

Move Lightroom Classic and its catalog to a new computer.

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Mac Computers

'Migration Assistant' is a Mac program that transfers documents, apps, user accounts, and settings from one Mac to another. It doesn't delete information from your old Mac or replace the operating system (macOS) on your new Mac. So, a transfer such as this to a new computer would include folders with photos, Lightroom, its catalog, previews, smart previews, presets and templates etc. Instructions are [here](#).

If the transfer is restricted only to folders with photos and Lightroom, follow the procedure below for Windows computers.

Windows Computers

This procedure is based on articles found at ...

<https://thelenslounge.com/move-lightroom-to-new-computer/>

<https://helpx.adobe.com/lightroom-classic/help/create-catalogs.html>

Move the photo folders:

The catalog contains three key pieces of information about each photo:

1. A reference to where the photo is located on your computer
2. Instructions for how you want to process the photo
3. Metadata, such as ratings and keywords that you apply to photos to help you find or organize them

For the catalog to function accurately on the new computer, folders with photos from the old computer must be present on the new computer. Photo folders on the new computer must be named and located exactly as they are on the old computer. So, use an external hard drive to copy photo folders from the old to the new computer.

Install Lightroom Classic on the new computer.

Move the catalog, previews, smart previews, presets & templates:

Note: Before copying or moving a catalog and preview files, back them up.

1. Attach an external hard drive to the old computer.
2. On the old computer, locate the folder that contains the LR catalog and the preview files. In Lightroom Classic, choose Edit > Catalog Settings (Windows) or Lightroom Classic > Catalog Settings (macOS).
3. In the Information area of the General panel, click 'Show' to go to the catalog in Windows Explorer (Windows) or the Mac Finder (macOS).

4. Quit Lightroom Classic.
5. In the Explorer (Windows) or Finder (macOS), copy the catalog.lrcat, catalog.lrcat-data, Previews.lrdata, and (if present) Smart Previews.lrdata files to the external hard drive.
6. Presets and templates (Windows) are saved at:
C:\Users\[user name]\AppData\Roaming\Adobe\CameraRaw\Settings. Copy all .xmp files to the external hard drive and then to the same folder on the external hard drive. If you've enabled the 'Store Presets With This Catalog' option in the Lightroom Classic preferences, the presets and templates files are saved at: C:\Users\[user name]\[catalog location]\[catalog folder name]\Lightroom Settings\Settings. Copy all .xmp files to the external hard drive.
7. Eject the external hard drive from the old computer and remove it.
8. Attach the external hard drive to the new computer.
9. Copy the catalog.lrcat, catalog.lrcat-data, Previews.lrdata, and (if present) Smart Previews.lrdata files from the external hard drive to a folder on the new computer located exactly as it was on the old computer. Copy the presets and templates to folders located exactly as they were on the old computer.
10. On the new computer, double-click on the newly pasted .lrcat file in the new location to open it in Lightroom Classic.
11. If Lightroom Classic can't find folders or photos in the copied or moved catalog, a question mark icon (?) appears next to folder names in the Folders panel and an exclamation point icon (!) appears in photo thumbnails in the grid view. To restore links to missing folders and/or individual photos, see [Locate missing photos](#).