

# The Lightroom / Photoshop relationship

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## PHOTOSHOP

Adobe Photoshop is the gold standard in the world of photo editing since the early '90s. With the addition of Adobe Bridge and Adobe Camera Raw, the three programs work hand-in-hand to provide a similar experience to Adobe Lightroom. This is confusing.

Photoshop, then Bridge, then Camera Raw, were developed in response to the growing demands of digital imaging professionals:

- To categorize and organize images into searchable databases.
- To design an efficient workflow for dealing with RAW image files, which involve editing instructions separate from the actual image data.

In the Photoshop workplace, Adobe Bridge is where the photography workflow begins: browse images in folders; view detailed metadata information captured with the photographs and thumbnails for each image. Bridge speeds up folder BROWSING, especially in the RAW format. Bridge is Adobe's file browser, with Camera Raw built-in.

*COMPARISON:* Adobe Bridge is built for versatility and universal access, while Lightroom is built as a long-term workflow tool for both editing, cataloging, and archiving lots of photos all in the same place.

Adobe Camera Raw is another vital component to the Photoshop workflow. Unlike JPEGs, which you can open directly in Photoshop, RAW photos will first be opened up in Adobe Camera Raw, before being opened in Photoshop. In Adobe Camera Raw, edit almost every aspect of a photograph. You can perform 90 percent of your work on RAW images using only Adobe Bridge and Adobe Camera Raw, reserving Photoshop for only the most intense edits. After adjustments to RAW photos in Adobe Camera Raw, open in Photoshop - do all the heavy editing you can't do in Adobe Camera Raw.

*COMPARISON:* The advantages of using Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Bridge, and Adobe Camera Raw together as a post-production workflow lies in the ability to make the process as simple as desired. The PS/Bridge/Camera Raw workflow is far less resource intensive on your computer than Lightroom.

The disadvantage of is the inability to do everything within a single program. In Photoshop, there are times where there are three different programs open at once to edit a single photo.

There are a few specific areas where Photoshop outperforms Lightroom.

**Advanced Retouching:** If you want to have pixel level control to edit photos, or if you want to make an arm thinner or a person taller, Photoshop is needed.

**Composites:** When you want to combine images – Photoshop.

**HDR:** Although there are some great HDR plugins available for Lightroom, if you want to blend images together to pull out the highlights and shadows from multiple exposures – Photoshop.

**Panoramas:** Photoshop can stitch several photos together to create panoramas.

**Advanced Healing:** While you can remove minor image flaws in Lightroom, the capabilities aren't as powerful as using the content aware magic of Photoshop's healing brush/patch tools.

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# LIGHTROOM

Adobe Lightroom **imports, organizes, edits, and exports** photographs.

The core of Lightroom is a catalog.

A catalog is a database that stores a record for each of your photos.

This record contains three key pieces of information about each photo:

- A reference to where the photo is on your system
- Instructions for how you want to process the photo
- Metadata - ratings and keywords applied to photos to help find or organize them

The user interface of Lightroom consists of various “modules.

*Library module* is where you organize and sort through your photos and videos.

*Develop module* is a more robust version of Adobe Camera Raw.

*Book, Slideshow, Print, and Web modules* are for publishing your images in various formats.

Lightroom was designed primarily as a workplace for the RAW image format

There are two versions of Lightroom currently available: Lightroom Classic CC, and Lightroom CC

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Adobe Creative Cloud is a set of applications and services from Adobe Systems that gives subscribers access to a collection of software used for graphic design, video editing, web development, photography, along with a set of mobile applications and also some optional cloud services

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Lightroom Classic CC and Lightroom CC compared . . .

Lightroom Classic CC and Lightroom CC never change the actual photos captured by your camera. Editing is *nondestructive*. You can always return to the original, unedited photo.

Lightroom CC uploads all your full resolution original photos to the cloud – all photos are safely backed up automatically. Consequently, Lightroom CC allows user to access all photos on multiple computers (laptop/desktop/home/work).

Lightroom CC on Mac and Windows share a similar/consistent experience with Lightroom CC apps on mobile/web. It's made for use on multiple platforms (laptop/desktop/home/work).

Lightroom CC also provides cloud-based features, such as searchability based on recognition software — without having to add any keywords manually.

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## **BOTTOM LINE:**

The Lightroom solution has a steeper learning curve, offers a more seamless experience, at the cost of more computer power. If you start here, be ready to make a substantial, consistent commitment of time and energy to mastering the workflow.

The Photoshop workflow is less organized, but can prove more lightweight and minimalist. The advantage of starting here is the separation of functions, and no involvement in managing catalogs and databases.