



**PSg Photo Solutions**  
LET US HELP YOU TELL YOUR STORY

# 30 Tips for getting your Photos Organized

By Philip Griffith

Copyright 2013

January is GO Month or Get Organized Month for many. Organizing your photos allows you to find that one picture you know you have with a few key strokes or lay your hands on the print in a minute or two at most. Is that something you'd like?

**Photo Organizing Tip #1** - Getting your photos organized starts with getting everything in one place! The prints are some times easier than finding all the digital images, but start with what you find, and every time you find more, bring them to that ONE place for photos.

**Photo Organizing Tip #2** – Don't forget all the digital photos taken on your cell phone or tablet! Transfer them to your computer along with anything still on your camera or any cards your haven't emptied. Once they're on your computer, clear all the cards and other devices so you don't bring in duplicate pictures later.

**Photo Organizing Tip #3** – Start sorting by getting rid of the duplicates, out of focus, dark, or otherwise bad photos! Use the DELETE key for digital images and the trash can for prints! The only time to keep one of these is if there's a story behind it and no other photo tells that same story. You can give the duplicates away to the other people in the photo only if you will really hand them off!

**Photo Organizing Tip #4** – As you are sorting your photos, use the ABC's to help you move along. A = photos to go in an album. B = photos to keep in a box (storage). C = photos to toss in the can or delete. S = the photos that tell a story. These are the ones you will want to do something with first.

**Photo Organizing Tip #5** – When you are sorting your photos it's really easy to get bogged down in the memories and emotions. You end up taking too much time with each image. Sorting is not looking at the photo to remember, but to categorize. What do you want to DO with the picture? Sometimes it helps to have someone else hold the photos and ask questions to keep you moving along. This is where a Personal Photo Organizer can help.

**Photo Organizing Tip #6** – For digital images your camera's date and time stamp is really handy in sorting your photos. Make sure it is set correctly. This is especially critical if you are sharing photos from a wedding or some other family function with several other people. Having all the camera date and time stamps the same will keep all the photos in the correct order when you gather them together.

**Photo Organizing Tip #7** – What are the themes that keep popping up in your photos? Sort by those themes or events. It can be really fun to see how people change over time while looking at a recurring event in your family.

**Photo Organizing Tip #8** – Photos are important to us, but it's rarely urgent that we do something with them until it's too late or an important milestone event happens. Make an appointment with yourself to work on your photos! Even if it's for 15 minutes one day a week! You will make progress and it will keep the urgency more in line with the importance.

**Photo Organizing Tip #9** – Look at the type and condition of your old photo albums. Not all albums are safe for your photos! Those "Magnetic" albums are some of the worst as they have both acid and the type of plastic that fade and destroy printed photos. Get your photos out of those ASAP! To remember the order and arrangement of the album, take a photo of each page.

**Photo Organizing Tip #10** – Use the information on your photos to help you sort them. Is there a name, place, or other information that is written on the back of the photo? Check for a date printed on the photo by the lab. Don't forget to look at the packaging if you still have that. I've found great information there like where the pictures were mailed to and when. All clues to help you identify your photos.

**Photo Organizing Tip #11** – For those old photo albums that have the photos glued in and perhaps even some handwriting, scan the whole page and reproduce it as a photo book. That way everyone gets to have a copy and you don't destroy or lose the original.

**Photo Organizing Tip #12** – Many people want to digitize their older printed photos. This is a great backup for printed photos. If you're just doing a backup, or won't be enlarging the photo, 300 dpi is the resolution to go with. If you have small prints, 2x3 or smaller, or Black & White prints, go with 600 dpi. The higher the dpi the longer it takes to scan.

**Photo Organizing Tip #13** – Scanning takes time. How many photos do you have to digitize and how much time are you willing to spend? There is a point at which the price of having someone else scan your photos is more cost efficient than doing it yourself.

**Photo Organizing Tip #14** – The multiplying of digital images on your computer calls for a good photo organizing software. It should allow you to tag photos with multiple tags, tell the story, view in chronological order, be searchable, and have some editing functions. What you don't want is multiple copies of the same photo all over your computer!

**Photo Organizing Tip #15** –Categories and Tags are the ways you organize your digital images. Categories are like file drawers and Tags are like the folders in the drawer.

**Photo Organizing Tip #16** – If you have prints that you want to add some information to, use a Photo Safe Pencil. Pens and markers often have acid in the inks and sometimes will bleed onto other photos. Pressing down using a pen can also leave an impression that can show on the front of the photo.

**Photo Organizing Tip #17** – Don't forget to backup! I recommend three digital copies and at least one printed hard copy (especially of your best photos). One on your computer, one on an external hard drive or flash drive, and one off site in the cloud. Your printed copy can be in a book, an album, on your wall, or in a box.

**Photo Organizing Tip #18** – Before you use an online photo site or backup company, read the Terms of Service! You want to have your photos saved at full resolution and be able to get them back the same way. Also look to make sure you are not giving them rights to use or share your photos, especially without telling you!

**Photo Organizing Tip #19** – Tell the story behind your photos! Some pictures just need a caption – a short, simple, concise statement that gives some additional information, others beg for a paragraph or more to give some history, explanation, or just tell the joke that isn't seen in the photo. What stories are your photos waiting to tell?

**Photo Organizing Tip #20** – Get your best photos out into your life. Make it easy, frame a few to hang on the wall or put on a desk. The less technology needed, the more you will actually see them!

**Photo Organizing Tip #21** – Take your top 10 photos from last month and tell the highlights from that month, some times there are low lights as well, and put them in a photo album. Do this each month and at the end of the year you have a great retrospective of your year all documented. Don't forget to enjoy looking at it with your family and friends throughout the year!

**Photo Organizing Tip #22** – Photo make great gifts! We've given and received photos of family for years. Now you can put them on cards, mugs, blankets,

mouse pads and more. Look through your photos next time you want to give something special to family or friends to find a picture that would bless them.

**Photo Organizing Tip #23** – Now that you've sorted your photos it's time to take those pictures that drip with stories and use them to tell those stories. Some people find it easier to write down what they want to tell and then look for the pictures that help illustrate or add details to the story. Others like to gather all the photos that remind them of the story and then write just enough to connect the photos together. Which way do you tell your story?

**Photo Organizing Tip #24** – Don't forget to take pictures of, or scan kids' art work and other memorabilia. It lets you keep a record without having to warehouse all the physical stuff!

**Photo Organizing Tip #25** – Sharing photos is what so many want to do and why there are billions of photos on Facebook. When you share your photos, do think about who will be able to see them and read the terms of service so you know what each service can do with your photos. You want to share your photos privately, but still have some social interaction.

**Photo Organizing Tip #26** – Store your photos in your house where the temperature and humidity is fairly even. The basement can be too damp or humid, the attic can have wide temperature swings and the garage is even worse. You also want to be able to get at those photos easily.

**Photo Organizing Tip #27** – There are some wonderful surprises waiting for you hidden in those 8mm movies. Look at the box to find clues (when it was processed or where it was delivered to) as to what might be on a reel. You will want to get all the film digitized to see what is there. Although there is an expense to it, you and your family will find treasures.

**Photo Organizing Tip #28** – When you are looking to digitize your videos or film, get the AVI or MOV file, not just a DVD. Why? Because technology is changing fast and you want the digital file that you can move forward with, not just the current viewing technology that will be gone in a decade or less.

**Photo Organizing Tip #29** – When working with your photos, don't forget to have other people look at them with you. You never know what they remember about the photo that you have forgotten or didn't know. Even your kids will have stories that should be captured that are different than what you might tell.

**Photo Organizing Tip #30** – Once you have a system in place to organize, archive and enjoy your photos, make sure you do it each and every time you take pictures. It will help you share those photos and remember the stories which is why we take pictures in the first place!