Adobe Photoshop and Lightroom Classic for Photographers

Third Edition

Classroom in a Book®

The official training workbook from Adobe

RC Concepcion

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Adobe® Photoshop® and Lightroom® Classic for Photographers Classroom in a Book®, Third Edition

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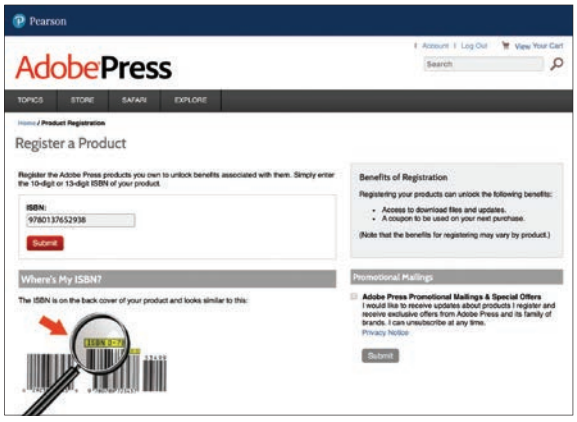
Purchase of this Classroom in a Book in any format gives you access to the lesson files you'll need to complete the exercises in the book.

1 Go to adobepress.com/PhotoshopLightroomCIB2022.

2 Sign in or create a new account.

3 Click Submit.



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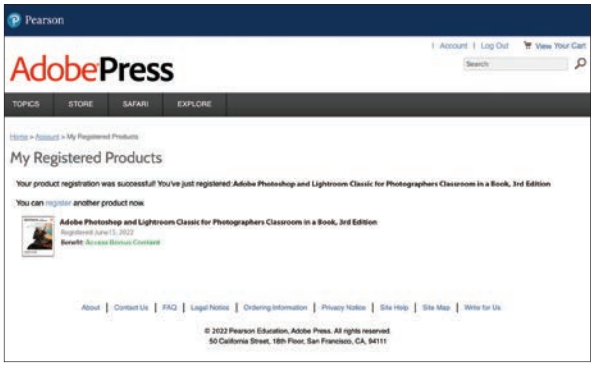

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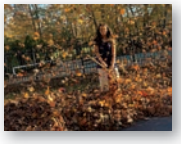

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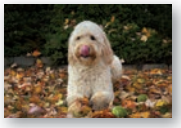

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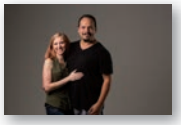

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2 ORGANIZING YOUR PHOTOS INTO LIGHTROOM COLLECTIONS

Lesson overview

This lesson covers how to sort through your images to separate the ones that are keepers (that you will print, share, or put in your portfolio) and ones you can discard or review later. You'll start by going through a specific workflow for culling images using flags in Adobe Photoshop Lightroom Classic, and walk through the process of sorting those images into discrete collections. From there, you'll learn how to set up a hierarchical structure using collection sets.

In this lesson, you'll learn how to:

- Employ color labels in your image.
- Use a star system to rank your images.
- Filter images based on flags, colors, or other metadata.
- Set up smart collections for specialized tasks.
- Set up a target collection for quick organization.
- Share and get feedback about your published online collections.

This lesson will take about 1½ hours to complete. To get the lesson files used in this chapter, download them from the web page for this book at adobepress.com/PhotoshopLightroomCIB2022. For more information, see "Accessing the lesson files and Web Edition" in the Getting Started section at the beginning of this book.

The Lightroom Library module makes it easy to assess and manage your ever-growing image catalog.

Preparing for this lesson

Before diving into the content of this lesson, make sure you do the following:

1. Follow the instructions in the Getting Started section at the beginning of this book for setting up an LPCIB folder on your computer, downloading the lesson files to that folder, and creating an LPCIB catalog in Lightroom.
2. Download the Lesson 02 folder from your Account page at adobepress.com to *username*/Documents/LPCIB/Lessons.
3. Launch Lightroom, and open the LPCIB catalog you created by choosing File > Open Catalog and navigating to it. Alternatively, you can choose File > Open Recent > LPCIB Catalog.
4. Add the Lesson 2 files to the LPCIB catalog using the steps in the Lesson 1 section "Importing photos from a hard drive." Lightroom may ask if you want to enable address lookup. You can dismiss this notification.

Iterative culling: My workflow

The single most tedious task after a photo shoot is sorting bad pictures from good so that you can come up with a plan for editing. This process is known as **culling** and is one of the most important steps you can do in Lightroom.

I spend a lot of time talking to people around the world about their use of Lightroom, and this seems to be the part of the process people struggle with the most. To fix that, I want to share the technique I use when working with my photos. This is something I learned a long time ago, back in my days as a high school teacher, and I call it the "iterative edit."

If you have to take a timed test of multiple choice questions, the best strategy for completing it is to go through the test as fast as you can, answering all the questions that you know you have correct. When you get to a question that you do not know the answer to, the strategy is to skip it. By doing this, you can quickly complete the answers you do know, leaving you more time to work on the ones you don't and allowing you to pick up context clues from your completed answers.

Now, let's apply this idea to our photography. If a shoot contains 200 pictures, there is a good chance that a large number of those pictures are either really good or really bad. By "bad" I mean things like: out of focus, the eyes are closed in a portrait, or you cut off someone's head. These are things that we immediately know are problems, and we would never spend any time working on these images. Conversely, with the good pictures, we're not trying to pick the very best picture out of the very best series. We're looking for pictures that are okay: it's exposed, it's composed, it has the subject. Ranking them is something we'll do later.

Adding flag markers in Lightroom

Let's begin by going into the Lesson 01 folder in the Library module's Folders panel in Lightroom. This shows a grid of images that we can start culling. As we learned in the previous lesson, we can get rid of the panels on all four sides by pressing Shift+ Tab. We can also black out the interface by pressing the L key twice to go into Lights Out mode. This will get rid of all of the distractions in the Lightroom interface that take us away from doing the job at hand—culling.

You have a couple of options with each image. If it is a picture that you think is worth keeping, press P on the keyboard to mark it as a pick. If you believe the picture is completely off, press X to mark it as rejected.

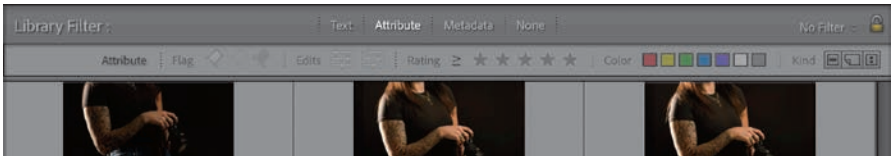
If you have to think for more than half a second about whether this picture is effective, press the Right Arrow key on the keyboard to skip the picture and go on to the next one. Remember your qualifications for bad and good. Do not spend more than a second thinking through these pictures. The goal is to get rid of the pictures that you know will not work.

If you click one of the flags and the picture doesn't advance, choose Photo > Auto Advance. Should you mistakenly add the wrong flag to one of the pictures, press the Left Arrow key to go back to the picture in question, and then press the U key. Pressing U unflags the picture.

Once you finish this process, you should have your pictures sorted into three different types of images: those that you know won't work (the bad images), those that you want to consider for ranking, and those that you have not gone through yet. Lightroom has a way to filter all of these pictures: the Library Filter bar at the

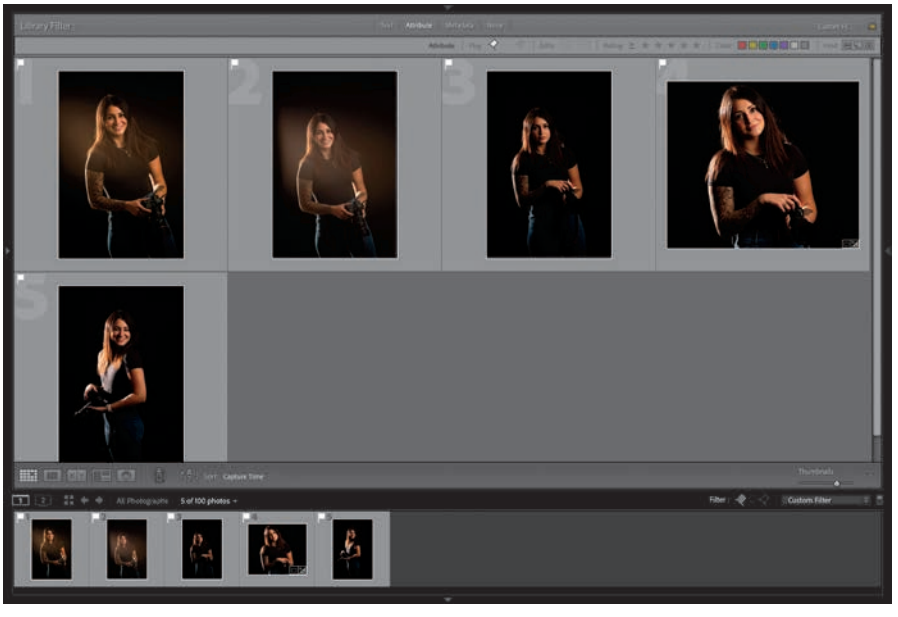
top of the center preview area. The Library Filter bar has the following options to help you find specific images:

- Text mode allows you to filter your Lightroom catalog for specific words. These words can be in the filename, title, caption, or any of the metadata embedded in the image.
- Attribute mode lets you filter out images based on flag status, star rating, color label, or virtual copy status, as shown below.



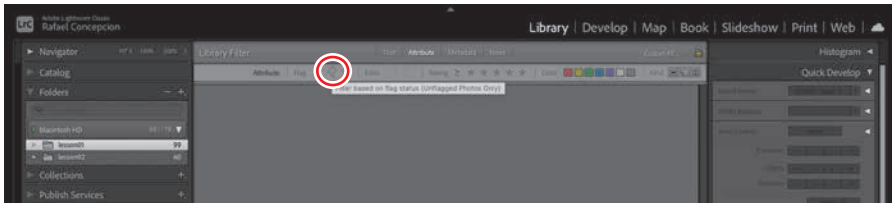
- Metadata mode lets you sort your images using a host of different metadata items Lightroom has compiled from your images. This is an extremely powerful way of filtering, but outside the scope of this book.

Click the Attribute tab, then select one of the Flag options (pick, unflagged, or rejected) to see only those specific images appear in the preview area. The filter icons are not exclusive—you don't have to select only Reject flags or Pick flags. If you click both in the Attribute filter, Lightroom shows you both sets of images in Grid view.



At the top right of the Filmstrip panel, there are similar Filter options (if you don't see the flag icons next to the Filter menu, choose Flagged from the menu). At the top left of the Filmstrip panel, you see the number of images in that folder or collection that contain a specific flag.

At this point, the images that are the most important part of the process are the unflagged ones. Click the Unflagged Photos Only icon, hide the panels (press Shift+Tab), go into Lights Out mode (press L twice), and repeat the culling process until nothing appears in the preview area.



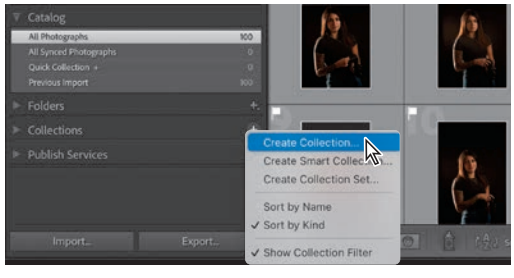
You will notice that this second iteration of culling goes much faster than the first one. The best thing about this part of the process is that you now have seen the shoot in its entirety, and can make better judgments as to which pictures stay and which pictures go. The only part you'll find disconcerting is the end—when you get to a completely black screen. Don't worry; just turn the lights back on (press L) and bring back the panels (Shift+Tab). You'll notice the screen was black because there were no more unflagged images. Click the Unflagged Photos Only icon again to bring back all your photos, and your cull is complete!

What is a collection?

As your Lightroom library gets bigger and bigger, you'll need to have key images in your catalog accessible for various purposes. As mentioned, prior to Lightroom, photographers who wanted to share a group of images, like a portfolio of portraits, often placed copies of those pictures in a folder to share. As different needs arose, they had to create other folders and store more copies of the same pictures in them. Each folder had a specific need and contained copies of pictures that also lived in other folders. Keeping track of the copies, and the space they occupy, makes this solution untenable. This is where collections save the day.

If you're familiar with buying digital music, you can think of Lightroom collections as playlists for your pictures. You purchase one song and own one physical copy of a song, but that song can live in an unlimited number of playlists. The same holds true for pictures and collections in Lightroom.

On the left side of the Library module, you have a Collections panel. Click the plus sign (+) in the panel header, choose Create Collection, and give the collection a name. From there, you can add images from throughout your catalog to the



Note: Some Lightroom users prefer to maintain multiple catalogs to separate personal and professional images. If you're an experienced Lightroom jockey, that may work well for you. However, because the Lightroom search features work on one catalog at a time, you may find it easier to maintain a single catalog.

collection, no matter what folder they live in, and you can add as many collections as you need for organization.

Every collection that you create in Lightroom can hold images from any folder you have imported into your catalog. It doesn't matter if the images live on your hard drive, an external drive, or a network-attached storage drive. The Lightroom catalog (your digital notebook) notes that you have one physical file but would like to have a reference to that file in multiple collections. The collections serve as a way to look at disparate parts of your photographic life without having to change your folders or make copies of your photos to live in different folders. This is an extremely powerful feature and one that your photographic life will revolve around.

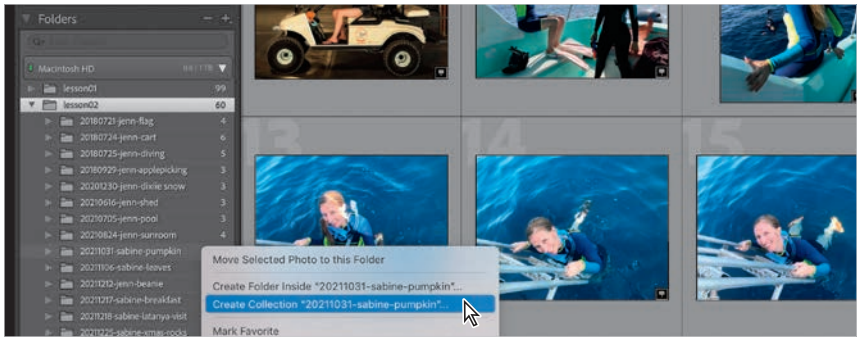
In an effort to show you this concept in its simplest form, I'll share with you a series of photos of my daughter, Sabine, and my wife, Jennifer.

Creating collections from folders of images

Let's experiment with creating collections and adding images to them with the files that we've imported for Lesson 2.

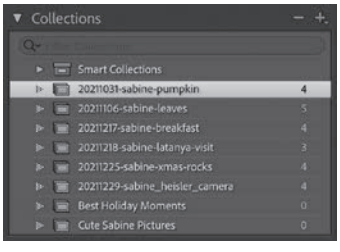
1 Go to the Folders panel in the Library module and click the little triangle to the left of the Lesson 02 folder. Inside that folder, you'll see a series of folders that we'll make into collections.

2 Right-click one of the folders that contains the word *Sabine* in the name, and select Create Collection "*folder name*" from the menu.



3 Repeat this with all of the other folders that have the word *Sabine* in their names, making collections for each of them. When you're done, you should have a total of six collections.

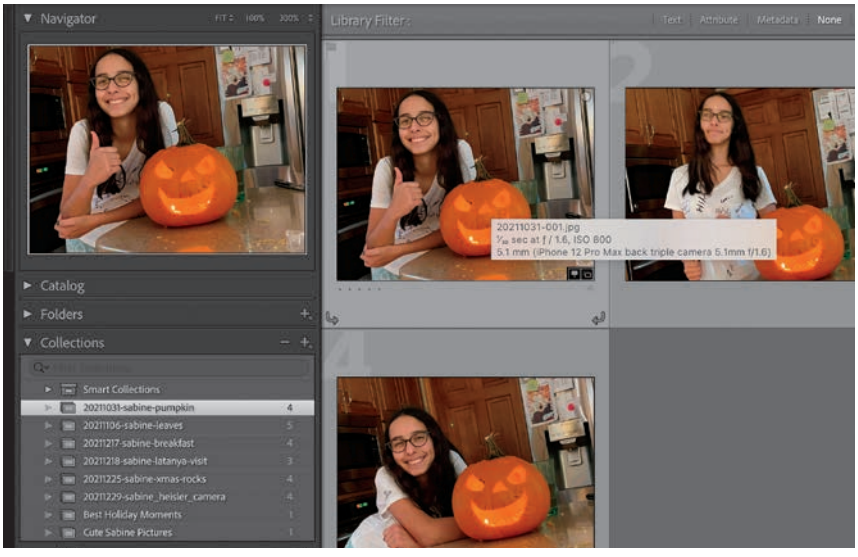
4 Press Command+D/Ctrl+D to deselect all photos. Click the plus sign (+) on the right side of the Collections panel's header, and create two additional collections: *Best Holiday Moments* and *Cute Sabine Pictures*, as you see here on the right.



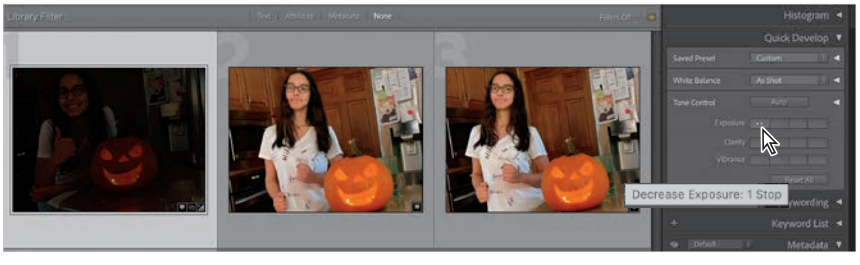
5 While it might seem repetitive to have collections that are named exactly like your folders, there are a couple of really powerful things happening under the hood here. First, unlike in a folder, you can drag the images around within the preview area and sort them into whatever order you like.

Second, you have the option to add images from any of those Sabine collections to the Best Holiday Moments or Cute Sabine Pictures collections. It doesn't matter where those images live or what folders they are in, you can simply drag any of them into a new collection if you'd like. The catalog (your digital notebook) will still reference that one physical file.

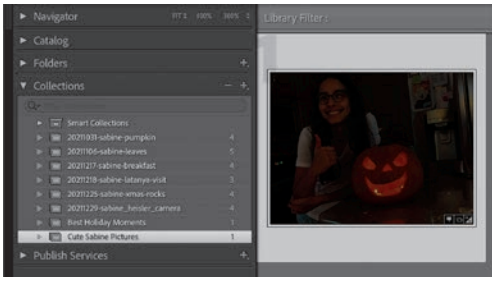
To show you the third important part about collections, click the thumbnail of the first picture in the 20211031-sabine-pumpkin and drag it into both the Best Holiday Moments and Cute Sabine Pictures collections.



6 Although we haven't covered developing a picture yet, let's make a quick change to this photo. On the right side of the Library module, open the Quick Develop panel's Tone Control section. Under Exposure, click the double left arrow three times. This should darken the image by three stops. You will see the change in the image in this collection immediately.



The awesome part about this is that the thumbnails of this image in the other two collections also will change to reflect the darker picture. You don't have to remember where the physical picture lives; Lightroom automatically makes that change across all instances of the image by referencing that one physical file.

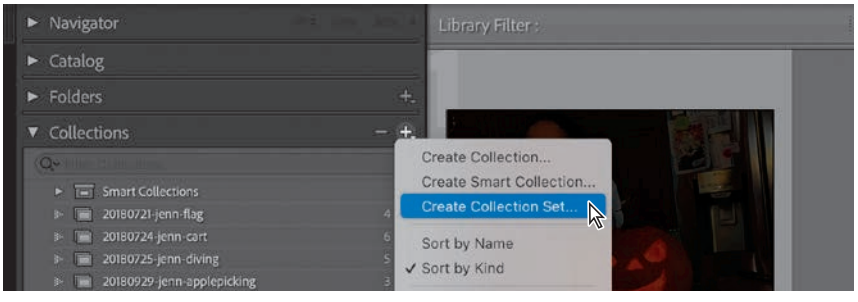


Before we go any further, let's create collections for the rest of the folders in the Lesson 02 folder (all of the folders with the word *Jenn* in them). You should then have a total of 17 collections.

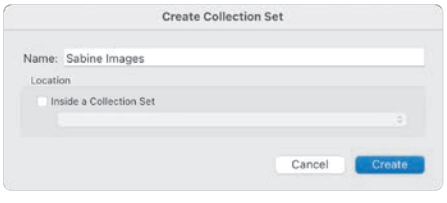
Creating collection sets

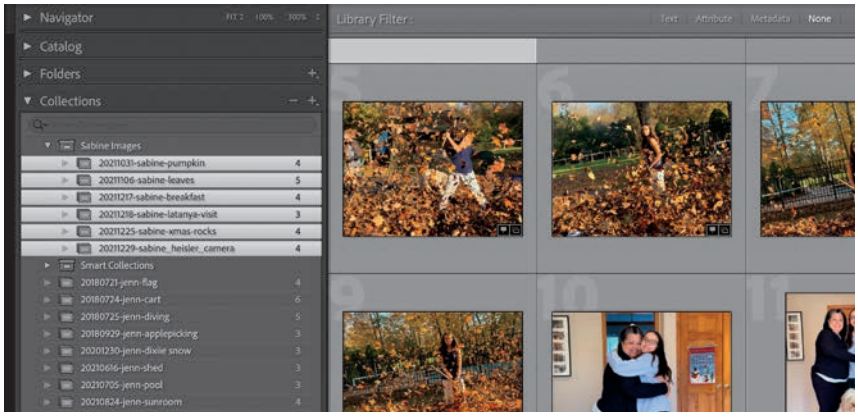
It's easy to see that our list of collections could get a little unwieldy. With so many Sabine collections, it would be hard to scroll and visually see where my work images are versus my family images. That said, there is a common element that runs through all of these collections of Sabine: my daughter, Sabine.

1 Click the plus sign (+) on the right side of the Collections panel's header, and select Create Collection Set. In the Create Collection Set dialog box, create a set called **Sabine Images**, and make sure the Inside A Collection Set check box in the Location area is unselected. Once the collection set is created, drag all of the Sabine collections into the Sabine Images collection set.

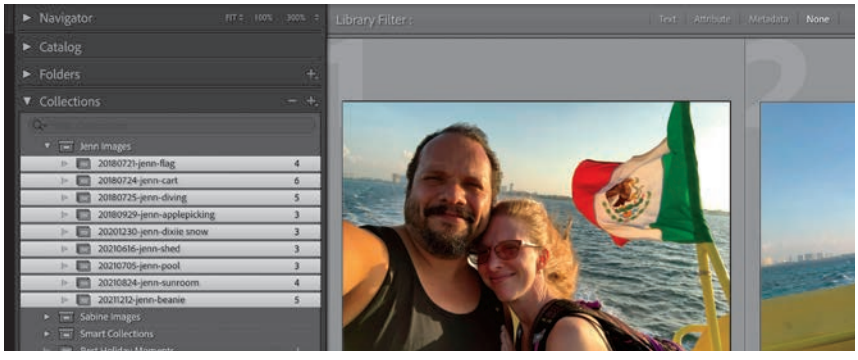


The result is a much cleaner look to the Collections panel. If you want to see the pictures inside all the Sabine collections, just click the Sabine Images collection set. If you want to see pictures from one of the individual collections, click that individual collection.

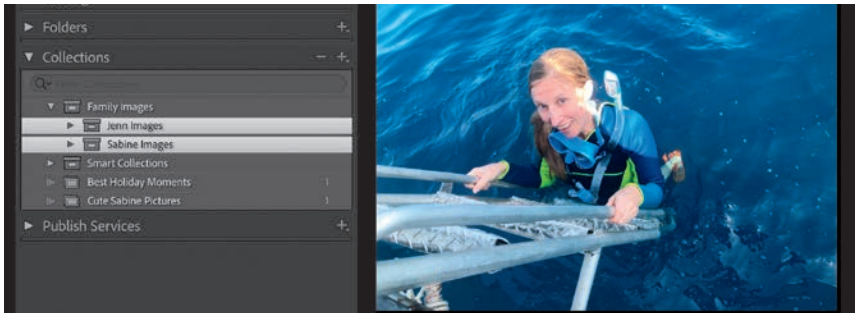




2 We can take this a step further. The Jenn collections also could benefit from that type of grouping. Create a collection set called **Jenn Images**, and make sure the Inside A Collection Set check box is unselected. Then, drag all the Jenn collections inside the Jenn Images collection set. This makes our collections even cleaner.



3 We can still take this level of organization further. Another great benefit of the collection set is that it holds not only collections but other collection sets as well. Looking at the collections that you have here, are there any other common elements that we can group around? Jenn and Sabine are my family. We could theoretically create a collection set called Family Images and place both the Sabine Images and Jenn Images collection sets in it.

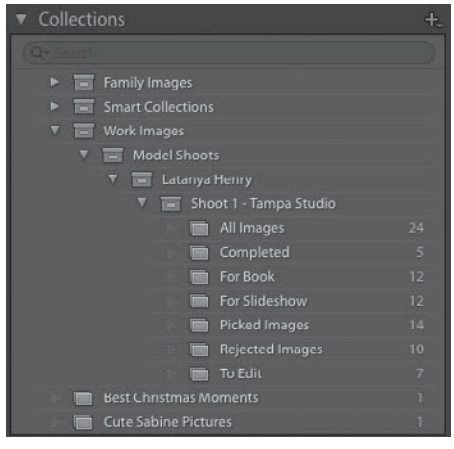


Then, should we want to see all the family images, we could click the Family Images collection set. If we want to see a series of Jenn images, we can click the Jenn Images collection set. If we want to see Sabine images, we can click the Sabine Images collection set. To see individual events, we can click the individual collections to drill down further. In other words, a place for everything, and everything in its place.

Sample organizational sets

Now that we know that our collections can be used to see a subset of pictures across our catalog and that collection sets can let us organize all of those views, let's put it into other workflows that make sense.

Let's say I work doing people photography, and I get an assignment to make a series of pictures of my friend Latanya Henry. In that shoot, I would have several groups of pictures—picked images to go over, rejected images, images that I want to edit further, images to take into a slideshow, and so on. If I made a collection for each group, what would happen if I got hired again to make another series of pictures for Latanya? Would I just create "Latanya Picked Images Number 2" and name the other collections in the same manner? That would be too messy.



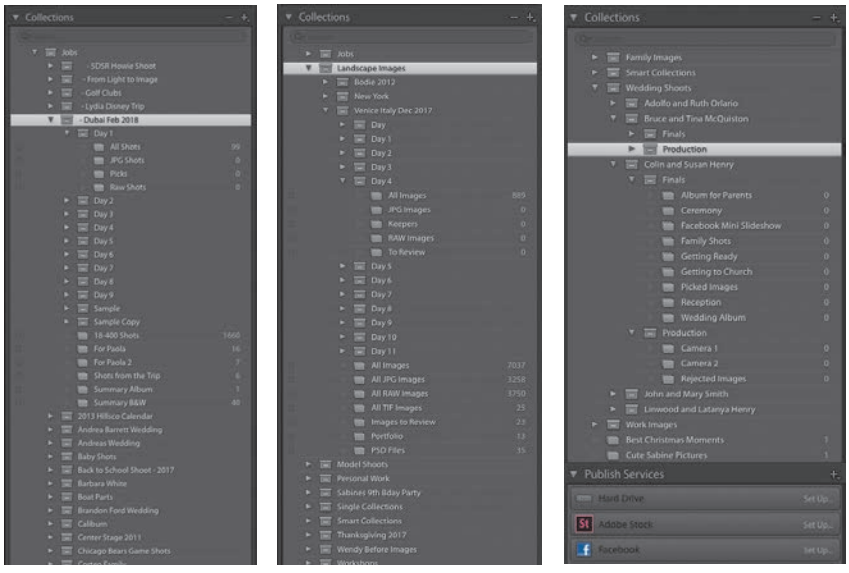
Instead, what if we made a collection set for Latanya Henry? Then, when I import the first shoot with Latanya, I would make a collection set for that specific shoot. Inside it, I would place all the collections that are related to that shoot.

The next time I shoot with Latanya, I would create a collection set for that second shoot, and repeat the process. Not only does this allow you to see only what you want to see, but it also lets you separate out individual images for the other functions in Lightroom, such as books or slideshows. You can have a collection for each function.

On the next page are a series of sample suggestions that you can use to organize your photography work. If you are a wedding photographer, you can use collection sets on a per couple basis, with a collection set for each couple's wedding. Inside each wedding, you can separate production work (shots from multiple cameras) and the finished work, using collections to sort out the various pieces of the wedding.

If you are a commercial photographer who does multi-day shoots, you can make a collection set for the entire job, organize the days into individual collection sets, and filter out the best shots into a "best of" collection. If you are a landscape pho-

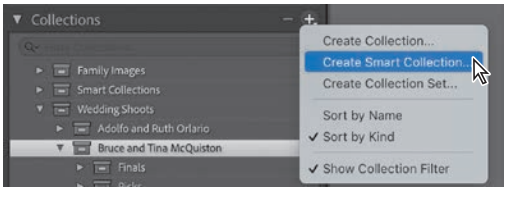
tographer, the organization would be similar to that of a commercial shoot, but instead of jobs, you can sort by locations.



These samples are provided as ideas to get you going, not as hard-and-fast rules for your photography work. The point is that you should take a moment to plan how you want to organize your Lightroom catalog using collections and collection sets. Once you do, it's up to you to stick to that format. It's a little time-consuming at first, but it pays great dividends later on as your catalog gets larger.

What is a smart collection?

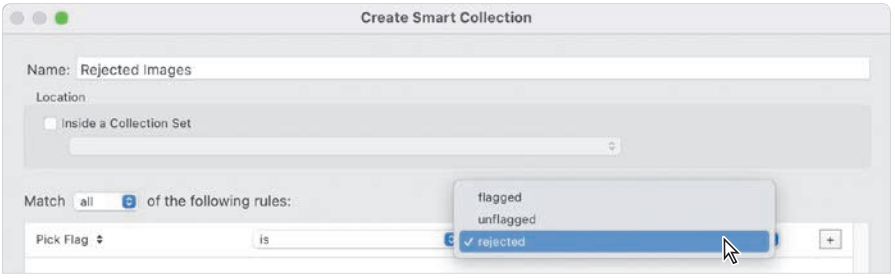
Smart collections are collections that you build based on predefined criteria. Click the plus sign (+) on the right side of the Collections panel's header, and choose Create Smart Collection from the menu.



In the Create Smart Collection dialog box, you can pick from a ton of different criteria to pull images into your smart collection. Below the Match menu, the left side shows you the criterion chosen, the center section gives you comparison options, and the right side gives you the restrictions for each criterion. Click the plus sign (+) at the upper right of the rules field to add another criterion (you can have as many as you want).

Once the smart collection has been created, you will see it in the Collections panel with a number of images in it. The number of images in a collection increases or

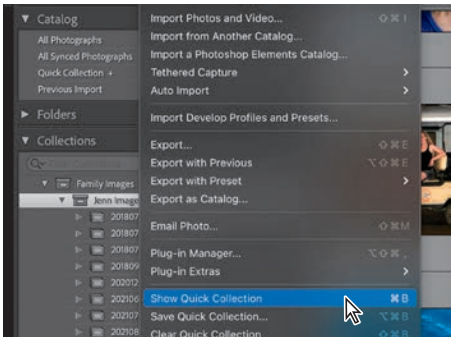
decreases as you flag images across your entire catalog. In this example, I created a smart collection that will keep track of images that I mark as rejected. As I flag my images, no matter where in the catalog the rejected ones live, Lightroom will keep a running tally of them inside this smart collection.



I recommend that you drill down into that column on the left during your smart collection creation. You'll find a ton of parameters that you can immediately put to use in sorting your photographic work.

What is the Quick Collection?

There may be times when you don't necessarily need to create a collection, but would like to temporarily organize a set of images into a group. Rather than creating and deleting a regular collection, moving images around, or exporting images unnecessarily, you can use the Quick Collection. The Quick Collection does not live in the Collections panel and is available to you by clicking Quick Collection in the Catalog panel or pressing Command+B/Ctrl+B.

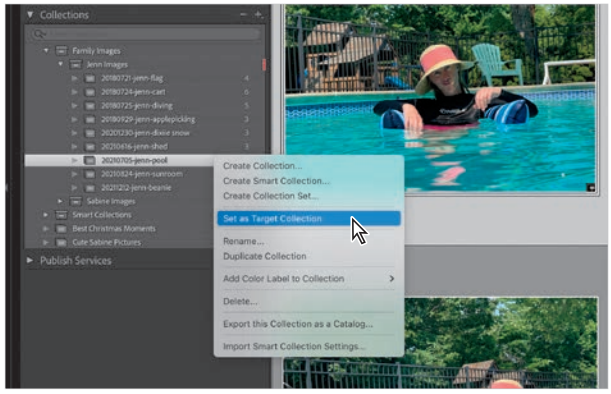


Add images to the Quick Collection as you move about the Library module by selecting an image and pressing the B key. Or, in Grid view, click the small Quick Collection circle in the upper right of any thumbnail; it turns gray to show you that the photo has been added to the Quick Collection.

What is a target collection?

A target collection takes all the ease of adding images to the Quick Collection, and following the same process, assigns the images to one of the regular collections you've created. To use this feature, right-click a collection you've already created and choose Set As Target Collection (you'll see a plus sign [+] appear to the right of your collection name). Now, every time you press the B key, the selected image

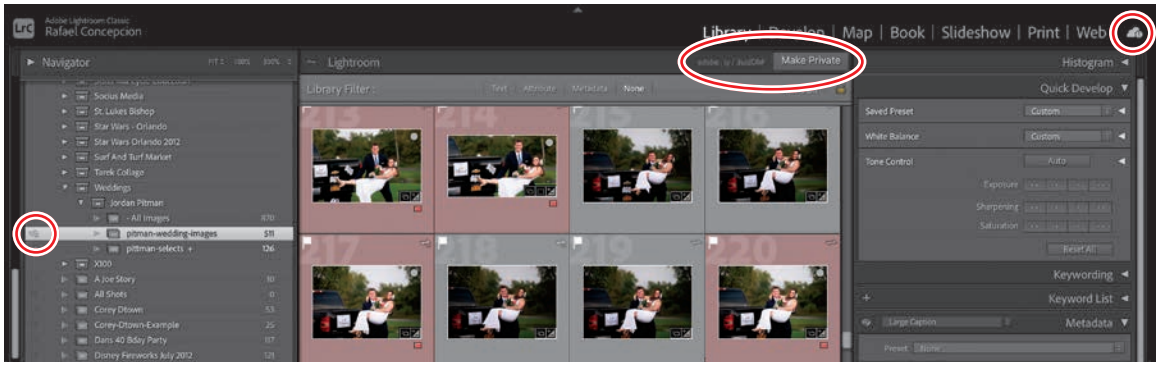
will be added to the target collection you specified, and not to the Quick Collection. To turn the target collection off, right-click it in the Collections panel and choose Set Target Collection from the menu again. Then, the images will go back to being added to the Quick Collection.



Sharing your collections online

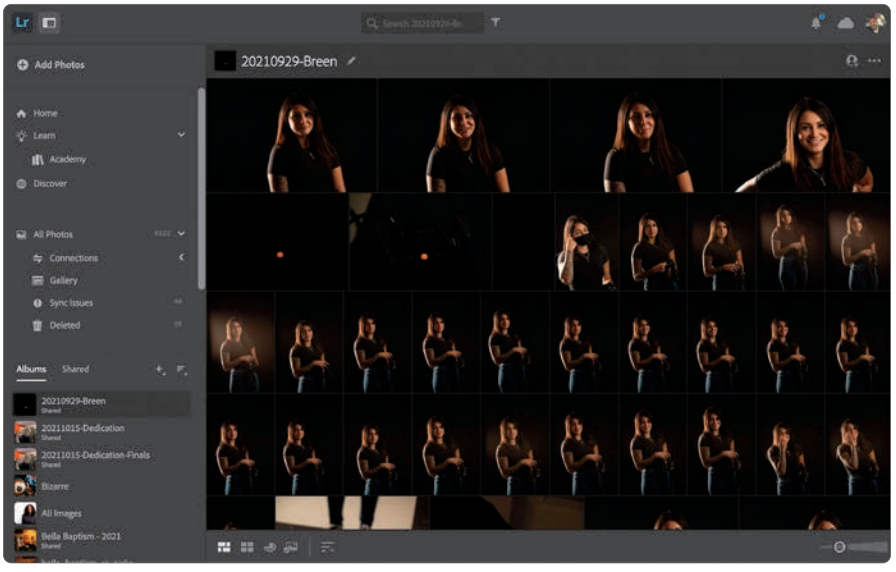
Another benefit of having your images in collections is that you can share the collections online. Previously, if you needed to get feedback on a shoot from someone else (a client, family members, friends), you would have to export images from the collection and import them into a third-party website.

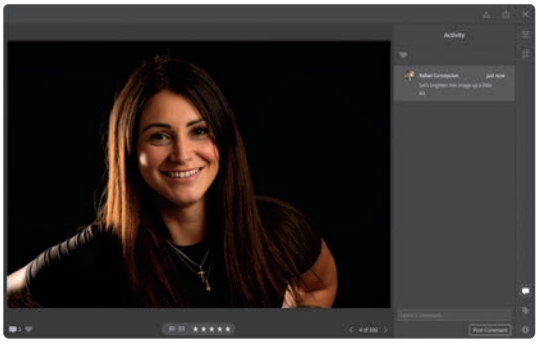
In Lightroom Classic (desktop), you can automatically sync a collection with Lightroom (mobile) once you turn syncing on. Click the cloud icon at the right of the Module Picker and click Start Syncing. Then, select the Sync With Lightroom option in the Create Collection dialog box. If you forget to do this when creating your collection or decide to sync it later, simply click the lightning bolt icon to the left of the collection name. Lightroom Classic will generate the files and automatically create an album in Lightroom, as well as a private website you can view by logging in at lightroom.adobe.com. You can make the gallery public by clicking the Make Public button in the upper-right corner of the preview area.



After you click Make Public, Lightroom Classic creates a URL that you can share with others (to the left of the button you clicked to make the website public, once you have made it public). In the online version of Lightroom (which has fewer

features than Lightroom Classic), all flags, star ratings, color labels, and other metadata settings will appear with the images (as you can see in Grid view below).





After clicking a thumbnail, you are taken to Loupe view, where you can click the Info icon to see the photo's metadata or the Activity icon to leave a comment or read other viewers' comments. Those comments are automatically saved to the cloud and then synced back to your computer for you to review in the Comments panel (which appears below the Metadata panel in Lightroom Classic once a collection is made public).

Adding star ratings and color labels

Rating your images is pretty simple. Pressing the numbers 1–5 will add one to five stars to any images you have selected. To remove any of the star ratings, just select the image and press the number 0.

In addition to pressing 1–5 for star ratings, pressing the numbers 6, 7, 8, and 9 on your keyboard will add the red, yellow, green, and blue colors labels, respectively. There is one color left—purple—that can only be accessed through the Photo > Set

Color Label menu. To remove the color from an individual picture, just select the photo and press the number for the associated color again, and the color is gone.

Now that you know how to add star ratings and colors to your pictures, let's talk about how best to use them. Once your pick and rejected flags have been assigned, you can use star ratings to rank your pictures in a "good, better, best" scenario.

The star rating system also can be useful for marking images for specific tasks or categories. Your portfolio shots can have five stars, while images that go into a slideshow can be your four-star shots. Or, in a wedding shoot, images of the groom's family can have three stars, while images of the bride's family can be your two-star shots.

I like to use colors for files that I am going to work on in Photoshop, files that are ready for printing, and final edits of files. Any red-labeled images in my catalog are images that need some work in Photoshop. The green-labeled images are ready for printing. Purple-labeled images are final copies of images that need no additional editing. I use purple for final images, as it's the only color that I cannot accidentally select with a number key. The colors also make it very easy to spot images that need to be worked on while in Grid view.

Adding keywords

Adding keywords is an extremely powerful way to keep track of photos by subject matter in your Lightroom catalog. Think of them as search terms, like the ones you use to find something on the web. Keywords don't take up much space—they're text

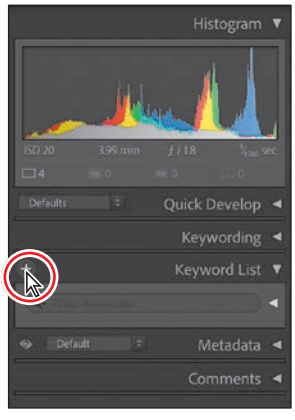
added to the photo's metadata—so you can apply as many keywords to each photo as you want.

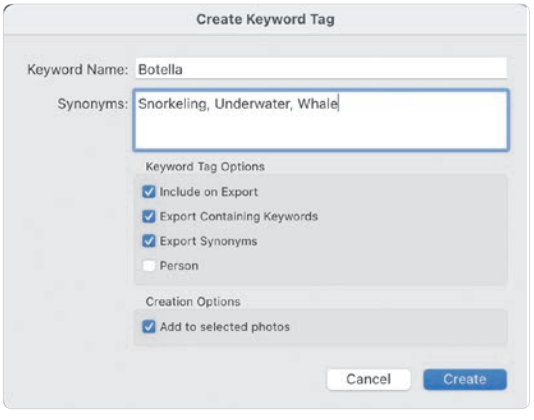
For the best results, make your keywords descriptive of the subject matter, such as "diving," "snorkel," "underwater," "freedive," and so on. Avoid adding keywords that you've included in the photo's filename, because the Lightroom search capability extends to filenames, too.

You'll develop your own list of keywords as you go, but to get you started, use the following steps to add keywords to the exercise files:

1. In the Library module, go to the Collections panel, and make sure that you have the 20180725-jenn-diving collection selected. We will add some keywords here.
2. In the Grid view, select a series of images from this collection (click the first photo you want to select, then Shift-click the last image to select all the images in between).
3. In the Keyword List panel on the right, click the plus sign (+) on the left side of the panel's header. In the dialog box that appears, enter **Botella** in the Keyword Name field, and then type **Snorkeling, Underwater**, and **Whale** in the Synonyms field (use a comma to separate the synonyms). Select the Add To Selected Photos option, leave the three export options selected, and then click Create.

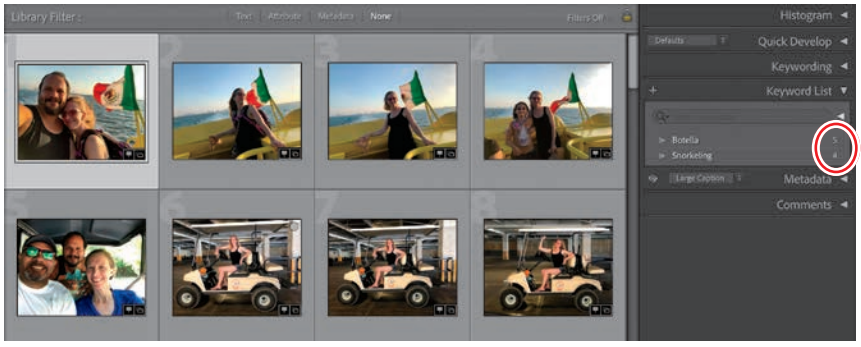
▶ **Tip:** To create nested keywords, select an existing keyword in the Keyword List panel and then click the plus sign (+) to add another keyword. To see nested keywords, click the triangle to the left of a keyword in the Keyword List panel to expand your keyword hierarchies. You can also type a keyword into the search field at the top of the Keyword List panel to reveal it in the panel.





Your new "Botella" keyword appears in the Keyword List panel, and Lightroom adds it to the selected photos. A general keyword like this also can serve as a category in which to nest more specific keywords (say, "freedive" and "scuba").

4. Now, select the last four images and repeat step 3, creating the keyword **Snorkeling** and applying it to your selected photos.
5. To see all the photos in your Lightroom catalog that have a specific keyword, move your pointer over the number to the right of that keyword in the Keyword List panel and click the arrow that appears to the number's right.



When you click the arrow to the right of a keyword (circled), Lightroom automatically switches your source to All Photographs in the Catalog panel. Once you apply a keyword to a photo, a tiny tag icon appears in its lower-right corner.

Other ways to apply (and delete) keywords

As you may imagine, there are additional ways to apply keywords. For example, you can:

- Drag and drop the keyword from the Keyword List panel onto one or multiple selected thumbnail previews.
- Drag and drop one or more selected thumbnails onto a keyword in the Keyword List panel.
- Select one or more thumbnails, and in the Keyword List panel, select the check box that appears to the left of a keyword. To remove a keyword from a photo, do the same thing but deselect the check box that appears to its left.
- Use the Keywording panel (it's above the Keyword List panel). If you go this route, you can create and apply keywords in the same step. To do this, select some thumbnails and then click within the box labeled "Click here to add keywords." Enter a new keyword. If you want to create and apply more than one keyword to the selected photos, use a comma between each keyword. For example, you may enter **Dune, Desert** and then press Enter/Return on your keyboard to create and apply both keywords.

To delete a keyword from your list, use the Keyword List panel (not the Keywording panel). Click the keyword and then click the minus sign (–) on the left side of the panel's header. In the warning dialog box that appears, click Delete.

Alternatively, right-click the keyword, and from the menu that appears, choose Delete. In the warning dialog box, click Delete. In fact, the aforementioned menu offers several useful options for managing your keywords. For example, you can edit them, remove a keyword from the selected photo, or delete the keyword altogether.

Either way, the keyword is removed from your keyword list and from any photos you applied it to.

Review questions

1. What's the simplest way to assess and cull recently imported photos?
2. Name three reasons it is important to use collections.
3. What is a smart collection?
4. What is the Quick Collection?
5. How do you share a collection online publicly?
6. How do you add a five-star rating to a photo?
7. How do you create a new keyword in the Keyword List panel?

Review answers

1. Use the Pick and Reject flags to assess and cull imported photos.
2. First, you can drag images in a collection into any order you want. Second, you can add a photo to as many collections as you want without making a new copy of the photo (saving you disk space). Third, any Develop changes you make to the image will be reflected in each collection it is in.
3. A smart collection is a self-populating album based on criteria that you set.
4. The Quick Collection is a temporary collection that lives in the Catalog panel.
5. Click the lightning bolt icon to the left of the collection name in the Collections panel, then click the Make Public button at the upper right of the preview area.
6. Press the number 5 key on your keyboard.
7. Click the plus sign (+) on the left side of the Keyword List panel's header.

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