Exporting Files From *Adobe Lightroom*
For IACC Monthly and Annual Competitions
Updated October 1, 2017
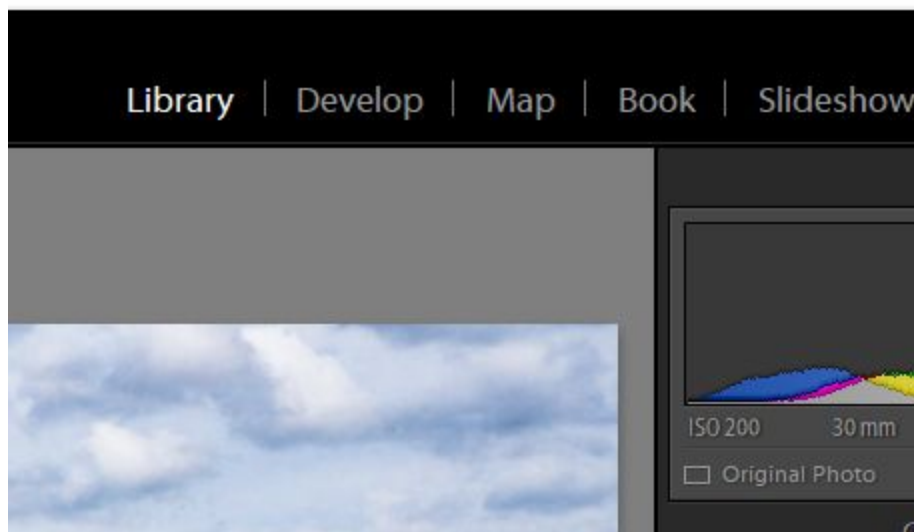By Ron Ross, for the IACC Competition Committee

Introduction

This is a guide to exporting images from your Lightroom catalogue for submission to IACC internal competitions. It assumes that you have Lightroom installed on your computer, and use it to manage and edit your images. Otherwise, it assumes only a very rudimentary knowledge of Lightroom. This document illustrates the process with Lightroom CC, but it should apply with only cosmetic changes to other versions.

Full details of the rules and current image specifications for IACC competitions are contained in the Competitions Manual posted on the IACC website. In case of conflict, that document supercedes any specification contained herein.

Procedure

1. Open Lightroom and **navigate to the image you wish to export.**
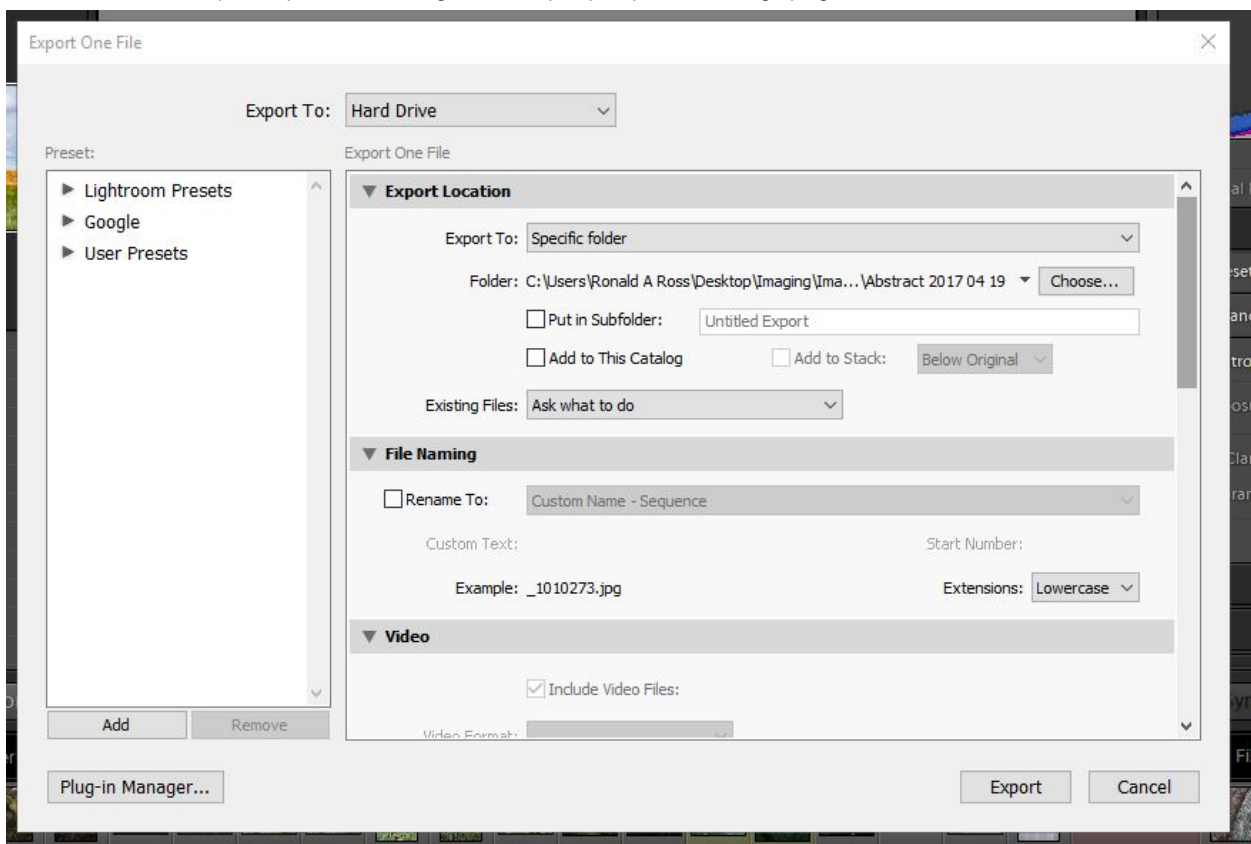
2. Make sure you are in the **Library Module.**

3. Click on the **Export** button on the lower left (also on File Menu).
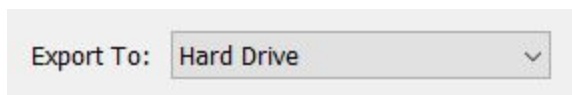

    a. The following dialogue box should appear. I'll work through it from the top down. The inner box on the left (**Preset:**) can be ignored. You can build a preset of your 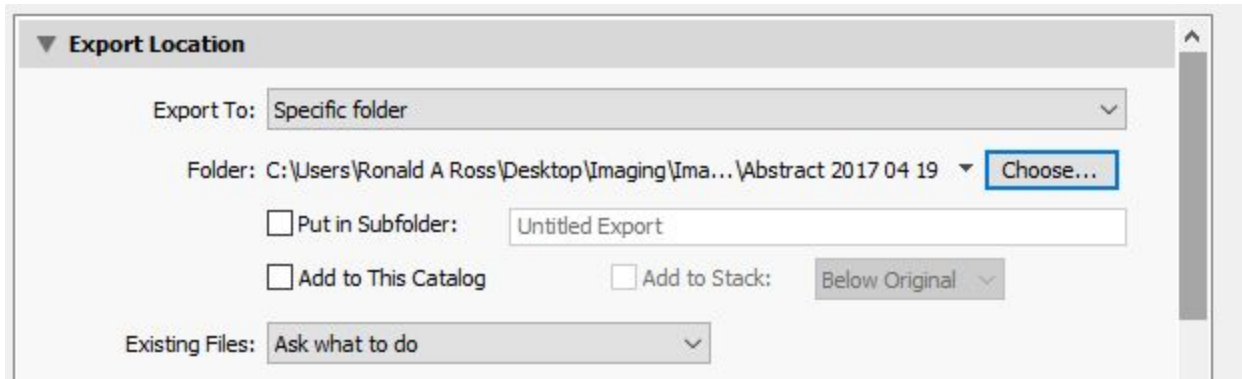own to automate this procedure. Here are instructions: https://helpx.adobe.com/lightroom/help/export-presets-settings-plug-ins.html

4. Make sure **Export to:** is set to Hard Drive.

5. **Export Location.**

a. First, you have to **Choose...** a destination (folder) for the file (blue outlined button). How you organize your folders is up to you. I have folders I use for competitions, SIGs, etc. This makes it easy to find exported files, and to see if I have already used an image for a SIG or for a competition.

b. You can ignore the two checkboxes for **Put in Subfolder:** and **Add to Catalogue** (leave them unchecked, as they are above).

6. **File Naming**

a. This is where a lot of problems occur, so I'm going to be thorough.

b. The **Rename To:** checkbox indicates whether or not you wish to rename your file. If you leave that box unchecked, Lightroom will export the file with its current name -- often one given by the camera, such as DSC_5045738.
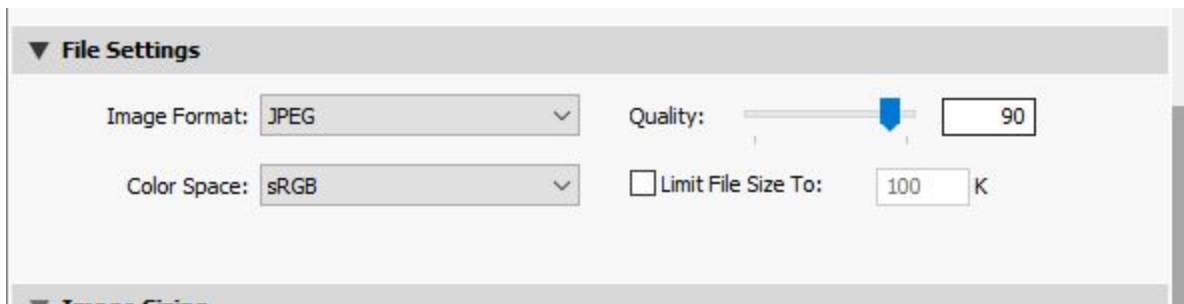

c. **I strongly recommend** checking the box, and picking **Custom Name** from the dropdown list. Give the file a descriptive name (like I have done above). This helps avoid errors when uploading files. Was DSC_5045738 or DSC_5054837 my themed digital entry?

d. **Important!** Our competition management software can only accept file names with letters (upper and/or lower case), numbers, underscores, and spaces. Avoid file names with punctuation, emojis, diacriticals, Futharc, etc.

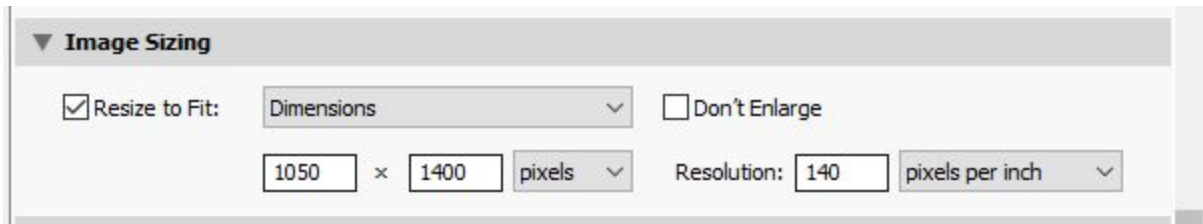e. The **Extensions:** dropdown in the lower right is irrelevant for us.

7. The **Video** section is even more irrelevant.

8. The **File Settings** box is very relevant!

a. **Image Format:** *must* be JPEG.

b. **Colour Space:** *should be* sRGB to produce the best results with our projector, and for viewing on the Internet. Other colour spaces are for printing or viewing on high-end monitors.

c. **Quality:** *should be* between 80 and 100%. I have found that 80 to 90% works well for our projector, if the starting image is a RAW file. If starting with a JPEG file choose 100% to avoid degradation.

d. **Limit File Size to:** should be irrelevant unless you have a really ludicrously big original. This might happen if you are using a medium format camera, have processed the file extensively in plugins such as Nik or DXO, and/or have a psd or tiff file as an original. If so, the next box is probably a better way to control the resize process.

9. **Image Sizing** is of less importance that it used to be for IACC competitions, but is critical for CAPA and PSA competitions.
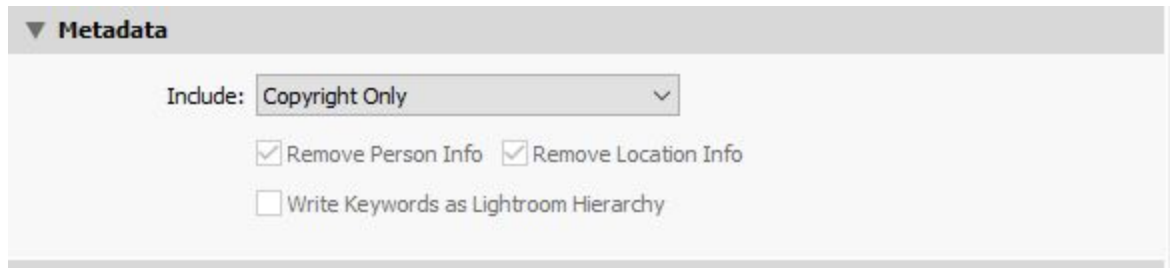

   a. If you wish to use this box, activate it using the **Resize to Fit:** checkbox. The dimensions in the illustration work well for IACC club competitions. It limits the amount of resampling (resizing by reducing or increasing number of pixels). Don't use anything smaller or your image will be small on the screen. *Note: Lightroom will not change your aspect ratio (image height to width ratio), but will fit your image* within *this box.*

   b. The pixel dimensions illustrated are mandatory for CAPA competitions. The ppi (pixels per inch) for CAPA can range from 72 to 300. Max file size is 1.8mb.

   c. **If this box is checked** make sure that the sizes chosen are reasonable! Very large values will result in huge files. I recommend that submitted digital images are a **maximum** of:
      i.   5000 pixels in any dimension
      ii. 24 inches/61cm in any dimension
      iii. 300 dpi/ppi

10. **Output Sharpening**.

   a. You can use or ignore this as you feel is appropriate. I use the settings above for competitions, but it is important to check the exported image in a file viewer to see how it looks. If you are already using a lot of sharpening, you may find you are better off without it. You should also consider how the image looks when shown on our projector. No two digital devices are the same. You may need to develop your own correction factor.

11. **Metadata**.

    a. We do not use the metadata, nor is it visible to the end users. Feel free to use any setting you wish. Setting it to Copyright Only (as above) helps keep file size down.

12. **Watermarking.**

    a. Make sure the **Watermark:** box is **Unchecked** (**!!!**) for IACC competition entries. Competition rules state that an image can contain no means of identifying the photographer, such as watermarks or signatures.

13. **Post-Processing.**

    a. This setting opens the file in Windows Explorer/MAC Finder for preview. You can also open directly in a viewer such as Faststone.

    b. You should always look at your images after export to make sure everything is OK. Is it the image/version you wanted? Can you find it again when you want to upload it? Is the colour/sharpness/resolution/contrast, etc. as you wanted it? Is the file size OK (check its properties)? Don't be afraid to adjust and re-export.