

LIGHTROOM CLASSIC LIBRARY WINDOW

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This second article on Lightroom Classic covers the Library window, which is where you organise your photo files and edit the images' metadata. Please read my article [STARTING WITH ADOBE LIGHTROOM CLASSIC](#) if you have not already done so. Remember that Lightroom Classic works with the Catalogue file on your hard disc, which is where all your editing (metadata changes and development) is stored.

This article only applies to Lightroom Classic and not the cloud based Lightroom. Lightroom Classic is far more powerful for organising your photos than Lightroom.

Go through this article with Lightroom Classic open, so you can try out each feature as you go.



When you open Lightroom Classic it will go by default to the **LIBRARY MODULE**. You should see this with **LIBRARY** highlighted in the **CONTROL STRIP** at the top of the Library window. If you can't see this control strip, click on the little triangle at the top centre of Lightroom Classic's window. Clicking on the other labels will take you to other modules: Develop, Map, Book, Slideshow, Print and Web. Pretty much all the work you do in Lightroom Classic is in the Library and Develop modules. You can hide or reveal modules listed in the control strip by Right/Control clicking on the strip and checking which modules you use. If you don't own a photograph printer and get all your printing done at a photofinisher, the Print module is of limited use to you. I have never found the need for the Web module.

Type G to return to the Library **GRID VIEW** (as above), or E to go to **LOUPE VIEW**.

LIGHTROOM CLASSIC'S PANELS AND THE FILMSTRIP

This section applies to all Lightroom Classic modules, not just the Library module. At the left and right sides of the window there are a group of individual Panels, which can be opened and closed by clicking the flippy triangle in the panel header. Each panel contains a mini module.

You can widen or narrow each of the panel groups by clicking and dragging its inside border. Type Tab to show or hide the panel groups, allowing more space for your images. If you type Shift-Tab, all the panels and bars disappear and your image window fills the screen. Alternatively click on the little triangles at the sides of the screen to show and hide each panel group.

Click the little triangle at the bottom centre of the window to show or hide the **FILMSTRIP**, which shows the images in the selected folder. I don't find the filmstrip of much use in the Library Module, but it is very useful in the Map, Book and Slideshow modules.

You can hide panels you don't use or unhide those you need by Control Clicking or Right Clicking on any panel name. A dropdown menu will appear and you can select or deselect panels. Check Solo Mode so that only one panel is open at a time. When you open another panel, the previous one closes.

You can highlight the main image window by typing L. This will cycle through Lights Out, Lights Dim and Lights On views. This can also be done by MENU: Window > Lights Out

THE TOOL BAR

Underneath the image window in any module is the **TOOLBAR**. Type T or Menu: View > Show/Hide Toolbar. What is shown in the toolbar depends on the module you are working in.

GRID AND LOUPE VIEWS IN THE LIBRARY MODULE

Selecting a folder of images in the Folders Panel will show all the images in this folder in the image window.

GRID VIEW shows thumbnails for of all the images, and if there are a lot of images in the selected folder, a scroll bar allows you to see them all. Type G to go to Grid view, or click on the left ikon in the Toolbar. Clicking on a single image highlights it (the border is lighter). Shift-clicking or dragging over images in Grid view can select a group of images, one of which is lighter showing it is active. Command/Control clicking on individual images will add them to the selection. Notice how the borders around the image change the tone of grey with selected images. For film buffs, Grid View is like looking at negatives or transparencies on a light box.

The Default **TOOLBAR** under the photo images in Grid view shows from left to right, the five alternative view modes, the Painter spray can, a dropdown menu to select different ways of sorting images, a triangle which initiates a slideshow, and a slider to adjust the thumbnail size. On the right-hand side is a flippy triangle which reveals a menu of options which when checked will appear on the toolbar. You can make the thumbnails smaller or larger by dragging the slider in the toolbar or with the keystrokes Control – or Control + (Right-click with a 2-button mouse is the same as Control click)

LOUPE VIEW shows a single image in the image window. Photographers using film examine negatives or slides on the lightbox with a magnifying loupe. Type E or click on the second left ikon in the Toolbar to select Loupe view. When in Loupe View, you can use the arrow keys to scroll through the images you selected in Grid View. The Toolbar in Loupe view has a different set of default tools. It has a flippy triangle on the right showing the menu of options available.

VIEW OPTIONS

In Grid or Loupe View, Right/Control click on an image and a fly-out menu will appear with lots of options. One of these is **LIBRARY VIEW OPTIONS**. Alternative ways to open the View Options Dialogue box are MENU: View > View Options, or type Control/Command J. A **DEVELOP VIEW OPTIONS** dialogue box can be accessed if you are working in the Develop Module.

In View Options, you can select what metadata is shown with each image. The default view for Compact Grid view is File name, flags, rating and colour code, but you can select an Expanded view to see more, or change what is shown. In Loupe view, I like to see aperture, shutter and ISO, along with lens.

ORGANISING YOUR IMAGES INTO FOLDERS

The **FOLDERS** Panel in the left-hand group of the **Library** module is where you see and organise the disc drives, folders and image files that you have imported into Lightroom Classic. When you organise files and images in the Folders panel, your changes are being made in Apple Finder or Windows Explorer. You only see the files and folders you have imported into Lightroom Classic, giving an uncluttered view. Clicking on a folder name will show the images in it.

Click the + sign at the top of the Folders Panel to add a new folder inside the active folder. A dialog box will allow you to name your new folder. This will also create a new folder in Windows Explorer or Apple Finder.

With a folder highlighted, click the – sign in the Folders Panel header to delete that folder and its contents from the catalogue, but this does not delete files from Finder or Windows Explorer unless there is nothing in the folder. If you want to delete a folder containing files, you have to do this in Explorer or Finder. This is because the folder may contain files that Lightroom Classic cannot recognise. You can delete images in a folder, and then if there is nothing else in the folder, delete the folder.

Drag and Drop folders in the Folders panel to rearrange them, putting them inside another folder, or moving them and their contents to another disc. Images can be moved from one folder or drive to another by selecting them in Grid view and then dragging and dropping to another folder. You can also use MENU: Edit > Cut and Paste to move selected folders or images around. Lightroom Classic does not allow you to duplicate images, but really you only want one copy, otherwise you will end up confused.

Always use the above methods to rearrange your images in folders. If you do this in Windows or Finder, Lightroom Classic will lose track of where the images are.

If this occurs, Lightroom Classic will indicate an image can't be found with an exclamation mark (!). Just click on the exclamation mark, then navigate to it in Lightroom Classic to put it in the catalogue. Alternatively, in Finder/Explorer, move the image back where it should be.

Just below the Folders module header is the **FILTER FOLDERS** dialogue box with a little magnifying glass ikon. Start typing in this box to search for a particular sub-folder's name. Really cool eh!

RANKING YOUR IMAGES IN THE LIBRARY WINDOW

You can see your images as small thumbnails in Grid View, but you really want to critically examine each one individually, rejecting the failures and identifying the heroes for development.

To see the active image fill Lightroom Classic's image window, (Loupe View), hit the spacebar, type E, or double click on the image.

Type Z or hit the spacebar to toggle full screen or zoomed into 100%. Control/Command + or – will zoom in or out too. In Loupe view, move to other selected images with the Tab or Left and Right arrow keys. When zoomed in you can navigate around the image by dragging the rectangle in the Navigator window.

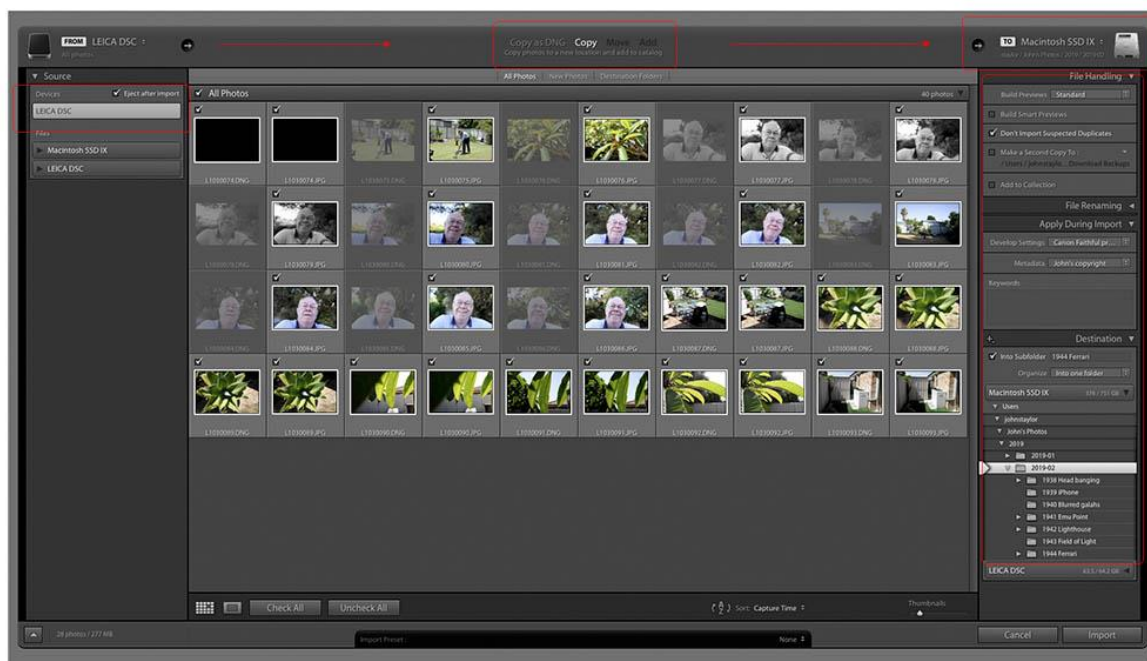
Type F (Full screen view) to make the active image fill the whole screen – without the info shown in Loupe view. Type F, E or G to return to Library View. HINT: Look at the final image in full screen view, when you have finished Development to check for distractions. I have found the Info panel distracts from making a full examination.

On the left of the Toolbar are 5 ikons that give different views of your images. Select several images, then click on each ikon. From Left to Right the views are Grid view (Type G), Loupe view (Type E), Compare to View (Type C), Survey View (N), and People view (O).

COMPARE VIEW allows you to compare one or more images against a hero. **SURVEY VIEW** allows you to compare two or more images, but no one is designated a hero. The **PEOPLE** view shows images containing faces with a box around each face. You can name a face and this name will be added as a keyword. See Keywords later.

IMPORTING A SESSION'S IMAGES

Both Nick Melidonis and I recommend the following method to load and process images into Lightroom Classic after each session or day. Images are downloaded from your camera, the duds discarded, the heroes identified for development, keywords are added. Putting all the images from one session in their own folder keeps things tidy and helps your workflow. See my notes on “Development Software Overview” for my thoughts on folder structure.



Import Window

When you connect your camera or card reader to your computer and Lightroom Classic is open, it will usually open the **IMPORT WINDOW**. If not, click the **IMPORT** button at the bottom left of the Lightroom Classic

window. You should see the name of the camera card in the Source list on the left. Select this if it is not already selected. You work the import window by going from left to right.

Choose **COPY** to copy the files from your camera card, leaving the originals on the card as a backup. On a long trip, I make sure I have enough cards for all the trip's images,

On the right at the top will be indicated the disc where the files will be copied. Below are the File Handling, File Naming, Apply During Import, and Destination Panels.

In the **FILE HANDLING** Panel, I use the following settings.

- Build Previews – Embedded & Sidecar. This setting affects the size of previews and how long they take to build. See Lightroom Help for more detail.
- Don't import Suspected Duplicates – Checked.
- Make a second copy to – off. Turn on if you want to copy a backup to a connected hard drive.
- Add to a Collection – off.

Click Uncheck All, then select the images you want to import and check one of those to effectively check all selected images.

The **FILE RENAMING** panel gives a great way of naming your images, if this is part of your workflow.

The **APPLY DURING IMPORT** Panel gives you the ability to do repetitive work on every image. **DEVELOP SETTINGS** allows you to apply a Development Preset to every image as it is imported. This can add a development profile, ensure lens aberrations are corrected, apply noise reduction and sharpening. The latest versions of Lightroom Classic enable you to create a profile that will vary noise reduction and sharpening depending on the image's ISO setting. See more in my article on Development for how to create such a profile. You can also add metadata (such as a copyright notice and keywords) to each image on import.

The **DESTINATION PANEL** allows you to specify where the images go on import, including the option to create and name a new subfolder for them.

You can save the settings in these panels by creating an **IMPORT PRESET** in the panel at the bottom of the window. This is useful if you have more than one camera.

Finally click **IMPORT** to complete the import. Lightroom Classic will copy the images from the card and build thumbnail images to show in the Library Grid View.

RATING, FLAGGING AND COLOUR CODING YOUR IMAGES.

Your new folder of images will appear in the Library window as a **PREVIOUS IMPORT** group in Grid View, but you can navigate to any folder of images using the Folders Panel.

If you have groups of images taken at the same time (Bracketed images or motor-wind images), you can stack images together for convenience. MENU: Photo > Stacking > Auto-stack by Capture Time. Drag the slider to set how many images are grouped together.

After importing a session's images, I look at each one in Loupe view, using the keys Spacebar, E, G and Z to zoom in and out of the image. Images are rated using stars. The type keys numbered 1 to 5 are used to star-rate each image. Alternatively, the star rating tools in the Toolbar can be used. As a first go, I rate ones I have seen with 1 star (Type number 1), and the promising images with 2 stars. Any bad images (out of focus, mis-timed or other faulty images) are flagged rejected (Type X). Use the right arrow key to go to the next image. Any I have not reviewed will have no stars.

For groups of similar images, such as in a motor wind group, I use the Survey View. Select the group of similar images and type N. Type X to reject all the images. Starting with the first image Type E to review it full screen, X to zoom in and check sharpness. In Survey View, clicking the cross in the bottom left of its icon will remove the rejected image from the group. In Survey View clicking a reject flag will cancel rejection of the remaining images. I use a similar process to select one or two hero images. In Survey View type 2 to give them all 2 stars. Checking each individually in Loupe View enables selection of the best images, which are then removed from the group in Survey View by clicking the X. Finally in Survey View type 1 to set the runners-up to one star.

I use colour coding to mark images in a focus stack, HDR or panorama group, so that I can easily develop the group together. The number keys from 6 to 9 give different colour codes. The zero key will clear any stars and colour codes of selected images.

When you rate, flag or colour code an image, you are adding to its metadata and make it easier to locate.

After going through all the images in a file, delete the images flagged rejected. MENU: Photo > Delete Rejected images. The default of this only removes images from the catalogue. Choose the “Delete from disk” option to put them in the Trash.

I flag any remaining images by selecting them all and hitting the ` key. This flag shows them as my master images. If I export an image to a subfolder, the exported image will not be flagged. If I develop an image with Photoshop it can then be flagged as the master image, and the flag of the RAW file turned off.

FILTERING TO SHOW ONLY YOUR BEST IMAGES

Now you have chosen your heroes, you can hide all the others. In Grid View, immediately above the images is the LIBRARY FILTER Bar. Type Backslash (\) to show or hide this bar, or MENU: View > Show Filter Bar. Mouse down on Attribute, then click on the two stars. Now all the zero and one-star images are hidden, so you only see or your heroes. Click None to see all your images again. More on the Library Filter Bar later – it’s powerful!

KEYWORDS

Keywording is one of the most powerful ways of adding metadata to images so they can be found easily. It is best to consider your strategy for applying keywords at the start so that you can make best use of it.

When you are starting with Lightroom Classic, there will be few keywords in the system. To create a new keyword, Click the + sign in the Keyword List Header and the CREATE KEYWORD TAG box will appear. If you have selected a group of images, you will be given the opportunity to tag all the selected images. As you create a new keyword you have the option of adding synonyms. My father’s name is Cyril, but I can add the synonyms Dad or CWT to enable these terms to be used to find images of him. To edit an existing keyword, double click a keyword name to reopen the Create Keyword Tag dialog box.

Keywords can be nested one inside another (drag and drop). So, it makes sense that you use this feature for example for Places: Country, state, region, town, suburb. Therefore, you can have main categories of keywords, with keywords nested inside the main categories.

- People – relationship (Family, Friends, MPC members, Models), names
- Places – Country, state, region, city or national park, suburb
- Events – MPC, family, parties, weddings, workshops, WAPF
- Animal – farm, wild, apes, gorillas, birds, pelican
- Plant life – flowers, fruit, foliage, trees, biological name (common name can be a synonym)
- Genre – landscape, portraiture, family, seascape, still life, night shots, weather, urban, transport

- Sport – Powerboats, Sailing, Drag racing, surfing, BMX
- Technique – motion blur, flash, focus stacked, panorama stitch, HDR, filters
- For composites – Textures, Skies

Use keywords that reflect your photography. Each keyword should find a reasonable number of images. For example, if you visit a country once for a short visit, and there are a hundred or so images. Then you don't need to have keywords for each city. However, you probably need a keyword for each of the suburbs or localities around Mandurah, because a search on your home town will find a huge number of images.

To apply existing keywords to a folder of images, firstly in Grid view, select images that you want to all have the same keyword. Keywords are best applied using the **KEYWORDING** panel. Just start typing the keyword, and it will suggest ones that already exist. The panel has **KEYWORD SUGGESTIONS** that you can click on to apply the keyword. You can also set up **KEYWORD SETS**.

You can also apply a keyword using the **KEYWORD LIST** panel. You can scroll down to find the keyword you are after, but it is better to start typing in the keyword filter box. This reduces the number listed to speed up finding the one you want. To the left of the keyword is a check box. Clicking in this will add the keyword to all the selected images.

Keywording is a tedious task, but Lightroom Classic has a number of features to make it as easy as possible. Check out Lightroom Classic's help by searching on Keywording to get more helpful hints. To find images in your library that are not keyworded, look at the existing Smart Collection > Without Keywords. Alternatively use the Library Filter Bar (see below).

THE PAINTER (SPRAY CAN)

The other way you can apply a keyword in Grid View is using the **PAINTER** in the Toolbar. Click on the spray can ikon. In the Paint dropdown menu that appears, choose Keywords. Click the sample box to highlight it, and start to type your Keyword. It will list existing keywords as you type and you can select the one you want. Move your cursor, which will look like a spray can, over a selected image and click. All the selected images will be given the keyword. If necessary, you can click on individual unselected images to apply the keyword.

You can use Painter for other tasks, such as applying a flag, label, rating or rotating images in a similar way.

PEOPLE

Lightroom Classic has face recognition software that works reasonably well, depending on the age range of your subjects. In the Toolbar below the images, click on the People ikon to select the People view. Click on the image in the Navigator window to view the whole image. Each face that Lightroom Classic recognises in the image will have a box around it and a suggested name. Either accept the suggested name or start typing the correct name for each person. The more tagged images of a person there are, the better face recognition will work. If you don't know the name, or if a statue or other artefact is chosen, delete the face box. Add face boxes if Lightroom Classic did not generate one. The names will appear in your keyword list.

If you had a folder selected, you will see a screen showing the named and unnamed people in the folder of images you are working on. You can work in this window too.

Often faces you don't know will be found. The suggestions can be funny, particularly when Lightroom Classic tries to name something not human. Enjoy going through your images.

METADATA PANEL

Lightroom Classic will show all the metadata captured by the camera and added during image processing, as well as metadata you add to an image in the Metadata Panel. The dropdown menu next to the Metadata Panel header gives you choices of which metadata to show.

You can for example add an image title, or change metadata by clicking on an item in the list and typing.

You can change the file name of an individual file by clicking in the File Name box to select the type and retyping. You can rename a number of files in a folder by selecting them, and then clicking on the button to the right of the File Name box. You will be given the opportunity to rename the images as a sequence, for example TEXT 0001, TEXT 0002 and so on.

If your camera does not have GPS, then you can add this. Use your smartphone to take an image at the same location. Cut and paste the GPS data from your smartphone image to the GPS panel of your camera's images taken at this location. Now Map View will show where your images were taken.

SEARCHING FOR PARTICULAR IMAGES

In Grid View (G), there are two ways of searching for images that match particular criteria.

FROM THE KEYWORDS AND METADATA PANELS

In the Keywords and Metadata Panels on the right-hand side of the Library module, there is a button with an arrow to the right of searchable items. Clicking on this will give a grid view of all files in the catalogue which match the selected metadata or keyword. Remember to search the keyword list, start typing your keyword in the *Filter Keywords* bar.

This method only searches the whole catalogue, and only on the one metadata type. The Library Filter Bar is a more powerful search tool.

LIBRARY FILTER BAR

The Library **FILTER BAR** above the images in **GRID VIEW** (Type \ to toggle visibility) can be used to search for particular images in a more sophisticated way than the one described above. Choosing a particular disk drive or folder restricts the search to images in this drive or folder. You can choose more than one criteria to search by, and so narrow your search.

From the Filter Bar's Menu list, click on **TEXT** to search on File Name, Copy Name, Title, Caption and Keyword

Click on **Attribute** to search for images which are flagged, marked as rejected, rated higher or lower or equal to a set star rating, with or without a colour code, edit status (developed/undeveloped), whether they are master images, virtual copies, or videos.

Click on **Metadata** to search on searchable metadata, including particular keywords from your list or no keyword, camera, lens and label.

Using this tool, I can search for all images on a particular drive, with the word Greenland as part of the Keyword, with 2 stars or more, taken by a particular camera and lens. They can be further filtered by date. It can lead to some unexpected results. 'Greenland' chooses not only the images I took in Greenland, but of Mark Greenland.

The latest version of Lightroom Classic includes Date as an option in the metadata list. In this way you can narrow your search to a particular date range.

COLLECTIONS

Collections are way of grouping images you want to view or work on together. A collection can include images scattered throughout your library. It is a virtual folder – the images are really still in their original locations. You can edit an image in a collection and you are editing the original and not a copy.

Create a new collection by clicking the + button in the Collections Panel header and typing in a name. Add photos to a collection by dragging and dropping. Show the images in the collection in Grid or Loupe view by clicking on its name.

I create a collection when I put together a number of images to go into a competition or portfolio. Clicking on the collection name shows just these images in Grid view. If you want to create a Photobook or Slideshow, put those images you want to include in a collection. Images can be removed from a collection by selecting them and using the Delete key. The images will only be removed from the collection, and will still be in their original folder. If you want to bin a photo in a collection, Right-click on the image to take you to the original folder.

Smart collections are set up using metadata, such as star rating, colour code or image size. For example, I give all my Gold and Silver Awarded images 5 stars. A Smart Collection of 5 stars will have my awarded images. WAPF competition organisers, and club Competition Directors use smart collections to find photographs that don't conform to the competition rules for image size and date range. You could do the same.

WORKING WITH CLOUD BASED LIGHTROOM

Lightroom is now a cloud based application and is available for laptops, desktops, smartphones and tablets. It can work images in the Adobe Creative Cloud, in the following ways:

- Images can be transferred from your camera card to the cloud using Lightroom.
- Images in the cloud can be edited by Lightroom using your tablet, smartphone or computer.
- Cloud images can be synchronised with Lightroom Classic. The Cloud Ikon in the top right corner of Lightroom Classic's Library window can be used to turn off or on synchronisation. It also shows the amount of cloud storage used. Synchronisation means edits can be made to these images using Lightroom or Lightroom Classic.
- Images in the Adobe Creative Cloud can be copied to your hard drives using Lightroom Classic. They can then be deleted from the cloud so they don't take up space.

BUT THERE'S MORE!

Explore Lightroom Classic's extensive Help to find more features, for example:

- Right-Click (Windows) or Control-Click (MacOS) on a folder's name to add coloured labels to the folder, or to mark a folder as a favourite. Then the Filter Folders box can be used to find these folders.
- If the folders catalogued in Lightroom Classic don't match the folder when viewed in Explorer or Finder, you can synchronise them. MENU: Library > Synchronise Folder, or Right-Click / Control-click on a folder's name and select Synchronise. You can add to the catalogue images in the folder that are not catalogued, or remove from the catalogue images that you trashed in Explorer or Finder.
- To explore what a disk or volume holds as catalogued photos, Right-Click on the volume name. The default shows the number of photos, but you can also select how much disk space is used or whether the disk is on-line or offline.

WHAT IS NEXT

In the article [DEVELOP MODULE](#), I will describe how you develop images in Lightroom Classic. I will also describe how you can develop multiple images at the same time. I will also cover how to export images as files for digital or print competitions.

The Article [CLOUD BASED LIGHTROOM](#) covers how to use Lightroom with your smartphone tablet or computer. It describes how to import images from your camera to Adobe's Creative Cloud, develop them, and transfer them to your hard drive.

Now you have started to add to your catalogue file, review my article [STARTING WITH LIGHTROOM CLASSIC](#) to find an overview of the catalogue file, where it is, and how to back it up.

Both Lightroom and Lightroom Classic have excellent training videos, showing how individual photographers develop their images. Go to the Help menu in Lightroom and explore what else you can do.

Things you should look up in the Lightroom Classic help are:

- Restoring your catalogue from a backup
- Renaming files and folders
- Lightroom Classic Maps module
- Lightroom Classic Slideshow and Books modules

Thanks to Nick Rains and Nick Melidonis for their help introducing me to Lightroom Classic.

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