

## **SECTION TWO: OVER-COMING THE FEAR.**

The premise of this Section of the book, is that, even though you've configured Photoshop and your computer to respond the way we want, you're still filled with apprehension when confronted by all the dials, buttons, knobs and levers presented to you.

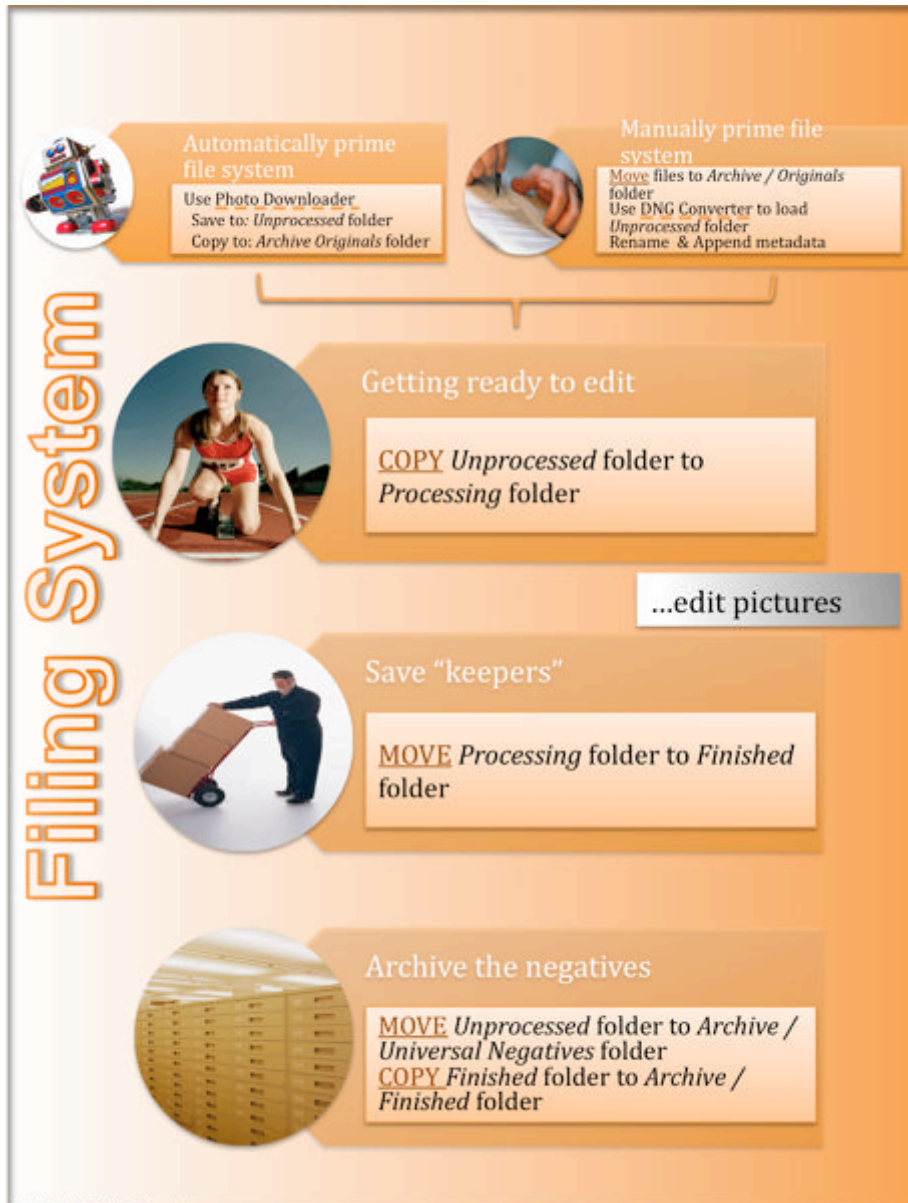
Most "how to" Photoshop books work on the idea that you want to take one picture and turn it in to something mind-blowingly-good. And you do, I know that, but I also know that at your Sister's wedding, you took 400 pictures and you know they can't all expect to receive "the full Photoshop treatment". So what we're going to do for the next hour, is break the back of the Photoshop learning curve, discover many of the tools that you'll still be using years from now, and also mass-process (or batch edit) those run-of-the-mill snaps. Don't worry, in Section Three and Four, we'll focus on finding the gems, and giving them the justice they deserve.

Regardless of whether you're polishing gems, or batch processing memories, the way you manage your filing system is the same, and so that's where we're going to start.

After that we'll learn a comprehensive workflow for Bridge, and how to mass-edit pictures in Camera Raw. And then finally, we'll uploading them to the internet.

## 1. MANAGING YOUR FILING SYSTEM

The workflow for ensuring that you never lose a picture, is a very simple 4 step process that you'll use regardless of the type of editing you're performing, or how accomplished you become. The foundation of this workflow is that you never, ever, delete or alter a picture, unless you already have at least one backup.



It starts with you either loading the raw files in to the system, or moving around images you've already copied to your computer. We then duplicate those pictures so that we've got a copy we can play with. Once we're happy that the pictures will win awards, we delete the ones we don't want, and move the keepers in to our keepers folder. At that point, we then move the original files in to our long term storage. By following these 4 simple steps, you'll always have a copy of every time your shutter clicked.

Some people will claim that this is excessive, and surely, you should be throwing away the bad pictures. Hogwash. Every time your shutter fires, you learn something. Whether its to adjust your ISO at night, set your speed really high when in a moving car, or just that whenever you take the camera out of its bag, you should remove the lens cap, ("Rookie mistake!" as Deanna and I shout every time one of us does this; a weekly occurrence, sadly). Everything your camera does, don't forget, is captured in that EXIF data, and so every mistake you make, is recorded for you to later study and learn from. Add to that, the fact that what may look like a terrible picture now, may become your favorite picture next year when you learn a new Photoshop skill.

Case in point; this picture of my wife in the bath, was taken on our honeymoon. At the time, I thought it was a great picture, but later I just couldn't find the Wow. Almost 2 years later, Topaz Labs released a Photoshop plug-in that showed my image in a new way. Its now my most favored image on Flickr. If I had deleted it back when I was finally done with processing my wedding pictures, this photo wouldn't exist today.





### Automatically priming your filing system

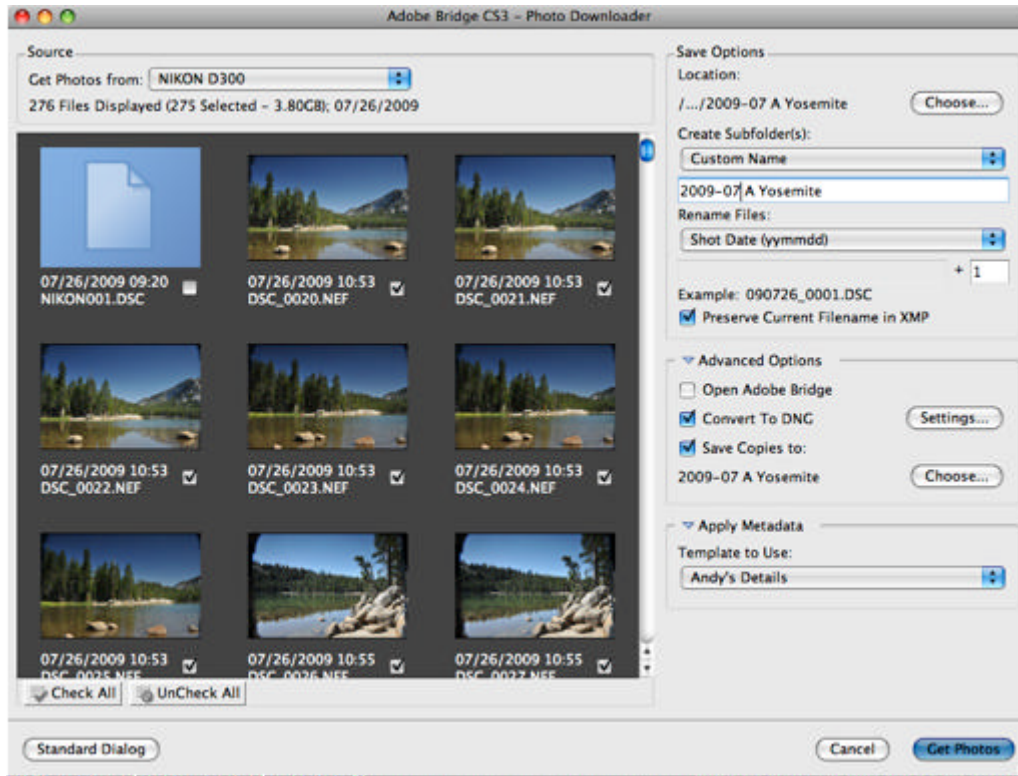


This step is nice and simple because we've already had a dry run in Section One. Insert your camera's memory card in to the card reader, and if it wasn't already loaded, Abode Bridge will start along with Photo Downloader.

You remember the drill, set your location to **Unprocessed negatives**, then set your subdirectory name to **{year}-{month} {ID} {Description}**. Next to Save Copies, hit the Choose button, browse to **Archive / Originals from camera**, and create a subfolder with the same name as the one you just specified under **Unprocessed negatives**.

Sometimes cameras place a description file on the camera card, browse through the thumbnails and make sure that its not selected. (I've never seen a Canon do this, but my Nikons always create a file called "nikon001.dsc".)

Make sure you've got the right metadata template selected, hit **GET PHOTOS** and let it do its thing.

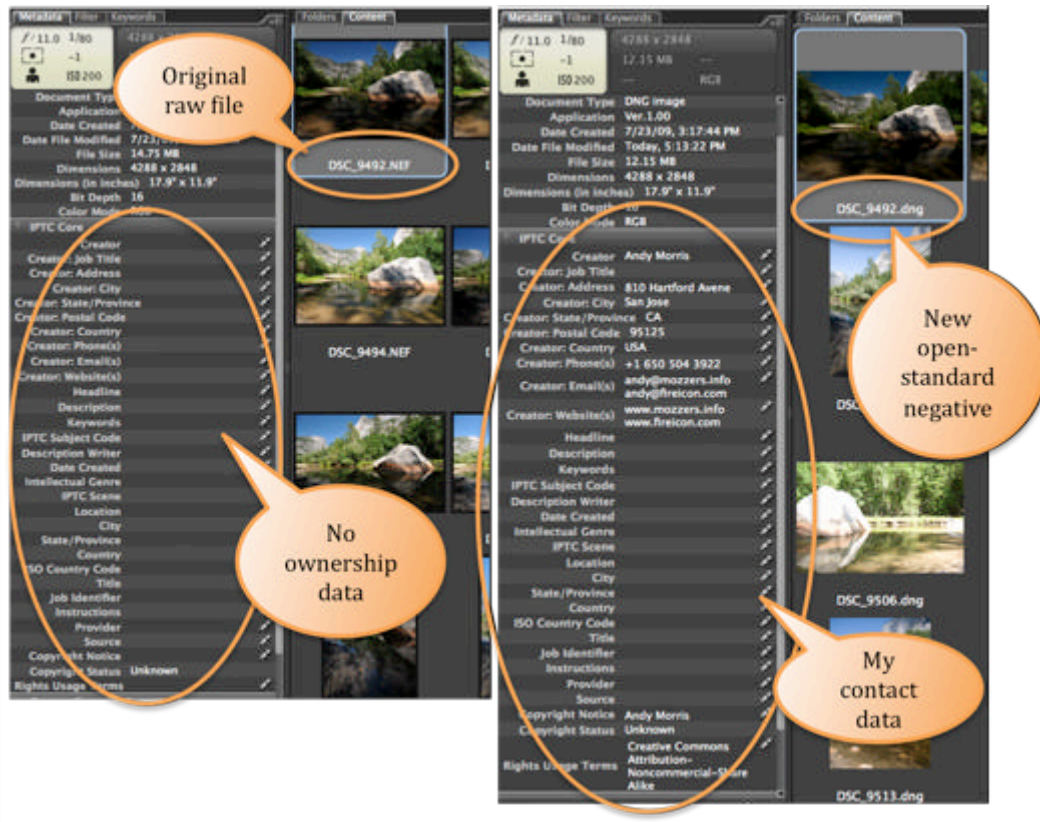


Back in Bridge, press **1** (down in the right hand corner), to rearrange your tabs in to “light table” mode. Using the **FOLDERS** tab, navigate to **Archive / Originals from camera / '{year}-{month} {ID} {Description}'**. Now select the **CONTENT** tab, and there you will see all your photos exactly as they were on the memory card – a collection or raw files, and, sigh, possibly some JPEGs and TIFFs.

Select **FOLDERS** again, and now navigate to **Unprocessed negatives / '{year}-{month} {ID} {Description}'**, and then select the **CONTENT** tab. You'll now see the same thumbnails, but if you look closer, they're no longer camera raw files, they're Digital Negatives (DNGs). If you select one of the thumbnails, and then click on the metadata tab, you'll also see that the tool has recorded all your ownership data.

If you did have any JPEGs on your memory card, you'll notice that these weren't converted to the new format because they're already in an open standard.





OK, we're nearly done. Watch carefully, I'm about to teach your Grandma to suck eggs. Insert the memory card back in to the camera. Format it. That's right, format it in the camera not on the computer. Computers rarely delete files these days, they have trashcans and recycle bins, and we really want that card clean, so do it on the camera.

Whilst the camera is in your hands, check that the ISO, file format, white balance, and shutter release mode are all at your "normal" operating settings. Now set the camera's shooting mode to automatic – on some cameras its called A, on my Nikon its called P. Any filters other than a UV on the front? Take them off. Clean the glass. Put the battery on charge.

Why am I telling you this? Because most people just put the card back in the camera and leave everything set as it was the last time they snapped some shots.

Let me tell you a story. I used to not reset my camera. Then one day last summer, I was having coffee when Angelina Jolie walked in to the cafe. I grabbed my camera, and swore. It still had my 10mm lens on the front. As fast as my sweating hands could, I switched to my 18-200mm, turned it on and started shooting. Or rather, was about to shoot when I realized that I'd left the 6 ND filter on the front, and I couldn't see anything. Quickly removing it, I pressed the shutter release button. The camera dutifully responded by beeping and counting down the self timer for 15 seconds, then finally, click: just the one, it was in Bulb mode and was holding the shutter open for me (I'd been night shooting the day before). By the time I'd finally got my camera

sorted, the future Mrs Morris had left, and I'd got nothing. That's why, now, my camera is always ready in automatic mode, it might not capture the perfect image, but it'll certainly do a better job than I got that day.

By the way, the above story is a lie, but it does make my point rather well•.

### Manually priming your filing system



We don't always have our pictures on a memory card; sometimes friends email them to us, other times, we just copy them on to another computer or portable hard-drive when we're out shooting, or we download those grainy JPEGs from our camera phones; so we need a way of reproducing what Photo Downloader does for us. Fortunately, Adobe thought of that! But they didn't include the solution in the box you bought.

You need to visit [www.adobe.com](http://www.adobe.com). In the search field at the top right of the screen, type "DNG Converter. Follow the links, download and install the free tool "Adobe DNG Converter".

Manually priming your filling system is, up to, a four step process.

#### Step 1: loading the originals

Using either Bridge or Finder / Explorer, navigate to **Archive / Originals from camera**. In here you need to create a folder called **'{year}-{month} {ID} {Description}'**. Move your existing photos in to this folder. Obviously, we're only talking about one photo shoot's worth here, if you've got a years worth of images on your computer, you'll need to create lots of **'{year}-{month} {ID} {Description}'** folders.

#### Step 2: converting raw files

This step only works on camera raw files, skip it if your folder only contains JPEGs.

Run the DNG Converter program. This has a nice 4 step interface, (apparently 4 is a magic number when laying out steps).

Set step 1 to point to the **Archive / Originals from camera / '{year}-{month} {ID} {Description}'** folder you just created.

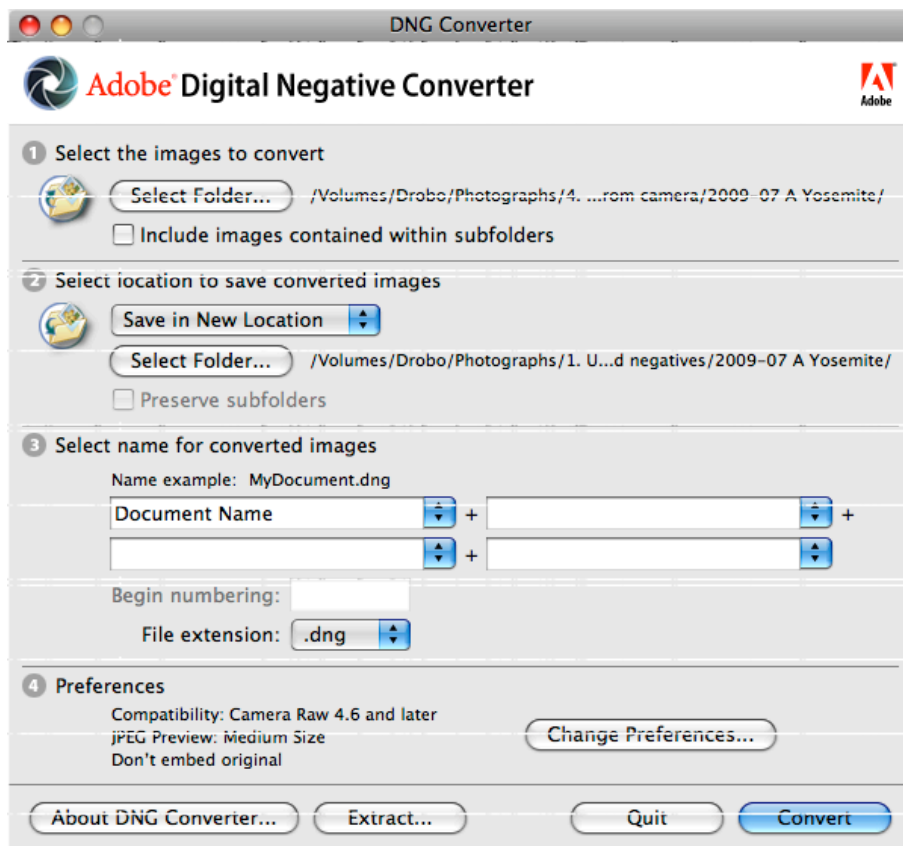
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• Hey, at least I've stopped making up statistics!

In step 2, set it to save files in a new location, press **SELECT FOLDER** and browse to **Unprocessed negatives**. Create a new folder here called **{year}-{month} {ID} {Description}**.

Leave step 3 set to “document name” – we don’t want to rename anything using this tool because it doesn’t offer the options we need.

The defaults in step 4 should be ok. I run CS3 and CS4 so I set the raw compatibility to 4.6 but this is a matter of personal preferences, and you recall the pizza talk from earlier I’m sure.



Hit **CONVERT** and you’re done. Back in Bridge, press **1** (down in the right hand corner), to rearrange your tabs in to “light table” mode. Using the **FOLDERS** tab, navigate to **Archive / Originals from camera / {year}-{month} {ID} {Description}**. Select the **CONTENT** tab and you will see all your thumbnails - take note of how many images are there. Select **FOLDERS** again, and navigate to **Unprocessed negatives / {year}-{month} {ID} {Description}**, select the **CONTENT** tab. You’ll now see the same thumbnails. Select one of the thumbnails, and then click on the **METADATA** tab. You’ll see that there is no metadata, so we need to fix that later. If the number of files is different from what you noted earlier, then your original folder contained JPEGs, so now we need to work on those.



**ASIDE:** In order to make this whole chapter more readable, I'm sticking to just talking about JPEG files. But of course, your collection can contain other formats, such as TIFF, that you should treat just as you do your JPEGs. The only exception that I know of is with the DNG Converter. For some reason best known to Adobe, it pretends it knows how to transform TIFF files to DNG, and then when it tries, it throws an error message. Manually handle your TIFF files the way you handle your JPEGs.

### Step 3: copying JPEG files (and other 'not-raw' formats)

If you have JPEG files in your **Archive / Originals from camera / '{year}-{month}{ID} {Description}'** folder, you'll need to manually copy them to the **Unprocessed negatives** folder.

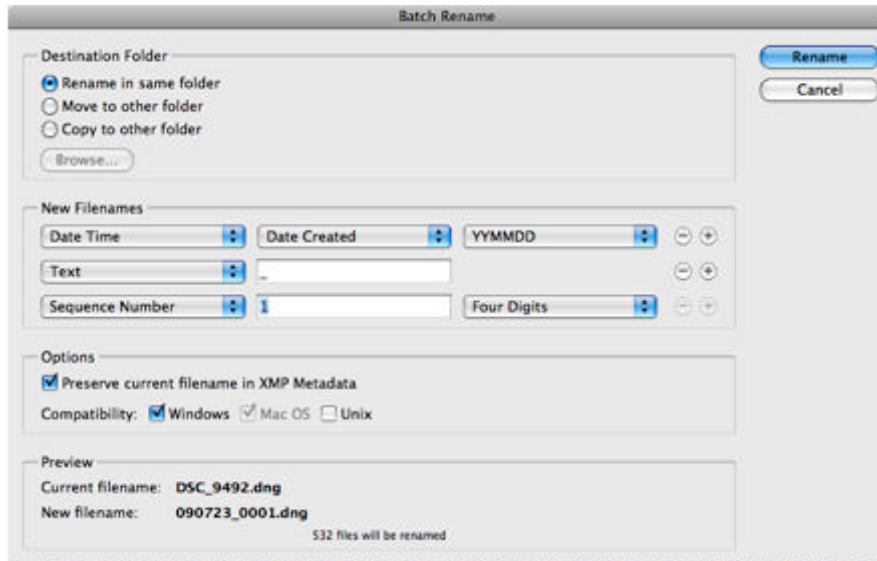
In Bridge, select the **FOLDERS** tab, and browse to your **Archive / Originals from camera / '{year}-{month}{ID} {Description}'** folder. Select the **FILTER** tab, and under **FILE TYPE**, select **JPEG FILES**. If you now click the **CONTENT** tab, you'll see that only your JPEGs are displayed. Hit **Command+a** to select all of them, **right click** on a thumbnail, and select **COPY TO**, **UNPROCESSED NEGATIVES / '{YEAR}-{MONTH}{ID}{DESCRIPTION}'**.

Now, select the **FOLDERS** tab, and click back and forth between **Unprocessed** and **Archive**: the number of files reported on the **FILTER** tab, should be the same (albeit in different file formats).

### Step 4: renaming the file

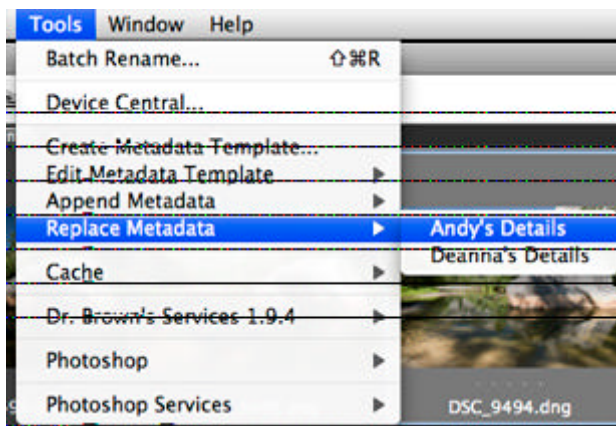
Whilst you could have renamed your files using the DNG Converter, it wouldn't have renamed the JPEG files that were possibly present. It also, doesn't offer us the same rename options as Photo Downloader, so we're going to use Bridge instead. Making sure you're in the **Unprocessed negatives / '{year}-{month}{ID} {Description}'** folder, and that the **CONTENT** tab is selected, and that the **FILTER** is set to show all images, press **Command+a** to select all the thumbnails, and then on the menu, select **TOOLS**, **BATCH RENAME**.

We're going to rename our photos in the same folder, and just like in Photo Downloader, we're going to preserve the original name in the metadata. Set the new filename to be the day the image was created, an underscore, then a 4 digit sequence number starting with 1.



### Step 5: setting ownership data

In Bridge, make sure the **CONTENT** tab is selected, and you're showing your **Unprocessed negatives / '{year}-{month} {ID} {Description}'** folder; press **Command+a** to select all the thumbnails, and then on the menu, select **TOOLS**, **REPLACE METADATA**, **{YOURNAME}'S DETAILS**.



Click just one of the thumbnails, click on the **METADATA** tab, and there should be all your personal data.

**ASIDE:** for some reason you can't automatically effect the Copyright Notice field – it seems to be always set to “unknown”. If you **RIGHT-CLICK** on a thumbnail (or multiple thumbnails) and select **FILE INFO**, you can change this on the **DESCRIPTION** pane. I rarely bother.

Your filling system is now primed.

Phew! Lets do that automatically next time eh? (And try to stick to just shooting raw images!)

### Getting ready to edit



This is a nice easy step. In the **Unprocessed negatives** folder you have a copy of all the digital negatives that you've yet to turn in to masterpieces.

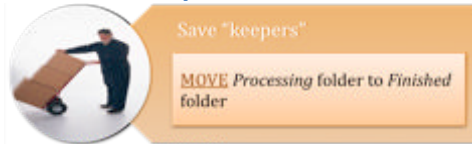
In Bridge, select the **FOLDERS** tab, and navigate to the **Unprocessed negatives / {year}-{month} {ID} {Description}** folder that you want to work on. Click on the folder name, and whilst holding the **Option key**, drag it to the **Processing** folder, (the mouse should change to a little plus sign).

Bridge will now make a copy of your negatives in the processing folder so that you can work on them, safe in the knowledge, that if you mess up, you've still got the originals in the **Unprocessed negatives** folder.

### Now edit your pictures.

Given that we're talking file system workflow here, we're going to skip this seemingly important step – after all, the entire rest-of-the-book is dedicated to editing your pictures. So for reading comprehension, lets assume you've just edited your pictures.

### Save the "keepers"



Congratulations, you've finished adding the WOW! You've edited all your pictures, printed them out, sent them to Flickr and notified the local paper that they have a Master in their City, you're now ready to complete the filing system workflow.

Using Bridge, select the **FOLDERS** tab, navigate to the **Processing / {year}-{month} {ID} {Description}** folder, **click and drag** it to move it to the **Finished photographs** folder.

And you're done with this step. You now have your masterpieces in a safe place, one that you can use to show off to your friends and family.

### Archive the negatives and art



Finally, we just need to tidy up the mess and really ensure we never lose an image.

There's still a copy of your negatives in the **Unprocessed negatives** folder, which at this point is a lie, because we've just established that you've finished processing them. So, **click and drag** to move this folder to the **Archive / Universal Negatives** folder.

One last step to be extra, extra safe. **Option click and drag** your **Finished photographs / '{year}-{month} {ID} {Description}'** folder to **Archive / Finished photographs** to make another copy of your finished images.

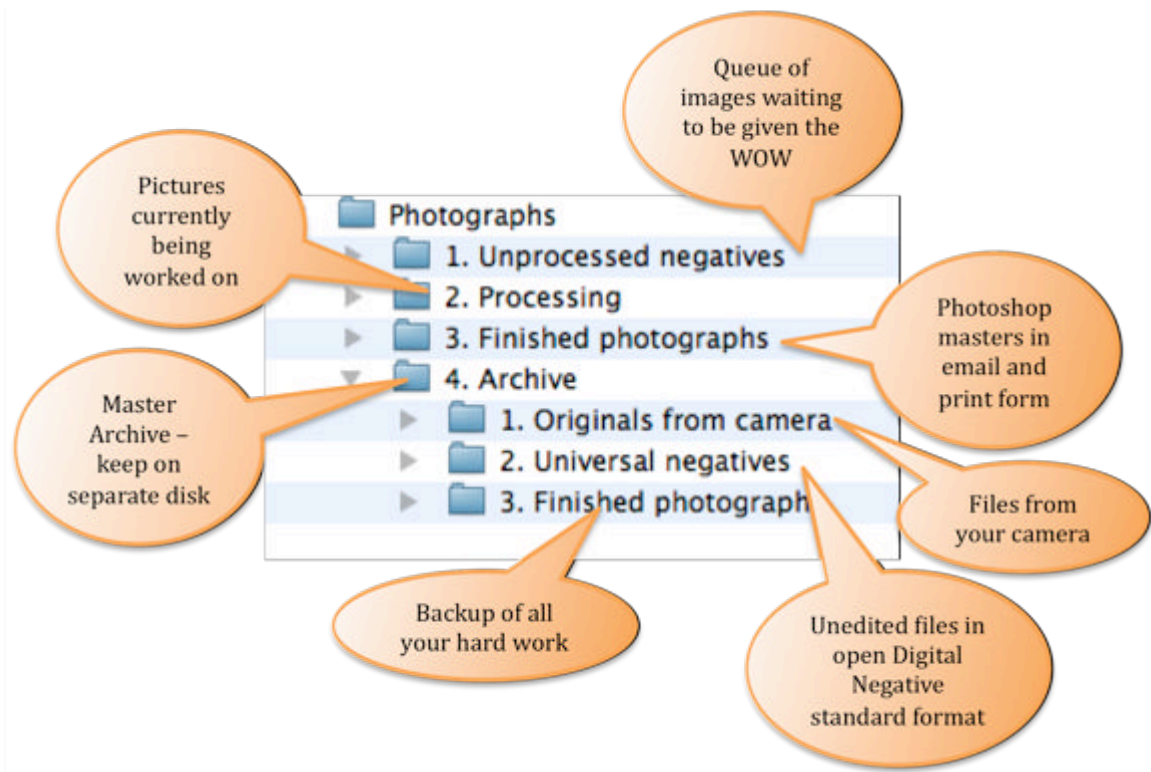
### Reviewing your file system workflow

Some of that got a bit messy in the middle there, it would be a lot easier if you left your photos on the memory card and stuck to shooting raw!

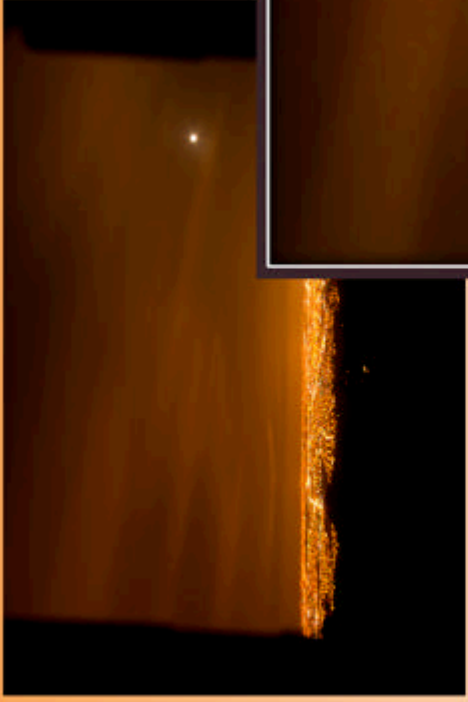
At the very top level we've created a simple workflow of 4 folders. **Unprocessed negatives** is your queue of work to be undertaken. **Processing** are the files you're currently working on. **Finished photographs** are those that are, well, finished. And finally, there's an **Archive** of both the raw files, the digital negatives and the finished photos.

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· Sorry, I'll stop going on about it now







From Snapshot to Wowshot

## 2. YOUR BRIDGE TO WOW

That's a terrible title for this section, but it does hold true, Bridge will become your foundation tool for editing pictures. You'll use it to control what you edit, how you edit, and to even record how far your editing has progressed.



So lets make a start. You followed the previous chapter right? You've copied your photos from the **Unprocessed Negatives** folder to the **Processing** folder?

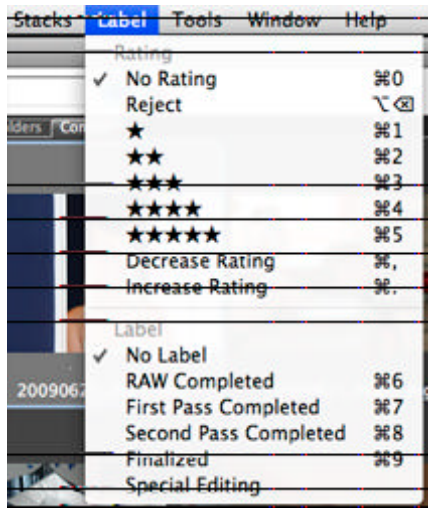
We're going to set you up for a fool-proof workflow for using Bridge to hunt out and improve your best photos. This workflow will be used always, just like the file system workflow. No shortcuts here.



## Chunking the miss-fires

In Bridge, select the light table tab layout by pressing the **1** button in the bottom right. Click on the **FOLDERS** tab and navigate to **Processing / '{year}-{month} {ID} {Description}'**. Now click on the **CONTENT** tab and all your images should appear. Use the slider at the bottom of the screen if you need to see them larger or smaller.

You will recall from the previous section, that each picture has metadata associated with it. In Bridge, we have even more options for adding to this data. We can give each picture both a rating (1 to 5 stars) and a color coded label.



We're going to use the rating system to identify which photos are the keepers and which are the duds. What we are not going to do is delete any pictures. So under no circumstance should you be tempted to hit the Trash Can icon, or right-click and select Move to Trash.

Scrolling through your light table, selecting the pictures that you absolutely know you're never going to process. We're looking for shots where you left the lens cap on, pictures that are out of focus, ones that have the tops of peoples' heads chopped off, etc. As you find these pictures, hit the **DELETE** key. You'll notice how these pictures don't actually get deleted, they simple get marked as "rejected".

Rejected a picture by mistake? Then simply remove the label by pressing **Command+0** (or using the **LABEL** menu item).

As you sort through your pictures, remember, you're not looking for the ones you want, you're looking for the ones you don't.

## A note about thumbnails

When you first click on a folder in Bridge, the program reads every DNG and its corresponding side-file, the XMP. From these files it builds up the thumbnails that you see displayed on the **CONTENTS** tab. Of course, if you have lots of files in your

folder, this can take a heck of a long time. The folder that contains the photos of our sabbatical last year contains just over 7000 files for Bridge to process. In order to make this quick for the second time you click on the folder, Bridge creates a cache of all the information it knows.

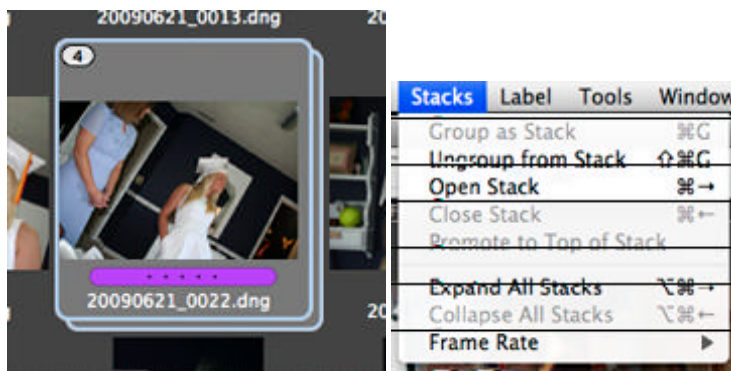
Using this workflow, we're moving a lot of files around, sometimes using Bridge and sometimes using the Operating System. Sometimes, just sometimes, Bridge gets confused between what it knows from looking at the files, and what it thinks it knows by reading its cache. When this happens, you usually get black squares rather than nice pictures in your **CONTENT** tab. Give it a chance to sort it self out. If you can't hear your disk crunching and you're absolutely sure that Bridge has stopped generating thumbnails, click **TOOLS**, **CACHE**, **PURGE CACHE**. This will tell Bridge to start again, and to re-analyze all 7000 files. Now would be a good time to get a coffee.

### Hiding the Panoramas and HDR shots

If you've taken shots that you hope to stitch together to make a panorama, or shots that you hope to blend to create a High Dynamic Range image, then your light table will be littered with thumbnails that simply get in the way of our process. So we need to hide them.

Bridge has a function called Stacks that is perfect for this. It's a way of stacking up like-images so that they only appear as a single thumbnail. By **Command-Clicking**, select the images that make up your individual HDR or panoramas and click **Command+G** or use the **GROUP AS STACKS** menu item.

Now that they're stacked, click on the outside border (not the thumbnail) to select the whole stack, and from the **LABEL** menu, mark them as "Special Editing". You're going to want to jump ahead to later in the book to find out how, exactly, you should be editing them.



### Finding the winning candidates

Select your main workspace layout by pressing the **2** button. Now click on the **FILTER** tab and select **NO RATING**, and **NO LABEL** (if the option is available). This

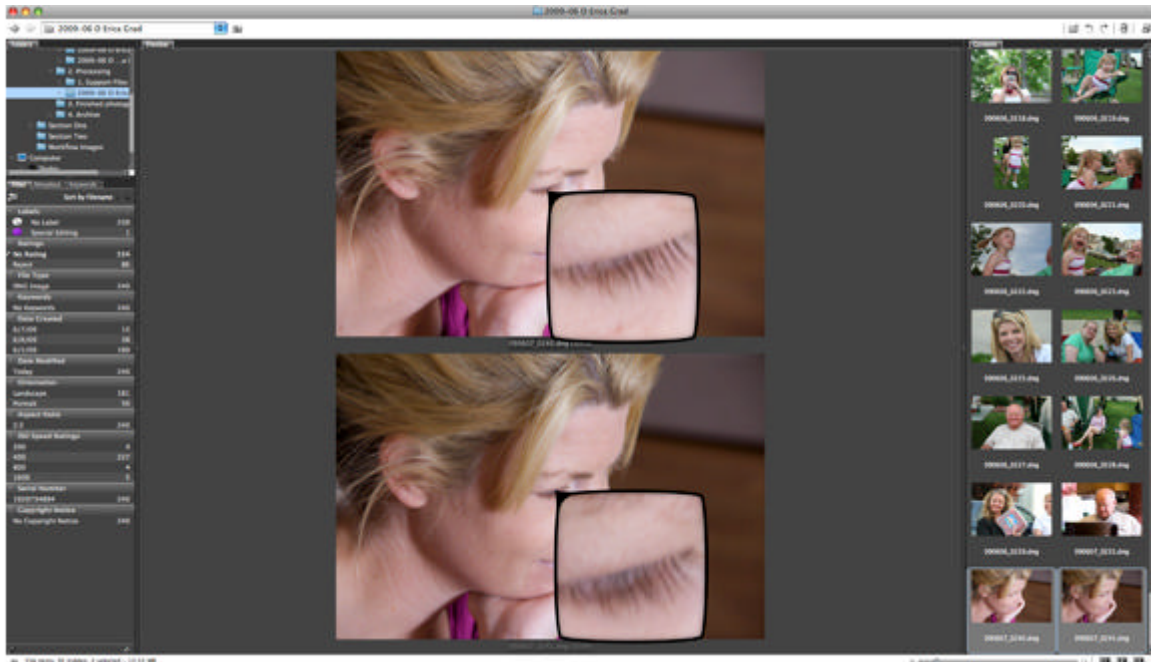
removes from view all those pictures that are rated 1-5 or are marked as rejected. It should also hide those stacks of HDR and panoramic pictures you made.

This time we're going to go through the remaining thumbnails looking only for the very, very best pictures – your five star winners – your must haves. We've moved to the main workspace so that as you click on the thumbnails, you can see the photo much larger.

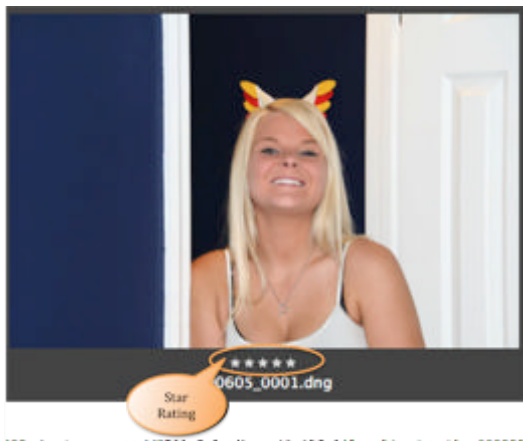
As Elton John said when Prince released his 3-disk opus, Emancipation, "Damn it man, edit!" What am I talking about? Think about your favorite artist or photographer. How many of their pictures have you seen from their entire career? 10? 20? Certainly no more than that. Now think back to when your friends got back from that cruise last year, and invited you over to sit through the 4-hour, 2000 slide recap. Less is more in the world of art. When I say we're looking for the very, very best of your pictures here – we are. Just the ones you'd put on your wall, on the cover of a photo album, or show to someone if you had only 30 seconds. Damn it man, edit.

When you find a picture you think is a winner, check the focus using the Loupe tool. To do this, simply **click** on part of the image in the **PREVIEW** tab and a little magnifying glass appears. Photoshop is great at saving bad pictures, but it can't fix an out of focus one. Drag the Loupe around your image until you are satisfied it's in focus. If you have two similar shots, **Command-Click** them, bringing them both up in Preview, and using the Loupe, find the sharpest one. If you **Command-Click** the **LOUPE** when two are shown, you'll move them in synchronicity – a nice way to really compare two like images. If you have a zoom wheel on your mouse, (like the gray button on a Mac Super-Mouse) you can zoom the Loupe in and out up to the completely useless 800%. **Click** anywhere in the **LOUPE** to hide it.





When you've found a picture you want, hit the number **5** to assign it five stars. It should immediately disappear because we set the image filter to only show us unrated images. So now we need to change that. On the **FILTER** tab, select the **\*\*\*\*\*** item and your image should reappear. We've now set bridge to show all the unrated, and all the 5 star pictures. Uncheck the **NO RATING** item and you'll see just your 5 star picture. Check it again and continue to hunt out and mark your 5 star pictures.



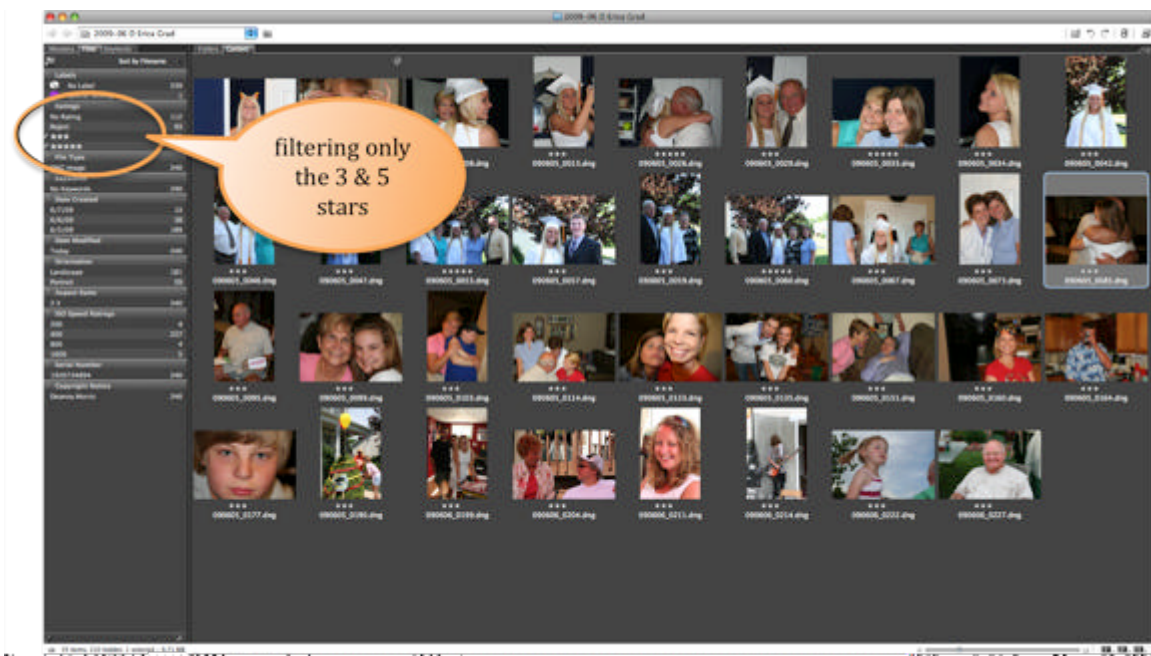
### Nice to have

Now go through your photos one more time. This time we're looking for the ones that, if you had extra space in your photo album, you'd include. They're clearly never going to be in the Smithsonian but you like them; they capture the moment. Give them a three star rating by pressing the **3** key on your keyboard. Just like before, the

moment you select the first one, it will disappear. So, to make it show correctly, adjust the settings in the **FILTER** tab.

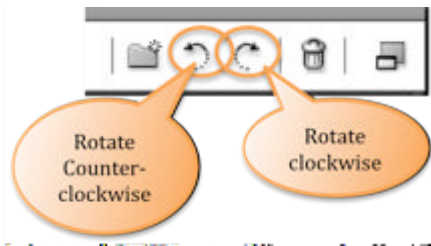
Why use 5 and 3 stars? You could use 1 and 2 stars if you like. What we aren't going to do is rate every single picture you took on a scale of 1 to 5, because no matter how discerning your eye, I defy anyone to tell the difference between a 3 and a 4 star picture. Simply marking "must have" and "nice to have" is enough.

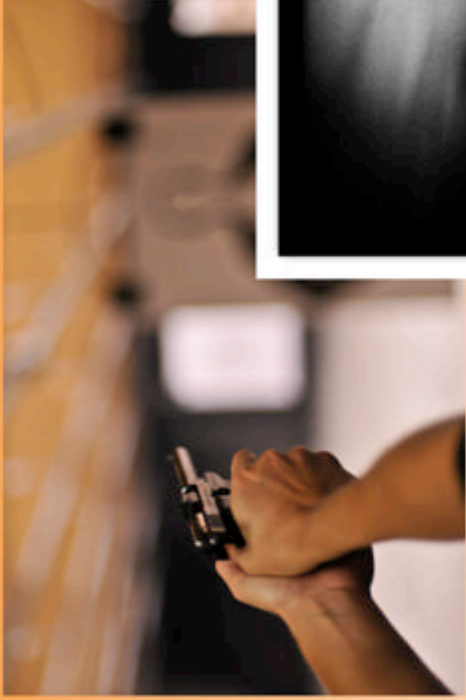
In my case, I now have 6 "must have", and 32 "nice to have" in my potential album. To see them all, press **1** to go back to the light table, set your filter to show just 3 and 5 stars. Now that you're looking at them all together, are there any that don't belong? Hit **0** to remove their rating.



### Quickly rotating thumbnails

Are any of them not the "right way up"? Use the buttons on the tool bar to rotate images as needed.





From Snapshot to Wowshot

### 3. LETS EDIT IN RAW!

Set Bridge to show you just the 5 and 3 star pictures using the **FILTER** tab. If you recall, the idea of this chapter is speed editing, mass editing, batch processing, not, I repeat, not, spending hours on each picture. So here's what we're going to do first, **Command+a** to select all your thumbs, **right-click** and select **OPEN IN CAMERA RAW**.

Lets take a deep breath and look at what you've just done. Firstly, that **OPEN IN CAMERA RAW** thing, was our way of telling Bridge to not bother opening Photoshop, and to open Camera Raw itself. If you'd have just double-clicked the files, then firstly Photoshop would have opened, and then Camera Raw would have followed. Later in Sections Three and Four, this is exactly what we want, but here, speed is the essence. The other reason, is that by forcing all files to open in Camera Raw, regardless of whether a shot was captured in Raw or JPEG, we're going to treat them the same in our workflow. (By default JPEGs are opened in Photoshop and not Camera Raw.)

If everything has gone according to plan, you're now looking at Camera Raw and all your thumbnails are displayed on the left. If any of them have a scary looking yellow triangle, don't panic, that's just Adobe's way of saying its still working on the photo. Lets take a quick tour.





In essence the sliders on the right are all the settings you could have specified at the time of image capture, because we're shooting raw, we get a chance to alter them now, in post processing. The only thing you can't really change, is the focal point and depth of field, and I hear that the boffins are working on that. So go ahead and whack the sliders about. You can't do any damage. If things go a bit awry, try double-clicking on the little triangle part of the slider to set it back to its starting point.

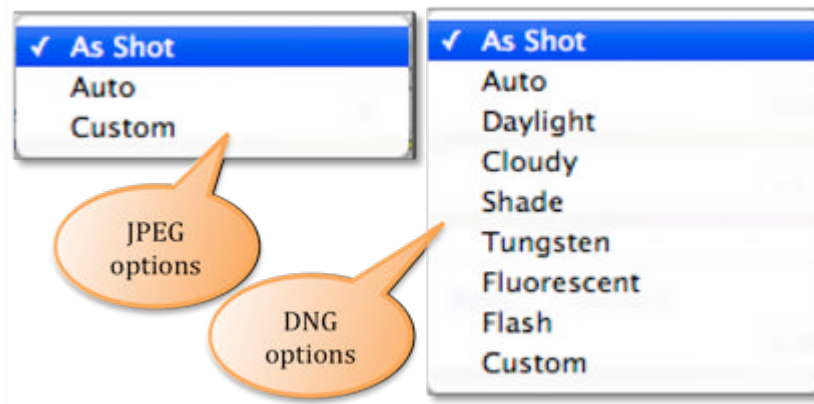
We're not going to use all the power of Camera Raw here, just a few basic steps to lift your batch photos. We're going to play with the White Balance, Exposure, Clarity & Vibrance, and two different types of Contrast. Later in Section Three, we'll use (almost) all the other levers.

Select your first photo from those offered on the left.

### Setting the White Balance.

Now, really, if you were a professional you'd have got this right in the camera in the first place, but given that life is way too hard sometimes, especially at family gatherings when there's light through the window, candles on the cake, a mix of energy saving and regular light bulbs, chances are, your pictures are a slightly "wrong" color.

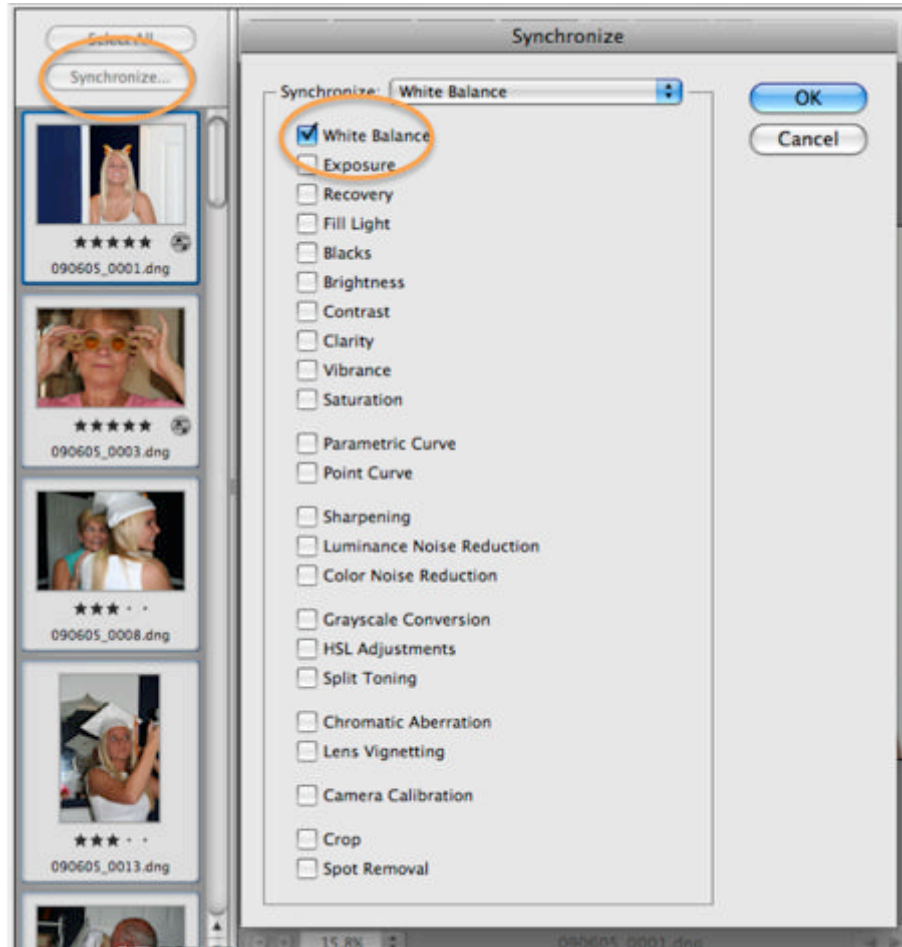
The quickest way to fix this, is to drop the **WHITE BALANCE** menu down, and select **AUTO**. If you're lucky, your image will pop. Mostly, I find that this doesn't work, and the image lacks warmth. Still, I try every time. This menu is one of the very few that changes between JPEG and RAW. If you're editing RAW files, you'll see all the presets that were on your camera ; so try them too.



The next option, is to click on the **WHITE BALANCE TOOL** and point it at something in your picture that should be a nice neutral gray. If you get it wrong, double-click the icon, and it'll reset itself.

If neither of these options get your picture just right, you can always manually adjust the **TEMPERATURE** and **TINT** using the sliders.

Now, **command-click** all the photos on the left that were taken under the same lighting conditions. That's right, I want you to select all the pictures that we're taken within the same hour at the same restaurant. Now press the **SYNCHRONIZE** button and sync just the **WHITE BALANCE**.



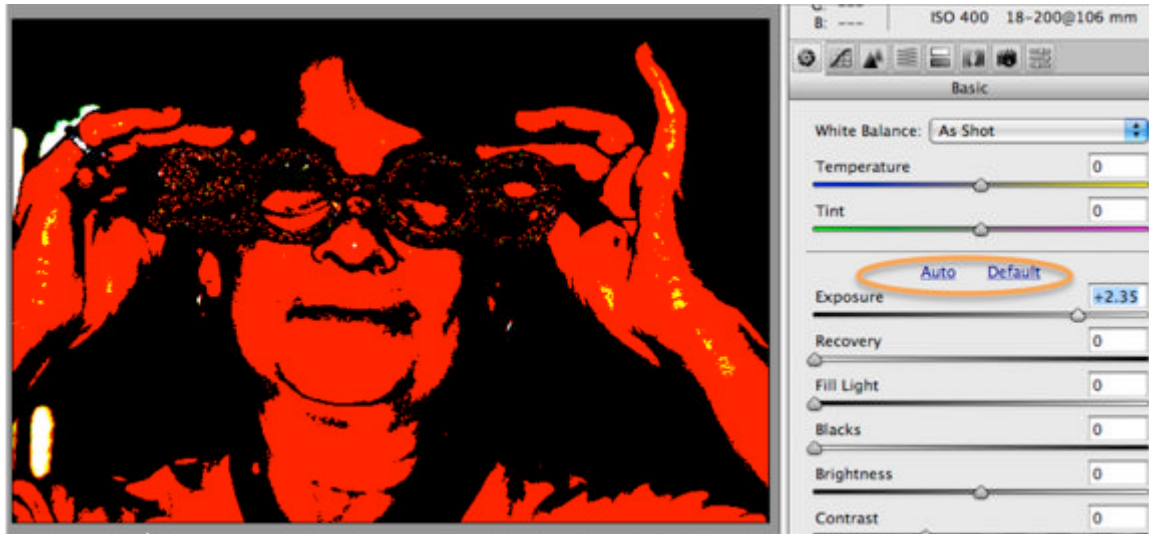
Wow that was cool huh? What did you do, fix 10 pictures in one click? Speedy!

### Setting the Exposure

In Camera Raw exposure is tied up with many other sliders: Recovery, Fill light, Blacks, Brightness and Contrast. Given that we're mass editing pictures here, we really only want to play with the one marked Exposure. But first, just like with White Balance, we'll see if Adobe can speed things up for us.

Make sure only one thumbnail is selected and press **AUTO**. I'm usually quite pleased with the results of this, but it doesn't always work. To undo this operation, click **DEFAULT**. You can manually tweak the setting using the Exposure slider. If you do this whilst holding down the **Option** key, you'll see the clipping mask. This mask, shows you those pixels that are absolute black or absolute white (plus a couple of

other things we'll discuss later). It's a nice way to be able to judge the "balance" of your image.



Now if you're lucky, you'll have lots of similarly exposed pictures, and once again you'll be able to select the various thumbnails, and this time, synchronize just the exposure.

### Setting the 'pop' in your picture

There are 3 more sliders that control your picture. The first is called Saturation, and controls how hard the various colors in your picture try to out-do each other. Do not mess with this slider. For batch processing, the results are too unpredictable.

Of much more interest is the Vibrance slider. Vibrance is defined as saturation for primary colors only – meaning that all those people in your picture shouldn't change color when you mess with it. I strongly suggest you pump it up, but probably to nothing over +60

And finally, there's Clarity. Clarity is very similar to the Smart Sharpening action you made earlier in the book. It adds punch and depth to your picture. For pictures of objects, landscapes etc, ones that lack contrast, I often set this as high as +80. But be warned, firstly, it looks a lot stronger when printed out than it does on your monitor, and secondly, if there are "soft" objects in your pictures (such as people), you should probably never set it over +30.

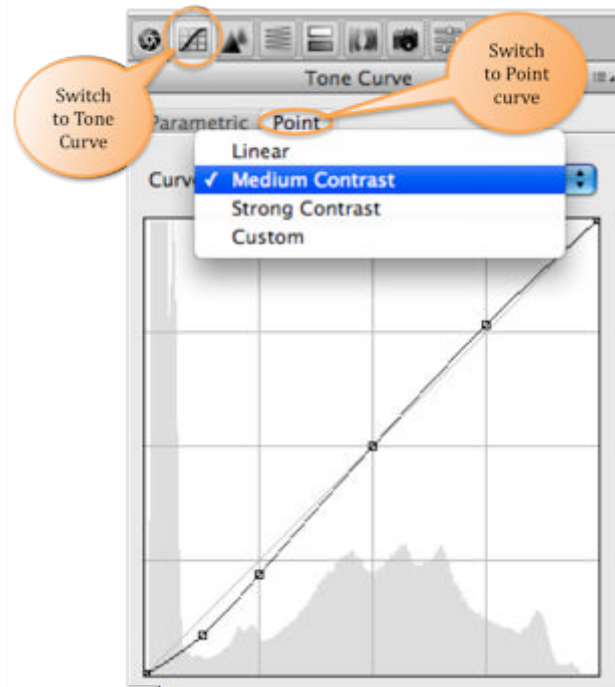
Once again, select the appropriate thumbnails, and sync the settings.

### Setting Contrast

Now for the final coup de grace, we're going to look at two very fast ways of adding that final punch to your pictures. The first is with a hellishly powerful tool called a Tone Curve. Fortunately for us, at this stage of our learning, we're just going to use the presets. Making sure you only have one thumbnail selected, choose the **TONE**

**CURVE**, and try the **MEDIUM CONTRAST**, and **STRONG CONTRAST** settings. If you don't like them, you can reset your picture by using the **LINEAR** preset.

The other option to try is back in the first tab, and is cunningly called Contrast. Use this judiciously as it can be a bit of a hammer, especially when applying it to lots of photos as we're doing here.



Happy? Then select all the appropriate thumbs, and once again, sync.

### Really mass editing

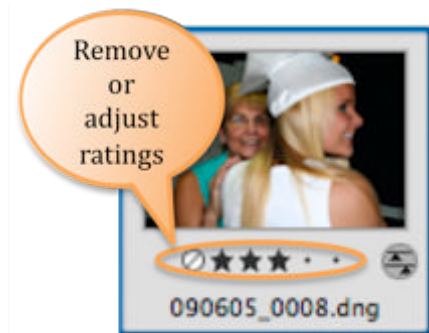
For the quick-of-mind amongst you, you'll have already spotted that we had a lot of repetition in the above steps. If you had a group of photos that all required the same white balance, exposure, clarity, vibrance and contrast adjustments, we could have synchronized all those changes at the same time, in just one click. And you're right, we could have, and I do. We were just going easy because it was your first time in. The other way of reducing the clicks, is to only load those "same-y" pictures in to raw and to use the Select All button.

### Reviewing your adjustments

Now that you've made mass improvements to your photos, some of them will probably look worse, or just not right. So starting with the top thumbnail, lets just click through them all, one by one, and make any slight adjustments to the settings that may be needed. With luck, only 1 in 10 will need any tweaking.

The other opportunity we should take here, is to review those 3 and 5 star ratings we gave. Now that we've seen the near-final version of our images, do they still deserve the ratings we gave them? By pressing **Command+1,2,3,4,5** you can adjust

the number of stars directly in Camera Raw. By moving the mouse over the thumbnail, a little no-entry icon appears, that when pressed, removes the ratings completely.



### Adjusting the content

Once we've finished reviewing and tweaking our batch edit, all we have to do is some manual content tweaking.

We're going to use Camera raw to do four things, we're going to straighten any lopsided pictures, we may crop a couple of them, we'll remove any sensor dust, and lastly we'll kill any red-eye.

### Leveling the horizon

If you've got a door frame that's not quite upright, or an horizon that's not true, we can straighten it in Camera Raw using the **CROP** tool. We'll talk a bit more about cropping in the next bit, for now, lets just click the icon and make sure its set to **NORMAL**. Now lets click the **STRAIGHTEN TOOL** and draw a straight line anywhere in your picture, that lines up with what should be a horizontal or vertical plane.

You'll notice that parts of your image are now grayed out. Later when you view this picture in Bridge, you'll see that your image has been leveled and cropped, keeping the original photo's proportions.



You can of course, synchronize this adjustment across many pictures, but there's rarely an occasion to do so.

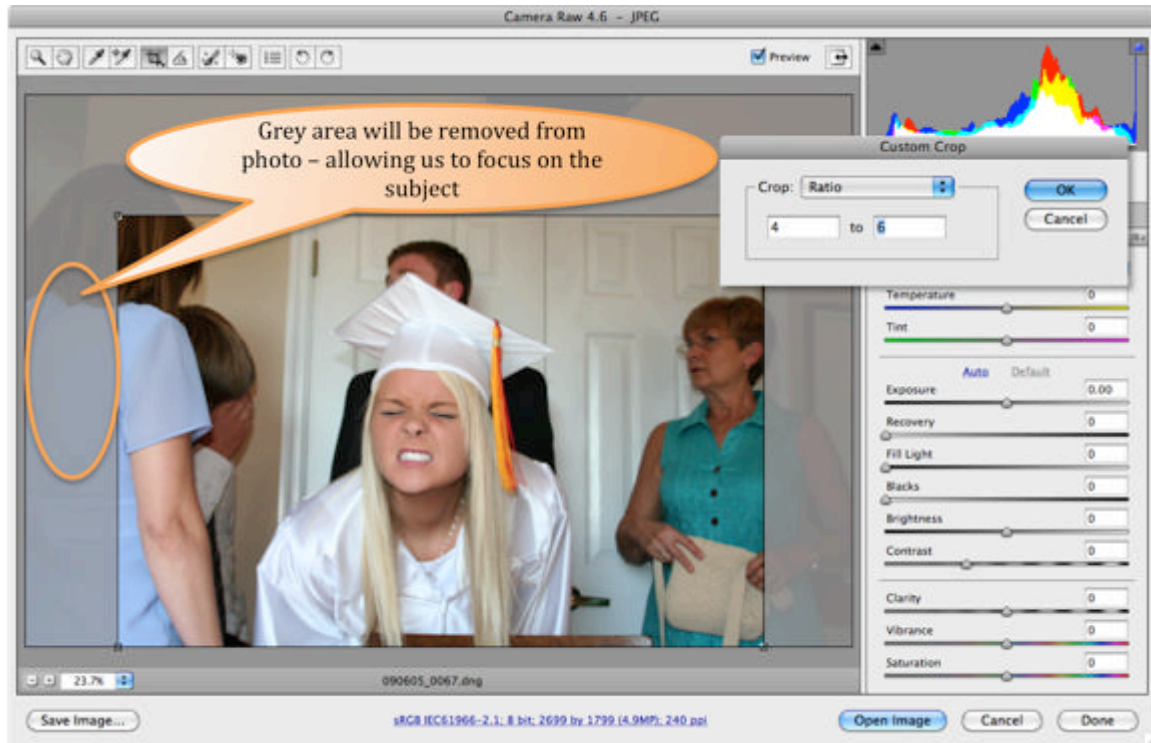
### Lets not crop

Cropping is the artistic reimagining of a picture. What, I hear you say? You know, its looking at a photo of you at the Christmas party standing next to that horrible person from Sales, and cutting them out of the picture, so you can show everyone how great you looked that night, without what's-his-name ruining the moment. Cropping is moving the edges of a photo to hide something that shouldn't be there.

Remember that definition, because later when we get to Photoshop, the definition changes to be "moving the edges AND resizing the picture", and the difference between those two crop tools is huge. We can make Camera Raw do the image resizing too, but we're batch processing here and that sort of massive change will totally ruin the quality of the final image.

The images that came out of your camera are probably of a 4x6 ratio, so lets makes sure that the Crop Tool is set to the same ratio.





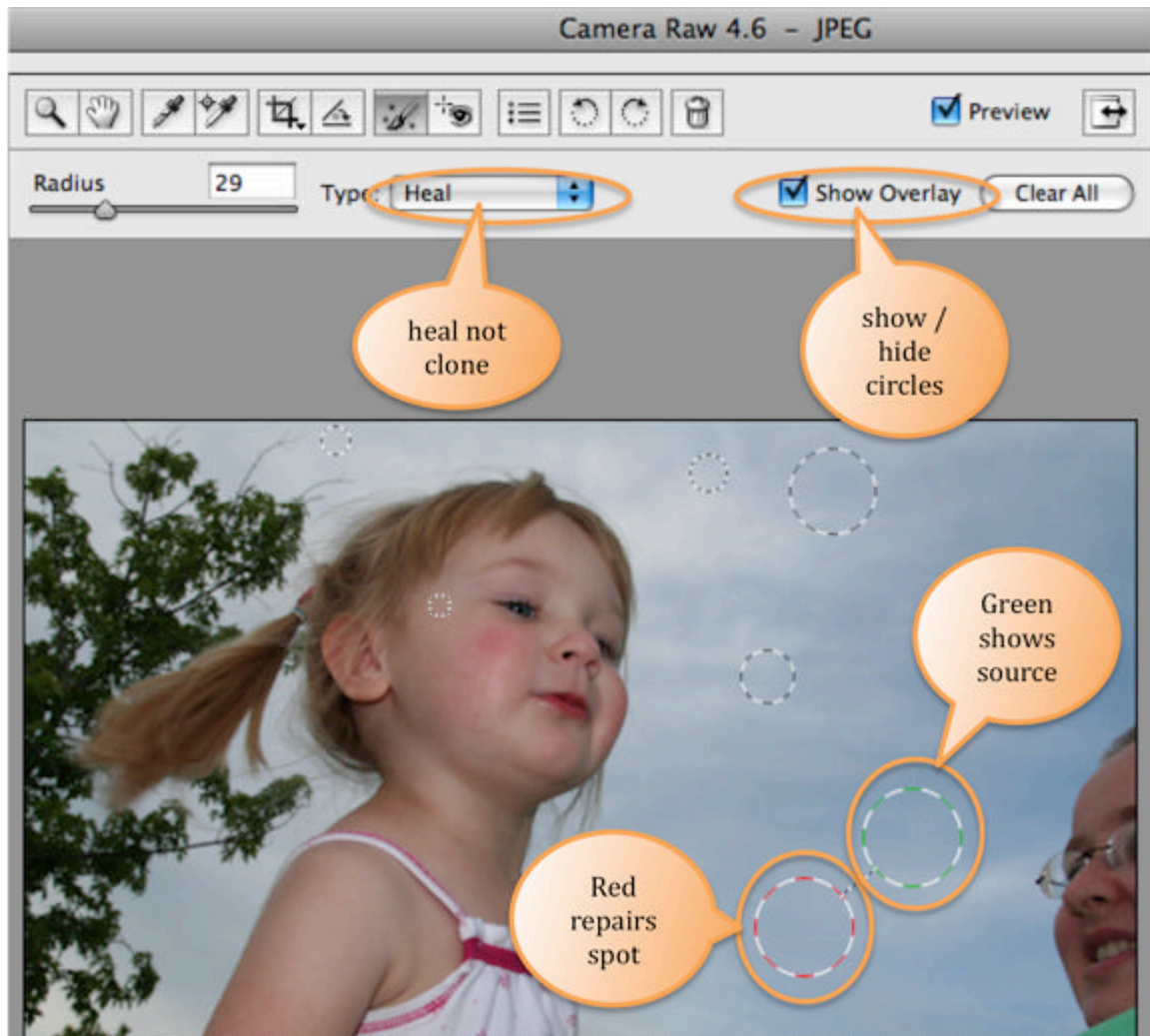
Now we're free to crop the image anyway we want, and we're always going to get a picture that is 4 units by 6 units in size. You can click-drag inside the crop area to move it about, and if you click-drag outside, you can spin it around.

### Removing sensor dust

No matter how often we clean our lenses or how paranoid we are about getting dust inside our cameras, at some point the dirt always wins. The great news is that Camera Raw is superb and fixing those minor annoyances. The other thing about dirt, is that once its there, it rarely moves, so this is possibly one of those fixes that you can synchronize across many pictures.

Camera Raw provides the **RETOUCH TOOL** for fixing minor blemishes like dust, (works great on zits too). It operates in two modes, clone, where it physically copies another part of the image and pastes it over the defect, and heal, where it tries to blend away the blemish. We're going to be using the healing power.

Select the tool, make sure **HEAL** is selected and drag a red circle over the blemish – make this about 25% bigger than the actual defect. As soon as you let go of the mouse, a second, green, circle will appear. The healing process takes the content from the green circle, and blends it with the content of the red circle. In 99% of the case, that means the end of your camera dust. Of course you can resize, move and delete the circles at will. You can also hide them by pressing V (for visibility) or deselecting the **SHOW OVERLAY** option.



### Fixing the evil eye

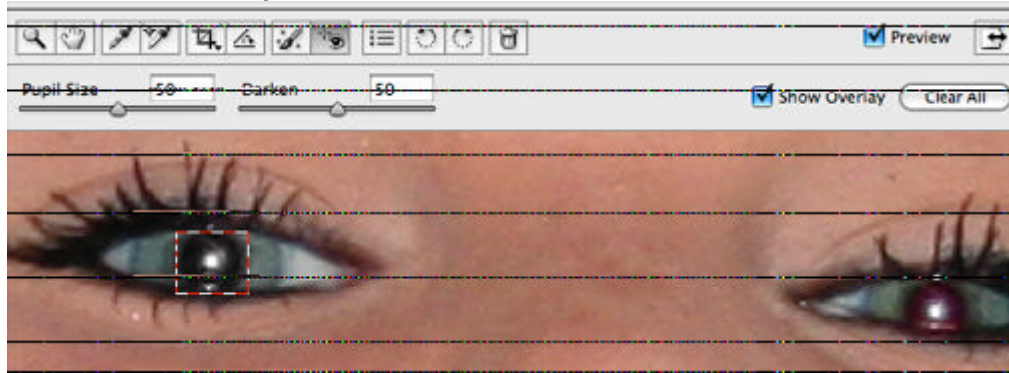
It seems that it always happens. The best picture we have of a person has glowing red eyes. Well, the good news, is that there's a tool for this. And cunningly, its called the Red Eye Tool.

You'll want to zoom your image so that subject's eyes are huge in the center of the screen. There's lots of ways of doing this, but clicking the **ZOOM** tool and then repeatedly clicking the image seems to be the best. Doing this, usually means that the eyes move off screen. The fastest way to get them center, is to hold the **space bar down**, and **click-drag** the photo.

Now select the **RED EYE TOOL** and draw a box over the red part of the eye. Adobe claims that at this point the tool smartly detects the red eye, adjusts the size of the tool, and removes the red eye.

Its never worked for me.

Instead I get a very small red box inside the pupil of the eye. By clicking on the borders of this box, and dragging them, I can resize the tool to cover the eye, and lo, it does indeed, fix the red eye. There's also a couple of sliders you can adjust to control the intensity.



Hit **DONE**.

### Summarizing Camera Raw

That wasn't too bad was it? Hopefully, you can see the power, and flexibility of raw processing now. There's lots more to it, and we'll come to that when we're not editing 40 photos all at once. But for now, know that you've just learnt your fourth workflow: the mass edit Camera Raw workflow.







From Snapshot to Wowshot

#### 4. RETURNING TO BRIDGE

And once more, we're back at our control center. You will recall that at the start of this chapter, I mentioned that we'll use Bridge to record our progress. So that's what we're going to do now. If you look on the Label menu you'll see that as well as assigning a star rating to your pictures, you can assign a label. We're going to use these labels to record our editing progress.

When we sit down to edit a bunch of pictures, we clearly want to get from start to finish as fast as possible, preferably in one go. Life, of course, often has other plans. Children, pets, the telephone, TV, dinner, maybe even going to work, all conspire against us, so that sometimes, we have to walk away from the edit when we're only half done. The Bridge label system will allow us to record what we've achieved and what we haven't.

Selecting all the photos you've just edited in Camera raw, mark them with the label "RAW Completed".

#### Once more around the block

Press the **3** button in the bottom right corner, to load your large view configuration. This is your last chance to flick through the photos and decide if they're ready to share. You can alter their star rating, or reload them in to Camera Raw for a final adjustment.

Ever wondered why in the old days, you could only get 30 shots out of a roll a film? Maybe the gods at Kodak we're trying to protect your friends from your snap-happy nature. Remember the Elton John quote, if you're currently looking at over 30 pictures, chances are you are about to loose mates. Edit damn it!

#### Final production.

We're going to use Dr. Brown's 1-2-3 Process: to make up to 3 copies of your finished picture. Right now they're still in raw format, and that's of no use to most people. So the first thing we need is a nice JPEG that we can post on the internet and wow our friends. Of course, some people prefer email, so we're going to make a smaller copy that can be mailed without killing your bandwidth and filling your mom's inbox. And finally, we're going to make a high resolution production for printing.

Back at the start of this book, you will recall you made some Actions that sharpened and added a frame to your images, they're what we're going to use now.

There is a limitation that you need to be aware of in the 1-2-3 process. It only works on pictures that orientated the same way. Selecting just the 5 and 3 stars that have made it this far, all of which are also tagged as "raw completed", set the **FILTER** to

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· Looks like the good Doctor didn't get my memo about all good steps being in groups of 4!

show **ORIENTATION**, **LANDSCAPE**. On the **TOOLS** menu select **DR. BROWN'S SERVICES**, **DR. BROWN'S 1-2-3 PROCESS**.

Step 1 is fixed and should tell you the number of pictures the tool is about to process.

Set Step 2 so that we're going to save pictures in a sub-directory, in the same location.

We'll tackle Step 3 in baby steps.

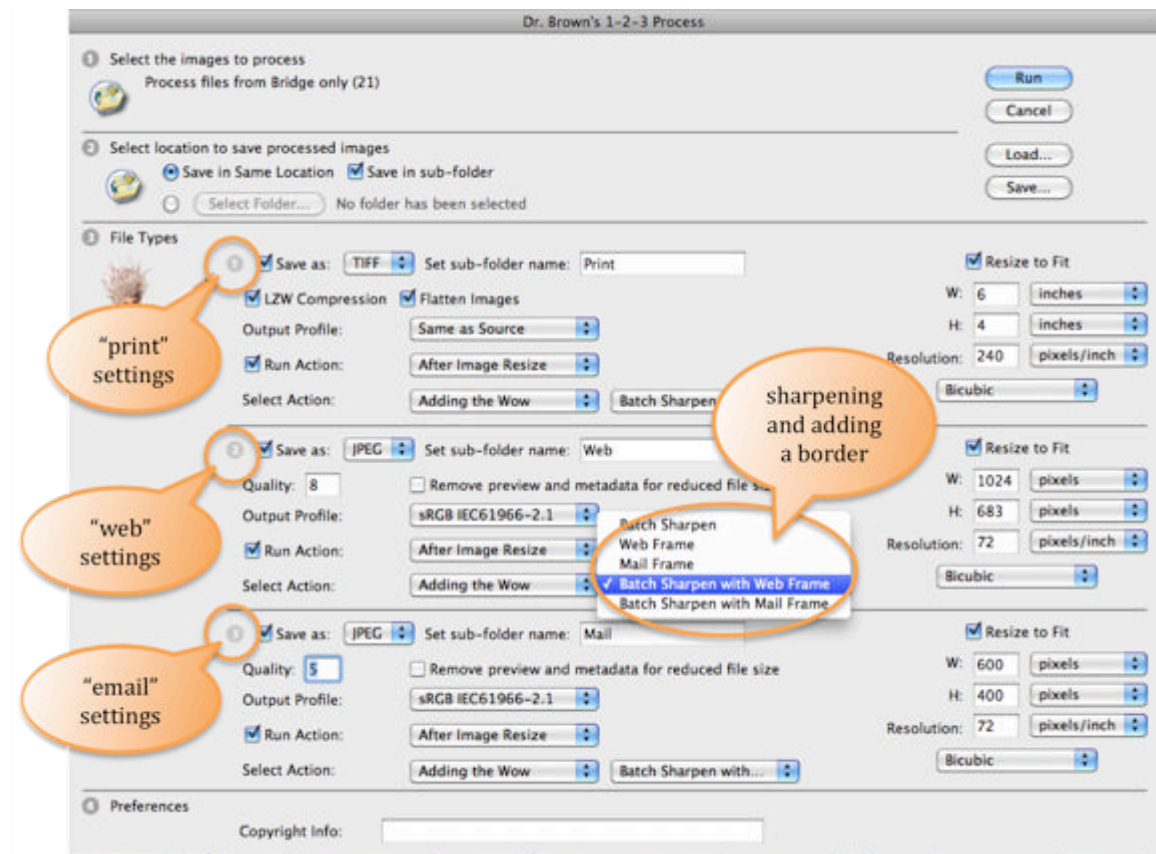
**Printing** - Step 3.1 is where we'll create the high resolution print version of your picture. There's several schools of thought on what format is best for printing. My favorite is to use the TIFF file format (flatten images, compression on). However, my chosen printing company, MPIX.com, insists on JPEG, quality 12, with the sRGB color space used, but not embedded in the file. Either way, we need to set the print size to be 6 inches by 4 inches with a resolution of 240 pixels per inch (the default for my camera), and we'll use the Bicubic resizing method. Once the image has been resized, I want to run that Action we recorded called, "Batch Sharpen".

**Web Use** - Step 3.2 is where we'll make the copy of the photo that we'll upload to the web. The desired format here is JPEG, and the quality doesn't need to be that high, 8 should do it, and we need to set the color space to be the same as the majority of browsers, and that's sRGB. We again need to use the Bicubic resizer, but this time we're going to ask for 1024 pixels by 683 pixels at a resolution of 72. Again after the resizing we want to sharpen the image, but this time, to make it stand out, we also want to add a border, so we use the "Batch Sharpen with Web Frame" action.

**Emailing** - Step 3.3 is where we make the tiny pictures that we can email around. Again the desired format is JPEG, sRGB, but this time the quality needs to be lower, around 5. The size also needs to be smaller, so we'll go for 600 pixels by 400 at a resolution of 72. We want to sharpen and add a picture frame to these images too.

Leave Step 4 blank and hit **RUN**.





Lots of screen flashing should ensue, and then you'll notice that you have 3 subfolders, **Mail**, **Print**, and **Web**. Take a look at your finished work. Pretty impressive eh? We'll make a Master out of you yet!

You're not finished of course, you only made prints of you Landscape pictures, change your filter to show **PORTRAIT** and repeat the above steps.

One more thing, we need to mark the originals so that we know we've made the prints. So using the **LABEL** menu, mark your chosen images as "Finalized". Don't bother marking the pictures in the Mail, Print and Web folders as their very existence proves you've completed this step.

### Tidying up

You're so close to being finished with this mass of birthday pictures now! Very soon, you'll be focusing on adding the Wow to your great captures.

Lets tidy up a little bit. Set you **FILTER** to show you every picture you don't want by selecting **NO RATING**, **REJECTED**, and unselecting **\*\*\*** & **\*\*\*\*\***. Press **Command+A** to select them all and press that little Trash Can icon in the top right hand corner.

And they're gone. Finally, you have a folder with just good, shiny, life-affirming images.

## Adding Keywords

This is one of those steps that most people skip because it tedious, but trust me, 2 years from now when you're hunting for the picture of your dog chewing on Granddad's new slippers at last Christmas' family party, you're going to wish you'd paid attention.

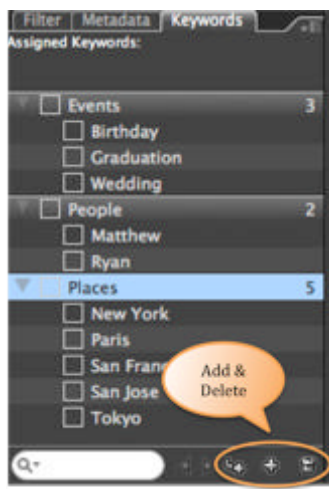
We've talked a lot about meta data. We've seen camera meta data, ownership data, ratings and labels. Now there's one more, keywords. Keywords are words that you choose, that will describe a picture, so that later, you can find it more easily.

For example, in the above scenario, I could choose keywords of "dog, Butch, Granddad, John, shoe, slipper, funny, Christmas" and perhaps a dozen more. Then, later, all I have to do, is tell Bridge to find all the "shoe" pictures it knows about, and there will appear, my funny photo.

People use keywords in a lot of different ways. A friend of mine uses them to store colors – apparently finding all his "blue-ish" ones in a single search is a big deal to him. The point is, this is free form, so think outside of the box.

Switch Bridge in to your light table mode by pressing **1**. Now click on the **KEYWORDS** tab. You'll see that Adobe has started the ball rolling by providing an uninspiring list. Click on a thumbnail, or to save time, many thumbs, and lets start adding keywords. You can use any of Adobe's by ticking the box next to them, (you can also delete them using that Trash Can icon at the bottom of the panel). Or by using the **+** icons you can add your own.

Knock yourself out. Get creative.



Once you've got your photo collection *keyworded*, you can use them on the Filter tab along with the star rating, and all the other stuff you've been using. That of course, only filters the current folder. If you use the Edit, Find menu option, you get to use the keywords across all your folders.

You can build really complex searches using Find, and if you discover yourself using them repeatedly, you can save them as something called Collections. I save all my Collections to a sub folder in **2. Processing / 1. Support Files / Searches**.

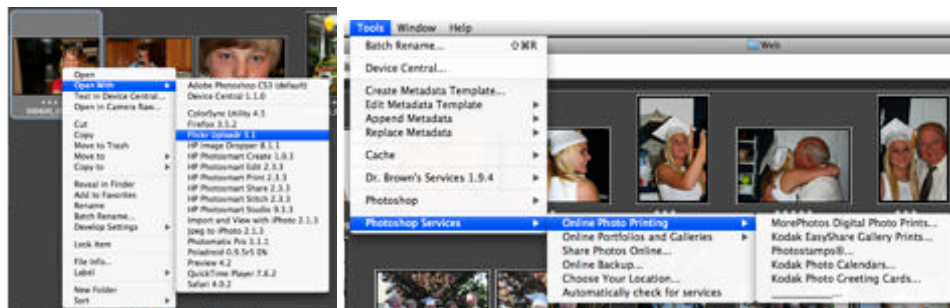
Be warned, when you use Find, the results look just like Filter, but they're not. It appears that you're browsing your same folder structure, but you're not. What you're actually looking at, is a superset. To return to your work, you'll need to use the Folders tab as always.

### Finishing up and sharing the moment



We're done here. Congratulations. You batch processed 200 party pictures in less than 40 minutes. Remember your File Workflow though, you've still got some moving and copying to do to make sure that the **3. Finished Photographs** and **4. Archive** folders have the correct content.

But before we do that, how about we share your pictures with the world? I'm a Flickr.com user, but like anchovies, that's just me. There's many ways built in to Bridge that allow you to share pictures. Check out the Tools, Photoshop Services menu. If your favorite site has an upload tool you can install, then you should also be able to right-click on your thumbnails, and directly upload pictures.



## 5. PULLING IT ALL TOGETHER

Your first major workflow is complete. I told you it was easy. Here's what you did.

