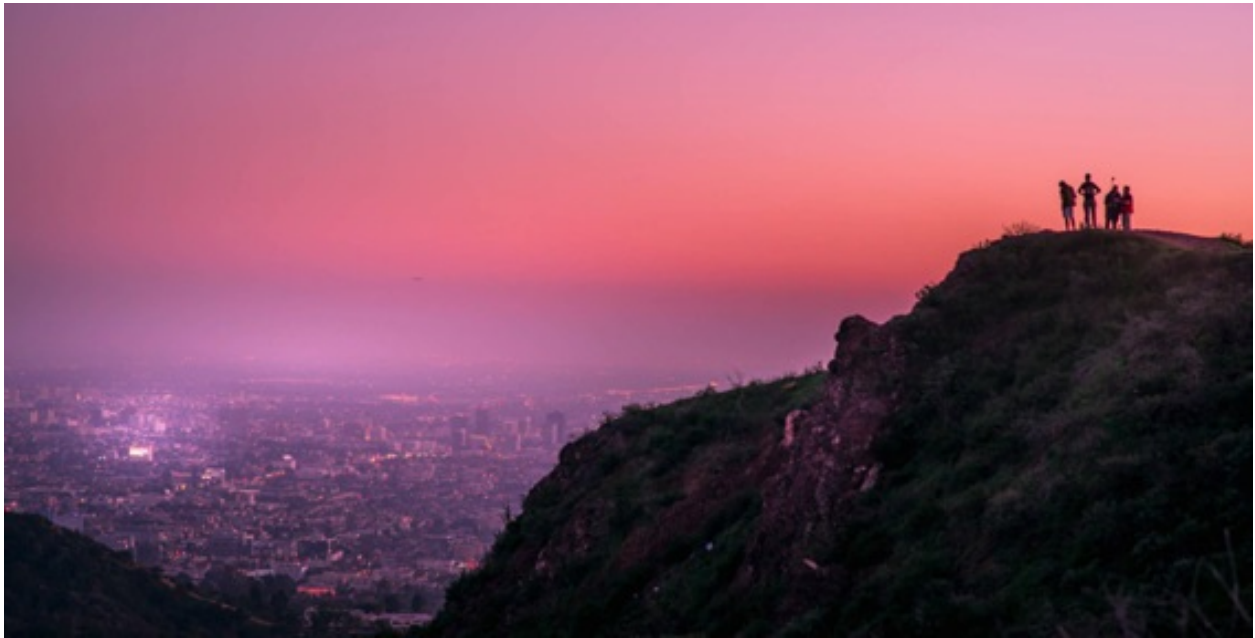


Chapter Two

Importing Getting Your Photos Into Lightroom



It goes without saying that to begin working on retouching your photos, you have to bring them into Lightroom. Many experienced Lightroom users take this for granted and have figured out their own work flow and ways to get their photos imported. But funnily enough, less than 25% of the people I have met who considered they knew Lightroom well actually knew all of the things that I consider vital as part of importing my images.

As I mentioned at the outset, this book is a delicate balance of trying to provide the right amount of information. Too little and readers can feel frustrated or cheated and too much and readers can also feel they are having unnecessary delays put in front of their desire to be Lightroom Masters of the Universe.

So I'm putting this information here so that people new to Lightroom know how to use it. Remember, you can always skip to the parts that most interest you, but if you run into a problem importing, don't forget that this info is here if you need it.

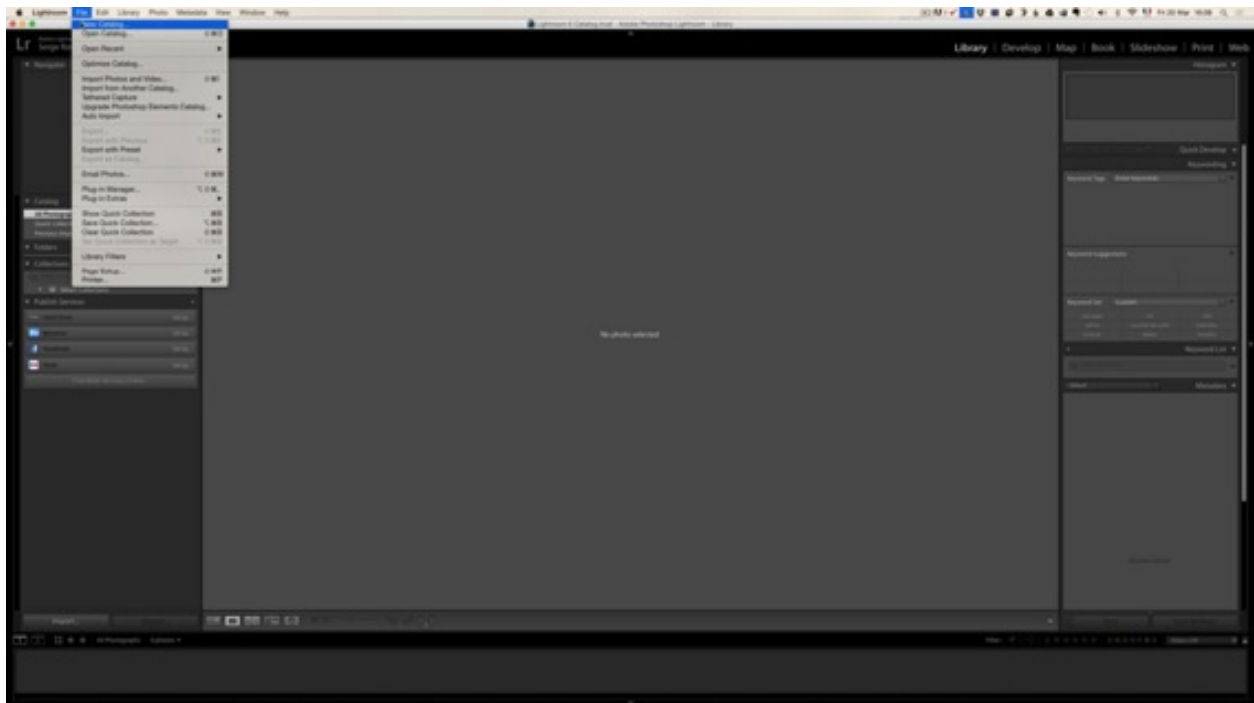
Creating Your Catalog

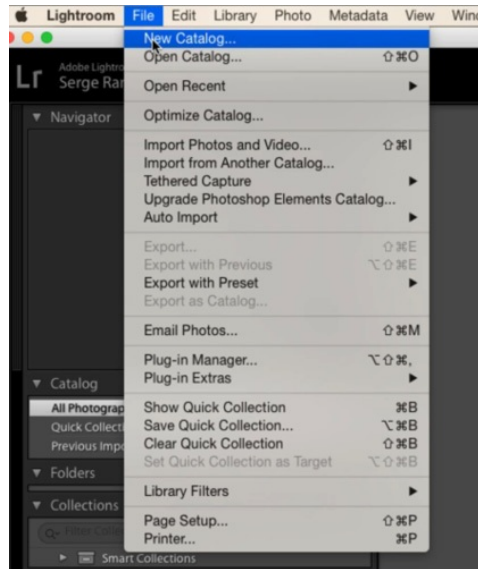
You are opening up Lightroom for the first time and by default what you have is what is called the default catalog. To be able to do anything at all in Lightroom, you have to have what is called a catalog.

A catalog is a place where you are going to reference all your photos and do all your retouching, prints, books, slideshows and so on. Everything comes from that catalog. It is the flagship that everything works from.

Step 1 - Create a new Catalog.

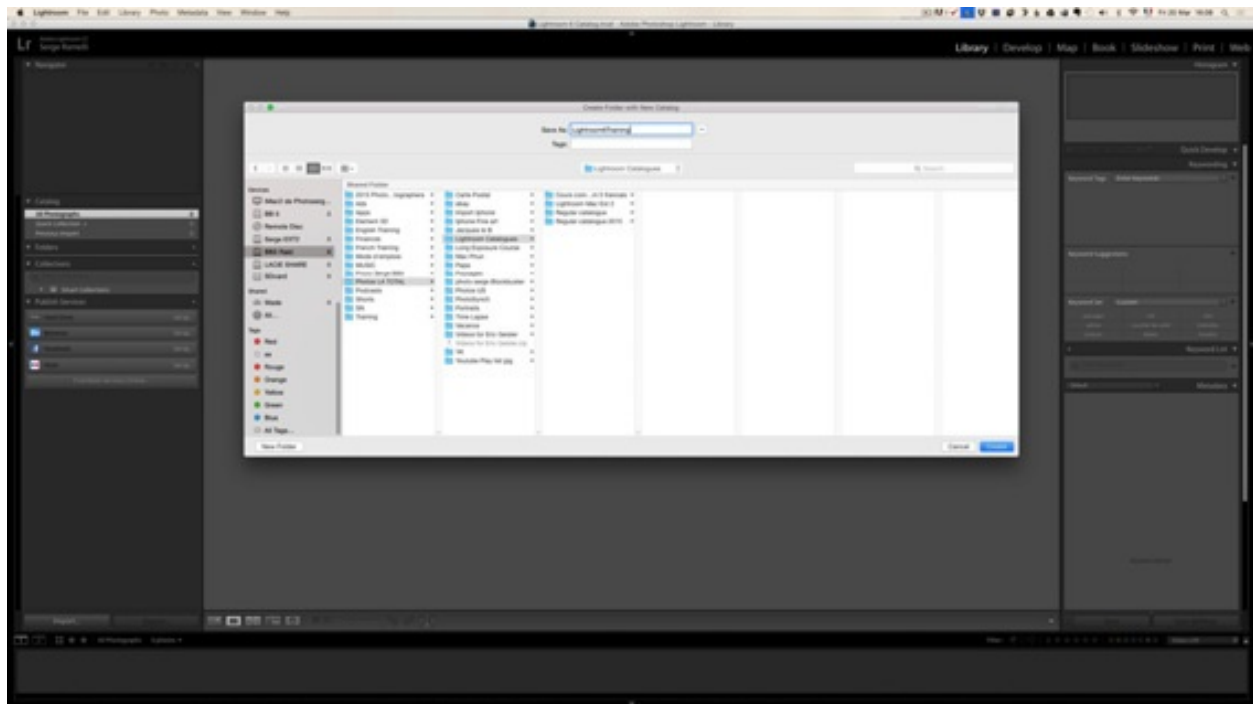
To begin we are going to create a new catalog. Choose the drop down menu for **File>New Catalog**.

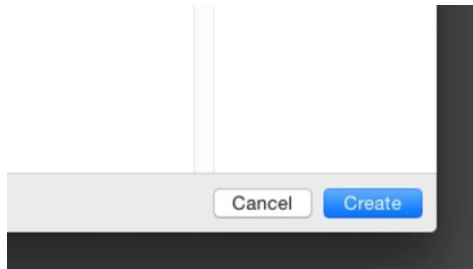




Step 2 - Save Your Catalog to a Location on Your Hard Drive.

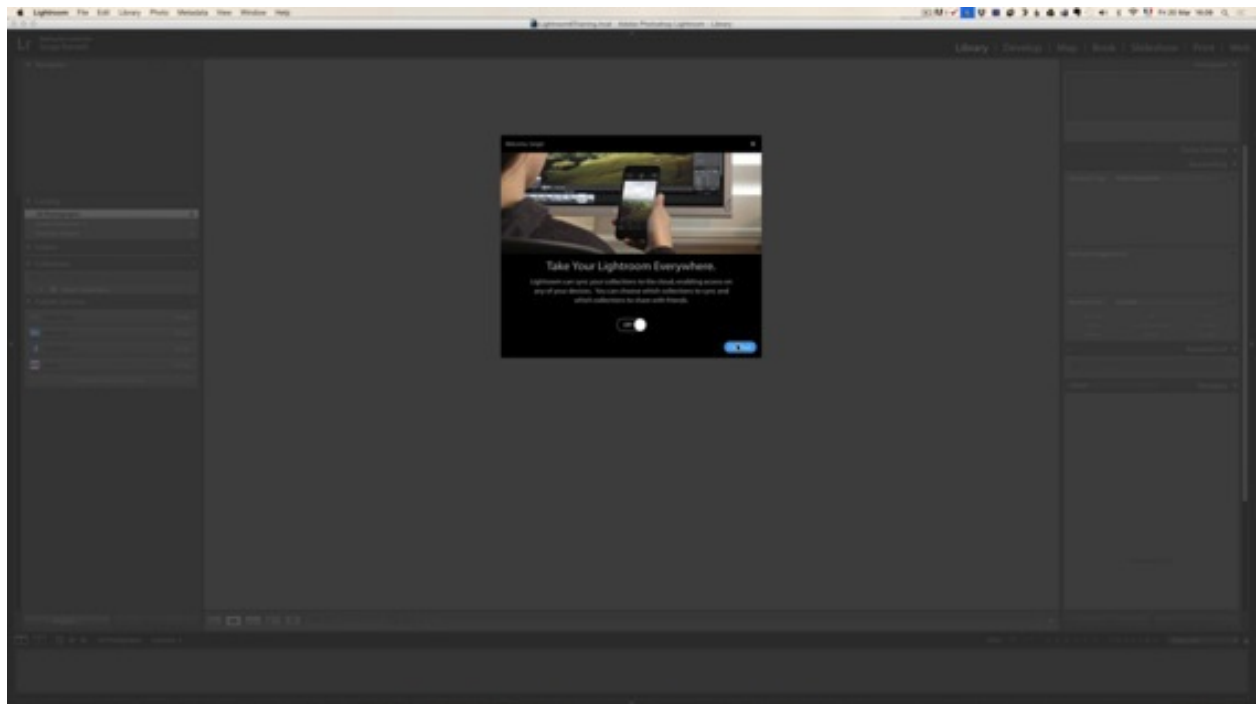
I need to create the Catalog somewhere on my hard drive so this is where I save it to somewhere on my hard drive. I choose the location and then click create.

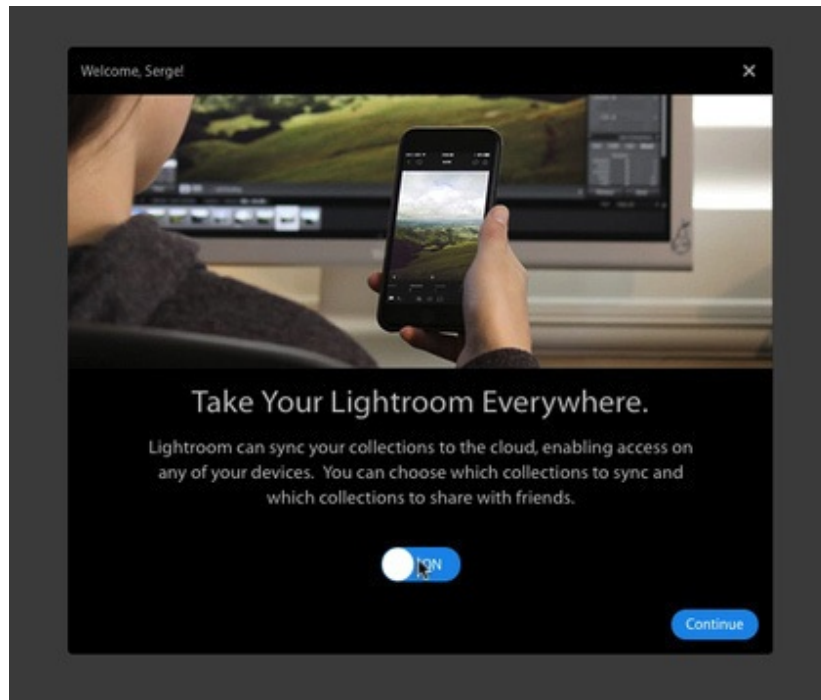




As a note, I almost always create this in a place where automatic backups are happening like a Dropbox or Google Drive folder. (You can find my suggested backup strategies in the Appendix.)

Lightroom then creates the catalog and welcomes you with an option to set your Lightroom up to link to the cloud so you have Lightroom Mobile syncing.





For the moment turn this off unless you already know how to use this feature. I will cover it later in a separate section in the Appendix.

But now you have a new catalog created. So let's get some photos into it!

Importing Photos from a Memory Card

Note: This section will be much more heavily detailed because I touch upon importing for the first time, the next section which tackles importing from a hard drive will race through the steps.

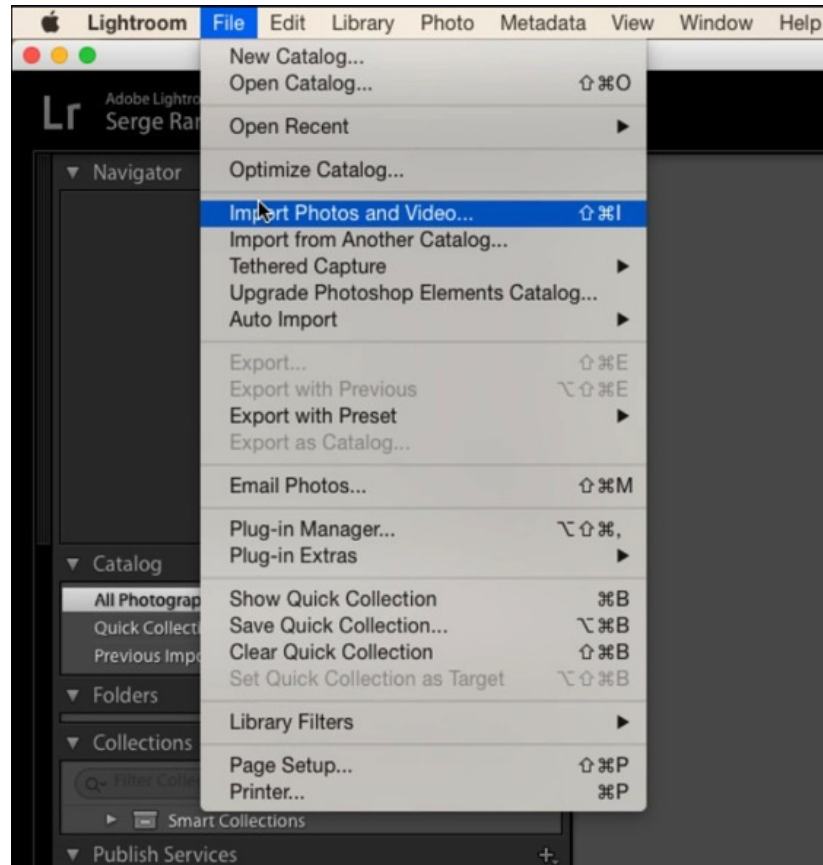
So the next thing you have to do is get images inside your Lightroom Catalog! A lot of the times you are going to be doing this straight from camera's memory card. So let's talk about how to do this.

Step 1. Put the Camera Card in the reader.

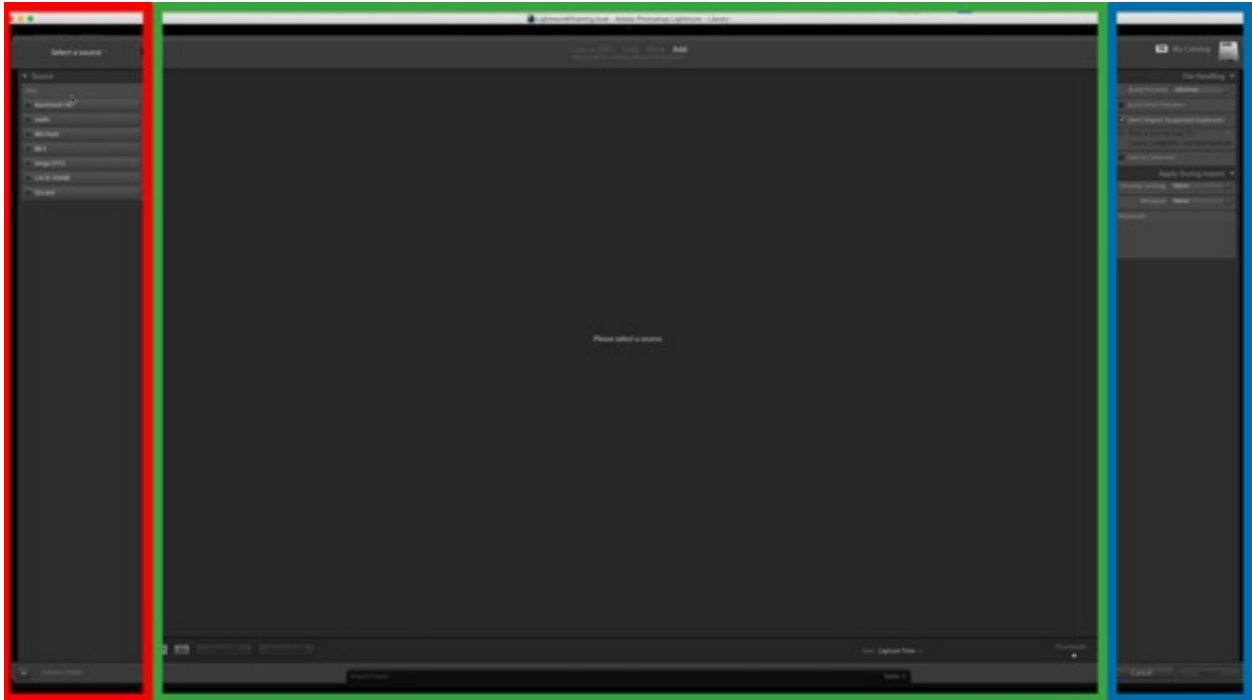
Obviously super obvious, this is my way of saying "Did you turn it off and turn it on again?" My point is to actually make sure that your card is recognized by the computer. In case you open Lightroom and your card isn't showing up, don't assume that there is a problem with Lightroom. Check your card to see if it needs to be reseated. If Lightroom is open, and you've plugged in a memory card, more than likely unless you've changed some settings previously, the Import module will open. In case it doesn't, you can manually choose to import.

Step 2. Select Import Photos.

Choose from the drop down menu **File>Import Photos and Videos.** (Shift-Command-I)



This will open the **Import Photo and Video Module**. As a rapid overview, there are three main areas of the import module.



Left Side: (Red Box) This shows you where the photos are coming from.

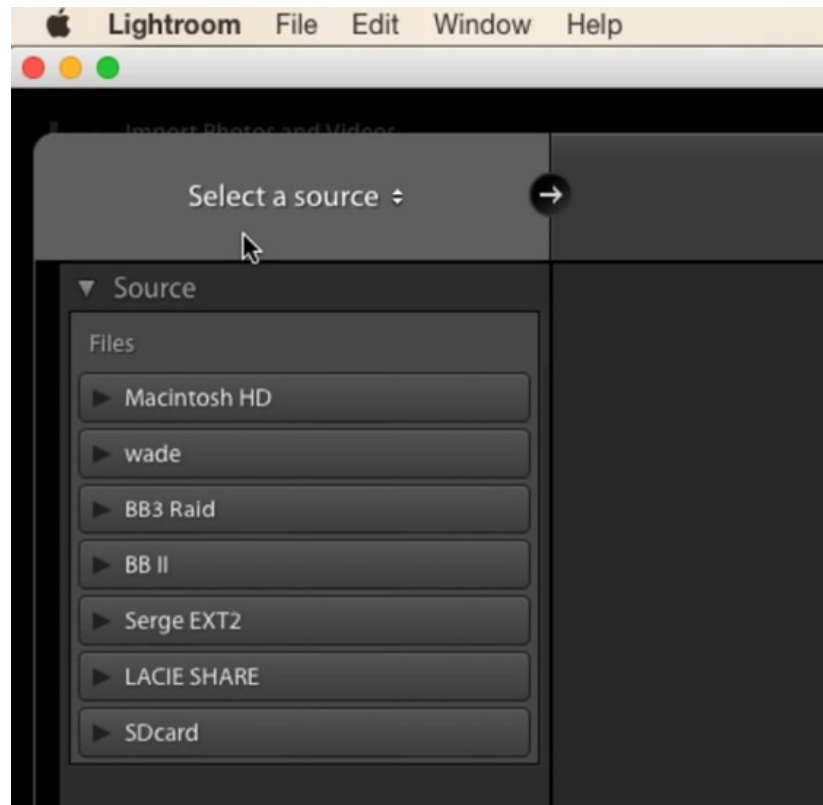
Middle: (Green Box) This shows what the photos are for import and how they are to be copied.

Right Side: (Blue Box) And this shows you where the photos are going and how they are to be handled.

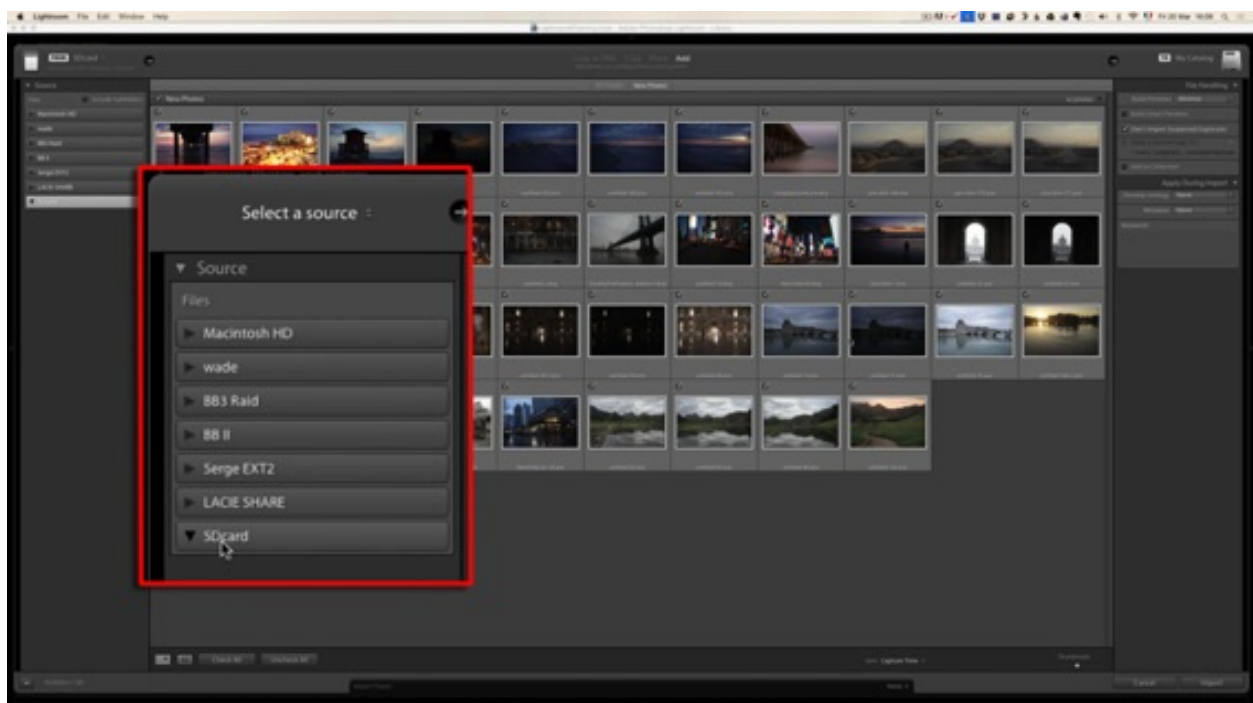
The sequence of working in this module is left to right and begins by choosing where the photos are coming from.

Step 3. Select A Source.

In the top right the module gives you the option to select what source you are importing from. If you click on “**Select a Source**” directly it will open a dropdown showing recent selections and common folder areas such as Desktop, Pictures and Movies.

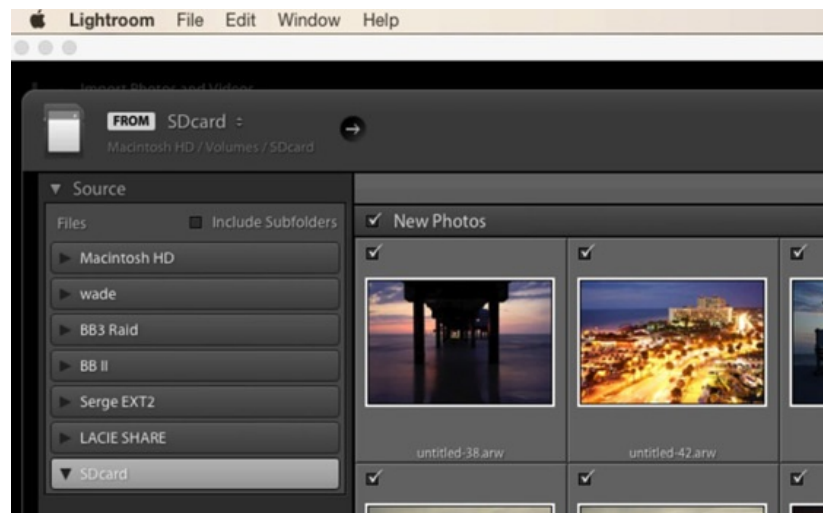


Beneath the Select a Source dropdown you will see a tab labeled “**Source**” and if you click on the triangle to expand this it will show any hard drives connected as well as any cards connected. Go ahead and select your SD card, compact flash or whatever memory card you have connected.

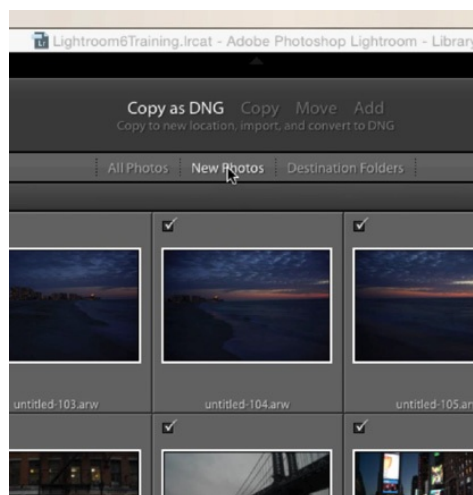


Step 4. Select What Photos to Import.

Every photo on the card is going to show up on the screen with a check box in the top corner. You can choose whichever photos you want to import by individually checking them or select them all at once.



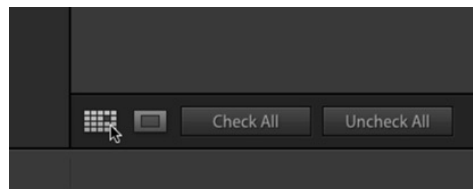
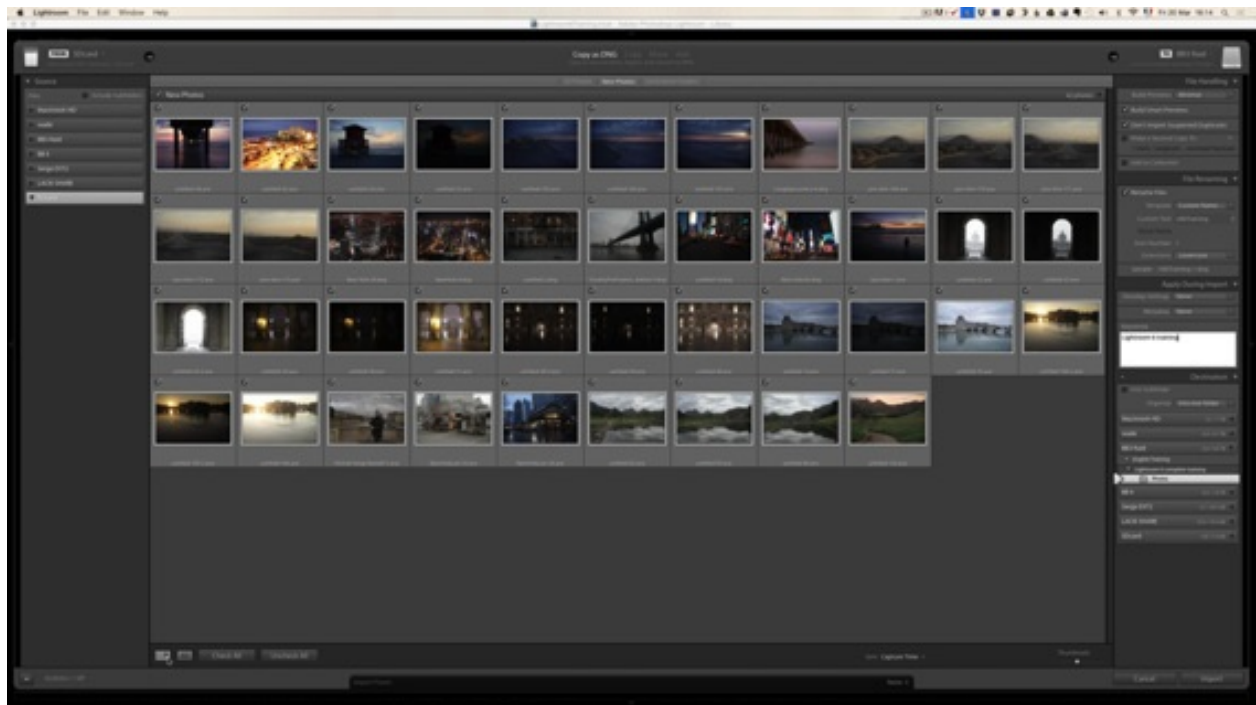
At the top of the photos, you will see three grouping options to help you rapidly select the photos you want: **All Photos**, **New Photos**, **Destination Folders**. All Photos will show all the photos in the selected Source location. New Photos will display only the photos which Lightroom detects have not been imported before and exclude suspected duplicates.



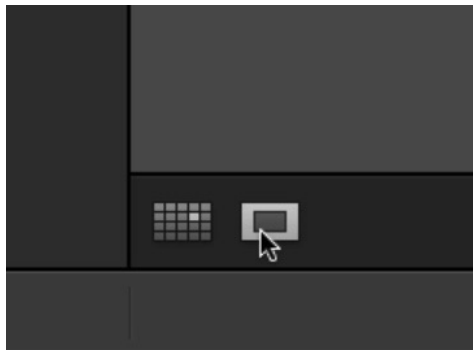
The Destination Folders option displays the photos as groups based on how your Destination settings have been configured, for example: by date.

Hint: Grid View vs Loupe View

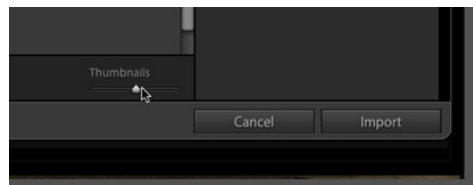
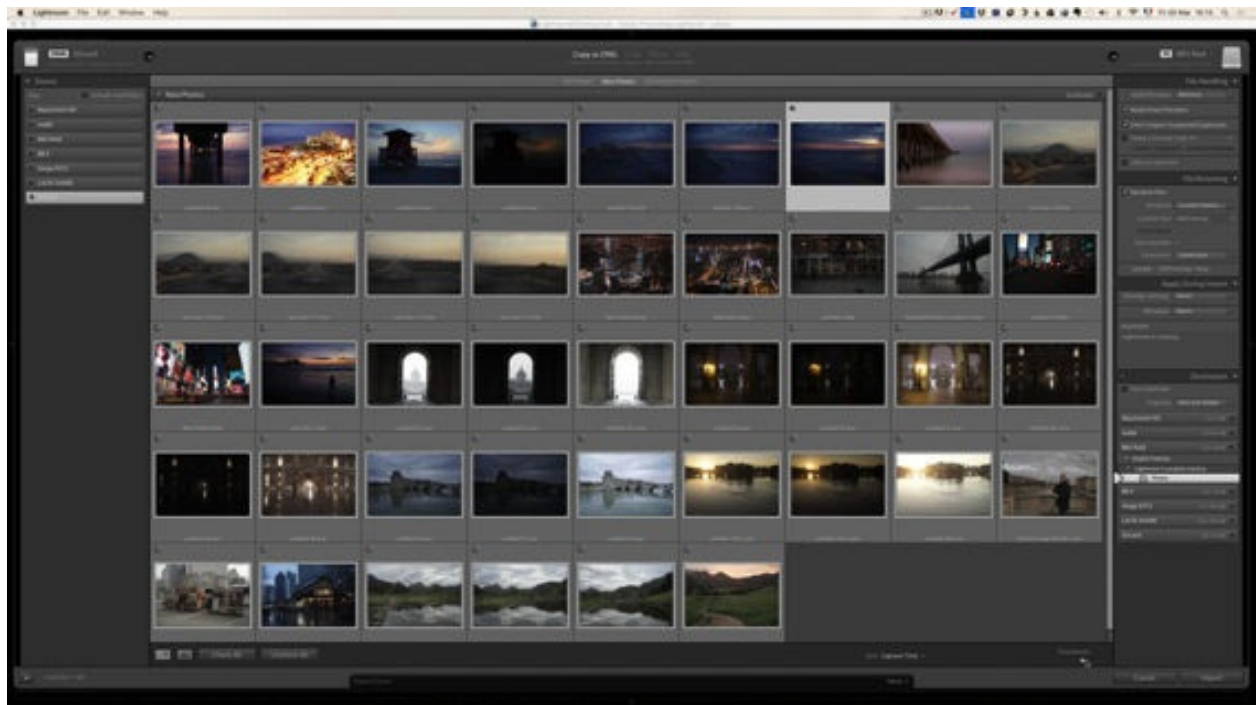
There are two different main viewing options in the Import Module (these are available in other modules as well): Grid View



or Loupe View.

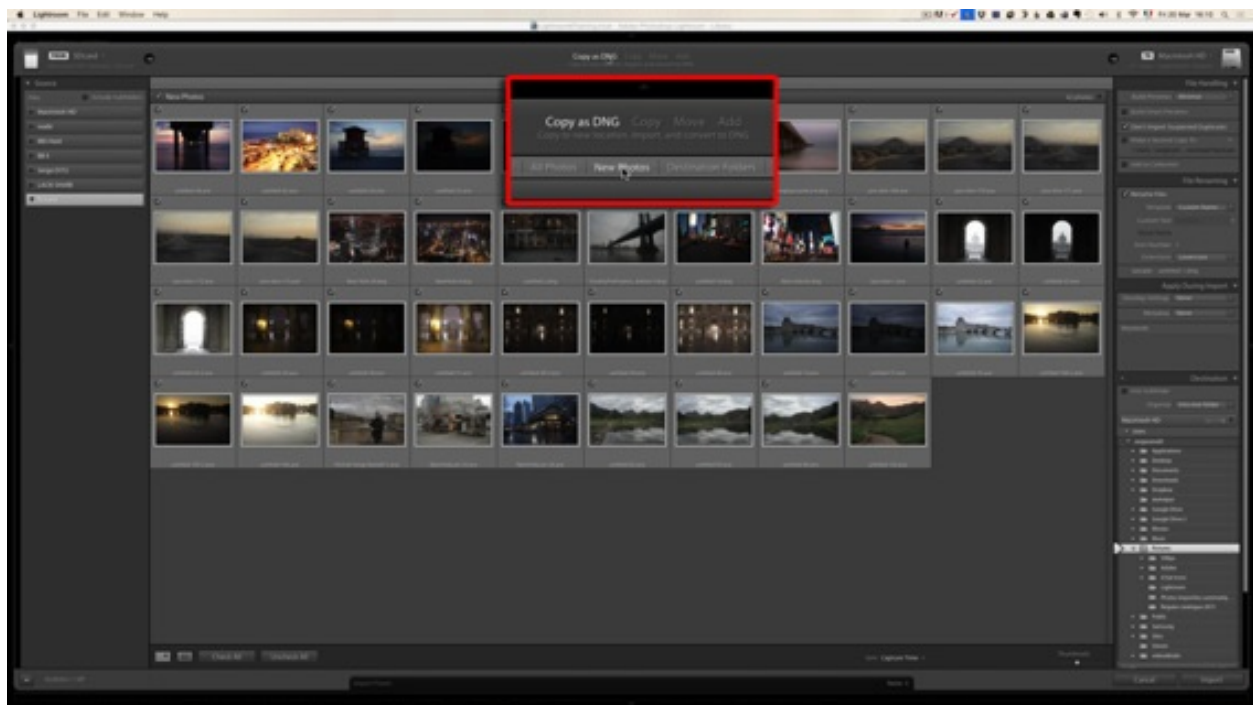


You can also adjust the thumbnail sizes in Grid view using the small slider on the bottom right.



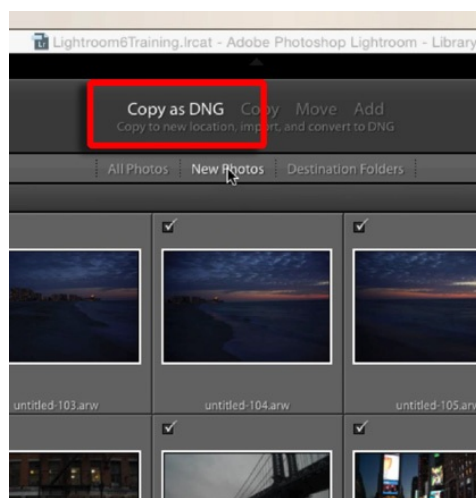
Step 5. Choose How to Import Your Selected Photos

You have four options at the top of the import module: “**Copy as DNG**,” “**Copy**,” “**Move**” and “**Add**.”

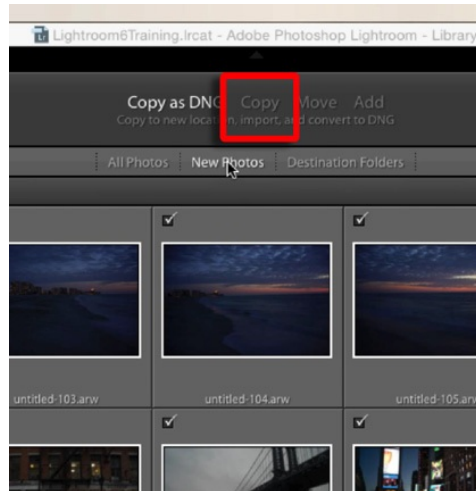


It's important to decide which of the four import options to use.

Now, If you choose “**Copy as DNG**,” it's going to convert whatever the format of how the camera took the photo and make them into DNG files. DNG stands for Digital NeGative and is Adobe's open-source RAW file format.



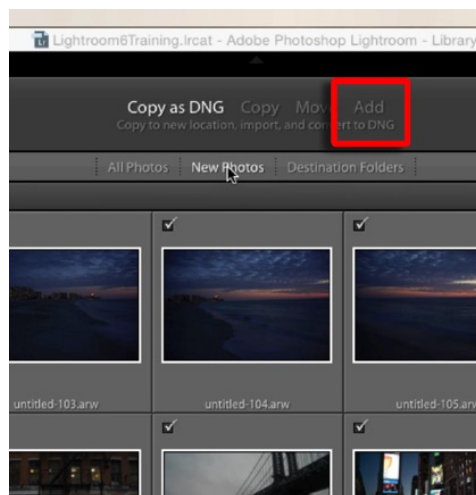
As an example, some of my RAW files here carry the Sony .arw file extension and others have the Canon .crw extension. These are all RAW formats but choosing the copy as DNG option will copy the photos to the folder of your choice and convert them to the Digital Negative format, DNG.



If you choose the option called “**Copy**,” it is going to copy over the files in whatever format that they already are to the location of your choosing on the computer including any additional files.

The “**Move**” option allows you to move the photo files from the folder to another location of your choice on your hard drive. **The files will be removed from their current location.**

The “**Add**” option links the photos into your Lightroom Catalog but leaves the actual files in their current location. So you would be able to see them in Lightroom, but if you unplug your SD card, the links to them will be broken.



This obviously isn’t a great choice to make when your photos are only on removable media (like an SD or Compact Flash card) however if it’s on a hard drive that you already have organized up and you don’t want them converted into a DNG, this is a useful option.

So which one should you choose? Well for a memory card where I’m importing

new photos I almost always recommend the **Copy to DNG** method. Why? Because I need the folders brought in and I prefer the DNG format. Here are a few key reasons why I like it:

A. The files are about 20% smaller than the regular RAW file format.

B. It's the most future-proof RAW format that currently exists.

C. All the corrections done on the image get embedded in the metadata of the file without the necessity of additional attachment files.

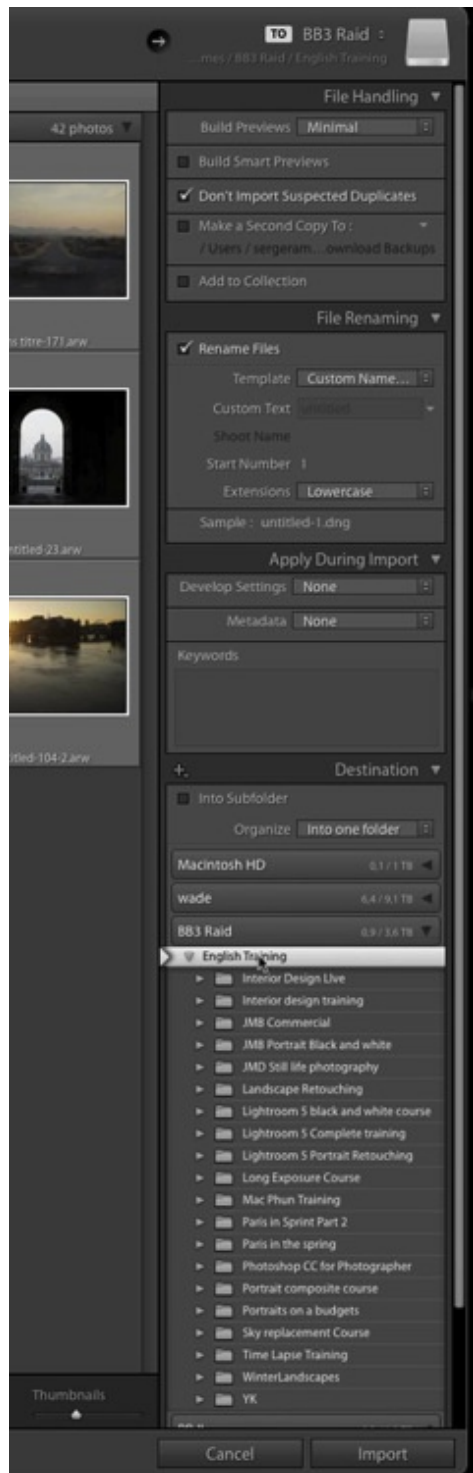
Metadata definition: additional information that is captured when a photograph is taken such as camera type, sensor type, date, lens, location, ISO, shutter speed, etc...

D. It can detect when the file is corrupted.

Perhaps you have different needs or an already established workflow with your camera's specific RAW format, but if you are on the fence as to whether or not you should use DNG, I strongly recommend it.

Step 6. Choose the Destination Folder to Copy Your Photos to.

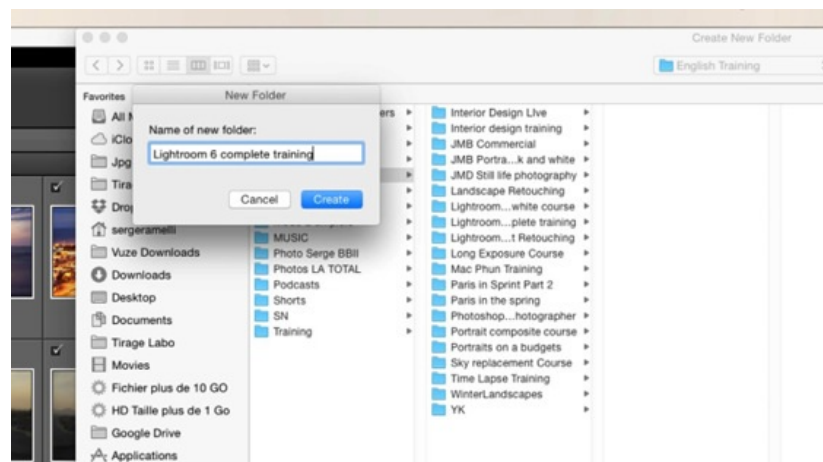
In the lower right of the Lightroom screen you will see a tab labeled "**Destination**." Selecting one of the hard drives shown there will open up the file directory in that drive.



If you already have a folder created you can simply select it. Otherwise right click in the parent folder of your choice and choose “**Create New Folder.**”



This will open up a window where you can name your new folder and create sub-folders as desired.



Once you are done, go ahead and select the “**Choose**” button at the bottom of the open file directory window to set that new folder as the Import Location.

Step 7. Optional Settings: Build Smart Previews.

Have a look at the top right of the Import module and you will see the “**File Handling**” tab and within this a check box for “**Build Smart Previews**” and this is important to consider.

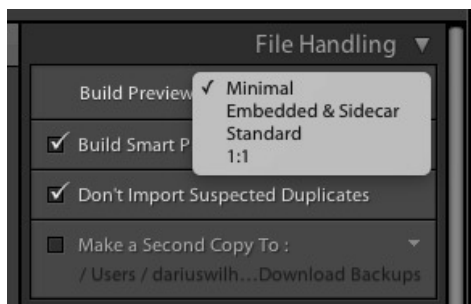


What is a smart preview you ask?

Smart Previews were introduced in Lightroom 5. They are a smaller copy of a photo that has been resized so the longest edge measures about 2500 pixels. They are about 2 megabytes each and give you the possibility of retouching your photos inside of Lightroom even if the hard drive that has the master photo files isn't connected to your computer. This can be very convenient especially when traveling because you can do all changes that you would do on the original file and Lightroom automatically syncs any changes made as soon as you reconnect the drive with your master photos.

There is a drop down menu with four choices (**Minimal**, **Embedded & Sidecar**, **Standard** and **1:1**), as you move down the list, each option progressively takes longer to create and takes up more space.

I usually choose to have Smart Previews and select the **Minimal** setting.

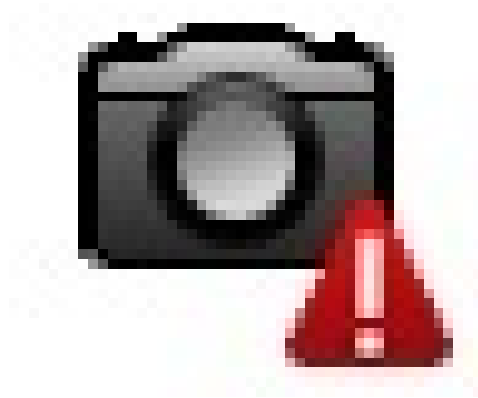


If you find you need larger previews for some reason you can always go back and create these later.

Step 8. Optional Settings: Don't Import Suspected Duplicates.

Inside the **"File Handling"** tab you will see a check box for **"Don't Import Suspected Duplicates."** This pretty much does what it says and it's good to

select it especially if you aren't super strict about formatting your memory cards between uses.



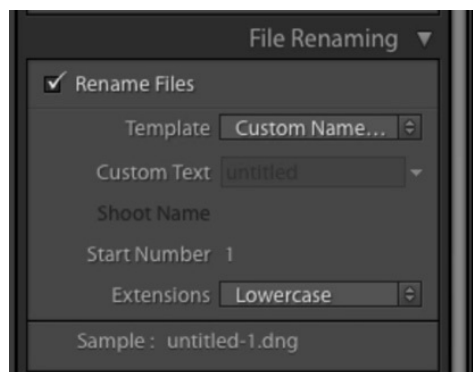
While we are here, you can also see two other options, “**Make a Second Copy To:**” which is useful if you want to copy it to your backup drive at the same time.

And then “Add to Collection” which is useful to add new photos directly into a collection you already have.

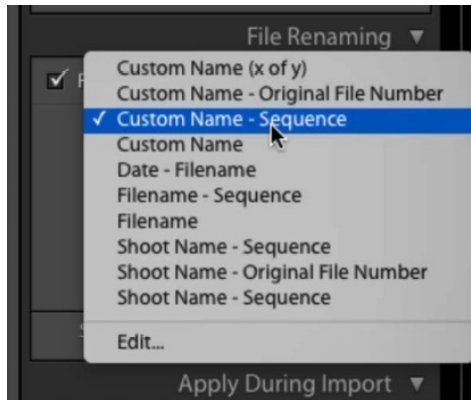
Step 9. Optional Settings: File Renaming.

By default, all cameras create a simple file directory so that all your photos are labeled IMG2341, IMG2342, *etc.*

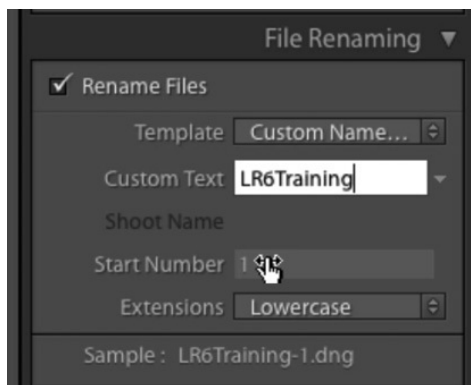
But let's say you want these photo files renamed “Uncle Charlie Birthday Bonanza,” the good news is that you don't have to rename each one by hand. Go inside the “**File Renaming**” tab you will see a check box for “**Rename File.**”



The drop down will reveal 11 different options and you can pick whichever suits your needs the best.

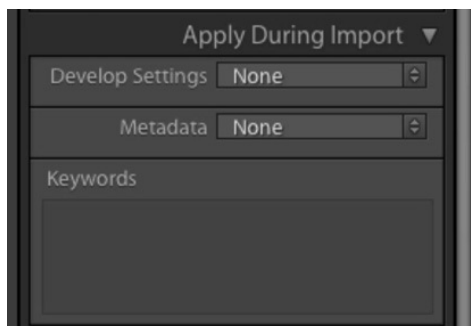


Each of the settings is pretty self-explanatory. In this instance I'll be using a **Custom Name - Sequence**. And I choose LR6Training. So they will be called LR6Training1, LR6Training2 and so on.

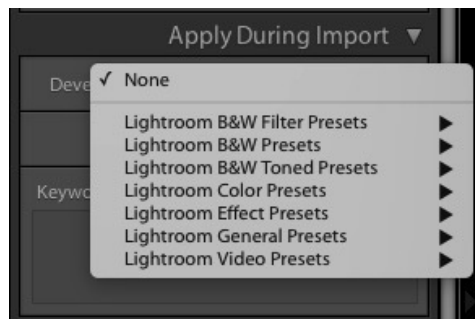


Step 10. Optional Settings: Apply During Import.

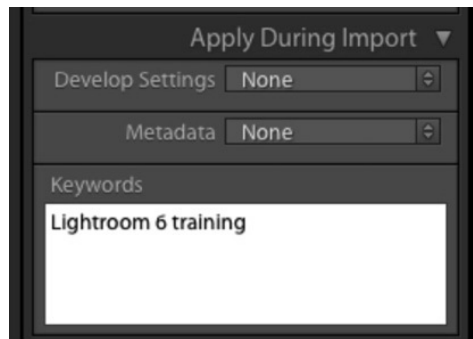
One last tab to talk about here is the “Apply During Import” tab.



Directly from this you can apply look presets to your folder,



And add keywords



And add default metadata (such as author, copyright, etc.).

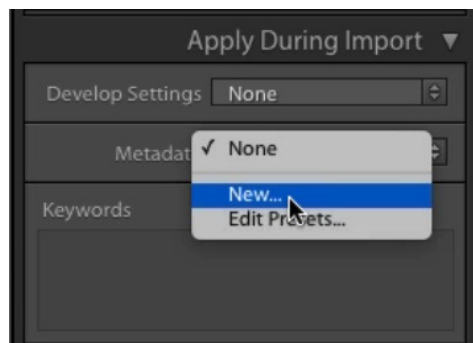
Keywords allow you to search for these photos later, eg if you typed in the keywords “Paris in Spring 2015” you could then search for that inside Lightroom and it would pull up all photos with those keywords. This is so crucial that I will cover this in full detail in it’s own section. For now let’s talk about another import option that I consider vital.

Step 11. Embed Your Copyright Metadata.

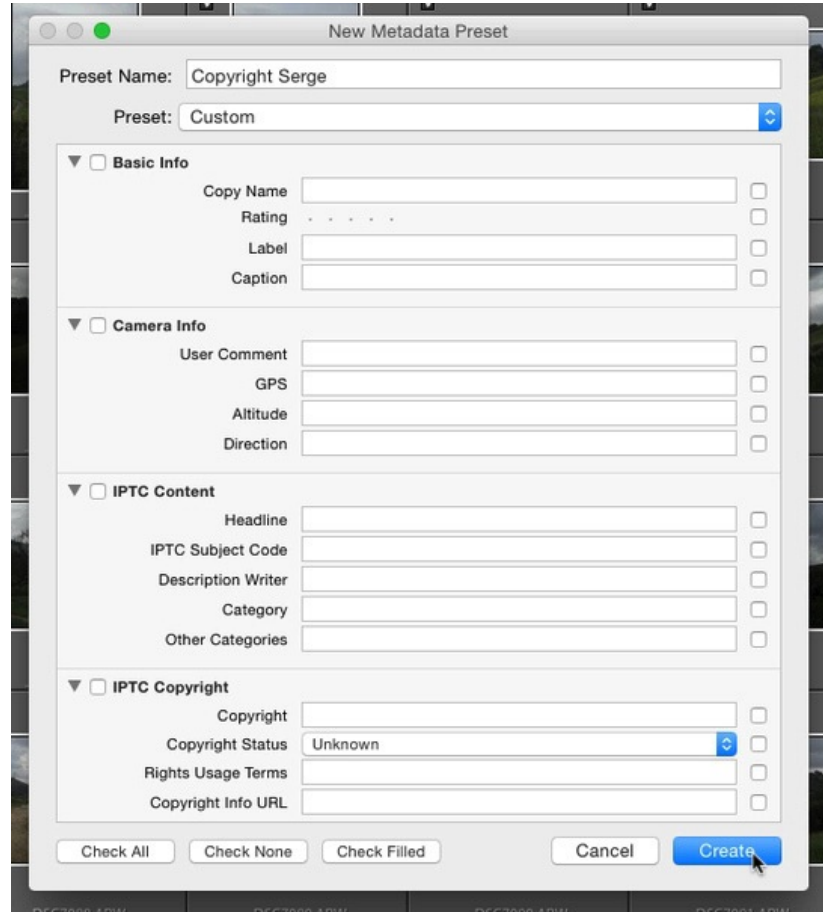
We live in a digital age where theft and violation of photographer’s copyright has become almost passe.

But this is how we make our living and sometimes we spent a lot of time, money and hard work to get our photos and if our photos are to be used, they should always be used with our permission. We might not care if a child doing a school report uses our photos for his class summary, but when a business is suddenly displaying your photos on their website without permission, well, you want to be protected against such intellectual property theft. Lightroom can help and as a matter of ritual you should embed copyright data every time you import.

In the Apply During Import tab choose **Metadata>New...**



An info box will open. Fill in the name of your preset and go ahead and fill out as much information as you want, but minimally the copyright section, your name, address, website and a way for people to contact you. When you are done click **Create**.

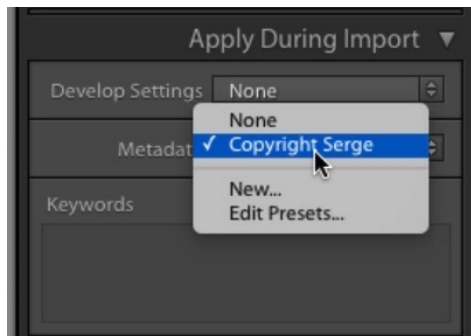


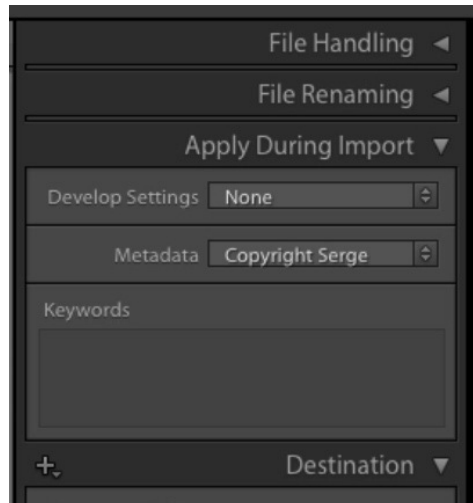
The screenshot shows the 'New Metadata Preset' dialog box. At the top, the 'Preset Name' field is filled with 'Copyright Serge'. Below it, the 'Preset' dropdown menu is set to 'Custom'. The dialog is organized into several sections, each with a collapsed arrow icon and a checkbox:

- Basic Info**: Contains fields for 'Copy Name', 'Rating' (with a star icon), 'Label', and 'Caption'. Each field has a corresponding checkbox on the right.
- Camera Info**: Contains fields for 'User Comment', 'GPS', 'Altitude', and 'Direction'. Each field has a corresponding checkbox on the right.
- IPTC Content**: Contains fields for 'Headline', 'IPTC Subject Code', 'Description Writer', 'Category', and 'Other Categories'. Each field has a corresponding checkbox on the right.
- IPTC Copyright**: Contains fields for 'Copyright', 'Copyright Status' (set to 'Unknown'), 'Rights Usage Terms', and 'Copyright Info URL'. Each field has a corresponding checkbox on the right.

At the bottom of the dialog, there are three buttons: 'Check All', 'Check None', and 'Check Filled'. To the right of these are 'Cancel' and 'Create' buttons. A mouse cursor is pointing at the 'Create' button.

You can now select that metadata preset from the drop down and Lightroom will embed the information into the photo upon import.



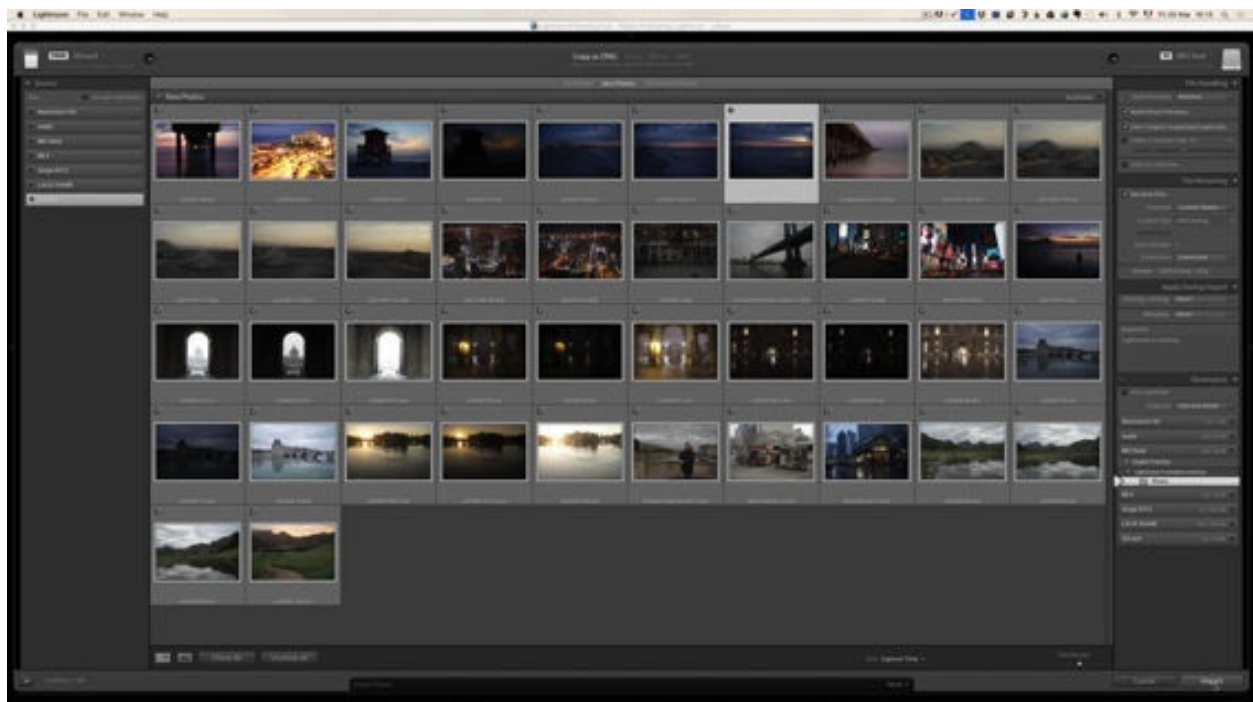


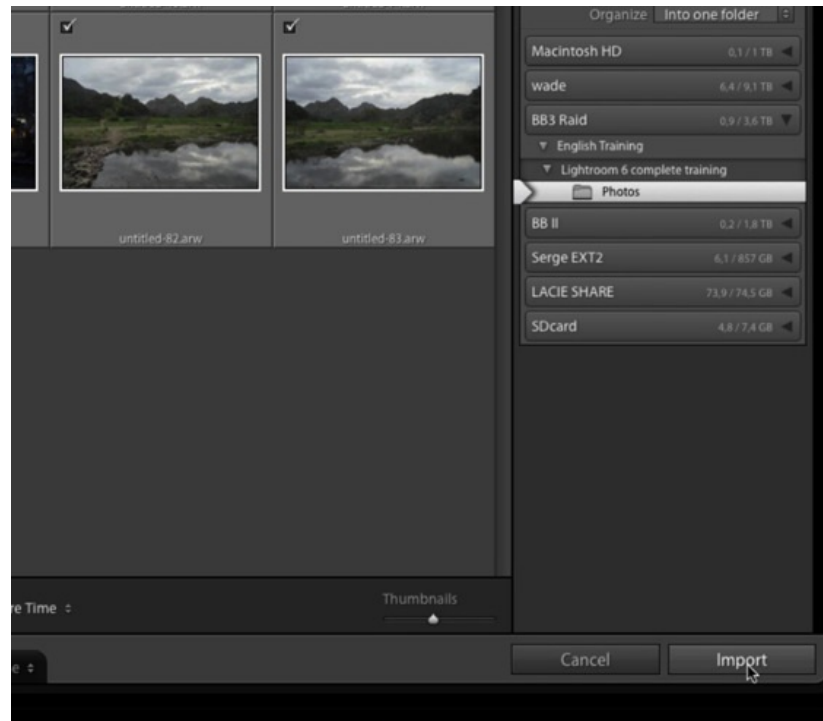
The great thing is that it's hidden and many times when someone is stealing your photo they do not remember to erase the metadata and you can use this to help prove that it is yours in case it becomes a legal matter.

And on the positive side of things, search engines will use this data to index your photos on the web.

Step 12. Click Import.

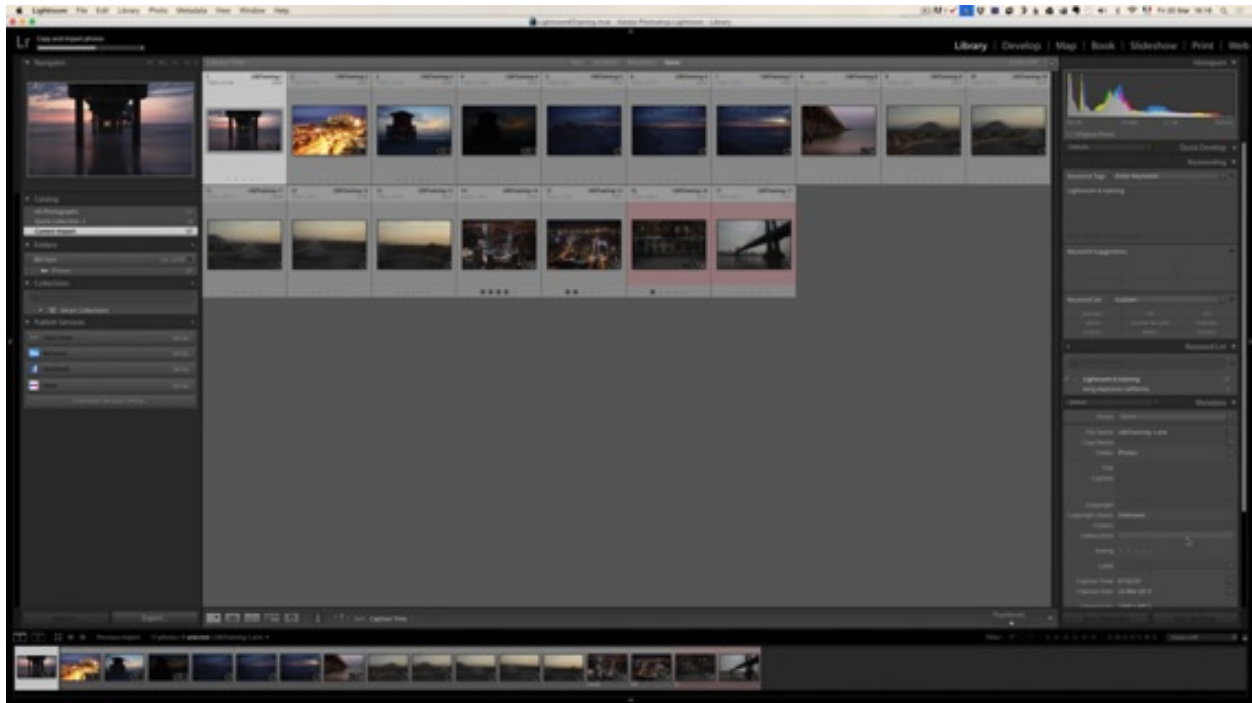
Go ahead and click that import button and watch the magic happen.





With the click of one button Lightroom is now moving the files from your memory card to your hard drive, converting them into DNGs, creating Smart Previews, renaming the files and assigning keywords along with any other options you selected.

Depending on how many photos you are importing and how many options you selected to be applied during import, this will either take a long or a short amount of time. And then it will open up the Library Module which will look something like this:



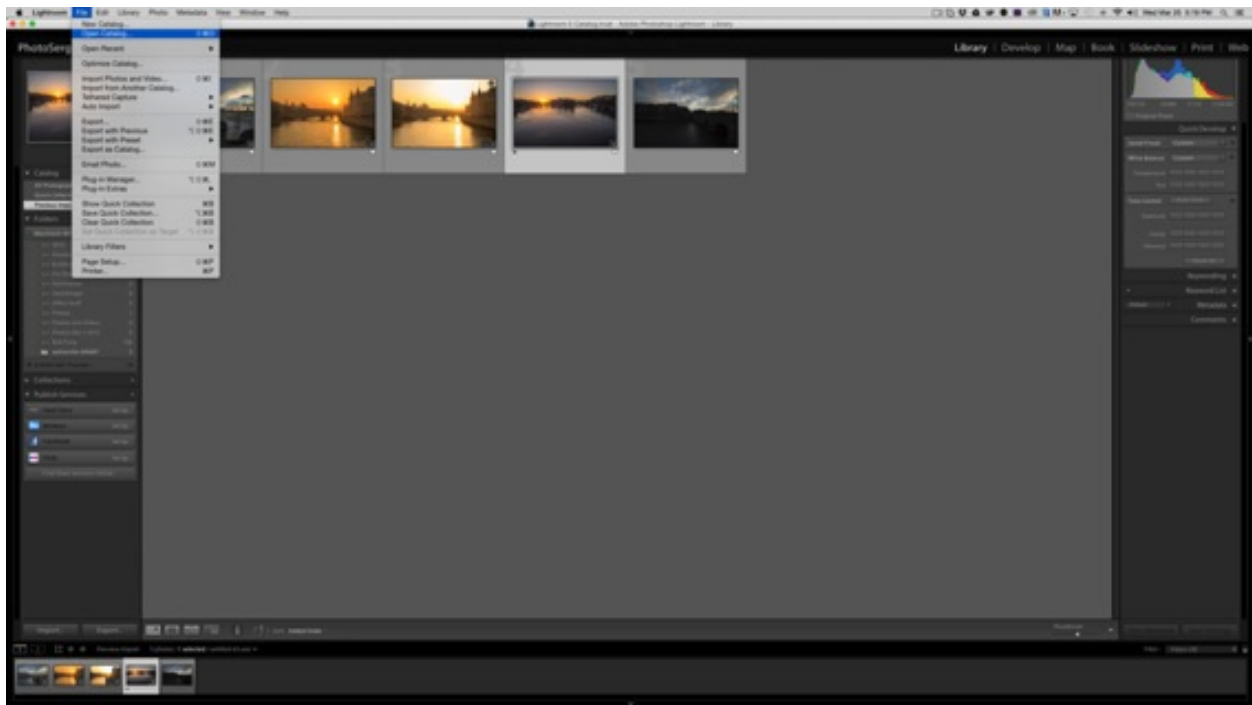
Importing Photos From Hard Drives

When you've already got hard drives full of photos that you want to bring into Lightroom very fast to start retouching and don't want to convert them to DNG (or they are already DNGs) you can quickly import them using the Add method we spoke of in the last Section.

Step 1 - Load a Catalog

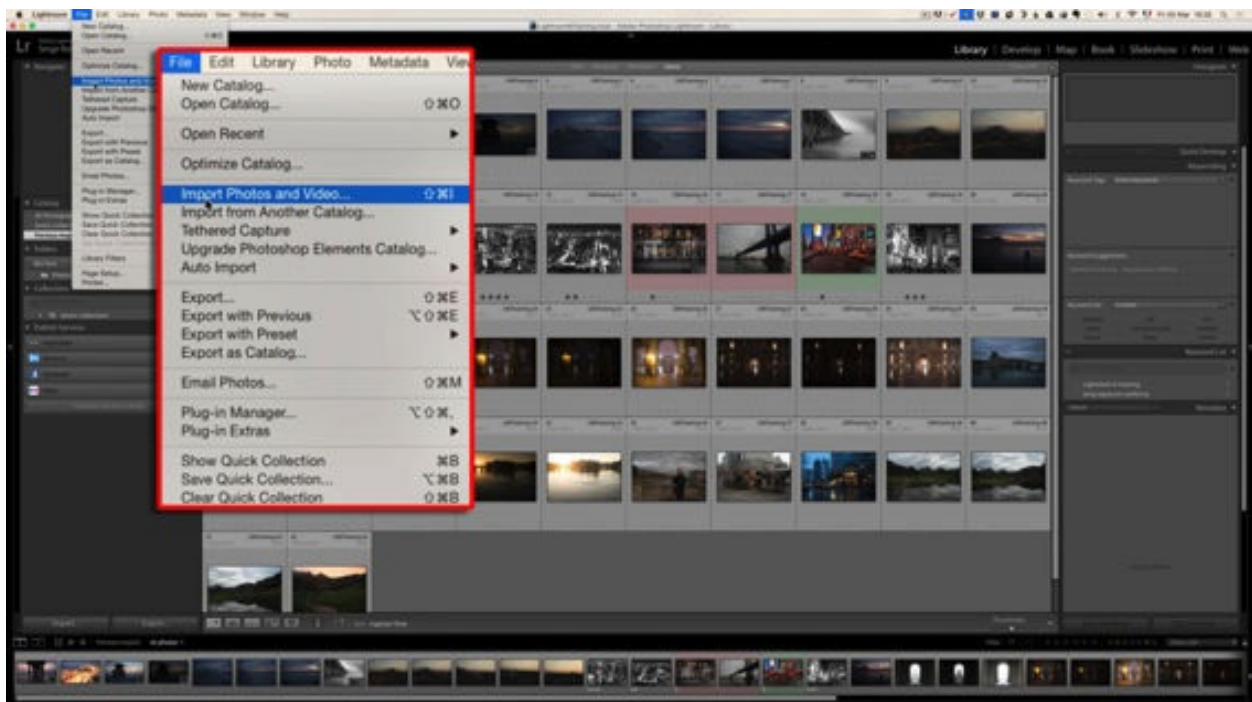
You learned how to create a Catalog in the last Chapter. If for some reason you aren't in the catalog you want, go ahead and open the one you want to import into.

Choose from the drop down menu **File>Open Catalog** or use the keyboard shortcut **(Shift-Command-O)**



Step 2. Select Import Photos.

Choose from the drop down menu **File>Import Photos and Videos** or use the keyboard shortcut **(Shift-Command-I)**

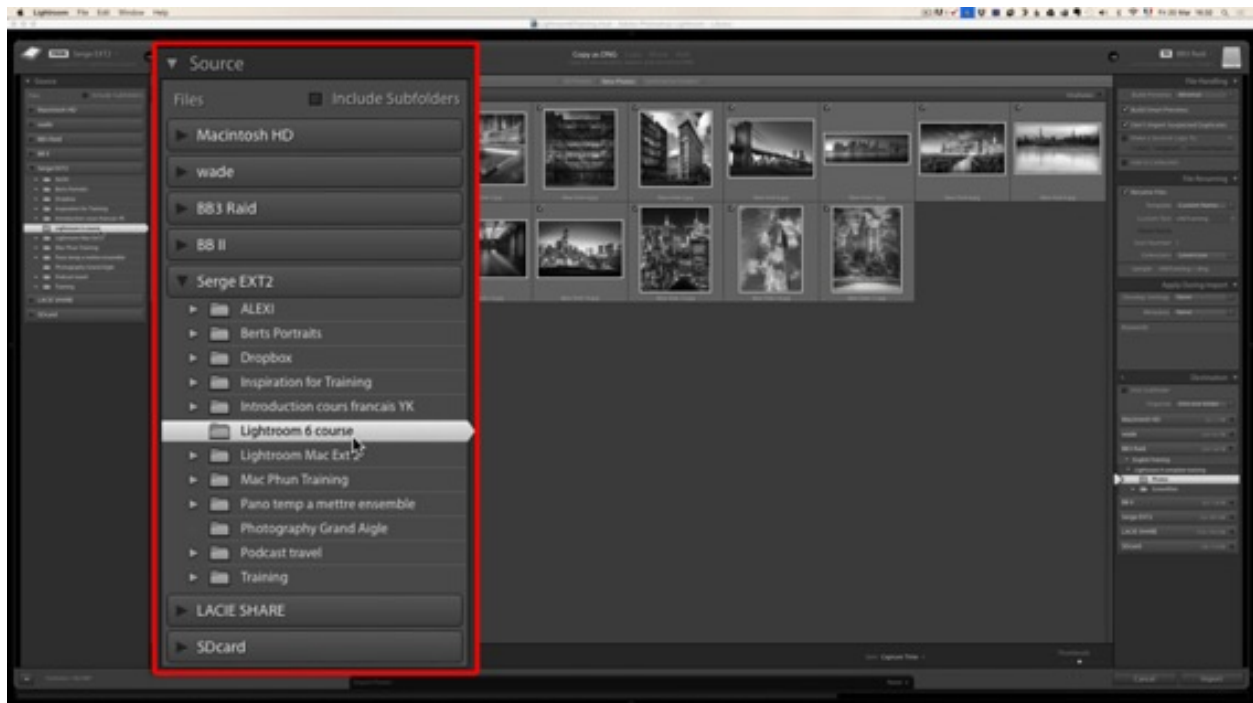


This will open the Lightroom Import Photo and Video module.

Step 3. Select The Source Hard Drive.

Go to the top right module and click on “**Select a Source**” directly or choose from the list of drives contained in the Source tab beneath this.

Go ahead and select your hard drive and open up sub-folders within it until you find the folder you are looking for.



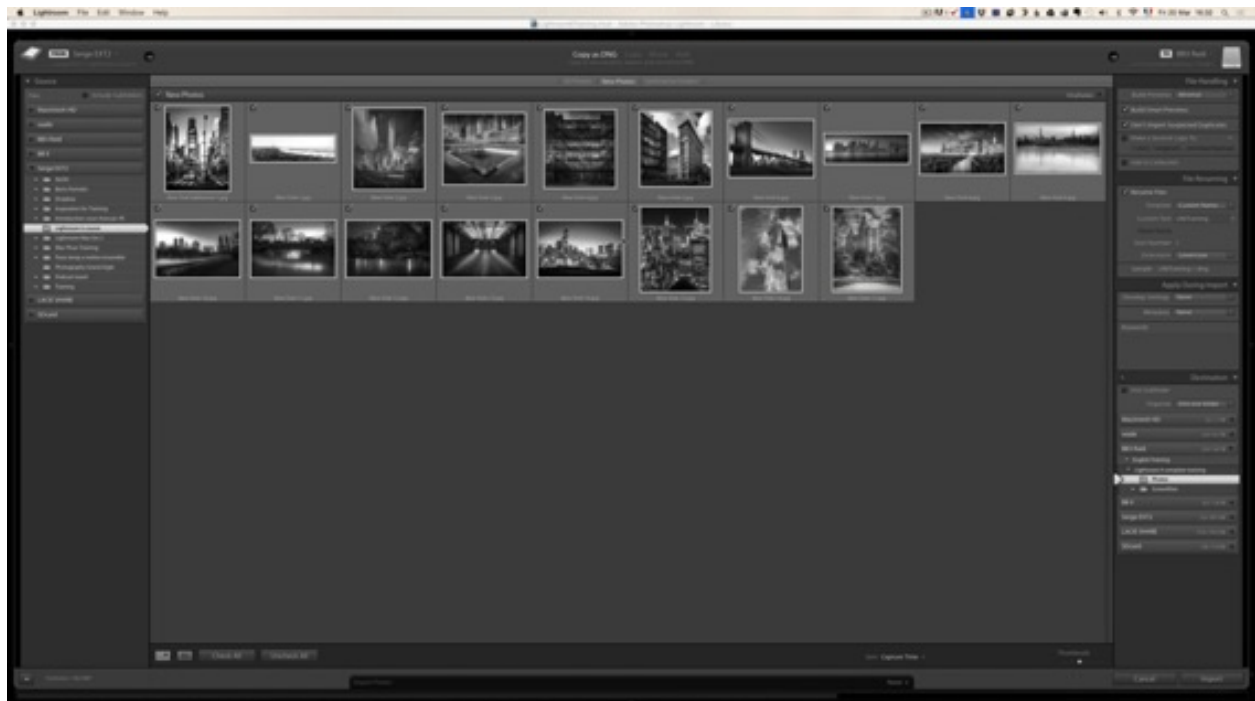
Step 4. Select What Photos to Import and the Add Method to Import

Go ahead and select every photo you want to import (there should be a check mark in the corner) and then at the top of the import module choose “**Add.**”

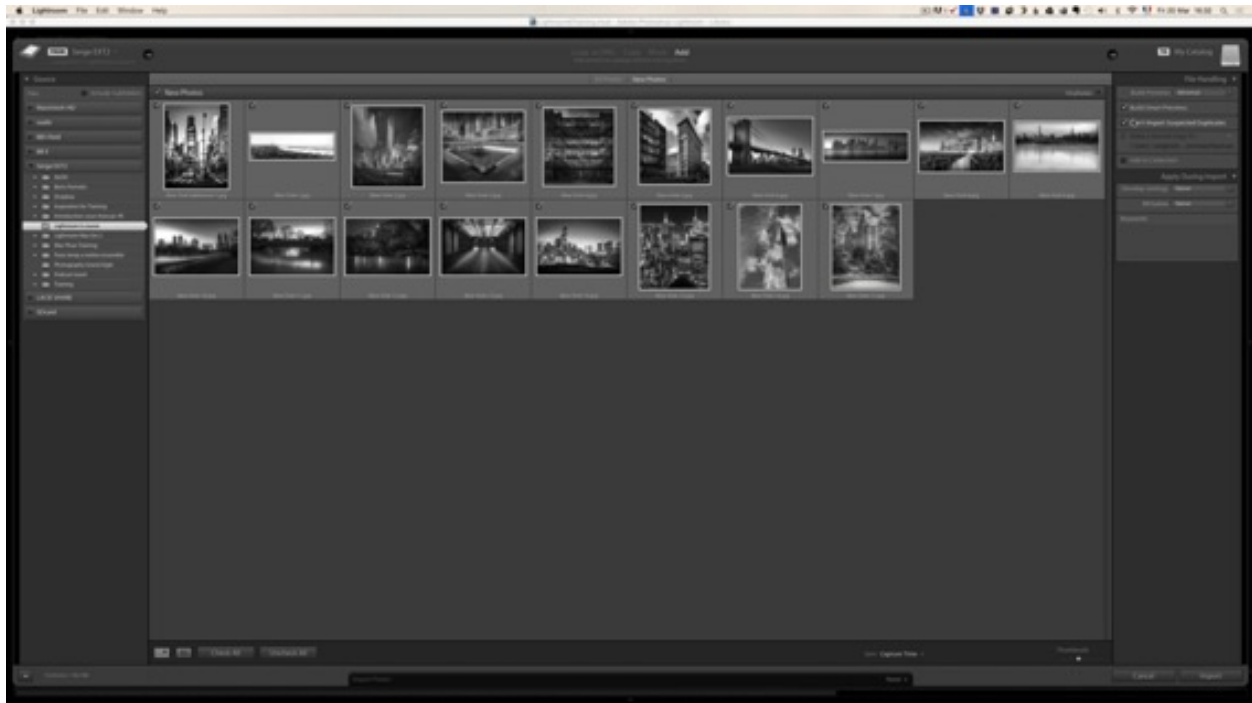


In the Add method of import there are several options that no longer exist for import actions. You can create smart previews if you want, add metadata and develop presets and you can add keywords. That's about it. So what's missing? Can you guess?

Yep you guessed it, the Destination tab is gone. This is a screen shot of the Copy as DNG method where the Destination option is visible:



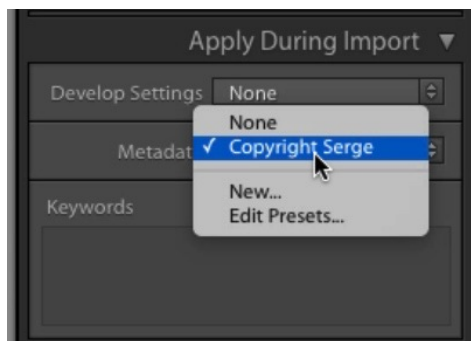
But in Add it is gone:



You might notice that the option to rename your files is also gone because you are referencing files that already exist.

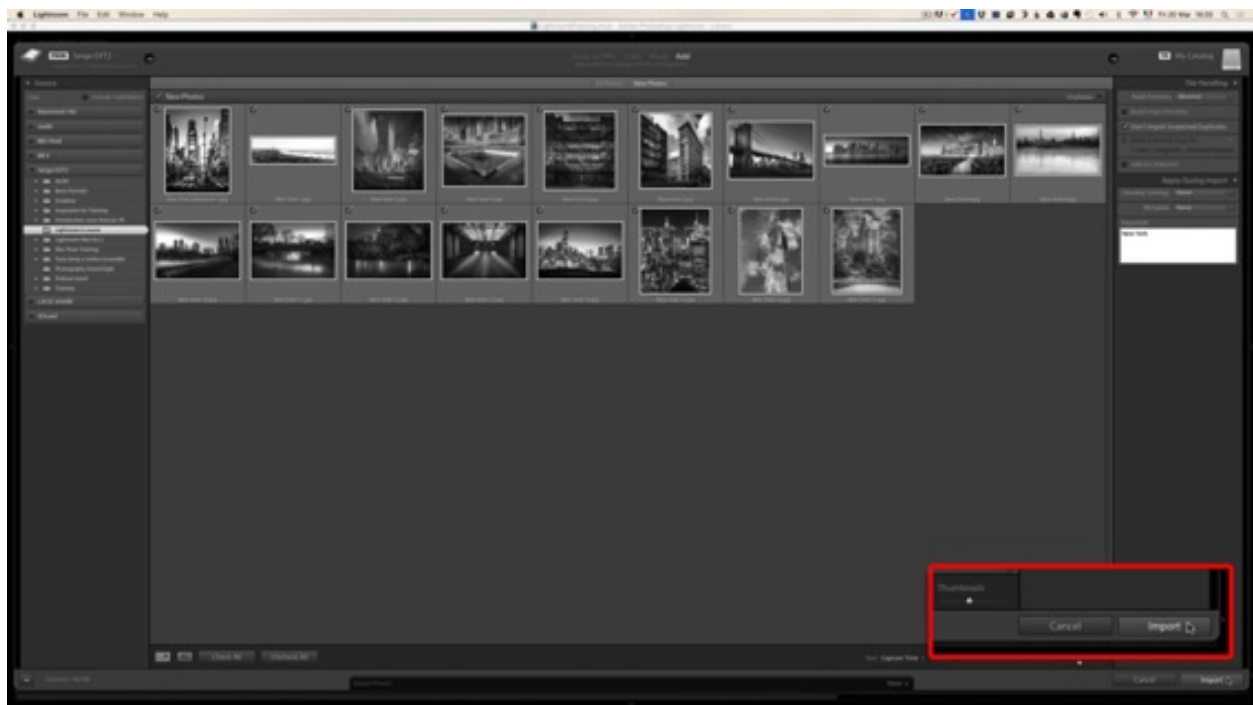
Step 5. Embed Your Copyright Metadata.

I covered the importance of this in the last section as well as how to create metadata presets. So go ahead and click on the metadata presets and select your Copyright Metadata preset from the Apply During Import tab choose **Metadata>Preset** as I showed you earlier.



Step 6. Click Import.

Now it's time to import. Look at the bottom right and you'll see the import button.



Once you click the import button: Voila! It's done.

Remember, when you use **Add**, Lightroom is not making new copies, it's only referencing them inside the Lightroom catalog (and if you remember from the beginning of the book, the Lightroom Catalog itself is simply a file that stores the references and not the photos themselves). And this tends to go pretty fast.

So your import is complete and next it will open up the Library Module and it should look like this: