



## Lightroom Bitesize: Exporting for the Web

When the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013 became law it effectively made images that are not clearly owned or copyrighted on the internet free to any takers - so now seems like a good time to make sure that you take all the steps that you can to prevent such 'theft'.

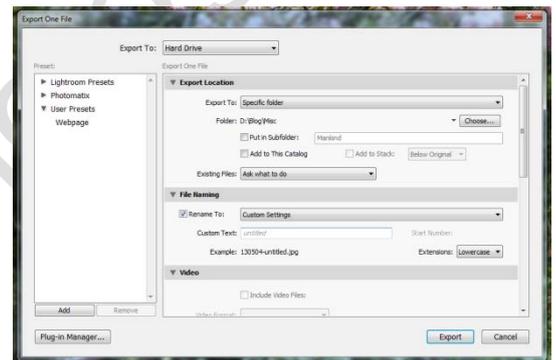
Fortunately Lightroom has the 'Export' function which can be set up in such a way to make all of your images being posted to the web difficult to use without permission.

Here's how to set it up:

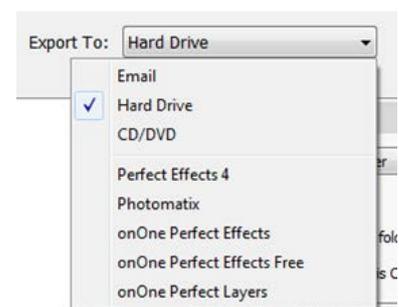
Once you have finished all of your post-processing you can export the image to another folder on your computer by going back to the Library module and clicking the Export button on the lower-left of the screen.



A new dialog box will open up - and it is here that we can create settings to help protect our images on the web.



First you need to decide where the image is going to be exported to. You have the choice of e-mail, hard drive, CD/DVD or any other compatible program that may be on your computer. Just use the drop-down box to make your choice. I will choose Hard Drive since I want to save it in a specific folder before uploading to the web.



*Note: You can also set up a Publish Service in the left hand panel of the Library Module to export to the Hard Drive. The process is the same as we will describe here but the destination folder will be fixed. This doesn't work for me but it's an option if you want it.*



Now you have to decide the destination folder (or Export Location, as Lightroom calls it) that the image is to be exported to. Again there are several options to choose from but I always like to put the images in a specific folder dependant on subject matter.

I change the Export to' option to 'Specific Folder and then use the 'choose' button to navigate to my folder of choice. If you save to similar folders every time you can also use the drop-down arrow to the left of the 'choose' button to see the most recent destinations.

There are then options to put in sub-folders and to add the image back into the Lightroom catalogue. I leave these blank.

I do, however, leave the 'existing files' option set to Ask me what to do' since it prevents over-writing of any previously saved images with the same name.

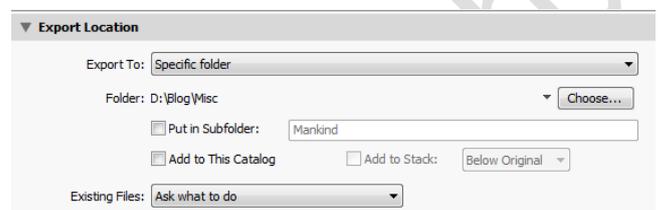
The next option is to rename the image file. Personally I like to rename the file with 'Date - Custom text name' but there are many, many options to choose from - or you may just want to use the filename your camera gave it. The choice is yours.

The next option down is video. But since this is about photography not video, we'll skip that.

We won't skip the next one though - file settings. For web use I would suggest that you use JPEG at a quality of 100%. I personally use the AdobeRGB colour space because it 'sees' more colour gamut - but sRGB will be fine as well. I never limit the file size because I will effectively be limiting it.....

..... in the next section: Image Sizing.

If you can limit the size of the image then you can restrict how many applications the image can have if someone uses it for their own use. I think that if you limit the longest size to between 600 and 1200 pixels it is large enough to show the detail of the image but small enough to stop it being used at anything larger than about A4 size. Leave the resolution at 240.





Although you have hopefully applied some sharpening in the Develop Module before exporting, Lightroom can add a touch more depending on the way the image is to be displayed. Since we are exporting for the web choose 'Screen' and 'Standard' as the amount in the Output Sharpening box.



Now here's an important box. Hopefully you will have added copyright information and image ownership either using your camera, adding information during the import of the image to Lightroom or by adding it to each image using the Metadata panel in the Library Module. What you can do now is decide how much of it will be in the file you are exporting. Personally I choose 'All' - but some are very guarded about their camera settings and just want the copyright data shown.



The next box is open to debate - do you add a watermark or not. I suspect that more and more will be following the introduction of the new law. And Lightroom is surprisingly flexible when it comes to adding a watermark.



Just check the Watermark box and then use the drop-down box to choose 'Simple Copyright Watermark'. When exported, the image will look like this:

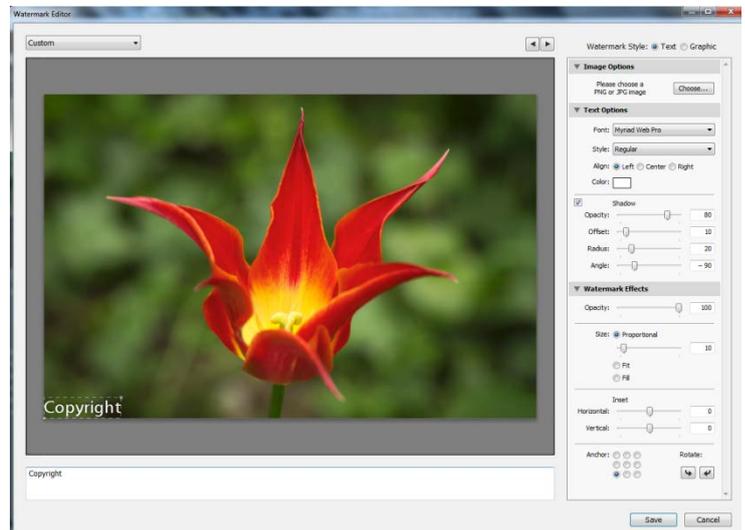


What it has done is taken the copyright information from the images EXIF data that my camera applies to every image - in this case my name - and has added it to the lower left of the image. Hardly inspiring and it could easily be cropped off. So let's do something a bit better.



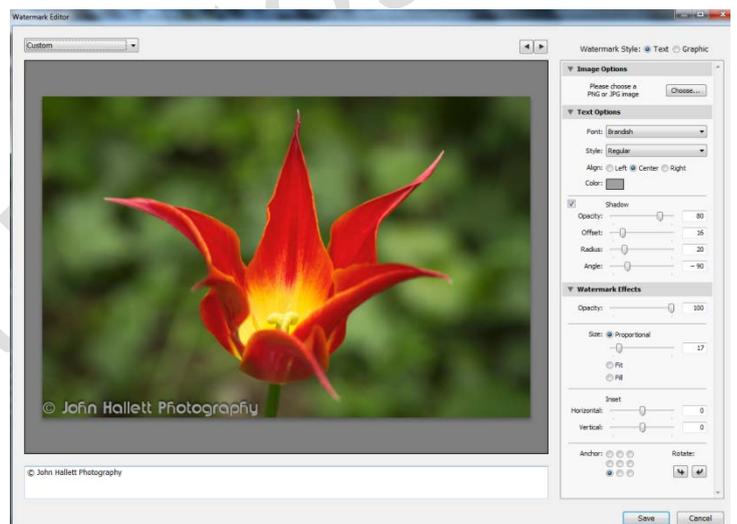
Use the drop-down box again but this time choose 'Edit Watermarks'. A new 'Watermark Editor' dialog panel will open up with far more options.

By default the text just reads 'Copyright' but at least add your name as well - or, if you want to be really posh, press ALT and then type in 0169 on your keypad and a copyright symbol © will appear.



You can now use the 'Text Options' box to adjust the font and colour and the 'Shadows' box to add a slight shadow to the text.

The problem is at the moment that the text is still at the bottom-left of the image where it could easily be cropped off. If you look towards the bottom of the dialog box there are options to anchor the text at any position and then to fine-tune the position using the 'Inset' sliders.



So you could have the text:

Here....



Here....



Or here....



Or at any position that you like.



Above the inset sliders is a 'size' slider so you can have the text bigger or smaller and, more importantly, an opacity slider so that you can reduce the impact of the text:



You may have noticed that we missed out mentioning the 'Image Option' section at the top of the dialog box. If you have a logo that you want to use instead of text then you can choose the file here.

Note: it is best if you create a transparent GIF image so that it doesn't obliterate part of the image itself. Here I have used a solid JPEG image of a white cross on a red circle that itself is on a white square. Even with the opacity turned right down it still takes over the image:





Here though, I have used my own logo in which the background is transparent and only the white areas are solid - this allows the image to still be seen clearly through the logo:



Even this could be cropped off if someone really wanted to steal it - but there has to be a careful fine balance between a watermark that gives reasonable protection to the image and one that ruins the image entirely

When you have chosen your personal watermark press 'Save' and give it a name of your choice. Then it will be the default watermark on every image you export.

Finally, in the Export dialog box, there is the 'Post-Processing' option. I only use Lightroom so this is set to 'Do Nothing' but if you want to continue processing in another application then you can choose which one here. However, this tutorial will output the image as a JPEG so bear that in mind.

So there we have a few ways of trying to defend our images from a new law that surprisingly makes image theft more likely. It's a strange country we live in.....

If you found this tutorial useful please let me know by leaving a comment on my Facebook page (or just 'Like' it) at <https://www.facebook.com/johnhallettphotographs/> . Thanks