

Organize Your Photos

Fire and Brimstone Message:

Thou shall endure pain and suffering for thy slovenly and slothful ways of filing and organizing thy photos.

Woe onto you who does not backup thy photos, for thou shall endure eternal loss.

Use Your Computer's File System

FAQ: How do I get my photos into Photoshop Elements?

Answer: You cannot get your photos “into” Elements. You get your photos “into” your computer, and then you access them from Elements in order to organize and edit them.

When you download your photos from your camera to your computer, you have the opportunity to do the most important step in organizing your photos, so that you have a chance of finding them at some future date.

As pointed out before your photos are filed in your computer, not in Photoshop Elements or anything else. Elements can help you find and organize the photos in your computer, but this is secondary to understanding that they have to be filed in a reasonable, intelligent manner by you, not by your computer. The Adobe Photo Downloader helps with this task, and the document *Organizer Workflow* explains how to use it.

So a quick summary of a typical Windows or Mac operating system file structure goes something like this. I will use the Vista notation for file system hierarchy. When you click on the Windows icon at the lower left, the screen that pops up allows me to select **Pictures** from the choices on the right side. Then you will see a file structure something like:

Robert>

Pictures>

Chincoteaque 05
 Christmas 08
 Costa del Sol 08
 Eastern Europe 07
 Fall 06
 Fall 07
 Spring 04
 Summer 06
 Winter 07
 Etc, etc

Each of the folders starting alphabetically with **Chincoteaque 08** contains only the photos taken at that place and time. These are individual folders with just enough information in the folder title to help you go back to some past event, trip, or season.

As described in the document *Organizer Workflow*, when you plug your camera into your computer and turn it on Adobe Photo Downloader launches automatically and takes control of transferring your photos.

Right at that moment you have the opportunity to create a new sub folder within **Pictures**, or else point to an existing folder where you want them to go.

At this point of time just after downloading your photos is also the appropriate time to back them up to a CD, DVD, or external drive. This is the best insurance against losing them altogether.

Use The Organizer in Photoshop Elements

FAQ: What does the Organizer in Photoshop Elements do for me if I have already saved my photos in Pictures in a sub folder that identifies the time and place I took them?

Answer: It allows you to have excellent database searching and organizing capabilities and more. If you go to Help> Photoshop Elements Help there are several concise headings describing these capabilities. Even though you have diligently used sub folders to identify those photos you took in **Summer 05**, there are several other ways you might like to find and organize individual photos. Here are some examples.

You can easily tag all of the photos of your grandchild, John, over the years and call them up with a single click.

You can make an album of favorite photos from one trip or several different occasions. You can rearrange the photos and add captions to them. Then you can share this album in several ways including a slide show, burning a CD, creating a printed album, or emailing some of the photos.

FAQ: Does the Organizer duplicate the photos that I have already filed in my operating system's file structure, so that it is using double the space for these on my hard drive?

Answer: No, because it is a database manager, it only uses 'links' or "pointers" to the original photos. These are very small demands on your hard drive.

What are Catalogs in Photo shop Elements?

The catalog is the entire collection of photos you want to see when you open the Organizer. Most people have only one catalog. But for special purposes you may want a separate catalog for a hobby, business, or other interest. A good discussion of this is found in Photoshop Elements Help when you search for 'catalog'.