

How do I back up Lightroom?

Ideally you'll be running a full system backup, but as far Lightroom is concerned, there are a few essentials to ensure you've included:

- The catalog(s) (*.lrcat extension)—holds all of the information about your photos, including all of the work you've done on the photos within Lightroom.
- The catalog backups—just in case your working catalog is corrupted.
- The previews (*.lrdata extension)—these would be rebuilt on demand as long as you have the photos, but if you have available backup space, you would save time rebuilding them. If you run a versioned backup system, which keeps additional copies each time a file changes, you'll want to exclude the previews as they change constantly and will rapidly fill your backup hard drives.
- The photos—in their current folder structure, in case you ever have to restore a backup. You'll want to include your edited files too.
- Your presets—includes Develop presets, Slideshow, Print and Web templates, Metadata presets, Export presets, etc.
- Your plug-ins—includes export plug-ins, web galleries and any other extensions that you may have downloaded for Lightroom.
- Your profiles—includes any custom camera profiles and lens profiles that you've created.
- The preferences file—includes last used catalogs, last used settings, view options, FTP settings for uploading web galleries, some plug-in settings, etc. The preferences could be rebuilt if necessary, but you would save yourself some time by backing them up and restoring them.

You'll find the default locations of all of those files in the Useful Information chapter at the end of this book. If you've saved all of those files and you ever have to restore from your backups, you can simply



Also check...

"Default File Locations"
section on page 461
and *"Where should
I store my plug-ins?"*
on page 125

return those files back to their correct locations, open your catalog, and carry on working as if nothing has happened.

Matt Dawson's Config Backup plug-in makes it very easy to back up presets automatically, along with your catalog, and it's continuing to be developed, so other files such as custom camera profiles are likely to be added in the near future. You can download it from: <http://thephotogeek.com/lightroom/config-backup/>