

# Good Principles of Digital Working

- Organising your files on your hard disk
- Transferring files from digital camera to computer
- Originals vs working files
- Backups

These notes are based upon the use of Photoshop Elements Version 3

Other versions of Photoshop and Elements have similar commands

Other editors such as Paint Shop Pro have similar facilities but detailed commands might vary

## Organising your files

Create a system to organise your files on your hard disk that is easy for *you* to work with - this could be by:

- Time (eg group by week or month)
- Subject or location
- Key words (attaching key words to files so that you can find them later)

System should cope with several versions of each file

- Keep your original files unaltered and at original size - create copies of altered or improved, or resized files alongside
  - only resize and sharpen before printing

*Make sure your system can cope with  
this in a way that suits you*

## Transferring files from digital camera to computer

Whether using USB lead connection or separate card reader:

- **Copy** the files from camera memory card to your hard disk rather than **move** them
  - provides added protection in case of accident
- Make sure that files have arrived safely and can be read *before* clearing memory card
- Clear the memory card by **formatting** it in the camera, rather than simply **deleting** files
  - over time this can help to ensure that memory card has no damaged or unreadable segments on it
  - less likelihood that card might one day freeze or similar

## Working files, not originals

- After placing files on your hard disk, keep the original unaltered
  - (this should happen anyway if you shoot in RAW)
- Delete rubbish to save space and effort
- When making changes to a file (in Photoshop or similar) save a copy immediately and work on that
- Save your working files as Photoshop (psd) files rather than jpeg
  - converting to jpeg makes changes that cannot be undone
  - if you need jpeg, save as psd and then create a jpeg copy alongside
  - repeated saving as jpeg degrades the image

# Backups

If you haven't yet lost files through a computer problem - you will!

- Backup your files frequently
  - this applies to all files, not just digital photographs
- Ideally, create a backup that is separate from the main computer hard disk
  - separate, stand-alone hard drives are relatively cheap
  - they usually come with built-in backup software
  - you can use Cdroms as a permanent backup but this can be time consuming and eventually expensive
  - for really important files, commercial photographers keep a separate backup at a different (building) location