

THE LIGHTROOM SESSIONS – RE-NAMING YOUR PHOTOS

(Taken from [Adobe Photoshop Lightroom Classic CC – The Missing FAQ](#) by Victoria Brampton)

NAMING YOUR FILES

Most cameras use non-descriptive file names such as IMG_5968. The problem with these names is, over the course of time, you'll end up with multiple photos with the same name.

HOW WILL YOU NAME YOUR PHOTOS?

The main thing to consider when naming your files is how you'll make the names unique. If a file doesn't have a unique name, and it's accidentally moved to another folder, other photos could be overwritten. The date and time works well as a unique file name, for example, YYYYMMDD-HHMMSS (year month day—hour minute second). If you regularly shoot in sub-second bursts or you prefer to keep to the camera file name, YYYYMMDD-original file number (and a camera code if you're shooting with more than one camera) can work well with a low risk of duplication. Others prefer a sequence number combined with some custom text, for example, Vacation2017_003.jpg.

You can rename the files at any time, so long as you do it within Lightroom, but doing so while importing means your initial backups will have the same names as the working files. This can be invaluable if you must restore from import backups.

WHICH CHARACTERS CAN I USE IN MY FILENAMES?

It's sensible to only use standard characters, such as plain letters and numbers, and use underscores (_) or hyphens (-) instead of spaces when you're setting up your filenames, so your filenames will be fully compatible with web browsers and other operating systems without having to be renamed again. Some characters, such as / \ : ! @ # \$ % < > , [] { } & * () + = may have specific uses in the operating system or Lightroom's database, causing all sorts of trouble, so those are best avoided.