacebar) to start; adjust the settings by clicking the Settings button, and choose a transition by clicking Theme.

Review Photos Full Screen

When you're looking over a set of photos, you want to see the photos, not everything else around them. The full-screen reviewing option lets you see just your images, with a minimal set of controls for ranking and sorting, and even for applying basic edits.

To review photos full screen:

1. Choose View > Full Screen, or press Ctrl+F11/Command+F11. If you have a photo selected, it fills the screen; if not, the first item in your library appears (**FIGURE 3.25**).
2. Use the navigation controls at the bottom of the screen to switch between files, play a slideshow, or hide or show the Quick Organize and Quick Edit panels (**FIGURE 3.26**).
3. Use the Quick Organize panel to apply keyword tags and create new tags: click tag names in the Keyword Tags field to apply them.

You can also use the Quick Edit panel to make basic adjustments if you're in a hurry.
4. Press Esc or click the Exit button to leave full-screen mode when you're finished reviewing.

TIP Click the tiny pushpin icon on a panel to toggle between the panel remaining visible and automatically retracting to the edge of the screen.

TIP If you apply Quick Edit adjustments to a Raw image, you're asked to save the edited version in a different file format, such as JPEG.

Use Stacks to Organize Similar Photos

You've spent a day at Yosemite shooting picture after picture, and when you return home in the evening and download all of those photos to your Media Browser, you realize you have about a dozen shots of the same waterfall—some lit a little differently than others, some with different zoom settings, but all similar.

Stacks serve as a convenient way to group those related photos together. They not only save valuable space in the Media Browser, they also make assigning tags much faster, because tagging a stack automatically tags every photo in the stack. When you're ready to take a careful look at all of those waterfalls and weed out the greats from the not-so-greats, you simply expand the stack to view all of the stacked photos at once.

To create a stack:

1. In the Media Browser, select the photos you want to include in a stack (**FIGURE 3.27**).
2. Choose Edit > Stack > Stack Selected Photos, or press Ctrl+Alt+S/Command+Option+S.

The photos are stacked together, indicated by a Stack icon in the upper-right corner of the top photo in the stack (**FIGURE 3.28**).

To automatically suggest stacks:

1. Select a group of images.
2. Choose Edit > Stack > Automatically Suggest Photo Stacks.
3. Click Stack to combine a row of photos into a new photo stack (**FIGURE 3.29**).

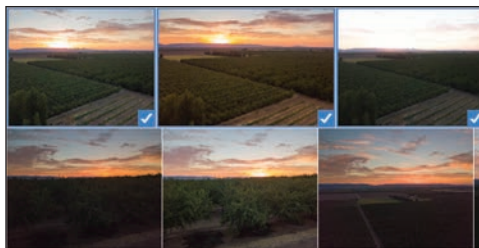


FIGURE 3.27 Select similar photos to organize them into a stack.

Stack icon

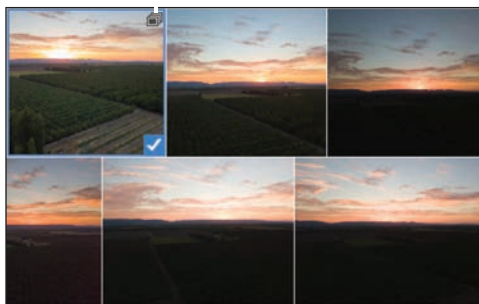


FIGURE 3.28 When stacked, the photos occupy just one thumbnail and gain the Stack icon.

Stacked

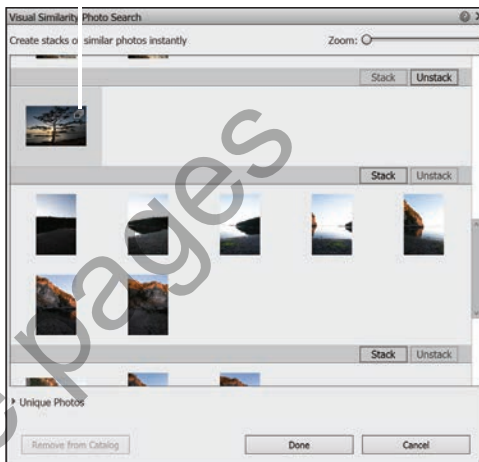


FIGURE 3.29 Let the Organizer automatically suggest stacks.

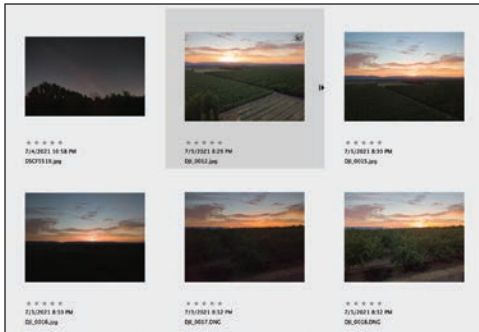


FIGURE 3.30 When Details is active, the stack's expansion arrow is visible.

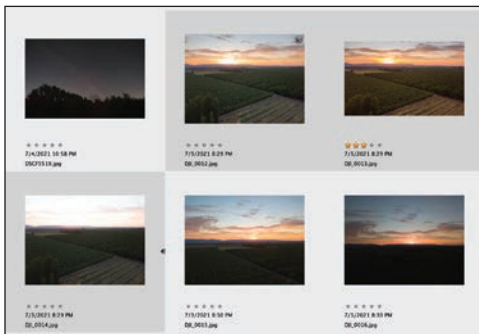
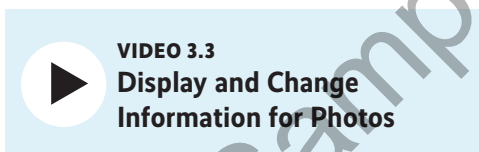


FIGURE 3.31 An expanded stack reveals the photos that have been grouped together.



FIGURE 3.32 A warning reminds you that you are about to delete all but the top photo in your stack.



To view all photos in a stack:

1. Choose View > Details to show the photos with details visible, if they aren't already. A stack can only be expanded when Details is active.
2. Click the arrow icon at the right of the stack (**FIGURE 3.30**). Or, choose Edit > Stack > Expand Photos In Stack (press Ctrl+Alt+R/Command+Option+R). The photos in the stack appear (**FIGURE 3.31**).

To unstack photos in a stack:

Choose Edit > Stack > Unstack Photos.

The stacked photos return to their original locations in the Media Browser.

To flatten a stack:

1. If you're certain you don't want any photo in a stack except for the top one, you can "flatten" the stack and delete the others. Choose Edit > Stack > Flatten Stack.
2. In the dialog that appears, click OK to delete all of the photos except for the top photo in the stack (**FIGURE 3.32**).

You can also choose to delete the associated image files from the disk.

TIP While you're viewing the expanded stack, you can also remove specific photos from a stack or designate a new photo to be the top photo (the photo that appears at the top of the stack in the Media Browser). Right-click any stacked photo and then, from the context menu, select an option from the Stack submenu, such as Set As Top Photo.