

The Dynamic Duo: Lightroom Classic & Photoshop

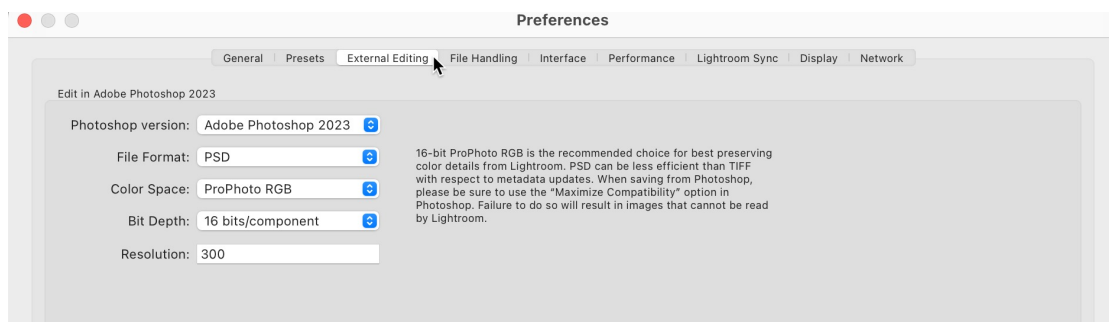
Are you looking to make the most of your Creative Cloud subscription that includes Lightroom Classic and Photoshop? Join us for an informative online conference session where you'll learn how to use these powerful programs together to enhance your photo editing skills. Rob, will guide you through the process, sharing insights on when to use each program and how to integrate Camera Raw, Bridge, and cloud-based Lightroom into your workflow. By the end of this class, you'll have a deeper understanding of these tools and how to use them to achieve your creative goals. Don't miss out on this valuable opportunity to expand your photo editing knowledge!

Photoshop and Lightroom Classic are the dynamic duo of a photo editing workflow! Bundled together within the Creative Cloud Photography subscription plan we can use them together to leverage the best of both worlds to tackle all manner of digital surgery, from minor cosmetic corrections to multi-image compositing. In this class Rob will help you understand the scenarios that can benefit most from both programs, show you the settings you'll need to configure, and explore several different workflows for sending your photos from Lightroom Classic to Photoshop and back again in the most efficient ways possible.

Understanding the basics of how to take your photos from Lightroom Classic to Photoshop and back again (and possibly back and forth more than once) can reduce frustration and increase efficiency.

Configuring Preferences

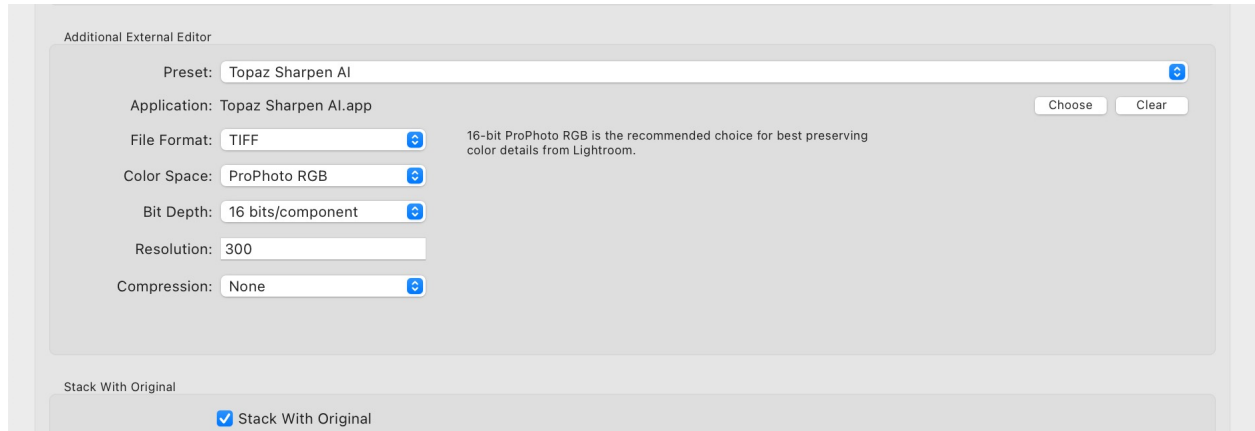
Starting in Lightroom Classic (LrC), let's take a look at the External Editing options, which can be found by going to Lightroom Classic > Preferences > External Editing (PC: Edit > Preferences > External Editing).



By default, LrC will detect the most current version of Photoshop that you have installed and make that application the primary external editor, which is displayed at the top of the dialog box. You can optionally configure additional external editors in the Additional External Editor section.

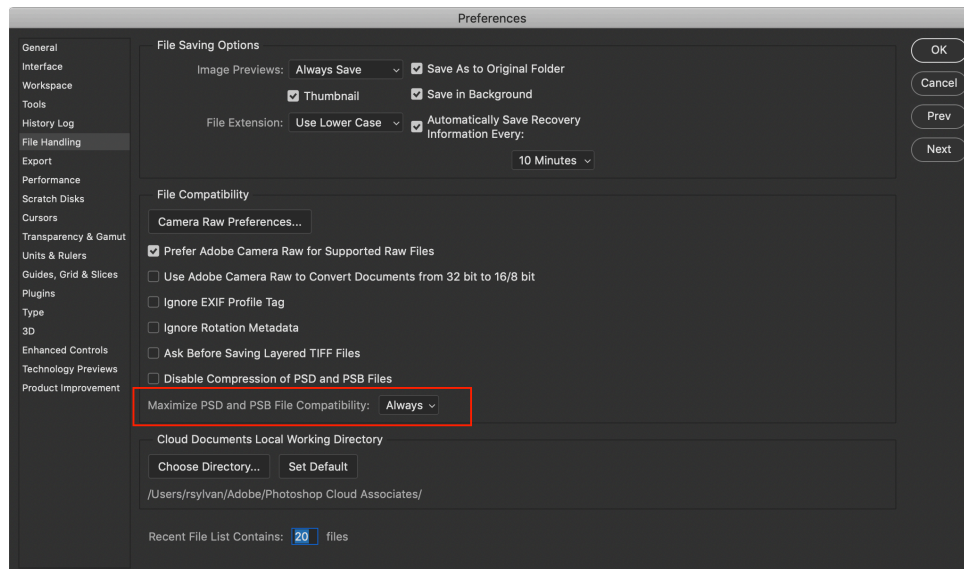
Tip: After configuring an additional editor you can click the Preset drop-down menu and save those settings with that editor as a preset to easily reuse again in the future.

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Regardless of whether you are using the primary external editor or an additional external editor you need to configure LrC to choose the File Format, Color Space, and Bit Depth of the copy that is sent to that editor. There is also a field for specifying the resolution value for the copy, but this has no effect on the pixel dimensions of the copy created, and it can be changed again at any time in the future based on your output needs, so simply choose a default value that you like at this stage (go with 300 PPI if that suits your needs). File type is also a personal preference, so choose TIF or PSD based on what you prefer, or just stick with the default setting.

Note, If you do go with PSD, make sure Photoshop's File Handling preferences are set to always maximize PSD and PSB compatibility. In Photoshop, go to Preferences > File Handling, and set Maximize PSD and PSB compatibility to Always.



The biggest choice you need to make is around bit depth. If you shoot raw and want to have the most data available for editing in Photoshop then choose 16 bit. If you are satisfied with the amount of image data available in an 8 bit file and prefer a smaller file size then choose 8 bit. If

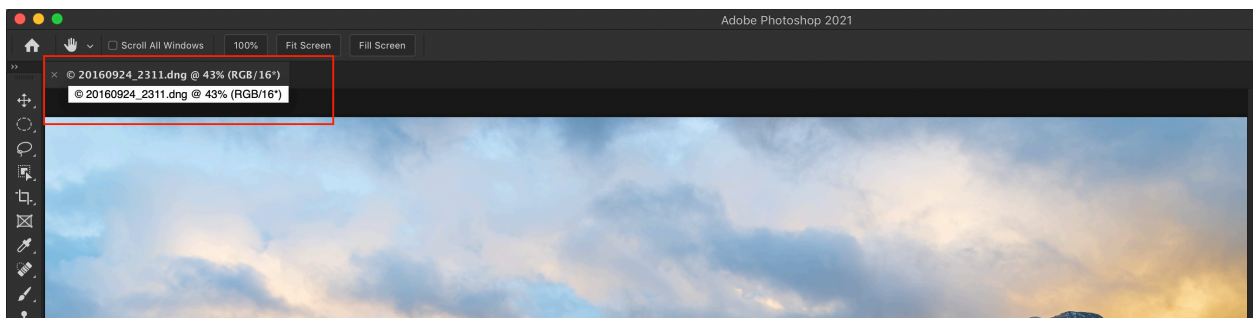
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you go with 16 bit then ProPhoto RGB is the best choice for color space, but if you go with 8 bit then I would suggest using Adobe RGB (ProPhoto RGB is a wide gamut color space that is better suited to 16 bit data). LrC will then use these settings for all copies sent to the external editor.

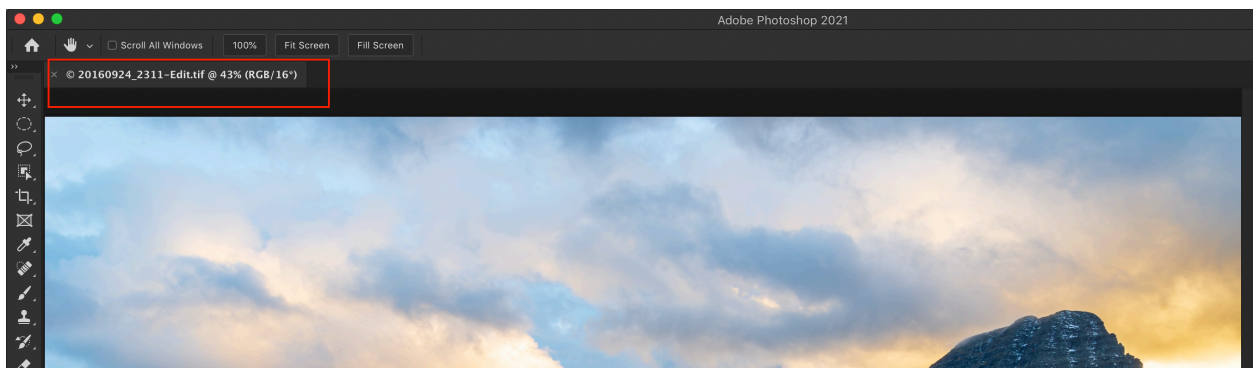
At the very bottom of the External Editing dialog box is the place where you can customize the file naming convention applied to the copies sent to the external editor. By default, the word Edit is simply appended to the existing file name. This works for me, so I just leave it as-is, but you can click the Template drop-down menu and choose an existing filename template or choose Edit to create a custom filename template that better suits your needs.

When?

One of the questions I get asked the most is about when in the workflow to send a photo from LrC to Photoshop. Well, if you are starting with a raw photo then it makes the most sense to do all your basic raw processing in LrC first (white balance, exposure, capture sharpening, lens corrections, etc.) and then send a copy with your LrC adjustments to Photoshop to do whatever work you need to do there. In this situation it is important to keep in mind that the copy that appears in Photoshop is not saved to your hard drive until you use the File > Save menu in Photoshop, so don't be surprised if you still see the file extension of the original raw photo at first.



As soon you save the copy in Photoshop the file extension will update to reflect the file format and file name template you choose in LrC's External Editing preferences, and at the same time the copy is saved to the same folder as the source photo and added to the LrC catalog.



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Once you are done editing in Photoshop be sure to save one last time, then close the photo and switch back to LrC.

Tip, if you start in LrC by placing the photo you want in a collection, and then make sure that specific collection is selected in the Collections panel (and not just the parent collection set), then the copy sent to Photoshop will also be added to that collection when it is added to the catalog after using the File > Save menu in Photoshop.

What about preserving layers?

Another frequent question I get is how to open a layered TIF or PSD file from LrC to Photoshop without flattening the image. If you select a non-raw photo (TIF, PSD or JPG) in LrC and go to Photo > Edit in > Edit in Photoshop then you will be prompted to make a choice.



If you simply want to edit the original layered version in Photoshop without creating a new copy or applying any additional LrC adjustments then choose Edit Original. This would be the equivalent of opening that file from Bridge or Photoshop itself. Once you are done editing in Photoshop, just go to File > Save, then close the photo and return to LrC.

LrC can only ever apply its Develop adjustments to a new copy, and that copy will be flattened. For example, if you brought that layered photo into the Develop module and applied new adjustments to it, and then wanted to see

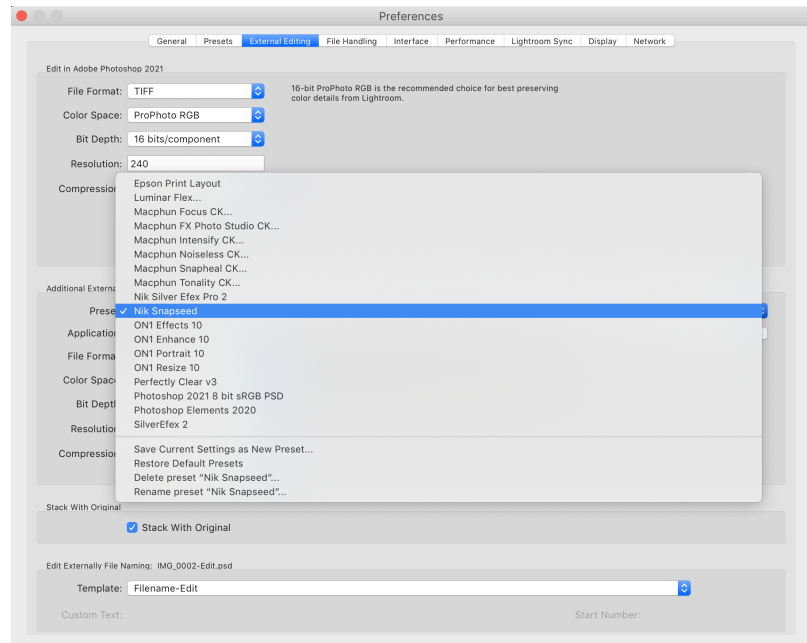
the end result applied to a new copy that you could edit in Photoshop you would choose Edit a copy with LrC adjustments, which will result in a new flattened copy being sent to Photoshop. These are two different workflows with two different results, and the choice is yours.

Configuring Additional External Editors

An external editor is any other pixel editor you may have installed on your machine. Aside from Photoshop, some of the most common are products from On1, Nik, Perfectly Clear, Topaz, etc. For most of these products, when you install that software the connection between it and LrC are also installed. If you click the Preset drop-down menu under Additional External Editor you will see these listed.

If you select one of those presets, you will see the file settings used when creating the copy that is

sent to the respective editor. For example, selecting the preset for Snapseed, I see that it is set to create a 8 bit sRGB TIF file. If I wanted to change any of those settings, I could dial in my preferred choices, then click the Preset drop-down menu a second time and choose Update Preset from the bottom of the list. You can do this with any of the presets you have.

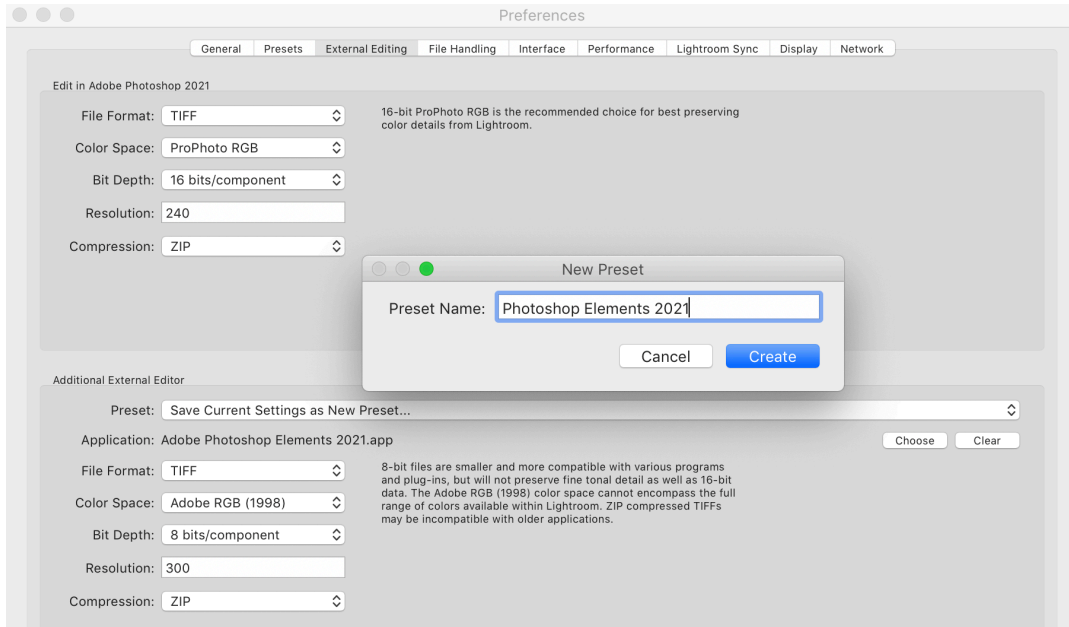


Adding New Editors

Alternatively, if you have an image editor that is not listed here and you'd like to be able to send a copy from LrC to that editor, you can create a custom preset. For example, I have Photoshop Elements installed, and I need to use that for some of the classes I teach. Here's how to create a custom preset:

1. Click the Choose button, and navigate to the program you want to open (Applications folder on Mac, Program Files on Win) and select it.
2. Configure the file type settings as desired.
3. Click the Preset drop-down menu, and choose Save Current Settings as New Preset, and give it a name.

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That's it. You've now got a custom additional editor configured and ready to go. If there is an additional editor you use frequently, leave that preset selected in the Preset drop-down menu. That will make it available right under Photoshop on the Photo > Edit In menu, and when you go there you'll see there is even a keyboard shortcut associated with the selected additional editor. Might just make your workflow one click faster.

Note, that drop-down menu is also where you will find the option to delete unwanted additional external editor presets. Just select the unwanted preset first, then click the drop-down a second time to access the delete option.

Large Document Format (PSB) Support in Lightroom Classic

We now have support for the Large Document Format (PSB) in LrC. This has been on the request list for a long time, and with increasing sensor sizes and the ability to easily stitch multiple frames into very large panoramas, it is a very welcome addition. I wanted to give it a test drive, and share the steps you might encounter when you create an image that exceeds the file size for PSD or TIF.

The first consideration is what you have set on the External Editing tab of the Preferences. By default it is set to 16 Bit ProPhoto RGB TIF, but it is possible to change that to PSD as well, as I have done. Both TIF and PSD support layers and all the things you would want to do in Photoshop. I have found that layered PSD files tend to be smaller than layered TIF files, but I really think it is more a matter of personal preference. My understanding is that TIF files have a file size limitation of 4GB, while PSD tops out at 2GB.

In the past, once you hit that file size limit you'd have to save the file using Photoshop's Large Document Format file type, which has a PSB extension. Photoshop can do that just fine, but the

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problem was that the resulting PSB file would not import back into LrC, which was not ideal. Thanks to this new update, those PSB files can be imported back into LrC. However, PSB still face the same limit for import as any other photo, which is that it can't be more than 65,000 pixels on the long side or more than 512 Megapixels total.

In Practice

I started out with 33 frames I captured in Yosemite National Park a few years ago. We were out scouting locations in the morning, and all I had in my hand was a Nikon D5300 with a 105mm lens on it (everything else was back in the car). We came into a field and there was Half Dome looking just beautiful. I couldn't stand back any further, so I just shot a pano of sorts, handheld, of the entire scene, and kept walking. Later on, I threw all 33 frames into LrC's merge to pano function, and it resulted in a 138 megapixel DNG photo of the scene. That was pretty cool! A good reminder to always take the shot.

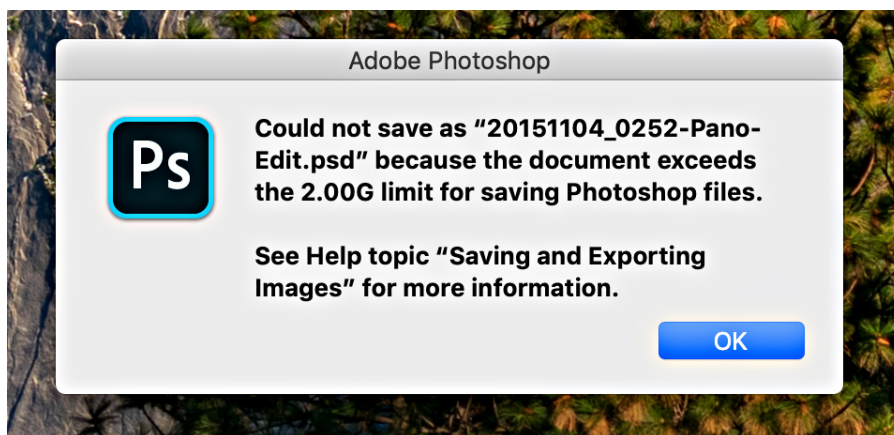


After processing the resulting pano in LrC I sent it to Photoshop to test out the improved Content Aware Fill to fill in the transparent pixels and then apply some sharpening to finish it off.

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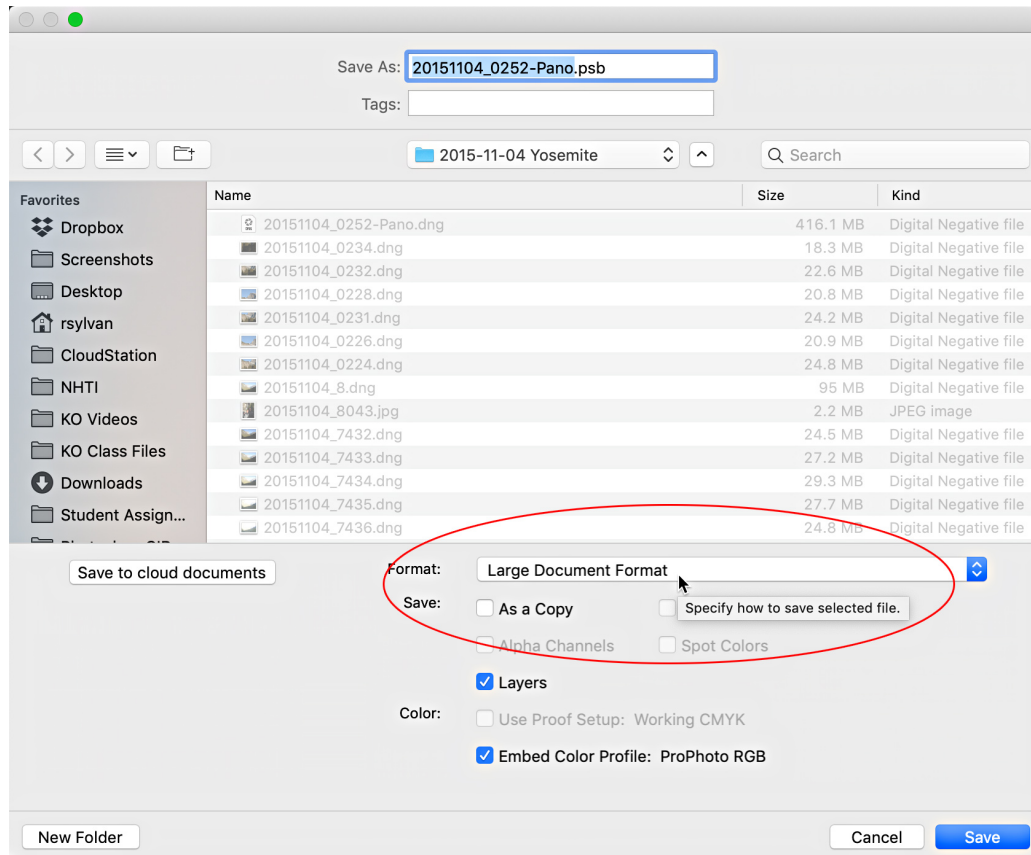


That all went well enough, but when I went to File > Save, to save this new edited copy to the same folder as the source photo and have it added back to LrC I was confronted with a dialog informing me the copy could not be saved as a PSD because I exceeded that 2GB limit.



So, I went to File > Save As, and chose the Large Document Format from the Format drop-down menu, and saved it to the same folder as the source photo. Saving was slow, but successful.

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Once I was done editing and the file was done saving, I closed it out of Photoshop and returned to LrC. I was pleased to find the new PSB file had imported successfully into my catalog and was already selected just like it would if it had been the normal PSD (or TIF) file. The resulting PSB file ended up being 3.19GB.

As a final step, now that I can have PSB files in my catalog, it was time to add a new smart collection to my [“Catalog Dashboard”](#) by using the rule File Type is Photoshop Large Document (PSB), and including it in the existing collection set.

Leverage Lightroom Classic Snapshots in Photoshop

Even if you use LrC for the majority of your editing needs there are still times when you just need to do something in Photoshop. This can be intimidating for some people who are very familiar with editing in Lightroom, but feel a bit disoriented when they head to Photoshop. I want to share a simple LrC tip to help you have an easier time should this happen to you.

The key to this tip is to take advantage of creating Snapshots in LrC’s Develop module before you head to Photoshop. Here’s a [refresher on Snapshots](#) if you are rusty on the topic, but basically a Snapshot is a way to preserve an editing state so that you can easily switch back to it if needed, and you can create as many as you need.

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When it is time to head to Photoshop, you can use the Edit in > Open as Smart Object in Photoshop, which embeds a copy of your original raw photo, plus all edits (including Snapshots) into the smart object layer in the copy (TIF or PSD based on your LrC preferences) that opens in Photoshop.

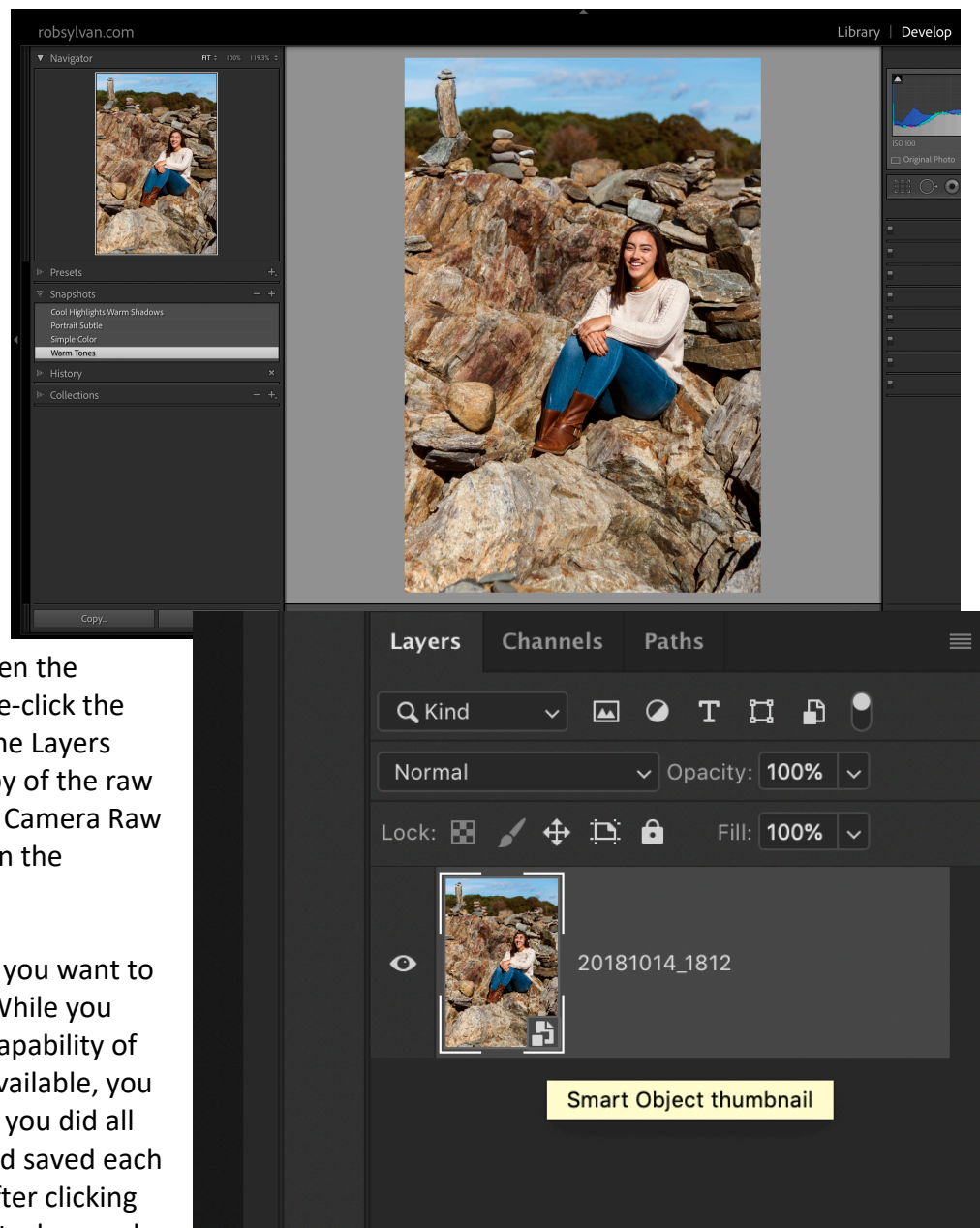
So, let's say you were editing a senior portrait (shout out to all graduating seniors who having alternative ceremonies this year!), and you came up with a few variations on the final image, and you wanted to see how each one looked with a simple text overlay you created in Photoshop.

Start by creating your different looks in LrC, and saving each look as a Snapshot.

Then, when you are ready, use the Photo > Edit in > Open as Smart Object in Photoshop menu to create a new copy with the original raw photo embedded in the smart object.

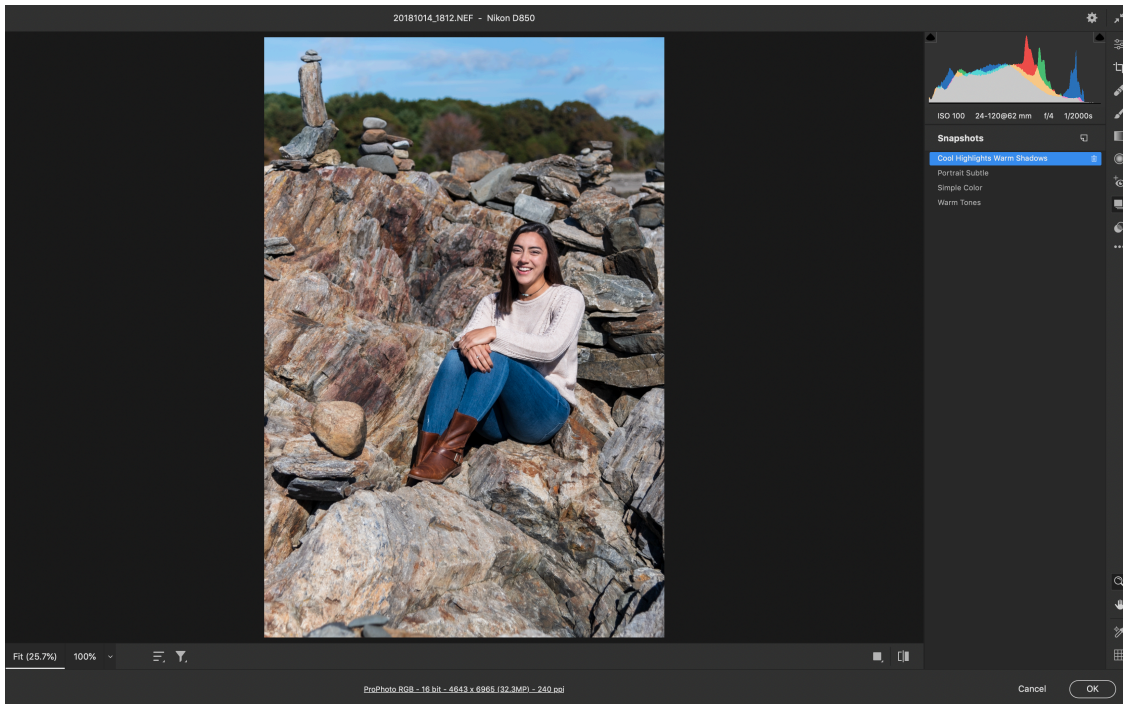
Then to switch between the different looks, double-click the smart object icon in the Layers panel to open the copy of the raw photo into the Adobe Camera Raw (ACR) plugin, and open the Snapshots tab.

Click on the Snapshot you want to apply, then click Ok. While you have the full editing capability of Adobe Camera Raw available, you don't need it because you did all of your edits in LrC and saved each look as a Snapshot. After clicking Ok, you return to Photoshop and see the updated look.



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You can jump right back to view another Snapshot for comparison the same way. Once you've picked the final look, use the File > Save command to save the copy to the same folder as your source photo and add it to the LrC catalog. Should you need to send that layered file back to Photoshop for more editing, use the Edit in > Edit in Photoshop command, and choose Edit Original, to open it right up to where you left off.



Adobe Camera Raw for Lightroom Classic Users

Since we just used ACR for that snapshot tip, I thought it might be helpful to look at it a little closer. Before there was Lightroom Classic, we had Photoshop, Bridge, and the Adobe Camera Raw plug-in that formed the foundation to many photographer's digital imaging workflow. In the 10+ years since Lightroom's debut I think it is safe to say that many of those photographers have made the migration over to LrC. So much so that it is far more common to see articles, videos, and tutorials about LrC than about ACR. That said, there are still people using ACR because that's what fits their needs. I'm not here to convince anyone to change the software they are using, but rather to provide a look into what is the same, what is different, and how to decode whether a given LrC resource applies to ACR, and vice versa.

Origins

LrC was created as a way to take the powerful editing capabilities in the ACR plug-in and build a more efficient workflow around it, from capture to output, aimed specifically at digital photographers. As a result, LrC's Develop module shares the same editing and rendering capabilities as the ACR plug-in, but in a different wrapper that includes features and functions

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for importing, organizing, and output that don't exist in Camera Raw itself. Due to this common origin, LrC and Camera Raw have evolved as separate products, but they continue to be developed and updated in parallel to retain that consistent editing and rendering capability.

Because of this, the conventional wisdom is that everything in LrC's Develop module is also in ACR, and everything in ACR is also in the Develop module. But in actual use, I think the answer is a good bit more nuanced than that, and that is what I want to explore.

Differences

So much is the same between the two programs that I just want to focus on the differences to help you navigate between the two programs. Now, if you are LrC user you might be wondering why this would be helpful, but there are a few scenarios where a LrC user might encounter the ACR plug-in:

- You use the Photo > Edit in > Open as Smart Object workflow from LrC (as we just did previously).
- You use the Filter > Camera Raw Filter menu in Photoshop.
- You have some reason to open a raw photo into ACR from Bridge or Photoshop (uncommon, but not unheard of).

We'll look at those specific cases later on, but I think there is value in LrC users knowing their way around ACR too.

The Interface

The biggest cause of disorientation for anyone opening one program or the other at first is the difference in where things are located. Thanks to a recent interface update in ACR it looks a whole lot more like LrC than it ever did before. That said, let's get oriented. In LrC, all of the editing tools are located within the group of panels on the right side of the Develop module. In ACR, it now has similarly arranged panels on the right side along with a toolbar down the right edge.

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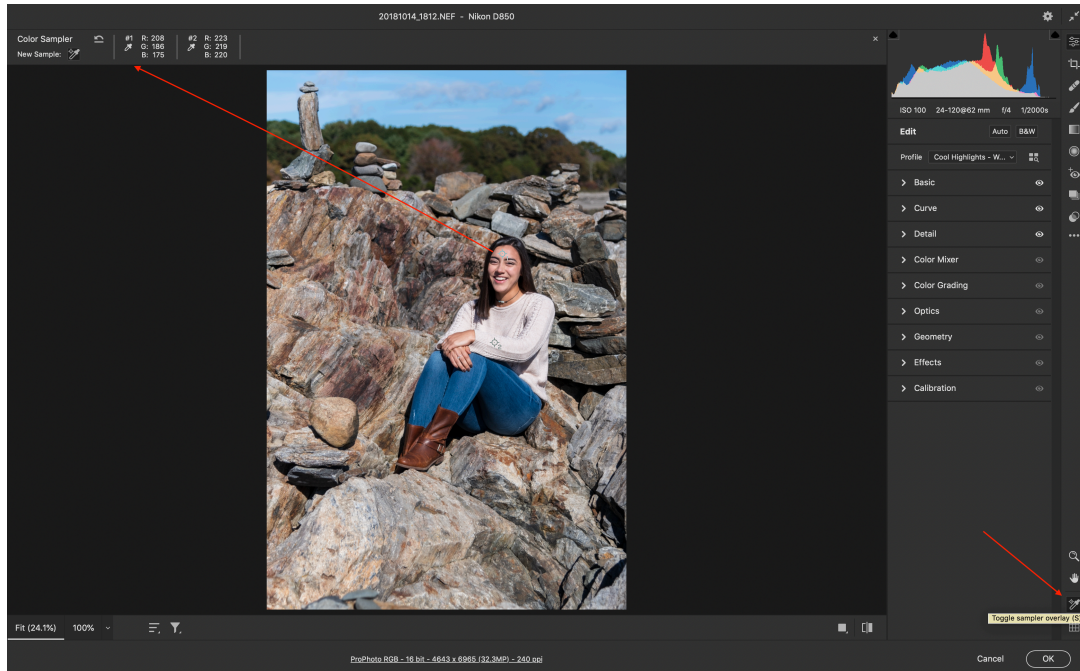
In both LrC and ACR, if you are unsure of what a given icon represents you can place your cursor over the icon to see a tooltip appear displaying the name of the tool and its keyboard shortcut. I highly recommend any new user spending the time to become familiar with the icons this way. Note, keyboard shortcuts are not consistent between the two applications, so be prepared to use your mouse a lot more in the program you are less familiar with.

A few quirky differences in the interfaces to be aware of are as follows:

- The tools that appear under the Histogram in LrC appear down the right-edge in ACR.
- The Lens Corrections panel in LrC is called Optics in ACR.
- The Transform panel in LrC is called Geometry in ACR.
- The icons for accessing Snapshots and Presets appear along with the tools down the right-edge in ACR.

There is one tool that can be found in ACR that does not exist in LrC, and that's the Color Sampler Tool (near the bottom on the right-edge of the interface). This tool allows you to drop up to 9 color sample points on the photo so that you can monitor the RGB values at those points while you edit. I'd love to see this added to LrC, but it has not yet come to pass.

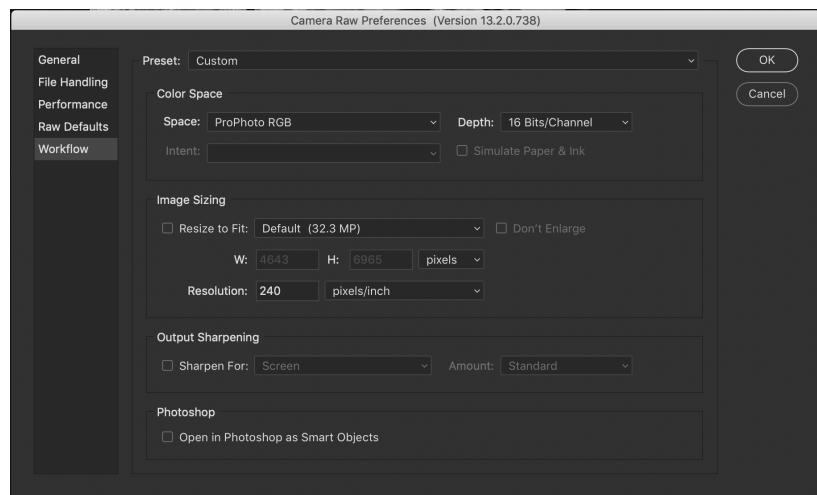
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Workflow Options in ACR

Somewhat related to the topic of color sampling is the fact that you can change the color space used by the Histogram and Color Sampler in ACR via the Workflow Options dialog (accessible by clicking the link at the bottom of the window). LrC's color space cannot be changed in a similar way (unless you are soft proofing).

It is in this Workflow Options dialog that you can configure ACR to open a copy of the edited photo as a smart object in Photoshop if desired. In LrC you would go through the Photo > Edit in > Open as smart object menu to do the same.



You'll also find an option to change the pixel dimensions of the photo opening in Photoshop from ACR this dialog. Most people leave this at the recommended Default setting that uses the native pixel dimensions (minus any cropping), but Lightroom doesn't have any way to change the pixel dimensions of the copies sent to Photoshop for editing (aside from cropping). If you need to resize the photo as part of your edit in Photoshop workflow from LrC you'd have to either resize it in Photoshop after it opens or go through LrC's Export dialog, then open the

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exported copy in Photoshop. In both programs the ideal is to stick to the largest color space and highest resolution (pixel dimensions) possible for editing the master version of the photo.

In LrC, the closest parallel to the Workflow Options dialog in ACR is found in the Lightroom > Preferences > External Editing (PC: Edit > Preferences > External Editing) panel. Here you can configure the color space, bit depth, and file type of copies sent to Photoshop with Lightroom adjustments. The default settings are recommended. Changing these settings has no effect on what you see in the Develop module.

So, don't be afraid to leverage ACR in your workflow when sending smart objects to Photoshop from LrC or when using the Filter > Camera Raw Filter menu in Photoshop to apply ACR controls to a layer as part of your editing workflow.

Enhancing the Edit in Photoshop Options from LrC

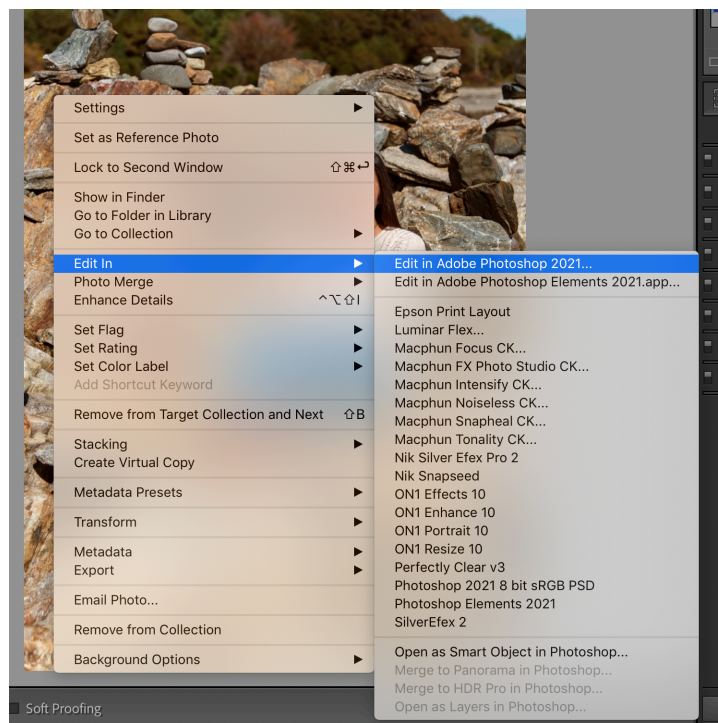
Since the beginning of LrC's existence (back when it was just called Lightroom), it was made to play nicely with Photoshop. Under the Photo > Edit in menu in both Library and Develop are various options for sending a copy (or the original in some cases) to Photoshop for editing.

The CMD/Ctrl+E shortcut are well known and used by most when the opportunity arises. Granted, we may try to find ways to avoid the trip to Photoshop, but I've been wondering about ways to make that process more efficient.

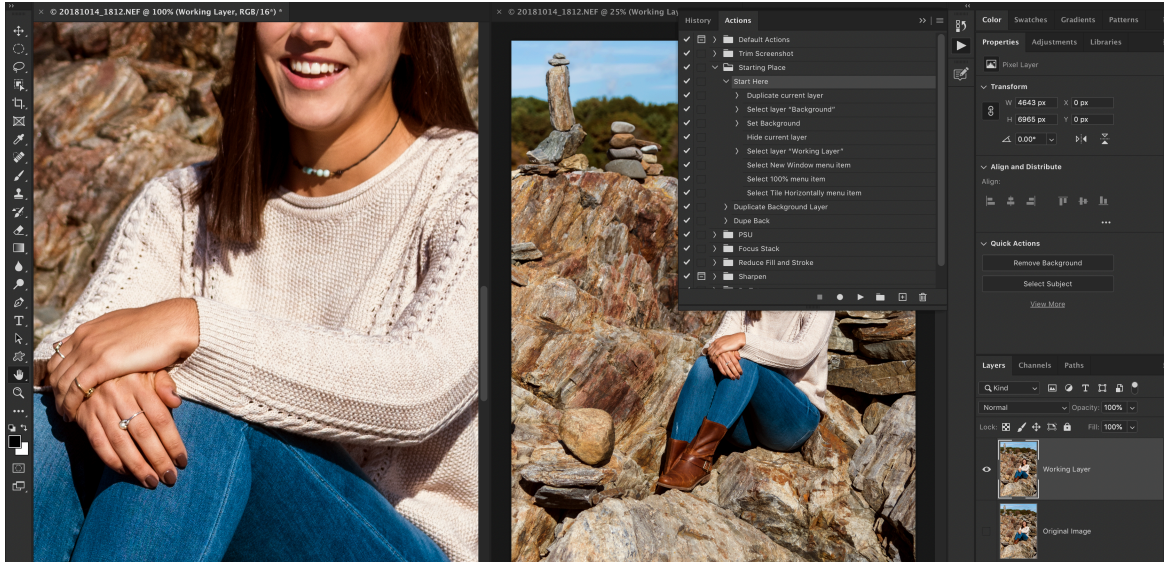
So I started thinking about what are some of the common steps I take after a photo opens in Photoshop, regardless of the reason for going there or the subject matter of the photo. Obviously, these steps will vary with each individual, but here are some things I almost always do:

- Duplicate the background layer (old habit for a fall back to the original image)
- Rename layers
- Open a secondary instance of the photo at a different zoom level

All of these things can be easily added to an action, and so I created an action that I could apply as soon as the photo opened in Photoshop.



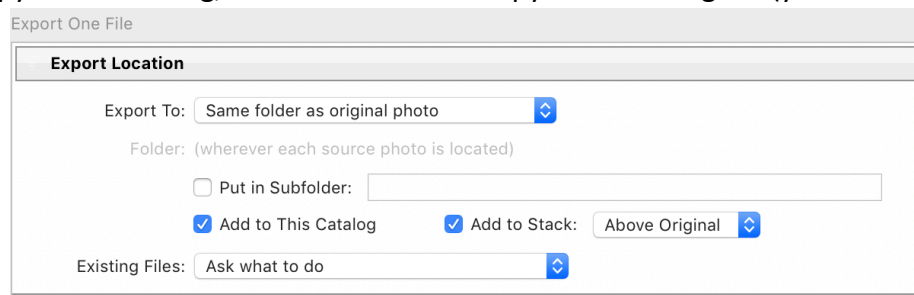
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Then I remembered that it was possible to create an executable form of an action called a droplet, which once created gives you the ability to drag and drop a photo onto the droplet to run the steps in the action. More importantly, you can trigger Droplets to run as the last step of an export from LrC.

Now, the Photo > Edit in > Edit in Photoshop command takes its cues from the External Editing tab of the Preferences with regard to the file type, color space, and bit depth of the copy created in that process. All of those options are available from the Export dialog as well. In addition, at the top of the Export dialog are the options to save the photo to the same folder as the original, add the copy to the catalog, and even stack the copy with the original (you can even choose the stacking order).

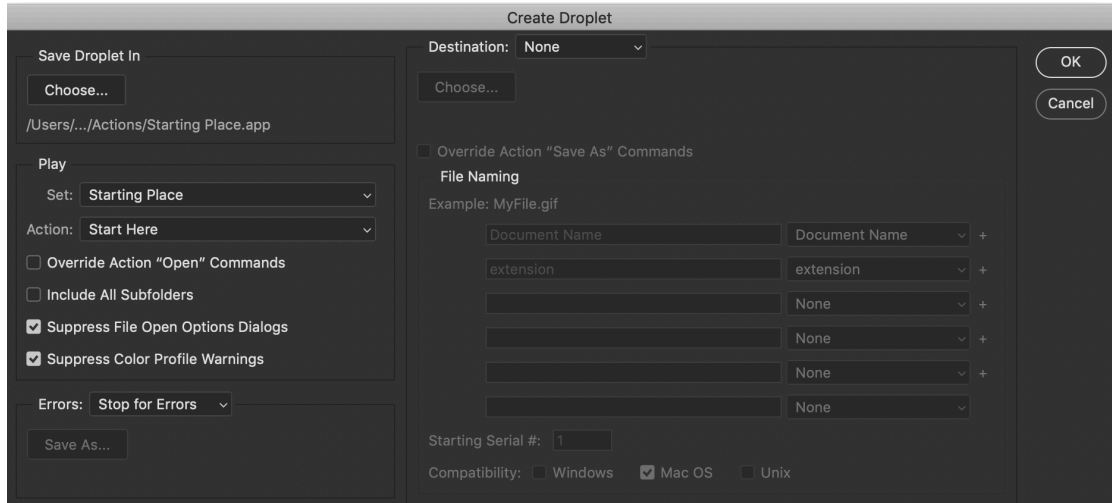
Basically, you can get the same results via export as you can via Edit in menu.



Putting it All Together

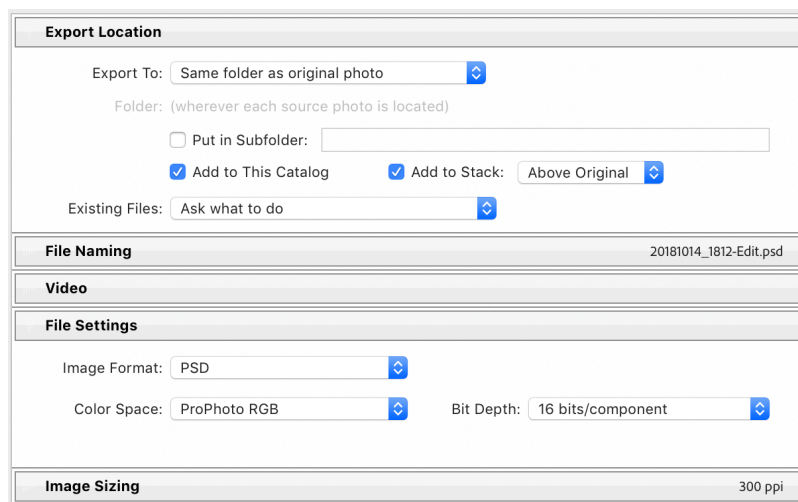
First, you'll want to give this some thought about your own Photoshop workflow and what tasks make the most sense for you to add to such an action. Then, create the action in Photoshop. Once you are happy with your action, use the File > Automate > Create droplet command in Photoshop to create a droplet from your action. When creating the droplet, it may be easiest to save it to your desktop at first, so that you can move it to the right folder for LrC later.

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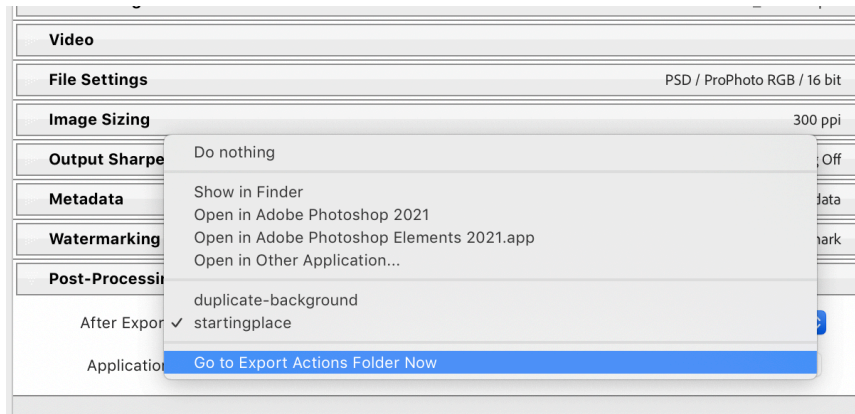
Once your droplet is made, open LrC and click the Export button (you might want to select a photo for testing first). On the Export dialog, configure the Export Location panel so that the resulting copy is saved to same folder as original, added to the catalog, and stacked accordingly.

Then, expand the File Settings panel, and configure it the same way you've configured the External Editing settings in Preferences. I set mine using the default preference settings, but do what works for you.



Then, go down to the Post Processing panel, click the After Export drop-down menu and chose Go to Export Actions Folder Now.

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This will open your file browser to that folder. Open the folder and place your freshly minted droplet inside. Then, go back to the Export dialog and click that After Export drop-down menu again, and you should see the name of your droplet in the list. Select your droplet (you can see mine is checked above).

Once the Export dialog is configured to your liking, click the Add button under the Preset panel on the left, and save your settings as a preset. I recommend putting the new preset in a folder to keep things organized, and give it a meaningful name. Then, click the Export button and give it a test run. If all was configured properly, you should see a copy of the selected photo appear in the same folder as original, added to the catalog (stacked with original), and then open in Photoshop where your action will be run.

I think it is pretty cool, and will probably continue to evolve as I use it. You might be wondering, what about a keyboard shortcut? Well, that isn't as simple. That said, it is worth noting that once you save it as a preset you can access all export presets via the File > Export with Preset menu, which allows you to skip seeing the Export dialog and just get on with running the process.

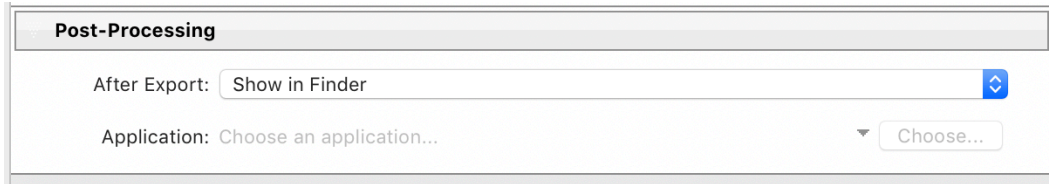
Other Uses for that Post-Processing Panel on Export

Way down at the bottom of the Export dialog is the lonely Post-Processing panel. I use it all the time, but I feel like it is one of the most underrated options people consider when exporting copies from LrC. Let's take a look at some of the other things you can do beyond leaving it set to Do nothing.

Open in File Browser

One of the most common ways I use it is to have it open my operating system's file browser (Finder on Mac and Explorer on Win) to show my exported copies.

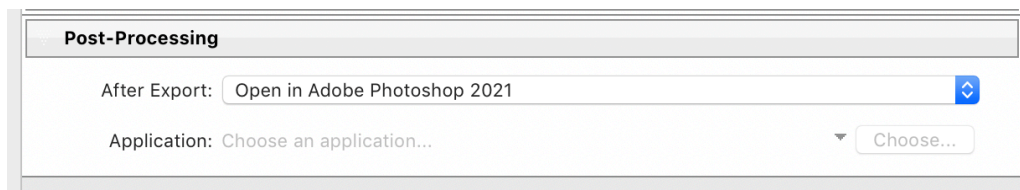
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This gives me a nice visual confirmation that the process is done and lets me verify the files are where I want them and that they're configured the way I expected.

Open in Photoshop

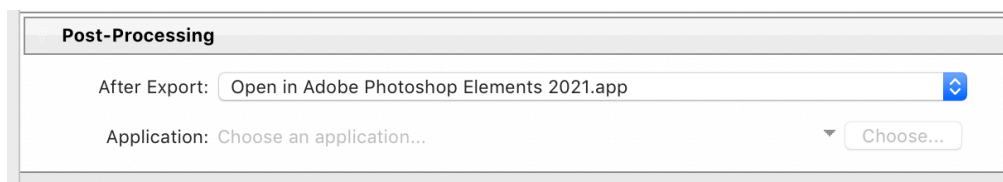
Sure, you most commonly use the Photo > Edit in > Edit in Photoshop command, as do I, but what if there were times where you wanted to simply open a photo into Photoshop in a different file type, color space, pixel dimension, etc. then what was possible via the Edit in Photoshop workflow? Maybe you don't really need to send a 16 Bit Prophoto RGB TIF to Photoshop just to do some minor tweak on the way to sending someone a JPG? Why not give this a try?



As I showed previously, you can even configure the exported copy to be added back into the catalog via the Export Location panel. Consider it a more configurable alternative to the Edit in Photoshop command.

Open in Your Secondary External Editor

If you've installed other third-party external editors (like Nik, OnOne, etc.) or manually created additional external editor presets (like I talked about last week), then the preset that is selected on the Preferences > External Editing tab will show below Open in Photoshop in the After Export drop-down menu.



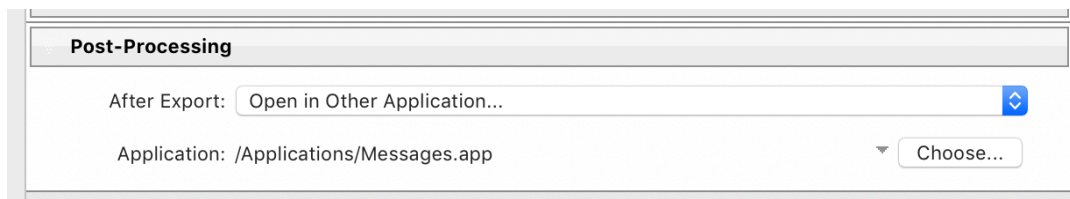
In my case I had my preset for Photoshop Elements selected in my preferences, so that is what is available in that menu. Just change the preference setting if you want to have a different program available. Or, see the next section for selecting another application that may not even be an image editor.

Open in Another Application

The options available here are entirely dependent on what applications you have installed and what you might use in your workflow, so here are just some examples to consider.

I was recently asked if it was possible to send a photo via text message from LrC, and I know at least on a Mac, you can send a photo right from LrC to the Messages app by using the Open in Other Application option in the Post-Processing panel. The process I'll outline here works for other applications too (but note that not all applications may accept photos sent from LrC, so you'll have to experiment).

1. Select the photo(s) you want to include in your export.
2. Click the Export button, and configure the Export dialog as desired (such as a resized JPG in sRGB in this case) for your reason to export.
3. Expand the Post-Processing panel and choose Open in Other Application from the After Export drop-down menu.
4. Click the Choose button, and navigate to where your applications are installed (the Applications folder on Mac and Program Files on Windows).
5. Select the actual application file you want to use (in this case I selected the Messages.app file).
6. Click Export to complete the process and pass the exported photo(s) along to the next application.



What about sending off a selection of photos to Adobe Acrobat to create a PDF to send to a client? What if you'd rather open the destination folder in Bridge to view the exported copies instead of your system's file browser? What if you wanted to pass off a full resolution copy to the cloud-based Lightroom to upload it to the cloud for sharing? These are just some things that I have done and found useful. You will surely think of other examples.

Note, it does seem to help to have the destination application open before clicking the export button in LrC to ease the hand off, and as you try different programs you may find that not every one works as you would expect.

Replacing the Sky Instead of Cleaning It

OK, I thought I would wrap this up with a look at a complete roundtrip workflow from LrC to Photoshop and back to put this into practice. One of the least fun editing tasks in LrC is cleaning up sensor spots in the sky. Starting with a noisy and mottled sky makes it even worse. I

The Dynamic Duo: Lightroom Classic & Photoshop

wondered if it wouldn't be easier to simply replace the sky completely instead of cleaning it up? I didn't want a sky that was unrealistic or overly dramatic, just clean with a smooth gradient. So, I thought I'd give the new Select > Sky function a try. Here's how it went:

<https://lightroomkillertips.com/replacing-the-sky-instead-of-cleaning-it/>

Check out April 2023 Updates

The April updates included several features that affect the Lightroom Classic to Photoshop workflow, which I explain here: <https://lightroomkillertips.com/april-updates-for-lightroom-classic-lightroom-and-camera-raw/>

Be sure to keep checking Lightroom Killer Tips regularly for new posts from Scott and me.

In Closing

As you can see there are a lot of ways to leverage the power of LrC and Photoshop together, from the most mundane retouching edits to running droplets of your favorite actions or even taking advantage of smart objects and ACR. I hope you find new and useful ways to incorporate this dynamic duo in your workflow!

Thanks for tuning into my session. I've got a lot more to share on LightroomKillerTips, so be sure to check out my other posts: <https://lightroomkillertips.com/author/robsylvan/>

Please don't hesitate to reach out to me with any questions. You can find me at any of the following locations:

Twitter: [@Lightroomers](https://twitter.com/Lightroomers)

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