

Introducing Lightroom Classic

Lightroom History

The first version of Photoshop launched in 1990.
Adobe added features and sold updated versions (CDs) every year.

By 1999, Photoshop had become very sophisticated / complicated to address the needs of graphic designers and digital artists.

Photographers started to complain about paying for complexity they didn’t need.

To address this, Adobe began coding a new product in 1999, which launches in 2007.

Adobe Lightroom (or just Lightroom) launches with the ability to store and edit your photos on any device using the cloud (Adobe servers) and is widely praised for this.

Functionality of Lightroom develops further, based on users' feedback/requirements.

Lightroom History

In 2015, Adobe switches from stand-alone CDs to a subscription service and launches the “Creative Cloud”. These are sets of packages of different Adobe products. Users can pick and choose what they want and pay accordingly.

Adobe Photoshop Lightroom CC, now called Adobe Lightroom Classic (CC), launches as part of this service, allowing users to edit photos on their PC/Mac with the full power of their device.

Adobe Lightroom still exists, primarily as a version for field-based/travelling photographers who want to access their photos on the move. Seen as a more straightforward application, Lightroom edits are primarily based on adjusting sliders.

Lightroom Mobile was launched in 2017, allowing users to edit photos on Apple and Android phones and tablets.

Confusing names !

Adobe Lightroom Classic (CC)
- stores photos on local PC/Mac
- full set of cataloguing and editing features

Adobe Lightroom
- intends users to store their photos in the cloud, but can now access local files
- “easier to use” sliders

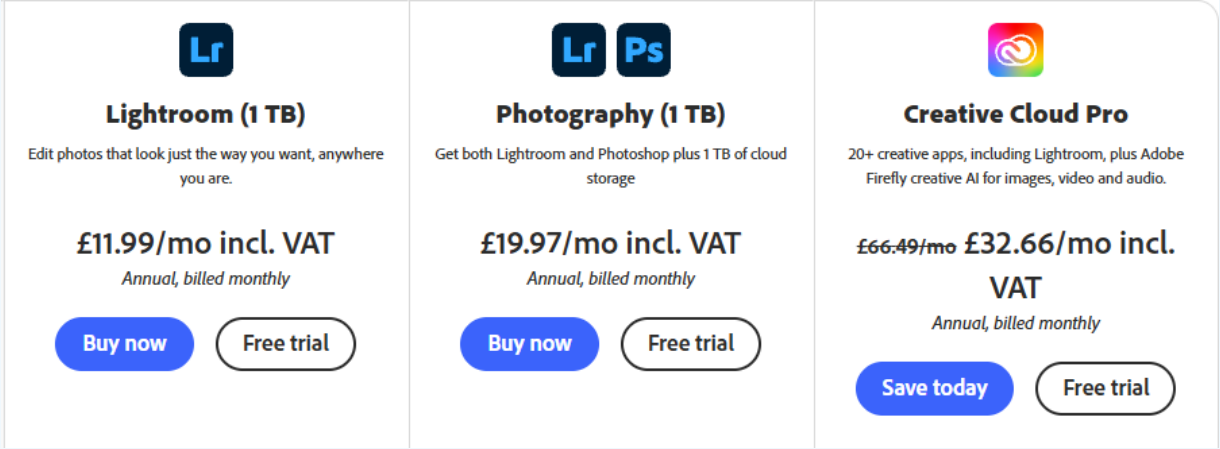
Adobe Lightroom mobile
- mobile version of Adobe Lightroom, but allows you to edit photos on phone/tablet
- similar functionality to Lightroom cloud version

Subscribers get access to all 3 versions for the same price

Costs

Subscribers on Adobe Photo Plan get Photoshop & Lightroom for £20 per month, or around £10 per month, if you pay annually. This might seem a lot but, by subscribing you also get continued updates and support.

In my opinion, Photoshop seems to get a lot more attention from Adobe, with more new features (particularly AI-ones) and more updates than Lightroom.



Non- Destructive Editing

Like most editors, Lightroom offers “Non-destructive” editing.

This means you work on a copy of the original image file, which has to be imported into Lightroom.

Once your edits are complete, you can export the edited file back to your PC/Mac and if you are not careful, you can overwrite the original image file.

I usually work on RAW files and export the edited ones as JPGs, so I have both the original file and the edit on my PC.

Camera and Lens profiles

Since you need to import the image into Lightroom, it needs to know how to interpret the raw image file.

JPG files use a common format across cameras, PCs, phones etc.
However, each camera manufacturer uses a different file format for their RAW files.

In addition, the RAW file contains information about the lens used to record the image.

When new cameras / lenses are released, Lightroom needs to be updated, so that it understands how to process the file.

Lightroom vs Photoshop

Lightroom Advantages

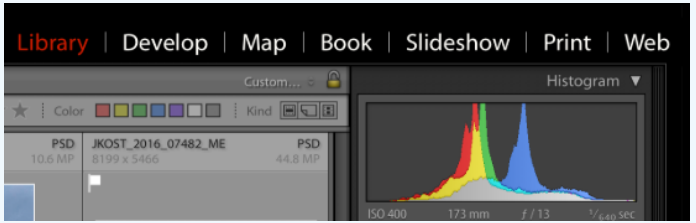
- Can manipulate/edit raw files directly, whereas Photoshop needs Camera Raw plug-in.
- Complete image management suite, including extensive cataloguing of images.
- Complete workflow from importing images, through editing to exporting/printing/web.
- Easier to use than Photoshop, but has fewer features.
- More about “image improvement” than faking/generating images, but some new tools are now akin to Photoshop.

Photoshop Advantages

- Pixel-level image manipulation.
- Supports multiple layer editing, allow users to combine different images, text etc.
- More sophisticated masking and blending of image effects.
- Huge range of tools and features, but takes time to learn.
- New AI tools can remove and generate parts of images (or even whole images) to remove distractions.
- The future of Photography – no photo required !

Lightroom Modules

Lightroom contains different “Modules”, which are sections of the program, dealing with a particular aspect of your photo-editing.



We won’t cover all of these today, but be aware Lightroom can print, produce web pages and slideshows of your photos.

The main 2 Modules are **“Library”** and **“Develop”**.

Library

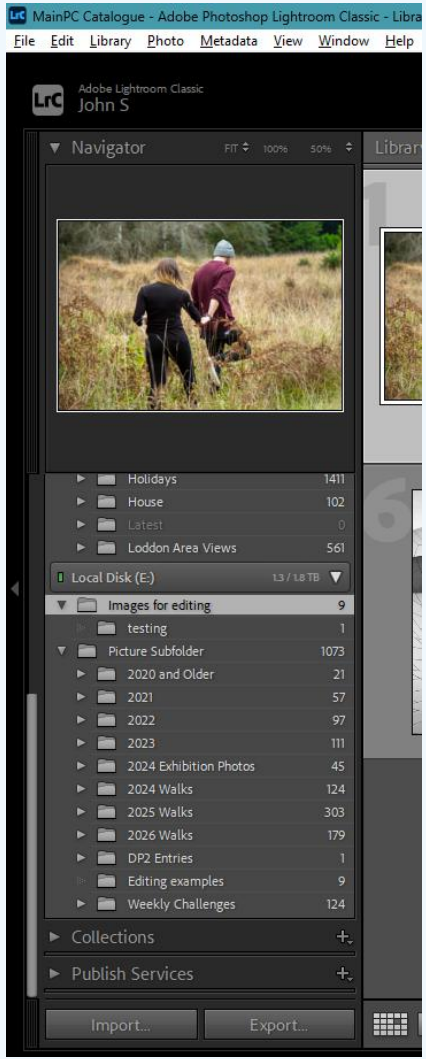
When you start up Lightroom, it usually begins in the Library Module.

On the left side there is an explorer window, showing you the folders you have created or imported into Lightroom. This collection of folders is called the **Lightroom Catalogue**.

Until you import a folder from your PC/Mac, Lightroom has no record of it.

You can have multiple catalogues and Windows folders can belong to more than 1 catalogue.

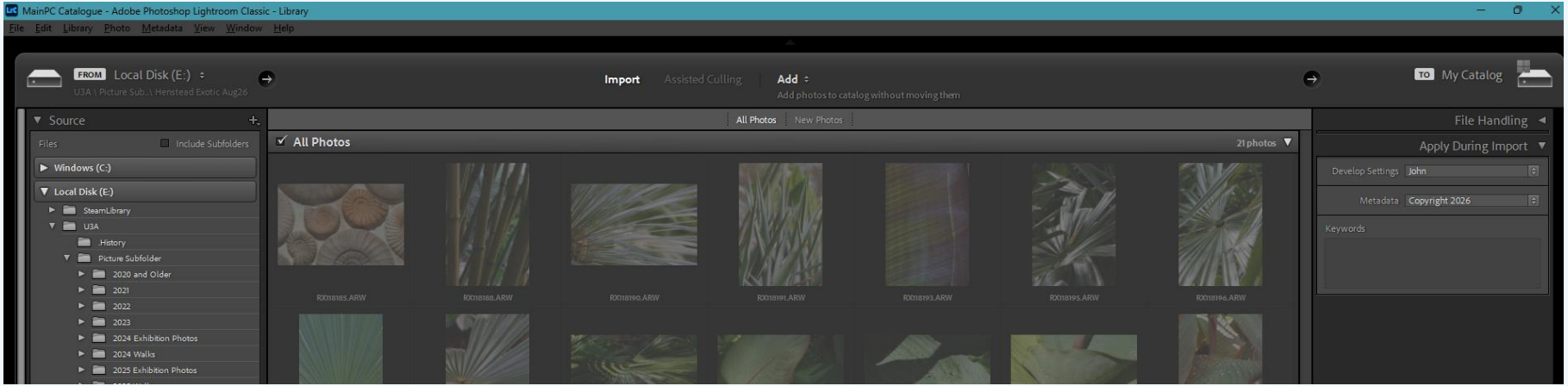
This is great news for professionals, with many clients !



Importing

Clicking on Import opens a new window.
On the left are the folders on your PC/Mac. Navigate to the folder you want using the mouse.
In the centre Lightroom shows a preview of the photos in that folder. Select all or just the ones you want to import. Photos already imported are greyed out.

On the right is a dialogue about what Preset to apply on import, if any.



Library Thumbnails

Once you have imported images, you can view these as a grid, individually, compare 2 images side by side, or compare several images.

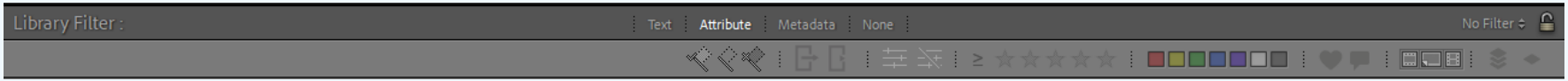


Any images you don’t want can also be deleted from here.

You can choose 2 types of delete :
Choosing the first option makes Lightroom discard the file from its catalogue and forget about it. However, the photo file remains on your PC/Mac.
Choosing the second option removes it from the catalogue and your Windows folder, but you can still retrieve it from the recycle bin.

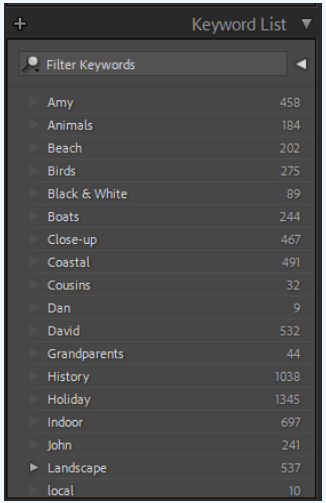
Catalogue search tools

Where Lightroom shines over Photoshop is its ability to find and retrieve images from the catalogue using your keywords, types (colour assigned), “star ratings”, Metadata etc



This ability to search is essential for Professionals, but is also useful for us amateurs !

Even if you don’t methodically store your photos in separate Windows photos, the search facility can help you locate the image(s) you want.



Develop Module

Clicking on Develop opens a new window. The image we are editing is in the middle of the screen.

On the left is the Navigator (to move around a zoomed image), a list of Presets, plus other options we won't cover today.

On the right is the histogram, Develop sub-Menus and a list of tools for each sub-Menu. This is what we will focus on today....

