

# File Organization

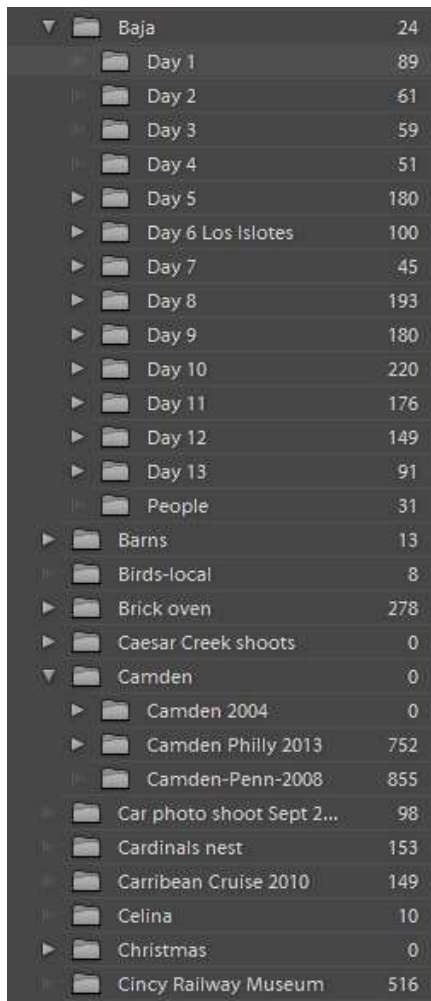
Why is file organization important?

- A great photo is useless if you can't find it
- Easy access to your photos makes your editing time more enjoyable

Pick a location on your computer that you will remember, like My Pictures

Decide on a file structure that helps you find your files

- Arrange your photos by a category that helps you remember the event, such as:
  - By subject or
  - By event, etc.
  - Organizing by date is risky because will you remember in 2 years what you took pictures of in Oct 2013? If you need to find photos by date, Bridge and Lightroom can do that for you anyway, whenever you want. In Bridge use the Filter Panel and in Lightroom use the Filter Bar (View > Show Filter Bar and select filters in the upper right)



Might want to separate a trip by day.

Might want to group similar events

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When you create a folder in Bridge or Lightroom, it creates a folder on your hard drive by that name

Consider your backup procedures when deciding on a file structure

- The best backup method is automated, incremental backup. Allway Sync is free for monthly backups and only \$26 for unlimited backups.
- If you don't have automated backup software you might want to only backup the files you have changed. To make that easier, you could put your changed files in folders separate from your originals.

Rename your files to something meaningful – If you move a copy of the file to another folder or Lightroom collection, you'll know where to find the original.



Remember you need a way to identify winning photos so you'll know you've already entered them

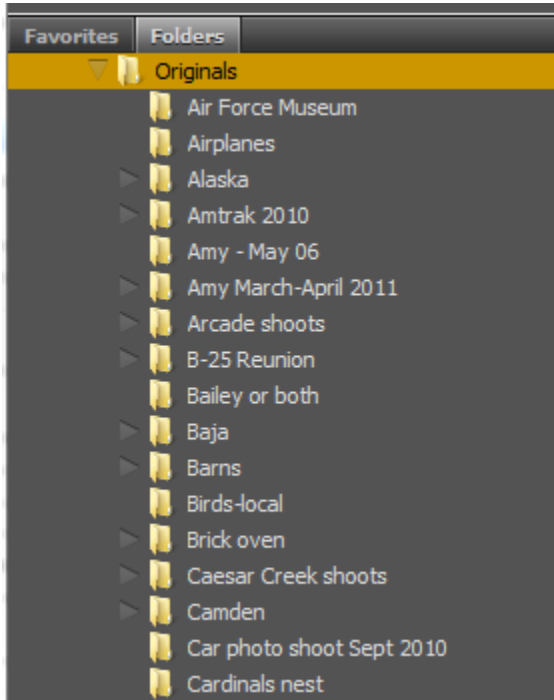
- Make a folder for Tripod Winners and make a small jpg copy to put in folder
- Or make a collection for Tripod Winners

In Bridge, making use of the Favorites tab makes finding images quicker and easier

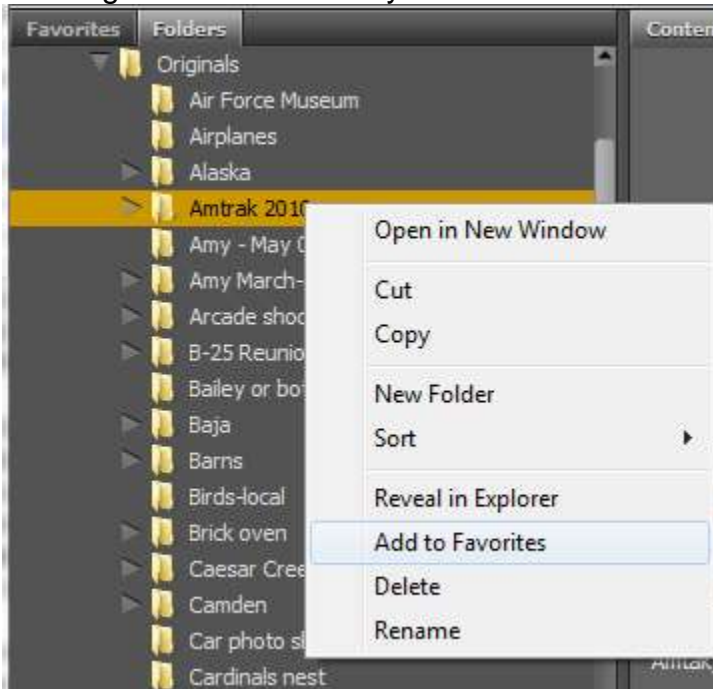


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To add folders to the Favorites tab, first select the Folders tab. It will look like this:



Then right click on a folder you want to add to the Favorites and select Add to Favorites:



## In Bridge or Lightroom, use collections

Think of a collection as a photo album. Let's say you went on a vacation and took 850 photos. Then you came home and wanted to invite some friends over to see those photos. What would you do? You'd never sit down and show them all 850 photos, right?

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You'd print the best photos from the trip and put them into an album that people could flip through in a few minutes. That album would be ready to hand over to someone any time you want to show off your favorite photos. That's what a collection is; it's an album. It's a way for you to get to your favorite photos in just one click.

Select each of the photos you want to put into a collection, go to the Collections panel, click on New Collection icon (+) and choose Create Collection. Give it a descriptive name. You can also drag and drop photos from the Preview panel to the collection at any time.



You already have thousands of photos and no organization. Now what?

- Reorganizing your files can seem like too much work but it is well worth the effort in the long run
- Start by moving all your photo folders into one master folder, like My Pictures.  
**Note: moving any files and folders that Lightroom is aware of, should really be done from within Lightroom. That way Lightroom can keep track of their new location.**
- Rename your folders by something meaningful as mentioned on page 1
  - Right click on a folder and select Rename
- Just the steps above should help a lot. If you have time, it would help to rename the files too. (F2 will bring up the rename dialogue) Keep in mind, if you have made copies of any of these files the names of the copies will no longer match the name of the originals.

## Advanced organization

Assign Keywords to photos

- Keywords allow for searching by subjects that span across folders. e.g. Bridges
- To be useful, it requires adding keywords to all your existing photos and to all future photos

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- You could then create Smart Collections with any keyword(s) in Bridge. (In Lightroom once you assign keywords, you wouldn't need collections for keywords unless you wanted multiple keywords in a collection)

## Rate your photos

- You can rate your photos with one to five stars
- Create your own definitions for each rating, such as, 1 star = good, 2 stars=great, come back to later, 3 stars = make a print NOW!, etc.
- This allows searching by "ratings" which narrows down your search
- To rate your photos in Bridge, select the photo and you will see five small dots under the photo. For one star, click on the first dot. For two stars, click on the second dot, and so on. In Lightroom, select the photo and press the number 1 for one star, 2 for two stars, etc.
- If you want to change the rating later, in Bridge, click in the empty space next to the stars to set the rating to zero or click on a different star. In Lightroom type in a different number or use the number 0 to remove the star rating.