

# The Photoshop CS Digital Photo Workflow

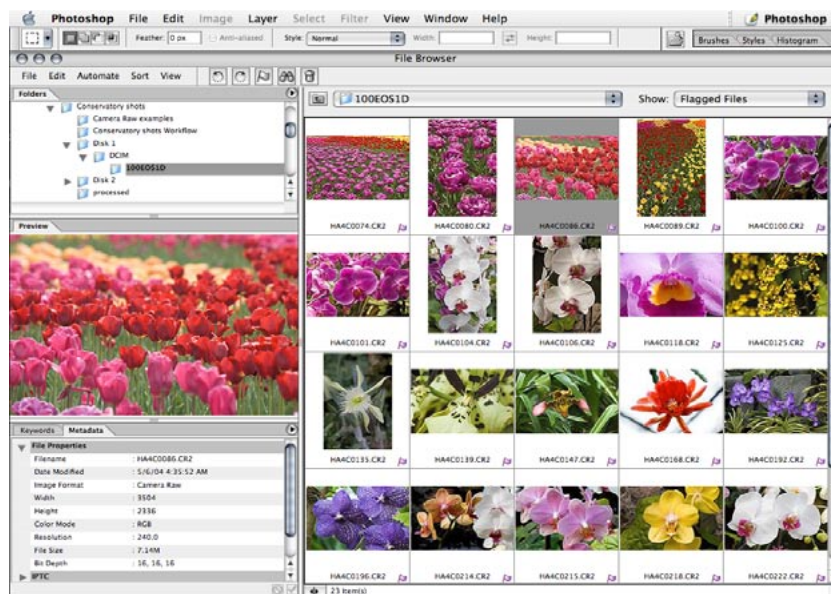
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Adobe® Photoshop® software is many things to many people. For prepress professionals, it's the center of a color managed workflow and CMYK conversions. For graphic arts professionals, it's the main tool for tone and color correction of images. Photoshop is used extensively in film and multimedia, and most images on the web have been touched by it.

Because the Photoshop customer base is so diverse, photographers often see Photoshop as a monolithic graphics application that wasn't specifically designed for digital photographers. That presumption is not correct. Photoshop Creative Suite (CS) in particular, and its new feature set, was designed specifically for a digital photo workflow.

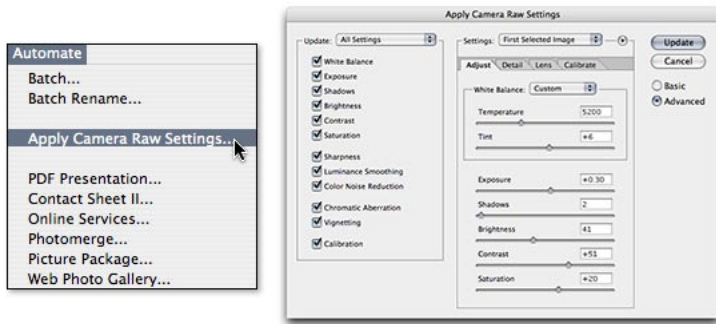
The Adobe Camera Raw plug-in was designed to address a real need for an efficient raw workflow. In combination with the Photoshop CS File Browser and the Automate tools, Camera Raw forms the backbone of a raw capture workflow. The Automate tools, such as Batch and the host of Automate functions (PDF Presentation, Contact Sheet II and Web Photo Gallery), are available directly from the File Browser. Used in the correct combination and in the correct order, the Camera Raw plug-in and Photoshop CS provide a robust and productive raw processing workflow.



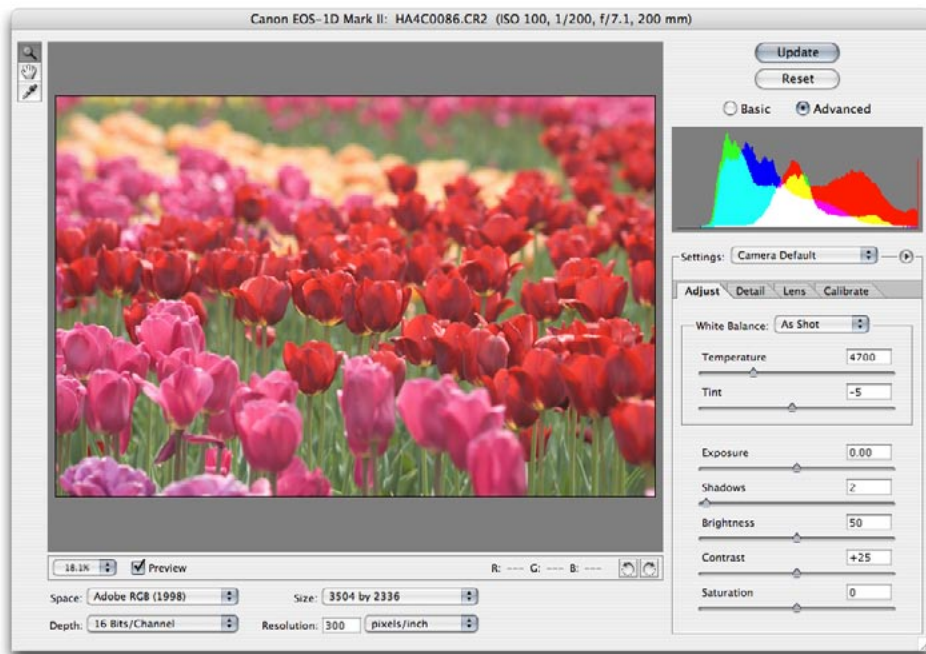
The Photoshop CS File Browser.

The File Browser forms the beginning of the selection edit process. Tools such as Sorting and View options allow users precise control over the order and how to display the images. You can resize and rearrange the File Browser panes to provide the exact view you need. You can save the setup of the File Browser as a Workspace to allow easy changes between various saved File Browser setups.

To achieve the most efficient method of selection editing, you can sort, rank and flag images and then group, move or copy them to other directories, renaming them as required to fit in with custom schemes. You can apply metadata individually or in groups directly from the File Browser. Additionally, you can adjust the Camera Raw plug-in settings individually or in groups as large as an entire folder by using the Apply Camera Raw Settings command under the Automate menu.



The Apply Camera Raw Settings command under the Automate menu.



This Camera Raw dialog box is set to the Advanced mode.

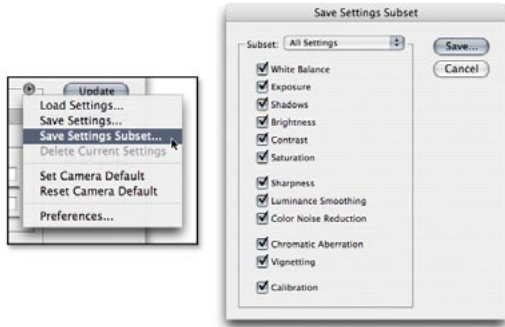
The Camera Raw dialog box is the heart of the raw processing workflow in Photoshop CS. This single dialog box provides you with enormous power over digital photographs by allowing control over a wide range of image parameters. Because of the wide array of tools, some users may view Camera Raw as intimidating. It shouldn't be. As you become familiar with the core functionality, you will become comfortable with the unprecedented control Photoshop CS offers. The main functionality is available via the tabs: Adjust, Detail, Lens and Calibrate.



The Adjust, Detail, Lens and Calibrate tabs.

By properly adjusting the image parameters, you can control all of the main image parameters such as White Balance and Exposure—two functions that simply cannot be duplicated in Photoshop because Camera Raw uses the raw linear camera sensor data for the transforms. Under Detail, you can adjust Sharpening and Noise Reduction. Under Lens, you can apply corrections for Chromatic Lens Aberrations. Under Calibrate, you can fine tune the rendering of camera-produced color.

You can save all of the Camera Raw settings as custom settings to further enhance your Camera Raw productivity. Users are encouraged to fine tune and adjust the Camera Raw camera settings to allow for unique interpretations of their images without being locked into the defaults.



Use the Save Settings Subset command to save a custom Camera Raw subset.

If you save a custom subset, you can choose exactly which image parameters to save in a custom setting. You can build a library of various settings and subsettings to apply for a wide range of various shooting conditions. The settings can be applied either directly in the Camera Raw dialog box or in the Apply Camera Raw Settings function of the File Browser.

The key to using Camera Raw in a refined workflow is to understand how Camera Raw can address the settings in an image.

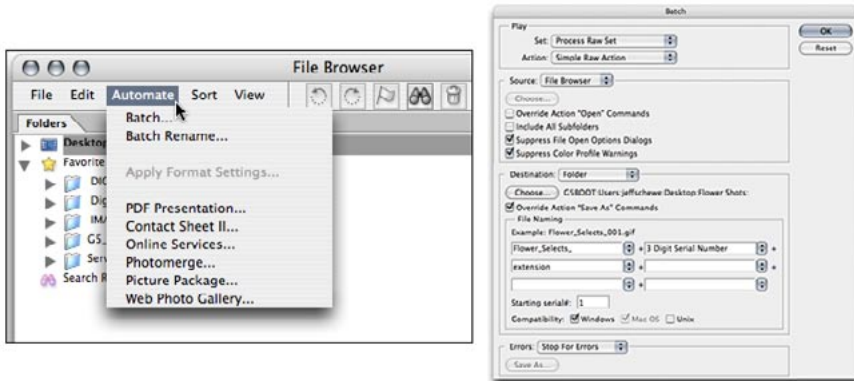


The normal dialog displays a standard OK button. It opens the image in Photoshop using the current settings, when you click OK. By holding the Option key for Mac or the Alt key for Windows®, the OK button becomes an Update button. Clicking this button updates the current settings into either the Camera Raw Data Base or into a sidecar file associated with a particular raw file. This feature allows you to choose the Camera Raw settings for an image without actually opening the image. The settings will be used when automating the processing at a later time. Holding down the Shift key allows you to exit the image without changing the settings. This feature is useful if multiple files have been selected from the File Browser and you want to skip this image and continue on to the next image.

Using Camera Raw in combination with the Photoshop CS File Browser allows you to do efficient selection editing, tone and color adjustment and to apply image parameters to single or multiple images. However, to be truly efficient you must automate the workflow.

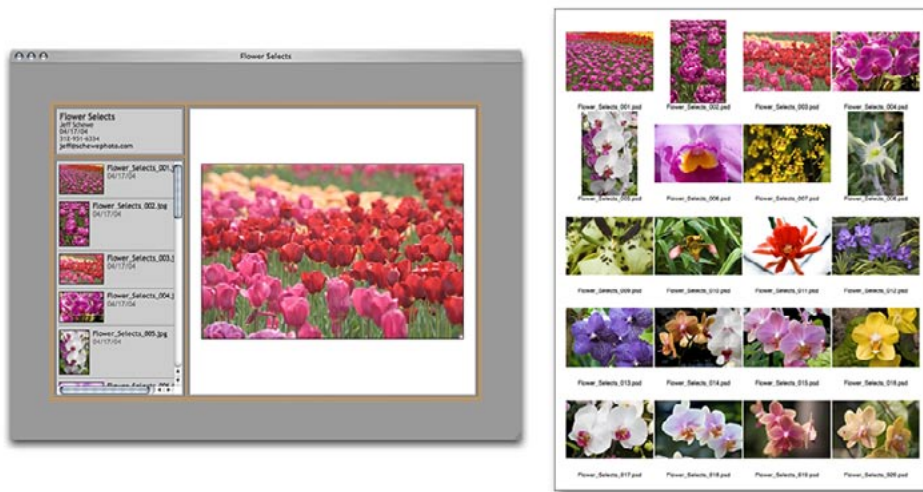
## Automation in Photoshop CS

After selection editing and applying Camera Raw settings to a photo shoot, the next stage of a productive and efficient workflow uses the variety of automation tools available in Photoshop CS software. Whether you use one of the Automate tools available directly from the File Browser or write actions and the Batch function, hundreds or even thousands of images can be processed by unattended operation of Photoshop CS.



Use the Automate tool directly from the File Browser to process large numbers of images.

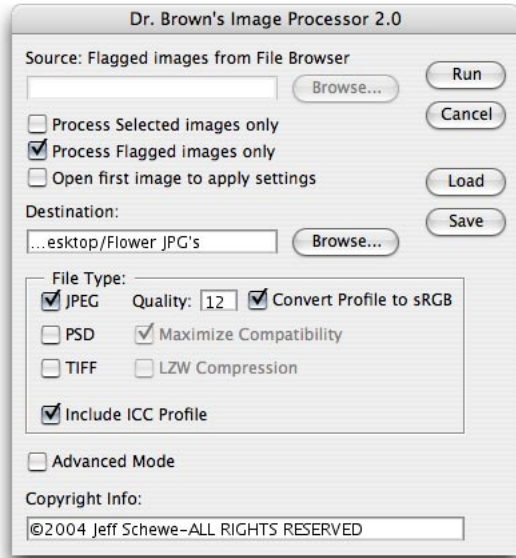
By properly employing the Batch function through actions, you can effortlessly apply repetitive steps to a large number of images. However, even before going through an entire Batch processing routine, the File Browser enables the use of other Automate plug-ins. You can produce Web Photo Galleries or Contact Sheets directly from selected images in the File Browser.



A Web Photo Gallery and a 20-image Contact Sheet made directly from selected images in the Photoshop CS File Browser.

For even faster batch processing, you can download a free Photoshop CS script addition called Dr. Brown's Image Processor 2.0 that allows you to go directly from raw files to processed JPEG, PSD or TIFF files. This process doesn't require actions, however it doesn't offer the full range of functionality that actions provide.

The Image Processor, a JavaScript that can be loaded to the Photoshop CS Scripts folder in Presets, can work either from the File Browser or from selected folders. The Image Processor can be downloaded at no charge from <http://www.russellbrown.com/body.html>.



Dr. Brown's Image Processor 2.0, a JavaScript addition for Photoshop CS.

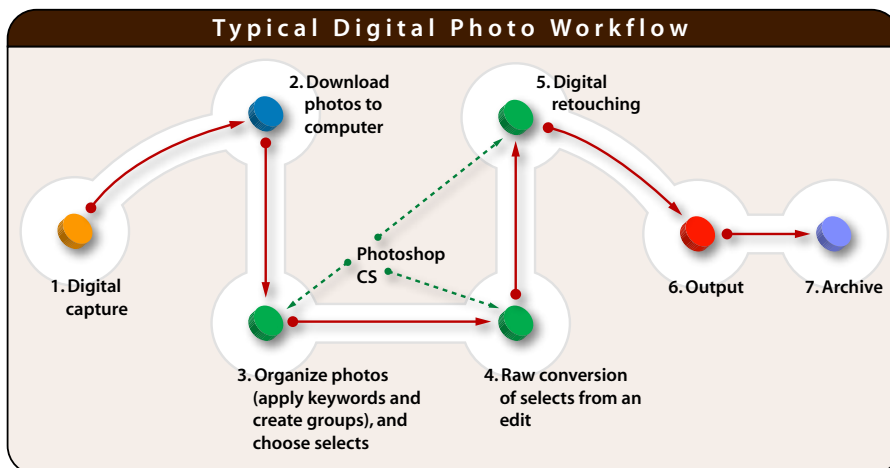
## Photoshop CS—the centerpiece of a digital photo workflow

Even though the Camera Raw plug-in, the File Browser and Batch processing are the required steps of an efficient workflow, all steps can't be processed automatically. Sometimes an image needs direct intervention and that's when you turn to the Photoshop CS application.

Images may need special handling for localized tone or color control. Photoshop provides a vast array of image correction tools for this purpose. New to Photoshop CS is an image adjustment called Shadow/Highlight. Also new to Photoshop CS is the Photo Filter, an easy method of adjusting color balance. Other important features are the mainstays of retouching, the Clone Stamp tool and the Healing Brush.

Photoshop CS controls allow for accurate color separation for halftone or fine art digital printing. Combined with Soft Proofing, users can have extremely precise control over the color rendering and printing of their images.

Photoshop may be many things to many people, but it's particularly critical to a digital photographer's toolset. Many of the new features and the enhanced functionality of Photoshop CS were designed specially for professional photographers. The tools for an enhanced workflow exist in Photoshop CS. The challenge for photographers is to refine their own workflow to maximize their productivity in Photoshop while maintaining a high level of quality for their images.



A typical digital photo workflow.

Adobe and the Photoshop engineers are constantly striving to make Photoshop and all of the Adobe applications as good as they can be. Adobe welcomes your ideas and feature requests. To further that effort, Adobe has a series of User To User forums for each Adobe application. Each product forum contains a feature request section that is often frequented by Adobe personnel. To contribute your ideas or offer feedback, please visit the User Forums at: <http://www.adobe.com/support/forums/main.html>. Although your feedback is encouraged and appreciated, Adobe cannot guarantee that feedback will be incorporated.



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Jeff, a summa cum laude graduate of Rochester Institute of Technology, has been an advertising photographer in Chicago for over 25 years. He has been doing digital imaging for over 14 years and is widely known and respected in the digital imaging community as a leading pioneer in the field. Jeff is a feature consultant and alpha tester for Adobe Photoshop.