

THE OFFICIAL ON1 GUIDE TO

LEAVING ADOBE® LIGHTROOM®



LEAVING LIGHTROOM

INTRODUCTION

This eBook is for Adobe Lightroom users that want to learn more about how to transfer their photos with the non-destructive edits intact into ON1 Photo RAW.

[Watch a short introduction video »](#)

BACKGROUND

The migration assistant is an automated AI-powered algorithm that takes the edits you have done in Lightroom and migrates them into ON1 Photo RAW, retaining the settings. It can migrate all of your non-destructive edits from Lightroom into ON1 Photo RAW and leave them in a non-destructive state. This allows you to view and edit the various sliders and settings the same way you can inside of Lightroom but in ON1 Photo. It will transfer almost every edit you can perform in Lightroom including raw processing, crop, retouching, and local adjustments along with folders, photos, albums, and metadata. This gives you the freedom to discontinue using Lightroom and not lose non-destructive work.

The ON1 Lightroom Migration Assistant is the only technology available that will transfer your Lightroom settings and keep your edits in a non-destructive format.

IMPORTANT ITEMS TO KEEP IN MIND BEFORE YOU START:

1. Your Photos Are Safe

Your original photos and your settings in Lightroom are not modified by this process.

2. You'll Need Time

The migration to ON1 can take some time depending on the size of your Lightroom catalog (four to eight hours for most).

3. One and Done

The Migration tool is intended to be a one time transfer of the Lightroom catalog to ON1 Photo RAW 2019.

COMPATIBILITY

The ON1 Lightroom Migration Assistant supports Lightroom 6.1 and Lightroom Classic. Read the full system requirements [here »](#)

10 THINGS LIGHTROOM USERS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT ON1 PHOTO RAW

I see lots of questions from Adobe® Lightroom users who use ON1 Photo RAW for Effects, but find themselves using other features in ON1 Photo RAW more and more. There seems to be an increase in the number of people curious about switching from Lightroom to ON1 Photo RAW. So I put together this top ten list to help explain how ON1 Photo RAW was similar to Lightroom and how it is different.

1. Both Lightroom and ON1 Photo RAW are non-destructive photo editors. That means when you edit a photo in either Lightroom or ON1, the edits are stored as instructions rather than changing the file on disk. This makes them both fast and safe for editing photos. They both support raw photos from hundreds of cameras, as well as most of the file formats that photographers care about like JPG, TIF and PSD.
2. Both Lightroom and ON1 Photo RAW have robust file management tools for browsing, finding, and managing your photos. In short, they share many of the same fundamental concepts all non-destructive raw processors have.
3. Browsing vs. Catalogs – The first big difference you encounter between Lightroom and ON1 Photo RAW when you start is locating your photos. In Lightroom, you must import or catalog all of your photos from the beginning– a reason some people want to switch from Lightroom right

away. The import process is cataloging metadata and processing preview versions of each photo, so it may take some time. ON1 Photo RAW uses a browser based system to let you navigate to any drive or folder where your photos live to view and edit them instantly. So there is no need to import. This is great when you come back from a shoot and have hundreds or thousands of photos you want to view. Now just because there is no long cataloging process, it doesn't mean that there is no database. For each folder that you browse, the metadata for each photo is extracted and stored in a database along with a cache of previews of the photos so you can search and browse them even faster in the future. ON1 Photo RAW's cataloged folders take this a step further. By marking a drive or folder as a cataloged folder, we keep an eye on it all the time and look for new, changed or removed photos. This way you don't get the dreaded "missing photo" problems of Lightroom and other database-only apps. In the background, we also extract all the metadata and create previews so you can search across your entire cataloged folder and view the photos instantly. Lightroom has the concept of a catalog file. This is the document or database that stores all of your settings for the photos you have worked on. You may need to create multiples of these catalogs in some cases and have to open them separately and keep track of where they live. ON1 Photo RAW uses a single database to store everything so there is no need to create multiples or keep track of them.

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4. Viewing and Organizing Photos – Both Lightroom and ON1 Photo RAW start in a Browse module and it is where you find, view and manage your photos. Both Lightroom and ON1 Photo RAW only show you the photos and supported file types and hide things like documents that may be in the same folders. Both offer the ability to show a filmstrip and a larger view you can zoom-in on. In ON1 Photo RAW, the compare mode lets you compare and zoom multiple photos at once. It is very similar to the compare and survey view of Lightroom combined into one mode. Both Lightroom and ON1 Photo RAW offer quick ways to tag your photos for sorting with stars, colors or a like/dislike flagging system. Metadata about your photos can viewed and edited in both apps in a similar way. Both support XMP, EXIF and IPTC metadata and both subscribe to the Metadata Working Groups specification on handling metadata. Both offer ways to store lists of photos. Lightroom calls them collections, where ON1 Photo RAW calls them albums. Both offer a way to store search criteria. Lightroom calls them smart collections, where we call them smart albums.
 5. At the core of any non-destructive photo editing, is the basic raw processing. This includes basic adjustments like exposure, contrast, highlights, shadows, white balance, etc. Both Lightroom and ON1 Photo RAW provide similar basic adjustments with mostly the same names. You will notice the different ranges and results of these sliders between Lightroom and ON1 Photo RAW and this is largely because each app uses a completely different raw processing engine. For example, ON1 Photo RAW has a little more contrast by default than Lightroom. Beyond the basic Tone and Color adjustments, both apps offer a range of other adjustments like lens correction, noise reduction, black and white, split tone, curves, etc. Lightroom presents all of its available options as a long list of panes. In ON1 Photo RAW, you start with the essential panes and click on the Show More button to add the enhancements your photo needs.
 6. Both apps offer great tools for cropping, retouching and local adjustments. I think the local adjustments in ON1 Photo RAW are a little easier to understand and are bit more flexible. They use a layer-stack approach so it is easy to see all of the local adjustments you have added. Each layer has a regular mask that can be edited with any of the masking tools. This lets you combine a gradient and brush at the same time, or even use a luminosity mask.
 7. Both apps let you copy/paste or sync your edits across multiple photos. And both let you save presets. Presets are a little different in ON1 Photo RAW. First, it comes with many more presets. Second, you can preview your presets next to each other for each comparison. Saving a preset is less daunting as well, as there is no dialog with hundreds of checkboxes to configure.
 8. Both Lightroom and ON1 Photo RAW use similar keyboard shortcuts, so you don't have to relearn old habits when you change apps. Check out the ON1 Photo RAW [shortcuts here](#).
 9. Beyond the Basics – For me, the biggest difference between Lightroom and ON1 Photo RAW comes down to two big features only found in ON1 Photo RAW – Effects and Layers. They go way beyond the basic tone and color controls. ON1 Effects has 23 filters which include textures, borders, glows, skin smoother, lens blur, dynamic contrast and vintage, to name a few. You can stack and configure as many of these filters as you want to
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create your own unique look. Each filter has masking and blending options built-in so you can easily target a filter to just the right area or tonal range. Remember, this is all happening right on your raw data, non-destructively. ON1 Layers is also a difference maker. It gives you a lot of the power of Photoshop® right in your raw editor. You can combine multiple photos together, which is perfect for replacing skies, blending exposures or swapping heads.

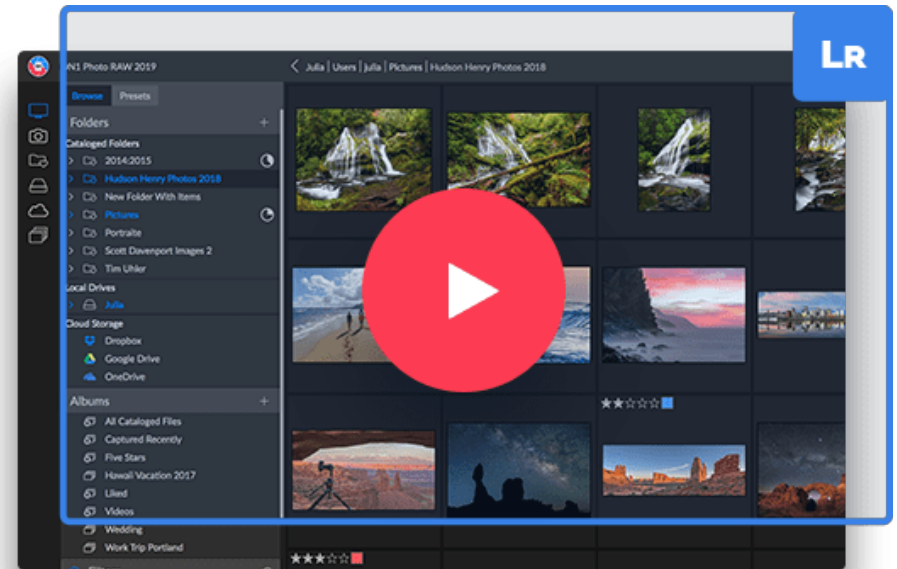
10. Getting Your Photo Out – Being non-destructive editors, you need to export a photo to share it. Both Lightroom and ON1 Photo RAW offer a powerful export feature where you can resize, choose the file type, watermark, sharpening, location, and naming options. ON1 Photo RAW uses the powerful Genuine Fractals® algorithm for resizing so it maintains all the detail of the original, no matter what size you export. With all that power comes a lot of controls you may also need to configure. If you simply want a photo of the same size, ON1 Photo RAW's quick export makes it really easy to export the current photo without having to go through the controls in the export dialog. Lightroom offers advanced slideshow, printing and web gallery output options. Currently ON1 Photo RAW users complete their workflows with other dedicated apps or websites for these features. Basic printing can be accomplished via the print dialog. Both apps also make it easy to send copies of your photos to other external applications like Photoshop.
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MIGRATING YOUR LIGHTROOM CATALOGS

A PRIMER ON RAW PROCESSING

In 2017, we added support for basic migration of Adobe® Lightroom catalogs. This migrated folders and photos as well as basic collections and metadata. It could also create copies of edited photos with the Lightroom edits processed or “burned” into the photos. It could not, however, do the final step, the holy-grail of migration, which is to migrate the actual Lightroom edits in a re-editable, non-destructive way. And for a good reason, it is a very difficult problem. First-off, there is a bit of technical ground we need to cover: processing a RAW photo into something pleasing in a multi-step process. First, you have to decode the often compressed data. Then comes the debayering, the step that actually converts the RAW data into an, albeit dark and ugly, RGB image. That’s the first bit of magic.

The second comes in actually making that photo look like what you saw through the camera. This includes adjusting the whitepoint, applying a gamma curve and other camera specific adjustments including color, camera profiles, reducing noise, correcting for hot pixels and lens distortion. That’s all just to get something that looks normal. Every RAW processor is different and uses many algorithms just to get to this point. When we start to talk about even the basic RAW adjustments like shadows, highlights, contrast, whites and blacks there is even more magic to accurately target those areas and do the right thing. So what does this mean when we talk about migrating the settings from Lightroom to Photo RAW, you may ask? Well, it means that it’s not a simple process of just copying the slider values from Lightroom. For example, a shadows slider value of +50 in Lightroom won’t yield the same results in Photo RAW. In fact it’s even more complicated, as the visual



results for a given control value change from photo to photo, they are adaptive. In order to get the same visual results, and that’s what we are really talking about here, we have to visually compare the results from Lightroom and determine what the corresponding settings would be in Photo RAW to give you the same appearance. And that has to be done for every photo! To solve this problem, we developed a fast, machine-learning, algorithm that does just that.

WHAT MIGRATES

Lightroom Feature	Migrated	Notes
Folders	Yes	All top-level Folders in Lightroom become top-level cataloged folders in Photo RAW
Photos/Videos	Yes	All photos/videos in the cataloged folders are added. This may include some photos that are not cataloged in Lightroom. Photo RAW only migrates available photos and does not migrate photos from offline volumes. Only files of supported file types and color modes will appear.
Versions	Yes	
Stacks	No	
Collections	Yes	All normal collections are migrated to albums. Collection sets become album sets. Smart collections are not migrated
Crop	Yes	
Spot Removal	Yes	Spot Removal is migrated to the Clone Stamp when used in Clone mode. When used in Heal mode it is migrated to the Perfect Eraser. The results will not be a pixel perfect match but will generally remove the same spots with comparable results.
Basics	Yes	Camera Profiles are matched for Adobe® and Camera profiles. Other LUTs or custom profiles are not migrated. Clarity is called Structure in Photo RAW. Dehaze is called Haze and will look a bit different. The quality of the results is very good for most photos.
Black & White	Yes	You will find this in the Black & White filter in Effects
Tone Curve	Yes	Parametric curve adjustments are not migrated, but point-based curves are.
HSL/Color	Yes	You will find this in the Color Adjustment filter in Effects
Split Toning	Yes	You will find this in the Split Tone filter in Effects. Colors will be close but not exact
Detail	Yes	There are significant differences in the sharpening and noise reduction algorithms. We did our best to align them but they may require manual adjustments to taste before output

WHAT MIGRATES

Lightroom Feature	Migrated	Notes
Lens Correction	Yes	We will apply automatic lens correction if we have a matching lens profile. Manual distortion settings are not migrated
Transform	No	Unfortunately Transform is very different and we couldn't find a practical way to migrate these settings. You can achieve similar results using the Transform pane in Develop in Photo RAW.
Effects	Yes	You will find these in the Vignette and Film Grain filters in Effects.
Calibration	No	
Red Eye	No	You can reduce red-eye automatically in the Portrait module
Graduated Filter	Yes	You will find these as adjustment layers in the Local module using the Adjustable Gradient. Range mask, Moire and Defringe are not migrated at this time.
Radial Filter	Yes	You will find these as adjustment layers in the Local module using the Adjustable Gradient. Range mask, Moire and Defringe are not migrated at this time.
Adjustment Brush	Yes	You will find these as adjustment layers in the Local module using the Adjustment Brush, including the Auto Mask function. Range mask, Sharpening, Moire and Defringe are not migrated at this time.

For most photos, where you have done basic raw adjustments, cropped, retouched and maybe added a couple of local adjustments, your migrated settings and visual results will be very close. There are some cases, such as JPG original photos, captured under difficult lighting situations with lots of edits that may not be as close. Keep in mind that your original photos and your settings in Lightroom are not modified by this process, so everything is safe.

START YOUR MIGRATION

PREPARING

Are you ready or thinking about making the switch from Lightroom to ON1 Photo RAW? If so, we want to make your transition as smooth as possible. We broke the most common method down into 4 steps to make it easier to follow along when making the switch from Lightroom.



Remember, Lightroom is a non-destructive editor so all the metadata changes and the edits you've made are in Lightroom's catalog file, not in the photos themselves. Fear not– we want you to maintain as much as you can from Lightroom so your time is not wasted. Our Lightroom Migration Assistant helps tremendously when you are ready to make the switch from Lightroom to ON1 Photo RAW. There are some key steps in this process to prepare first.

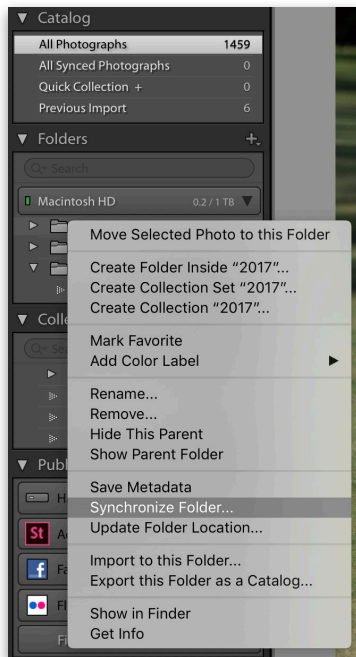
BACK UP YOUR LIGHTROOM CATALOG

We recommend you backup your Lightroom catalog before starting the migration process. You can learn more about how to backup [here »](#)

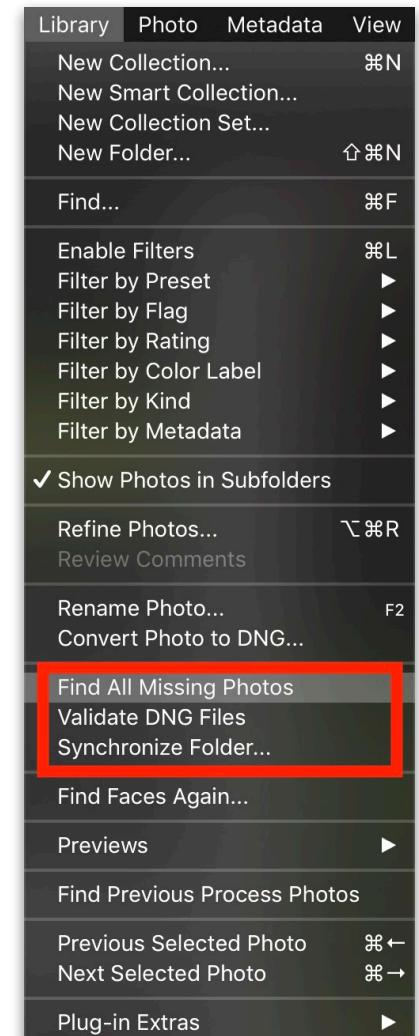
MIGRATING TO ON1

STEP 1: FIND YOUR PHOTOS

Connect any external drives or shares containing photos you want to migrate. Then use the Sync Folder command in Lightroom to make sure your Lightroom catalog and the actual files are up-to-date. This will add any photos that Lightroom is missing as well as remove broken links. In addition to connecting all drives, we recommend Synchronizing your folders, finding all missing files and validating all DNG files prior to starting the Lightroom migration process. To do this, right click on the folders on the left side of Lightroom's Library module and choose "synchronize folder":



You can also "Synchronize Folder", "Find all missing photos" and "Validate DNG Files" from the "Library" menu at the top.



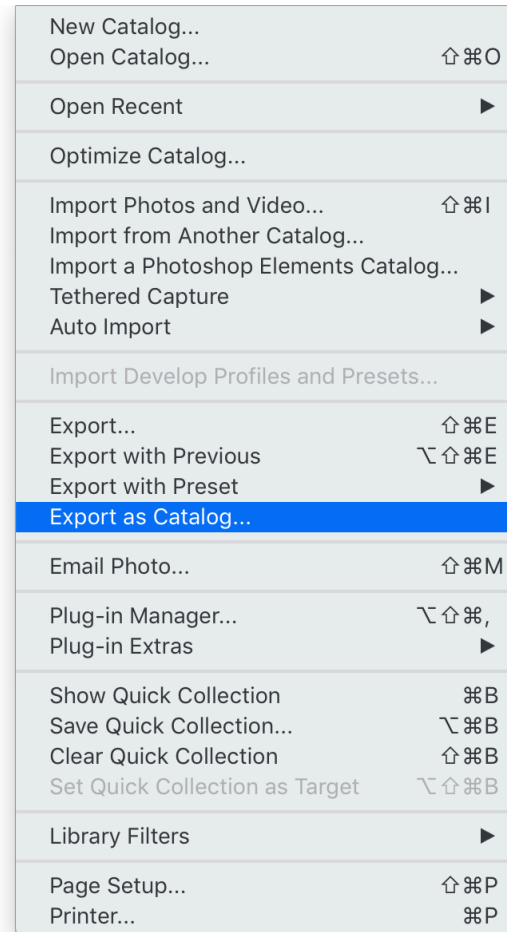
MIGRATING TO ON1

STEP 2: PRE-ORGANIZE!

Take this opportunity to remove any photos, virtual copies or collections you don't care about. It's also a good time to reorganize your folders if necessary. Keep in mind we will only migrate photos that have edits in Lightroom; photos in the catalog with no edits will appear in ON1 identical already.

Large Catalogs – If for example you have 10,000 photos in your Lightroom catalog and lots of edits... Yes, you can migrate the entire catalog, but it will take a very long time, and may not be practical. There is another option you may want to consider for the pre-organizing step.

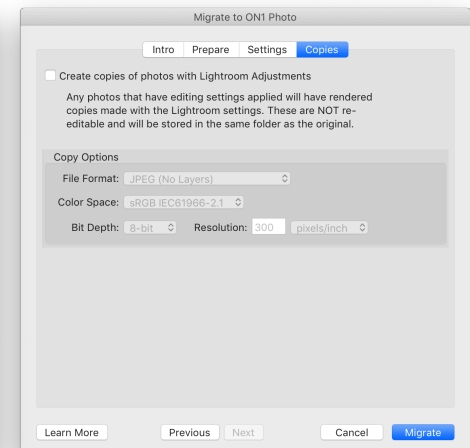
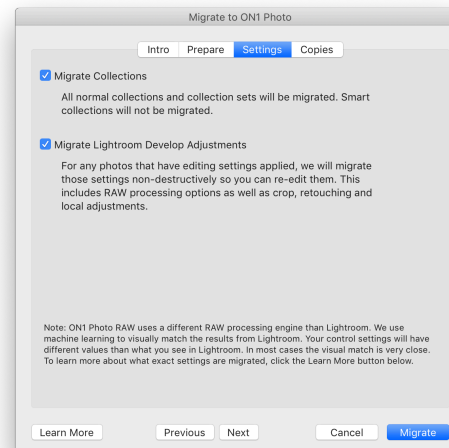
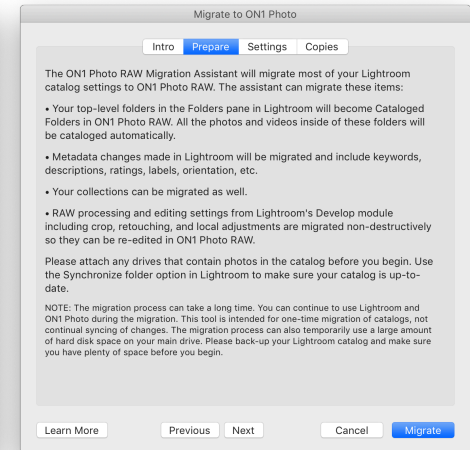
1. Use Lightroom's Filter and Search functions to narrow down the number of photos you want to select for migration.
2. In Lightroom go to File > Export as Catalog.
3. Open the new catalog and proceed to step 3.



MIGRATING TO ON1

STEP 3: MAKE THE SWITCH

- To migrate your catalog, open it inside Lightroom, and choose Migrate Catalog to ON1 Photo RAW from File > Plug-In Extras.
- Intro tab:** An assistant window will open up; the first screen has an introduction about the process. If you would like to see any additional up-to-date information on the Migration Assistant, click the Learn More button, which will take you to a help page on the ON1 website. Click Next when you're ready.
- Prepare tab:** This tab will provide you with more information about the process. Much of the same information is in this eBook. When you understand, click Next to view the Settings tab.
- Settings tab:** Choose if you want to migrate your collections and Develop settings. For most of us, you will want both of these on.
- Copies tab:** If you want to create rendered copies of your photos. This will make non-editable copies of any photos in Lightroom that have Develop settings applied to them. For most of us, you will leave this option off.
- Press the **Migrate** button and wait. The process can take a long time depending on the number of photos that you have. It does work in the background, just leave Lightroom open and it will do its work. It's a good idea to start this at the end of the day and let it run overnight.



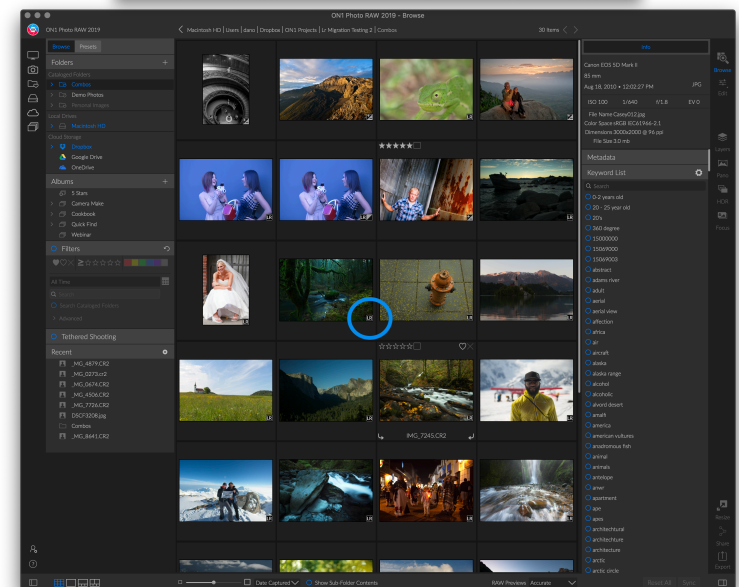
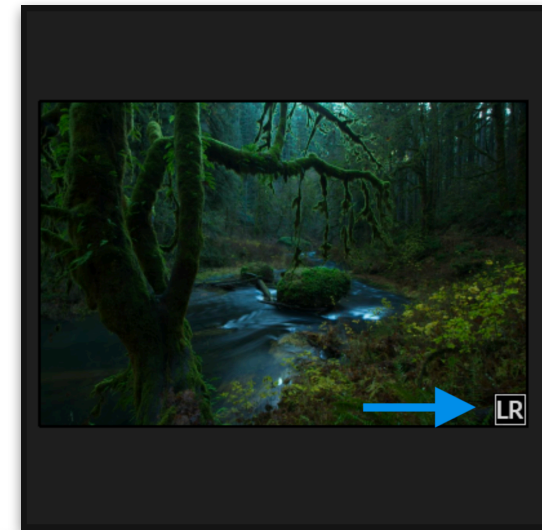
MIGRATING TO ON1

STEP 4: START TO EDIT IN ON1

Once the migration process is completed, you will see the same folders that are in the Folders section of the Library module in Lightroom in the Cataloged Folders pane in the Browse module of Photo RAW. You will be able to navigate the folders in the same way. Your collections will appear in the Album pane. When you look at photos they may have a small “LR” badge on their corner. This means they have Lightroom settings for them that have not been interpreted in ON1 Photo RAW settings yet. In the background we scan the photos and perform the translation. If the photos have the “LR” badge this hasn’t been accomplished yet. Don’t worry, when you open a photo to edit it, this is done on the fly and the photos appearance will update as well as it’s thumbnail and preview in Browse. All of the non-destructive settings will be applied and you can adjust them in the Edit module. If you want to remove the settings and start from scratch, you can press the Reset button.

IMPORTANT

The migration process can take some time, especially if you select the copy with Lightroom adjustments option. You can continue to use Lightroom and ON1 Photo during the migration process. The Migration Assistant is intended for one-time migration of catalogs, not continual syncing of changes. However, if you have more than one Lightroom catalog, you can use the Migration Assistant again on each catalog to merge them into one ON1 Photo RAW installation.



FAQ

Q: Who is it for?

A: It is for any and all Adobe Lightroom users that want to transfer their photos (with the non-destructive edits intact) into the ON1 Photo catalog, and keep them in a non-destructive format.

Q: What is it?

A: It is an automated AI-powered algorithm that takes the edits you have done in Lightroom and migrates them into ON1 Photo RAW, retaining the settings.

Q: What can it do?

A: It can migrate all of your non-destructive edits from Lightroom into ON1 Photo RAW and leave them in a non-destructive state. This allows you to view and edit the various sliders and settings the same way you can inside of Lightroom, but in ON1 Photo. It will transfer almost every edit you can perform in Lightroom including raw processing, crop, retouching and local adjustments along with folders, photos, albums, and metadata. This gives you the freedom to discontinue using Lightroom and not lose non-destructive work.

Q: How does it work?

A: After you install ON1 Photo you open Lightroom and click File > Plug-in Extras > Migrate Catalog to ON1 Photo. This will bring up a modal dialog as the first step. [Learn more about the migration process here.](#)

Q: How accurate is it?

A: It's quite good on most raw photos. For raw photos, where you have done basic raw adjustments, cropped, retouched, and maybe added a couple local adjustments, your migrated settings and visual results will be very close. There are some cases, such as JPG original photos, captured under difficult lighting situations with lots of edits that may not be as close. Keep in mind your original photos and your settings in Lightroom are not modified by this process, so everything is safe.

Q: How fast is it?

A: Not very. There is a lot going to make this happen and people tend to have tens of thousands of photos in their Lightroom catalogs. The process will take most users four to eight hours. On the plus side, it can run in the background and you can continue your normal work. A good idea is to start it at night when you are done with your work and by morning it should be done. Let me give you some deeper insights on how long it takes in our testing that you can apply to your scenario.

For these tests we are working on a couple year old mid-range Lenovo laptop with an Intel Core i7 processor. The photos are stored on a slow external USB 2 drive. This is pretty common set-up for many of us. For this test we had a catalog of 5000 photos. It's a mix of RAW and JPG with a few PSDs thrown in for good measure. We had edits on every photo. This would simulate a user who uses a preset on import. Keep in mind many users only apply settings (make edits in the Develop module) on a smaller percentage of their photos. In our test it took as average of 3 hours to complete the migration.

If you scale these numbers up to a more normal catalog of 50,000 photos where only 25% of the photos have edits, on the same computer it will take about 7.5 hours to complete.

How can you make it faster you might ask? The longest portion of the migration process is Lightroom generating the small JPG photo for matching, that's about 80% of the time spent. So to make it faster, only migrate photos with settings that really matter to you. If you have done super basic adjustments like only turning on lens correction or adjusting white balance or noise, reset those settings. You can batch apply them quickly again in Photo RAW after the migration.

Q: How much extra space does it need?

A: When the migration process is performed we need to make a small JPG version of your photo with Lightroom's settings applied for comparison. Each file takes about 125Kb, or about 625Mb per 5000 photos that are migrated. These are temporary files and are removed automatically over time. They are stored in the application cache which is located on your boot drive. Keep in mind we only need to create these temporary files for photos you have made Develop module adjustments to in Lightroom.

Beyond these small temporary files, we are not actually creating a new version of the image file on disk unless you select "create a copy." We will create a very small ~5KB .on1 and .on1meta sidecar file for each photo that serves as the host for those non-destructive edits (which are stored in the Lightroom catalog). The .on1meta files are also temporary and are removed automatically over time.

Q: Does it migrate my collections?

A: Any normal collections, the ones you drag and drop photos into, and their contents will be copied over as Albums. If you have used collection sets, their organization will be maintained as well. Unfortunately Smart Collections will

not be migrated, but you can create Smart Albums later inside ON1 Photo, which are similar.

Q: Does it migrate my presets?

A: No, it will not migrate over the Lightroom Presets. It will migrate the photos you have applied presets to and give you a very close visual match for the photo.

Q: What files/folders/file types get migrated?

A: All top-level Folders in Lightroom become top-level cataloged folders in Photo RAW.

Q: What does it not migrate?

A: Red eye correction, photo stacks, and adjustments from the Calibration and Transform panes. In ON1 Photo we offer a red eye correction tool, use subfolders instead of stacks and have our own Transform and Color Profile panes for making these corrections after the migration.

Q: Does it sync in both directions?

A: No, the Migration tool is intended to be a one time transfer of the Lightroom catalog. Once the migration of a catalog completes ON1 will write it to our database and that will not be overwritten if you attempt to migrate the same files again.

Q: I have more than one Lightroom catalog, will it still work?

A: Yes, you just need to migrate each catalog, one at a time.

Q: What happens if I already have non-destructive settings on the same photo in ON1 Photo RAW?

A: We will ignore Lightroom settings when you attempt migrate and the file will remain the same.

Q: What about Keywords? Metadata, Location, People, Keyword List?

A: All metadata on a per photo basis will migrate over, the master keyword list will get recreated from those photos. Keywords in Lightroom that are not associated with any files will not be migrated.

Q: Can I select which photos to migrate?

A: Yes and no. We recommend you audit your catalog first, and remove any photos you don't want or need to speed up the process. You could also select just the photos you want to migrate and create a new catalog with only those photos and then migrate.

Q: What happens to my original photos and Lightroom catalog?

A: Nothing, they will still live in your Lightroom catalog and all the settings will remain intact.

Q: What is a .on1meta file?

A: These are temporary sidecar files that hold the settings for the migration. They will automatically delete themselves once the migrate completes.

Q: Will Lightroom "Virtual Copies" be migrated?

A: Yes. All Virtual Copies in your Lightroom catalog will migrate over during the process as "ON1 versions."

Q: Will the migration process create and write files to disk for virtual copies?

A: No, they will be "ON1 versions" visible only inside ON1 Photo RAW.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

VIDEO TRAINING

Migrating from Lightroom to ON1 Photo RAW 2019 | [Watch »](#)

Leaving Lightroom Behind with Dan Harlacher | [Watch »](#)

ON1 Photo RAW 2019 Video Training | [View Library »](#)

WRITTEN INSTRUCTIONS

ON1 Photo RAW 2019 User Guide | [Download »](#)

[Knowledge Base »](#)

[Contact ON1 Support »](#)



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