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# DIGITAL IMAGING WORKFLOW

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## Part #1

This workflow is *one* approach in the creation of images for the internet or for printing by an ink jet printer, not for a commercial CMYK printer. It is meant to be a guideline to processing images, not a set of rules to be strictly followed. Many alternative techniques are equally valid and in some cases, are a better approach than detailed here for a specific image.

Basic Workflow:

- Camera Image File + Modifications and Adjustments => Master Image File (psd or tif format).
- Master Image File + versions 1...n of the image's final size, resolution, sharpening & file format => Output Image File versions 1...n.
- Backup your data

**Basic rule:** always retain the original image data.

### Step 1: Pre-Processing

Setup your equipment and transfer your images to the computer.

#### 1) Setup Computer

- a. Update your computer's operating system if available
- b. Obtain 1 GB of RAM (2GB is better; 500MB is minimum) and a large hard disk (200GB+ is good) with at least 10GB available at all times
- c. Establish a backup procedure and obtain necessary hardware; automate if possible
- d. Obtain a camera memory card reader to transfer image files from the memory card to the computer via USB-2 or FireWire
- e. Install Virus Protection and spyware software and update regularly; consider camera memory card recovery software
- f. Defragment your hard disk regularly
- g. Setup the file structure for your image collection
- h. Calibrate your Monitor and enable its profile
- i. Obtain printer/paper ICC profiles as needed
  - Costco profiles are obtained from the Costco web site or [www.drycreekphoto.com](http://www.drycreekphoto.com), profiles are updated every 6 months
  - PS CS2: profiles are stored in Windows \ system32 \ spool \ drivers \ color folder; restart after storing
- j. Install Photoshop CS or later with the latest updates
- k. Setup Photoshop: Edit > Preferences
  - Display & Cursors: Painting Cursor = Full Size Brush Tip, Show Crosshair in Brush Tip; Other Cursor = Precise
  - Units and Rulers: Print Resolution = 300 to 360 pixels/inch; Screen Resolution = 72 or 96 pixels/inch
  - Plug-Ins & Scratch Disk: Scratch Disk - First = D: (if available) Second = C:
  - Memory and Image Cache: Cache Levels 6 to 8; Memory Usage = 60% to 85%

- l. Setup Photoshop: Edit > Color Settings:
  - Working Spaces > RGB = Adobe RGB (1998)
  - Color Management Policies > RGB = Convert to Working RGB
  - Profile Mismatches and Missing Profiles = no check marks
- m. Setup Bridge: Edit > Camera RAW Preferences
  - Save Image Settings in = Camera RAW Database
  - Apply Sharpening to = Preview Images only
  - Camera RAW Cache = 1GB or more if possible
- n. Setup Bridge: Edit > Preferences
  - General: set Background Color, Thumbnail Metadata, and Favorite Data
  - Advanced: When Saving the Cache = Use a Centralized Cache File for convenience, a Distributed Cache for a complex setup

#### 2) Setup Camera

- a. Update your camera's firm-ware if available
- b. Obtain enough image storage cards and batteries
  - If shoot 100 images a day with a 5 MP camera, RAW Storage = 100 RAW files x 5 MB each = 500 MB; more if a jpg image is also stored, or jpg Storage = 100 jpg files x ~2 MB each = 200 MB
- c. Obtain a portable image storage device (e.g., a laptop or battery-operated hard disk) for field use
- d. Obtain a gray card to determine true color balance and photograph the gray card in the same lighting as the subject
- e. Enable Auto-Rotate, if available in your camera
- f. Create camera images in RAW format for quality or jpg format for efficiency
- g. For jpg images, setup the camera for no sharpening, low contrast, and low saturation for maximum detail and tonal range
- h. Set camera's white balance to Auto or a specific lighting condition, especially for jpg
- i. Use the camera's histogram to expose as bright as possible without blowing out highlights but with some headroom in case one color channel might be clipped and not visible on the histogram

#### 3) Transfer Images from Camera to Computer

- a. Put camera memory card into a card reader
- b. Use Bridge to copy images to computer and rename files if desired
- c. Backup the camera image files
- d. View images in Bridge and delete unwanted image files
- e. Rotate vertical images if not done automatically
- f. Bridge: Tools > Append Metadata > Name and 2005 Copyright to set Copyright Status = Copyrighted Work, Copyright Notice = "© 2005 by {name}. All Rights Reserved."; © = alt+0169
- g. Bridge: Keyword tab > add keywords if desired
- h. Backup the camera image files and verify that the image transfer was performed properly
- i. Format memory card in camera (or delete the files)