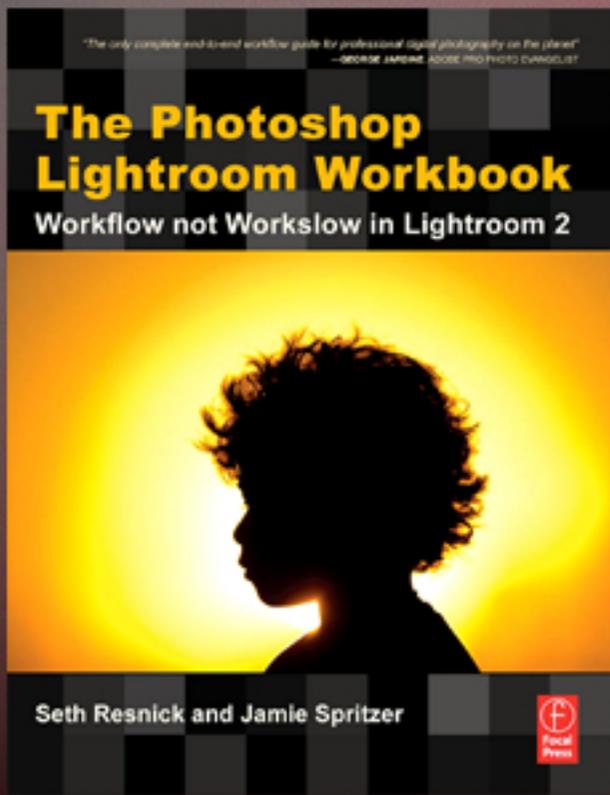


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**The Photoshop Lightroom  
Workbook  
Resnick & Spritzer  
ISBN 9780240810676**



# Importing and Exporting Catalogs and Synchronizing Your Laptop and Desktop

The question is:

I use a Laptop in the field when shooting and a desktop at the studio/home for processing and management in Lightroom. If the 'main' Library and Catalog live on my 'main' computer's external drive in the studio/home, how do I sync the Catalog on my laptop or other computers with the 'main' Library and Catalog?

There are several ways to do this, and we will review them here. Most of them are rather confusing, but D-65 has found work-around solutions that work effortlessly and flawlessly. Your methodology for accomplishing this needed task will be dependent upon what you need to do on your files in the field.

## D-65 Concepts for Syncing

### Concept One

You maintain your archive on your studio or home desktop computer. You have a shoot on location, so you will be bringing a laptop and external hard drive on location with you. You may do some work on the files you capture in the field, but your main goal is simply to take the images you captured in the field and bring them back to the studio, placing the images from the field into the studio/home machine.

In this scenario, you don't need to bring or care about bringing your entire archive of images with you on your shoot.

### Solution for Concept One

- (1) The easiest and most reliable way to accomplish this is to bring a laptop and a hard drive on location. For absolute protection, we like to bring two or three external drives on location, duplicating the contents to all three drives just to protect against drive failure or theft or any other unforeseen circumstance.
- (2) Ideally reformat the hard drive before the trip. We usually take LaCie Rugged drives or SmartDiskFireLite drives, but any decent portable drive will do.
- (3) Before we leave, we create a new Lightroom catalog on the freshly reformatted drive. We name the catalog `yyyymmdd_Lightroom_Catalog`. Refer to Chapter 4, for creating a new catalog.
- (4) We shoot the job(s) on location and import to the portable drive into a folder named `yyyymmdd_jobname`. Our external drive will then have a Lightroom catalog and a folder of images from that job.
- (5) We tweak our files in the field and apply metadata and keywords, edit out ones we don't want, rank and essentially accomplish as much as we can.
- (6) Verify that, in Lightroom's Catalog Settings > Metadata, you have checked Automatically Write Changes into XMP. If you don't have that checked in your Catalog Settings, after you are done tweaking all your files, select them all in the Library Module grid mode and choose Save Metadata to File (Command S).
- (7) We return home and plug the external drive into our main computer at the studio or at home.

- (8) We start Lightroom on the main computer and choose Import from the lower left-hand corner of the Library Module. We select the folder to import.
- (9) The Import Photos dialog box will pop up (Figure 15.1).

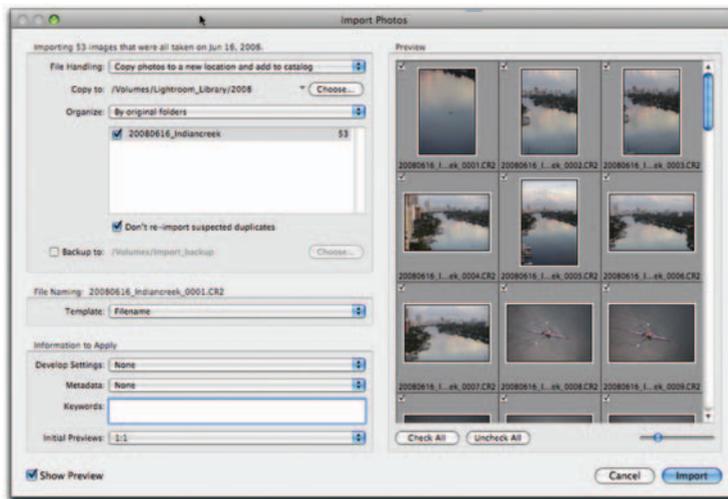


FIG 15.1 Import Dialog Box

- **File Handling:** Choose Copy photos to a new location and add to catalog.
  - **Copy to:** The location that all of our image files reside, our Lightroom\_Library hard drive on our main computer. In our case, it will be /Volumes/Lightroom\_Library/2008.
  - **Organize:** By original folders.
  - Don't reimport suspected duplicates.
  - **File Naming:** Template Filename – because we named the files in the field.
  - **Information to Apply:** None, because we have applied Develop Settings, Metadata and Keywords in the field.
  - Choose 1:1 Initial Previews because we always want 1:1 previews.
- (10) The files are imported, and all material is now on our main drive. The portable drive can be reformatted and readied for the next location shoot.

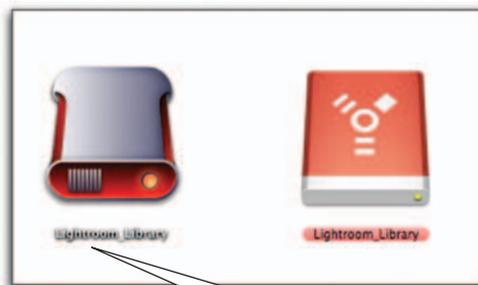
## Concept Two

You maintain your archive on your studio or home desktop. You are leaving for a location shoot and want to bring your entire

catalog and images from studio/home with you. You do not plan on working on any old images, but you want the material with you just in case. You have a shoot on location, so you will be bringing a laptop and external hard drive with you. You may do some work on the files you capture in the field, and your goal is to add these images to your existing catalog that you took with you in the field. When you return to the home or office, you want to update the catalog at home with the material you captured in the field.

## Solution for Concept Two

- (1) The easiest and most reliable way to accomplish this is to bring a laptop and an external hard drive that is large enough to hold the entire Lightroom catalog and image files and can be reformatted on location. For absolute protection, we like to bring two or three drives on location, duplicating the contents to all three drives just to protect against drive failure, theft or any other unforeseen circumstance.
- (2) Ideally reformat the hard drive you are bringing on location before the trip. We usually take use a large 750-GB Seagate or 1-TB Seagate external drive. This drive is reformatted so that there is nothing on it, and it is given the same name as our main drive at home. We color code them differently. We do this so that file paths will be exactly the same. If we had different named drives for location, our files could lose their paths, and rather than pointing each folder to the right drive, this is an easier solution (Figure 15.2).



The drive for location is given a different icon, but the name of the drive is exactly the same name as that of the main drive.

FIG 15.2

- (3) Before we leave, we copy our Lightroom\_Catalog and folders of images from our main Lightroom\_Library to the external drive we are taking on location. Ideally, we accomplish this using Retrospect or other backup software (Figure 15.3).

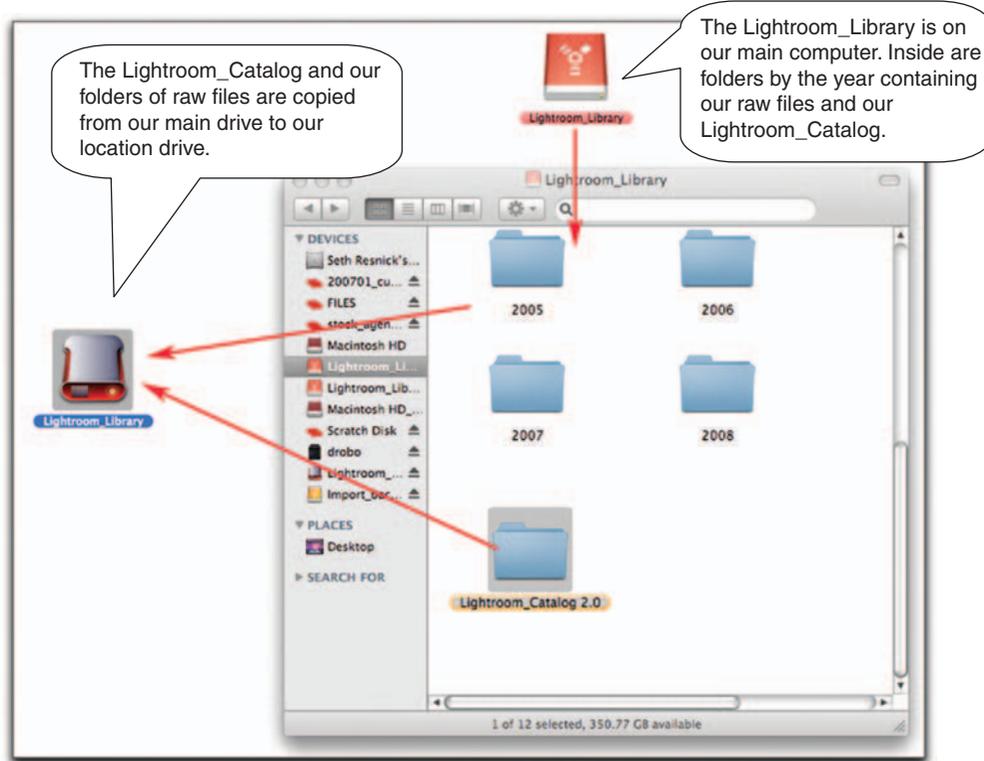


FIG 15.3

- (4) We shoot our job and import to the portable drive into the 2008 folder. The job is named yyyyymmdd\_jobname. In Figure 15.4, on page 308 we have imported files into a folder named 20080622\_denver.
- (5) We tweak our files in the field and apply metadata and keywords, edit out ones we don't want, rank and essentially accomplish as much as we can.
- (6) Verify that, in Lightroom's Catalog Settings, you have either checked Automatically Write Changes into XMP or, after you are done tweaking all your files, selected all of them

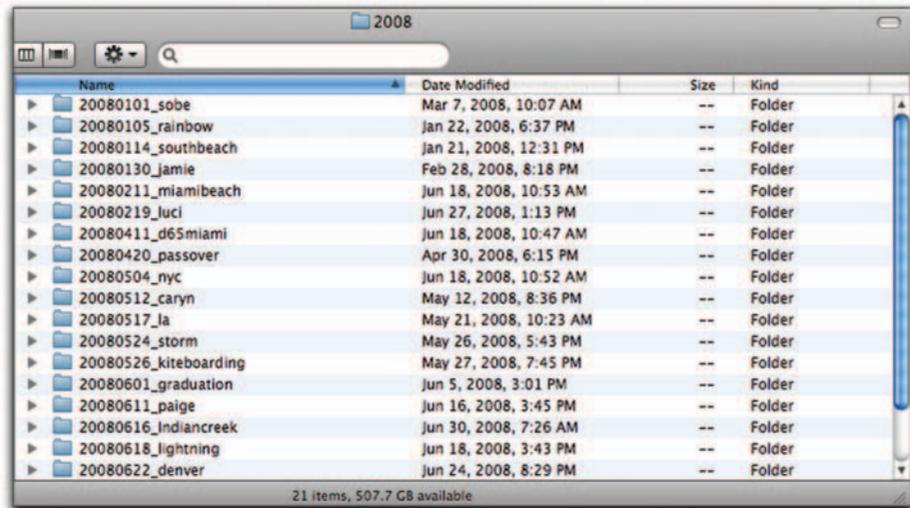


FIG 15.4 2008 Folders in Lightroom\_Library

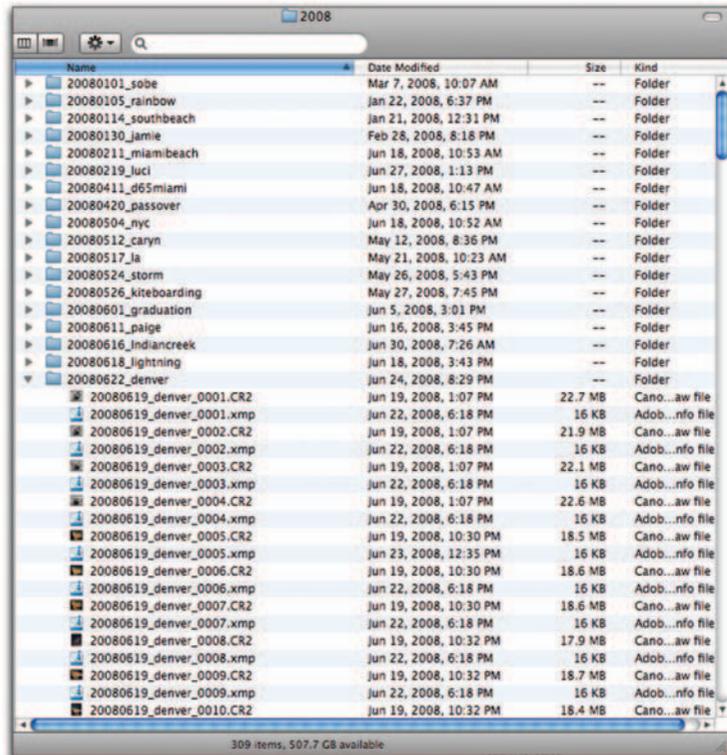
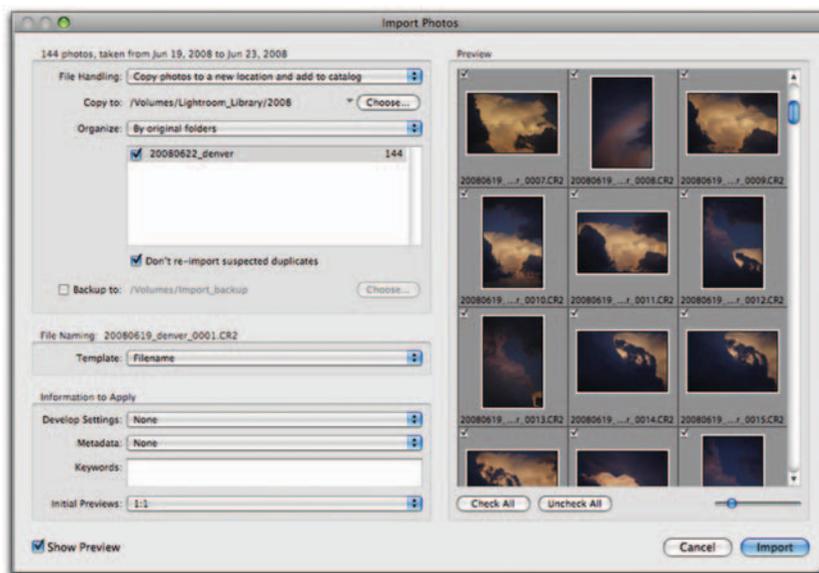


FIG 15.5 Folder showing raw files and sidecar,xmp files

and chosen Save Metadata to File (Command S). [Figure 15.5](#) shows the 20080622\_denver folder with all the raw files and corresponding .xmp files.

- (7) We return home and plug the external drive into our main computer at the studio or at home.
- (8) We start Lightroom on the main computer and choose Import from the lower left-hand corner of the Library Module. We select the folder to import.
- (9) The Import Photos dialog box will pop up ([Figure 15.6](#)).



**FIG 15.6** Import Dialog Box

- **File Handling:** Choose Copy photos to a new location and add to catalog.
- **Copy to:** The location that all of our image files reside, our Lightroom\_Library hard drive on our main computer. In our case, it will be /Volumes/Lightroom\_Library/2008.
- **Organize:** By original folders.
- Don't reimport suspected duplicates.
- **File Naming:** Template Filename – because we named the files in the field.
- **Information to Apply:** None, because we have applied Develop Settings, Metadata and Keywords in the field.
- Choose 1:1 Initial Previews because we always want 1:1 previews.

- (10) The files are imported, and all material is now on our main drive. The portable drive can be reformatted and readied for the next location shoot.

### Concept Three

You maintain your archive on your studio or home desktop. You are leaving for a location shoot and want to bring your entire catalog and images from studio/home with you. You plan on working on old images from the existing catalog, but you also want to add new material. You have a shoot on location, so you will be bringing a laptop and external hard drive on location with you. When you return to the studio/home, you want to update the catalog on your main computer with the material you captured in the field and with the material changed in the field. Now we must sync the field catalog and the studio/home catalog.

### Solution for Concept Three

- (1) The easiest and most reliable way to accomplish this is to bring a laptop and an external hard drive that is large enough to hold the Lightroom catalog and any image files that you want to bring on location.
- (2) Ideally reformat the hard drive you are bringing on location before the trip. We usually take a 750-GB Seagate or 1-TB Seagate external drive. This drive is reformatted so that there is nothing on it and it is given the exact same name as our main drive at home. We color code them differently. We do this so that file paths will be exactly the same. If we had different named drives for location, our files could lose their paths, and rather than pointing each folder to the right drive, this is an easier solution.
- (3) Before we leave for location, we copy our Lightroom\_Catalog and folders of images to the external drive. Ideally, we accomplish this using Retrospect or other backup software.
- (4) We shoot our job and import to the portable drive into the 2008 folder. The job is named yyyyymmdd\_jobname. In [Figure 15.7](#), we are on location and have shot some lightning images for a job. These images are imported into a folder called 20080618\_lightning.
- (5) We tweak our lightening files in the field and apply metadata and keywords, edit out ones we don't want, rank and essentially accomplish as much as we can.

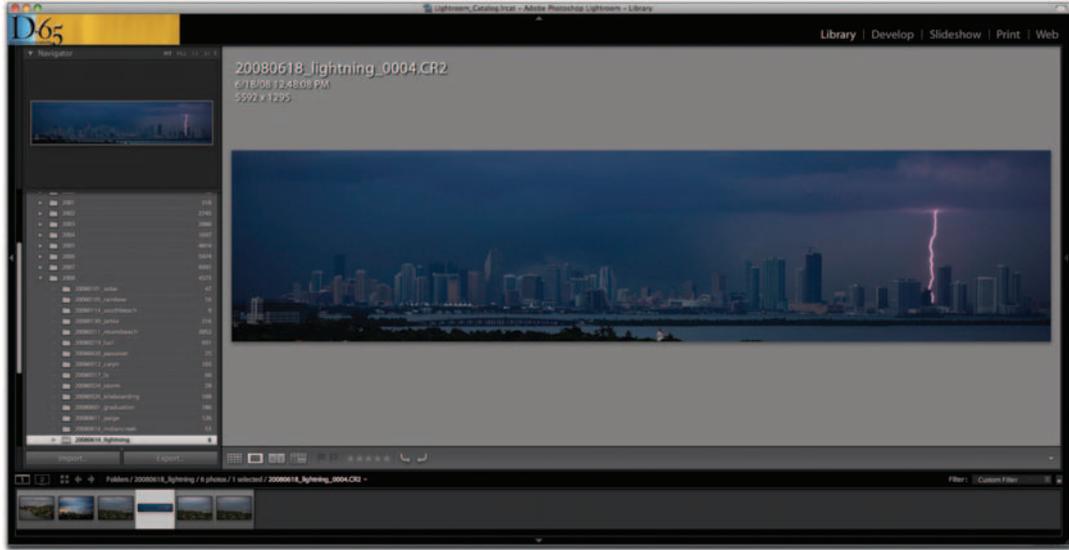


FIG 15.7 Images are worked on on the road

- (6) We also work on a second folder (Figure 15.8) and make changes to keywords, metadata and develop module, delete some images and rename the entire group. We are going to want to have these changes apply to our 'main' Lightroom Library and Catalog when we get home. We are going to want

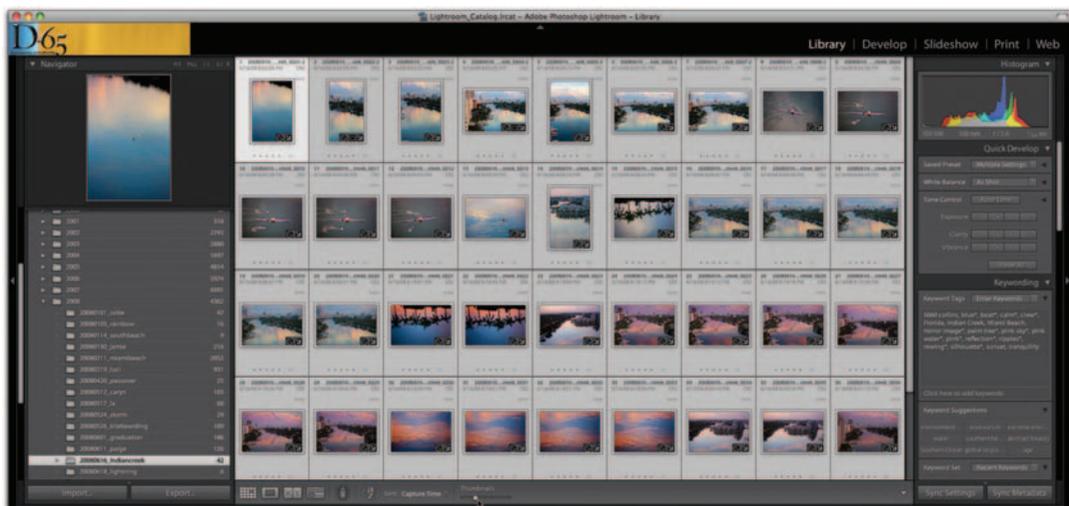
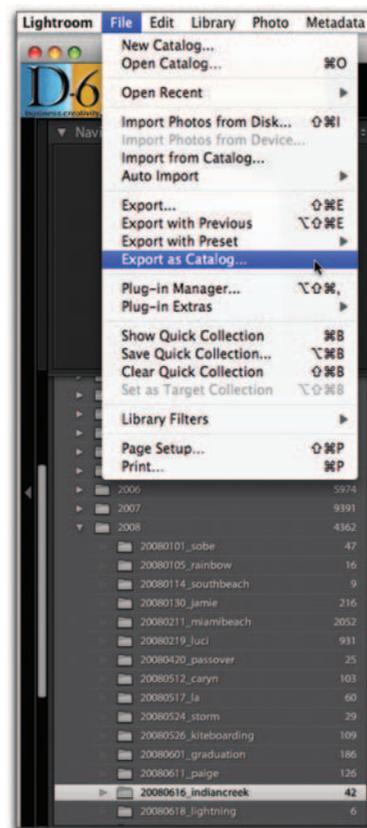


FIG 15.8 Images are worked on on the road

to add the lightning as new material and replace or update the indiancreek folder at home with the changes made in the field.

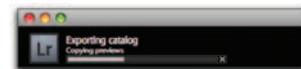
- (7) Verify that in Lightroom's Catalog Settings, you have either checked Automatically Write Changes into XMP or, after you are done tweaking all your files, selected all of them and chosen Save Metadata to File (Command S).
- (8) Next we are going to select each folder of images that we worked on and export each as a catalog. First, we select 20080616\_indiancreek, and then we select 20080618\_lightning. We export them to our laptop's desktop or to the external drive. We export first to the laptop or desktop and then duplicate the catalog to an external drive(s) as a backup (Figures 15.9A–C).



(A)



(B)



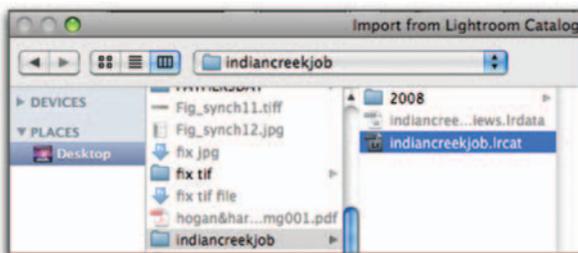
(C)

FIG 15.9 A&B&C Exporting a Catalog

- (9) We return to the studio/home and plug the external drive into our main computer. At this point, you can copy the exported catalog(s) and image files to your studio/home computer's desktop, or work off the external drive from location. In this demo, we moved the catalogs from the location laptop to our main desktop. We start Lightroom on the studio/home computer and choose from the Library Module File Menu > Import from Catalog. We navigate to our desktop where we have placed the indiancreekjob folder, which was altered in the field (Figures 15.10A and B).



(A)



(B)

FIG 15.10 A&B Importing a Catalog

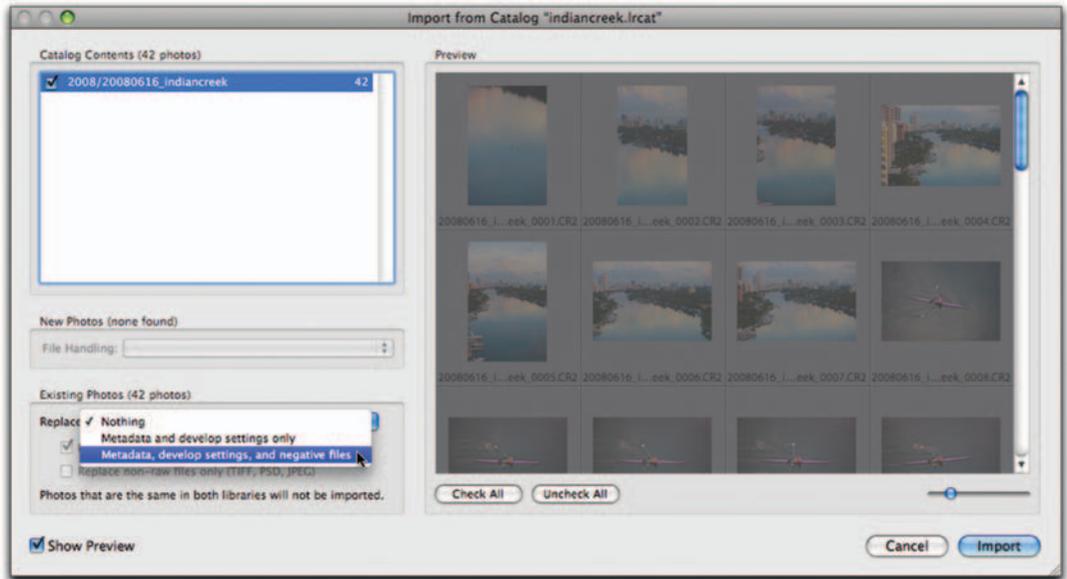


FIG 15.11 Import Catalog Choices

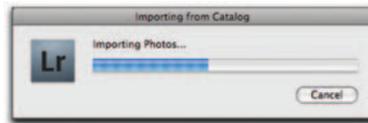


FIG 15.12 Import Progress Bar

- (10) Because these files exist on our studio/home computer, we get a dialog box asking us what we want to do. We choose to Replace Metadata, develop settings and negative files in order to update our catalog at home that we altered in the field (Figure 15.11).
- (11) The indiancreek images that we altered on the field laptop computer are imported and the existing images on our office/home computer updated (Figure 15.12).
- (12) We repeat this process, this time importing the lightning folder, which does not yet exist on our home/office computer. Notice that the Existing Photos dialog box is grayed out. Under File Handling, we choose Copy photos to a new location and add to catalog. We copy to the location, our Lightroom\_Library, where all of our image files live on our main computer (Figure 15.13).
- (13) The files from the lightningjob and the old indiancreekjob have been imported, and all material now on our main computer is up to date.

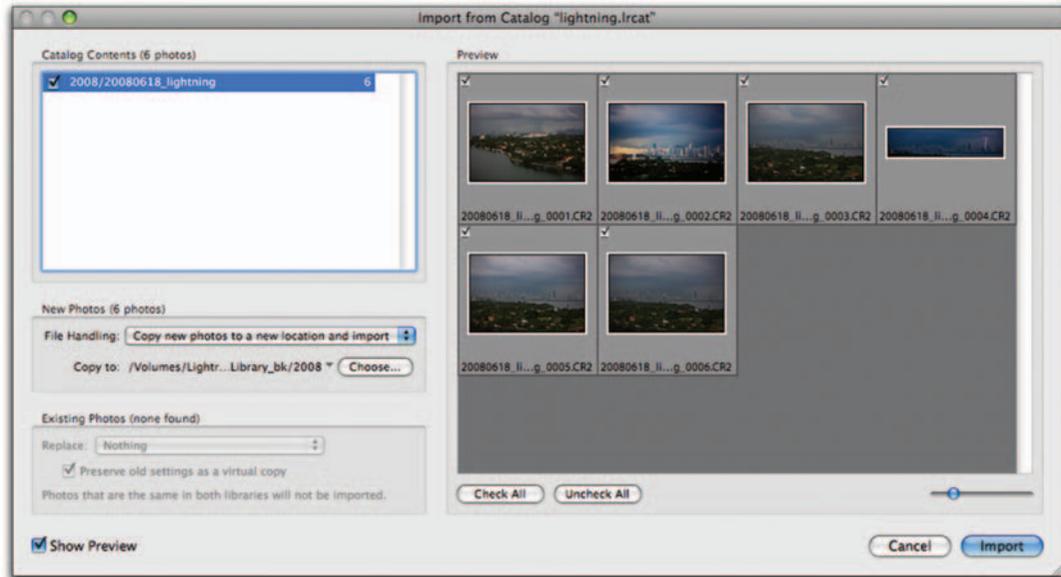


FIG 15.13 Import from Catalog settings

## Summary

You use Lightroom on a main computer and take a laptop on location. How you go about syncing the work done on your laptop on location to your main computer is a critical part of the workflow. There are several methods that will accomplish this task in Lightroom. The choice you make will be dependent on whether you are simply acquiring new information on location that you want to bring back to the main computer, or whether you are taking information from the main computer and working on that in the field and then syncing that information back to the main computer.

## Discussion Questions

- (1) Q. If you are just going on location and want to take a laptop and bring the new files you shot back to your main computer, is it necessary to export a catalog?
  - A. No, the easiest thing to do is make sure that the .xmp file is saved with the files on location and simply take the folder of images and .xmp and import to the main computer at home.

- (2) Q. When is exporting and importing a catalog a necessary step?
  - A. If you take information from the main computer and make additional changes to those files on location and then you want to merge the changed information back into the main catalog, it is necessary to export a catalog from one computer and import the catalog into the existing catalog on the other computer.