Is Lightroom for you?

Bridge was created for users for all the applications in the Adobe Creative Suite – Illustrator, Dream Weaver, Premier, Photoshop.

Lightroom:

- Created just for photographers
- Does everything Bridge can do and more
- Database driven, where Bridge is not. This provides much fast searching. Thumbnails appear much faster, etc.

"Lightroom does nothing more than I can do in Bridge"

- While you can do most things in Bridge that you can in Lightroom, there are many things Lightroom lets you do more easily and therefore, faster.
- Lightroom is designed with several modules that make it easier to learn a good workflow
- Using the camera raw converter is much faster when adjusting several images. You don't have to open Adobe Camera Raw for each image. You can move from one image to another more quickly using the filmstrip at the bottom.
- Lightroom also adds a History of all changes made and keeps that history forever
- Finding and previewing all photos with the same keyword is much faster - Architecture
- Virtual copies – You can create "virtual copies" of a photograph in Lightroom and modify it differently than the original without increasing your disk space usage.
- Lightroom adds presets in the camera raw "Develop" module which saves time and allows you to preview a change before actually applying it
- Lightroom adds printing – Several "package" templates are provided
- Full screen previews in Lightroom are sharper than in Bridge

Photoshop Creative Cloud

The latest version of Photoshop is called Photoshop Creative Cloud (CC).

- You can no longer buy a standalone copy (DVD or download) of Photoshop
- Now, options for Photoshop are to buy a subscription with a minimum monthly fee of $10 ($120/year) IF you currently have CS3 or higher. It also includes Lightroom. If you don't have CS3 or higher now, the cost will be $20/month ($240/year).
- With the previous versions, if you bought each upgrade at $200 every 18 months, you were paying about $135/year to own Photoshop. Even less if you skipped some upgrades.

Many of the features that are new in Photoshop CC are in Lightroom 5 already:
1) Radial Gradient Filter
2) Upright Lens Correction Adjustments
3) Non-destructive Cloning and Healing Brush

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New in Photoshop CC that isn't in Lightroom 5 and Photoshop CS6/Elements :

1) Camera Raw as a filter in Photoshop – This can be accomplished in CS6 or earlier with Smart Objects (although the filter in CC is probably easier to use)

2) Camera Shake Reduction – Only slightly improves a shaky image

3) Conditional actions and more support for filters and smart object layers.

Can Lightroom replace Photoshop?

- For some people, maybe. It depends on how much you do with your photos
- Recommendation – Use Lightroom in addition to Photoshop or Elements. Photoshop/Elements give you layers which are very useful
- Elements and Lightroom could be all most photographers need
- OnOne software will add layer functionality to Lightroom ($95)

Other benefits

If you only have Elements now, you are missing some powerful tools in the raw converter (Gradient tool, Adjustment Brush, Spot Removal, Hue/Saturation/Grayscale, Lens correction, Effects, Presets, etc).   You get all of these in Lightroom.

Lightroom is much cheaper than Photoshop

Importing, searching, organizing your photos is much easier than the Elements Organizer

If you are new to photography applications, the learning curve is shorter than Photoshop

Features

- Quick search filters
- Hide only the panels you don't need by using the arrows on the edges of the panels
- Quickly jump from thumbnail previews (Library) to camera raw (Develop)
- Before/After preview in Develop module
- In the Develop module Presets are supplied. You can download more and create your own
- "Previous" button quickly repeats the most previous changes you made in Develop
- There are crop overlays that can be guides for different cropping ratios
- Sync – Synchronize changes across several images
- In the Develop module, CTRL + / will show you all the shortcuts available in the current module
- In the Develop module the backslash key (\) will toggle on and off the preview of your changes
- Export – Easily create copies of your photos with varying sizes, resolutions, names, formats – such as "Tripod Competition"

Is Lightroom for you?

- Can run plugins directly from Lightroom (Nik, OnOne, Photomatix, etc.) – Right click on the photo and select "Export" or "Edit In"
- Auto Advance while flagging photos – Hold the Shift key while pressing a key for the star rating or color label you want ("1" for one star, "2" for 2 stars, etc.). Or if you don't want to hold the Shift key, turn on Auto Advance by checking Photo > Auto Advance from the menu.
- Printing – print directly from Lightroom. Templates are provided for different sizes and multi-image layouts. You use your own printer or send files directly to a printing service.
- Output to the internet – Many templates are provided. Options for standard galleries or Flash gallery. Upload to a web site right from Lightroom

Challenges with Lightroom

Understanding the Import/database functionality

Converting from Bridge to Lightroom

- Some PSD files may not get imported because they were not saved with "Maximum Compatibility" turned on in Photoshop