

Adobe Photoshop Lightroom

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1. What is Adobe Photoshop Lightroom (ALR) & what is it not?
 - 1.1. It is a “Workflow program for digital photography” that does “Asset Management” and “Image Processing”
 - 1.1.1. Asset Management: ALR can help you categorize your images and find them when you need them. There are also several ways you can output your images, either for further work or for presentation.
 - 1.1.2. Image Processing: You can adjust your images non-destructively regardless of file type.
 - 1.2. It is **not a replacement** for Adobe Photoshop (PS).
 - 1.3. It is not Adobe’s reaction to Apple’s Aperture; but they are competitive products.
 - 1.4. It is **a replacement for Adobe Camera Raw (ACR)** that **works with many file types**, not just RAW files. The entire code base of ACR v4 is in ALR v2.0. The biggest advantage of ALR over ACR is the history database.
 - 1.5. It has been designed by photographers for photographers.
2. What does ALR do?
 - 2.1. Maintains a *database* of images with keywords;
 - 2.2. Adjusts overall color balance and white balance;
 - 2.3. Crops and rotates images;
 - 2.4. Maintains a history of actions performed on each image;
 - 2.5. It does all of these modifications in a non-destructive manner;
 - 2.6. All changes are written as metadata to the ALR database and, optionally, to sidecar (xmp) files;
 - 2.7. ALR does not change your image or any part of the file in any manner. Management by metadata!
3. Basic Navigation Tips
 - 3.1. Click on little gray triangles to show or hide panels. You can also hide a tab completely by right-clicking on it and selecting what you want to hide.
 - 3.2. Click on a numeric entry box and use up & down arrows to adjust slowly or shift + up/down to adjust rapidly
 - 3.3. Enlarge tab area to increase sensitivity of sliders
 - 3.4. The third menu changes, depending on which module you’re using.
 - 3.5. Cmd/Ctrl-Z lets you undo multiple times.
4. Module #1: Library--This is “Home Base”
 - 4.1. Importing is available only here File > Import...
 - 4.1.1. Importing dialog
 - 4.1.1.1. Lots of options, mostly personal choice. I prefer to copy images into the ALR library.
 - 4.1.1.2. Make your own metadata templates
 - 4.1.1.3. Make your own Develop settings
 - 4.1.1.4. Rename files from useless camera names to useful ones
 - 4.2. Filters help you see the images you want by selecting certain ratings &/or keywords.
 - 4.2.1. In LR2, these have been moved and expanded. View > Show Filter Bar (Keyboard: “\”)
 - 4.2.2. Filters are good if you don’t know what you want. If you do know what you want, Smart Collections (next section) are better.
 - 4.3. “Collections” are groups of images from one or more shoots. An image can be in zero or more collections.
 - 4.3.1. LR2 introduced new concepts for collections: Collection Group, Collection, Smart Collection
 - 4.3.1.1. A Collection in LR 2 is the same as in LR1 except that it cannot contain sub-collections
 - 4.3.1.2. A Collection Group can contain sub-collections of any type but doesn’t contain any pix
 - 4.3.1.3. A Smart Collection contains pix that are selected from anywhere in the library according to rules
 - 4.4. Keywords help to find pictures. Nesting is allowed and is very useful.
 - 4.5. Quick Develop Tab: Useful for pix of kid’s birthday party for grandma, but not much else.
 - 4.6. Info & Metadata Tabs: Useful information
 - 4.7. Menus
 - 4.7.1. Library: Only when in Library module. Has many useful items
 - 4.7.2. Photo: Some items are different in different modules.
 - 4.7.3. View > View Options: Set what you want to see overlaid on the working area.
 - 4.7.3.1. Grid View, Expanded Cells Extras: Index #, File name, Exposure, Exposure Bias

- 4.7.3.2. Loupe View: File name in both, Common Photo Settings & Date Time in #1, Exposure Bias & Shoot in #2
- 4.7.3.3. Type “I” to toggle among the views & show no info.
- 4.7.4. Window: Note the keyboard shortcuts and use them.
- 4.8. Sort, organize and delete here—Delete either just from library or from hard drive
- 5. Module #2: Develop—This is where you will spend most of your time and effort. Remember: What you see will not be what you get if your monitor’s not calibrated!
 - 5.1. Presets Tab: Use the built-in ones & make your own. The image in the Navigator changes as you mouse over presets.
 - 5.2. History Tab: There’s nothing else like it in other programs. It’s from ALR’s database and is available from session to session. The image in the Navigator changes as you mouse over history.
 - 5.3. Histogram is active. It changes as you change settings. Show clipping for shadows & highlights by mousing over the squares at top left & right or by clicking on them. Watch the histogram as you make changes!
 - 5.4. Basic Tab: Should be renamed “Fundamental Adjustments” or “Start Here after Crop & Straighten”
 - 5.4.1. White Balance tool: Watch the Navigator as you move the tool over your image. Holding the “W” key while using the tool will let you see what each setting looks like on the larger image.
 - 5.4.2. Note colors on the white balance sliders to remind you about what they’re doing.
 - 5.4.3. Exposure: Adjust this first (or use Auto Adjust Tonality and then tweak all settings). It’s OK to add enough exposure that some highlights are blown out because we can use Recovery to bring them back.
 - 5.4.4. Blacks: I adjust this right after Exposure.
 - 5.4.5. “Recovery” is “Highlight Recovery” & helps darken light areas if you’ve had to use lots of brightness to bring up shadow detail. Effects are similar to Shadow/Highlight tool in PS.
 - 5.4.6. “Fill Light” is magic for the midtones in an image.
 - 5.4.7. Brightness: Auto Adjust usually sets this too high. Use this in combination with Fill Light.
 - 5.4.8. Contrast: Changes the slope of the curve. This is helpful when used carefully.
 - 5.4.9. Click on “Auto Adjust Tonality”, then reduce “Brightness” to 10-20 at most and add Fill Light.
 - 5.4.10. Hold down Option/Alt key while sliding Exposure, Recovery and Blacks sliders
 - 5.4.11. Clarity is a kind of mid-tone sharpening that’s similar in effect to sharpening the mid-tones in PS with the high pass filter. A negative value softens the image and is especially useful for portraits.
 - 5.4.12. Vibrance is a non-linear saturation adjustment with protection for skin tones. It increases saturation on under-saturated areas more than it increases saturation on already saturated areas.
 - 5.4.13. Saturation is a linear saturation adjustment that I seldom use. I use vibrance instead.
 - 5.5. Tools always available in the Develop Module
 - 5.5.1. Crop & Straighten Tool (“r”)
 - 5.5.1.1. Constrain aspect ratio or not; but notice “Rule of Thirds” grid
 - 5.5.1.2. Straighten Settings adjust with slider or when you have the rotate cursor or with straighten tool
 - 5.5.1.3. Holding Option/Alt while adjusting the crop rectangle will keep the image centered.
 - 5.5.1.4. Add 11 x 14 & 512 x 384 (or 4 x 3) as presets.
 - 5.5.2. Spot Removal Tool (“n”)
 - 5.5.2.1. Clone or Heal mode
 - 5.5.2.2. Size & opacity are variable. Size responds to a mouse’s scroll wheel
 - 5.5.2.3. Red Eye Correction Tool: Do good photographers need this? ;-)
 - 5.5.2.4. Graduated Filter Tool decreases need for ND grads in the field.
 - 5.5.2.5. Adjustment Brush: This is my favorite tool. To learn about the many options and techniques, read Martin Evening’s book on LR2.
 - 5.5.2.5.1. On-Off Switch is usually on for me so I have access to more variations
 - 5.5.2.5.2. Auto mask handles borders reasonably well; but I often have to go in with the eraser to fix something
 - 5.5.2.5.3. “o” toggles between normal and overlay views.
 - 5.5.2.5.4. Save and use your custom presets
 - 5.5.2.5.5. To end a session, click on the brush or press “n”. Then to reactivate a session, select the brush and click on the spot for the session you want to reactivate.
 - 5.6. Tone Curve Tab
 - 5.6.1. Dark and light gray triangles below graph determine ranges for sliders above.

- 5.6.2. Light gray behind the curve is the composite value of all pixels in a brightness value.
- 5.6.3. It's great to be able to adjust highlights, lights, darks and shadows separately.
- 5.6.4. Mouse over your image to see where on the curve any part of the image is located.
- 5.6.5. Click, hold & drag on any part of the curve to change its shape. I find it easier to use either the sliders or direct numeric entry.
- 5.6.6. Adjusting the split points: Increase mid-tone contrast by moving the two outer split points wider.
- 5.6.7. ACR Curve is identical to the settings in ACR and can be handy for a rough adjustment.
- 5.7. Color Adjustments: Available only with color images. Saturation and Luminance sliders are more useful than the Hue ones.
- 5.8. Grayscale Mixer Tab—Very powerful way to make grayscale images. Available only when you've changed the image to grayscale.
- 5.9. Split Toning Tab: Especially useful with grayscale images; but it can be magic for some color images.
- 5.10. Detail Tab: Be sure to be viewing at 100% when using sliders here.
- 5.11. Lens Corrections Tab: 100% or larger here, too
- 5.12. Synch is the way to apply all or some of the corrections to other images. It's especially useful for removing dust spots.
- 6. Module #3: Slideshow
 - 6.1. Convenient to show clients the pix you took during their shoot.
- 7. Module #4: Print
 - 7.1. Especially good for making sets of "Proof" prints;
 - 7.2. Can be used for final output if you don't need to perform other adjustments in Photoshop.
 - 7.3. Page setup stored as part of the entire preset
- 8. Module #5: Web
 - 8.1. Make a set of HTML pages of your selected, adjusted pictures.
 - 8.2. Make a set of Flash pages of your selected, adjusted pictures.
- 9. Other New Things in Lightroom v2
 - 9.1. Multiple monitor support!
 - 9.2. Profiles for cameras selectable on the Camera Calibration tab
 - 9.3. There are several other changes in the Develop module and in the Printing module; but they're mostly minor.
- 10. Cost & Requirements
 - 10.1. Windows XP SP 2 or newer; 768 MB RAM (Minimum), 1,500 MB Realistic (or more)
 - 10.2. Mac OSX 10.4 (Tiger) or newer; 768 MB RAM (Minimum), 1,500 MB Realistic (or more)
 - 10.3. Cost: \$300 (NAPP members get 15% discount) Upgrade from LR1 is \$99 or \$84.15 for NAPP members
- 11. Is Lightroom something you need?
 - 11.1. No, if you don't shoot many pix and have a recent version of PS Elements or PS.
 - 11.2. Yes, if you shoot a lot and need to select, fix & output just the good ones.
 - 11.3. The intuitiveness and ease of use of LR are greater than ACR. I have a friend who has said that LR has re-kindled his enthusiasm for digital photography because LR is easy to use and is fun.
 - 11.4. PS CS3's ACR has same code as LR Develop—except for history. So, do you want/need the history? Do you want to be able to start, stop and resume where you left off? Do you want to spend most of your time in one, integrated environment? The same argument applies to PS CS4 because the ACR that comes with it will have the same code base as LR 2.1.
 - 11.5. NAPP's PS CS3 Learning Center: <http://www.photoshopper.com/cs3/index.html> for more info on PS CS3. PS CS3 lets you use ACV v4 on jpg's (if you insist). There's another learning center for PS CS4, of course.
 - 11.6. Conclusion: For me (and Matt K and many others), the combination of LR and PS CS2/3 has increased my workflow speed. Scott Kelby and Matt K recently posted a video where they said that they are spending 80%-95% of their time working on an image in LR2. I find that's true for me, too. If you haven't yet purchased a copy of LR, get the 30-day demo. Then join NAPP if you're not already a member so you can get the 15% discount. If you have LR v1.x, just upgrade.
- 12. ALR Online Resources
 - 12.1. Lightroom-News: <http://lightroom-news.com>
 - 12.2. Lightroom Killer Tips: <http://www.lightroomkillertips.com/> Managed by Matt Kloskowski, Director of Education for National Association of Photoshop Professionals (NAPP).
 - 12.3. Photoshop User.com: <http://www.photoshopper.com/> (\$99/yr or \$180/2 years)

12.4. PhotoshopUser.com Lightroom 2 Learning Center (Free to all)

12.4.1. <http://www.photoshopuser.com/lightroom2/>

12.5. Additional Develop Presets posted at:

12.5.1. <http://lightroompresets.com/>

12.5.2. <http://www.method-photo.co.uk/lightroom/> (Ian Lyons's site)

12.5.3. <http://inside-lightroom.com/index.php>

13. Books

13.1. Martin Evening, *The Adobe Photoshop Lightroom 2 Book: The Complete Guide for Photographers*, \$49.99 list, \$31.49 from Amazon

13.1.1. ME is a London-based photographer with an excellent writing style.

13.2. Scott Kelby, *The Adobe Photoshop Lightroom Book for Digital Photographers*, \$44.99 list, \$29.99 from Amazon

13.2.1. You have to be willing to put up with Kelby's writing style that ranges from informal with moderate detail to obnoxiously cute and superficial.

13.3. There are several other books either available now or to be released soon. I have Mikkel Aaland's book on "pre-order" from Amazon.