



Also check...

“Backup” section on page 115, “Where should I store my plug-ins?” on page 125 and “I have a long list of folders—can I change it to show the folder hierarchy?” on page 149

How do I move my catalog, photos and other Lightroom files to a new computer?

Firstly, you need to make sure that all of the essentials are backed up—the catalogs, photos, preferences, presets, plug-ins and any other related files. We covered these in more detail in the earlier Backup section. If you’re wiping the hard drive in the process, rather than running both machines at the same time, it’s even more important to make sure that you don’t miss anything.

For extra security, you may choose to write most of your settings to XMP as well. To do so, select all of the photos in Grid view and press Ctrl-S (Windows) / Cmd-S (Mac). That stores your most crucial settings with the files themselves, and can be particularly useful if you make a mistake.

It’s a good idea to make sure that Lightroom’s Folders panel shows a tidy hierarchy before you back up the catalog. This makes it very easy to relink the files if the folder location, or the drive letter for an external drive, changes. We covered those instructions earlier in the Library chapter.

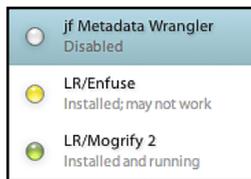
Once everything’s safely backed up, we’re ready to set Lightroom up on the new computer. There’s no need to install Lightroom from the CD and then run the updates, as the downloads on Adobe’s website are the full program. You can just download the latest version or trial, and then enter your serial number(s). If your license is an upgrade version, you may need the serial number from an earlier version as well as the Lightroom 3 serial number.

Transfer the files—the catalog, the photos, preferences and so forth—and place them in their same locations as the old computer. The locations for the preferences, presets and profiles, are listed in the Useful Information chapter. If you’re moving from Windows XP to Vista or 7, or from Windows to Mac or vice versa, some of the new file locations will change.

Then it's time to open the catalog. Double-click on the *.lrcat catalog file to open it, or hold down Ctrl (Windows) / Opt (Mac) to show the Select Catalog dialog when launching Lightroom and navigate to the catalog.

You might find that there are question marks all over the photos and folders because they're no longer in the same location, but don't be tempted to remove them and re-import, and don't try to relocate by clicking on a thumbnail question mark icon as you'll create a bigger job. Instead, right-click on the parent folder and choose Find Missing Folder... from the context-sensitive menu, and navigate to the new location of that folder. Relocate each top level folder in turn, until all of the photos are online.

Finally, you might find your plug-ins need reloading as the locations may have changed in the move. Go to File menu > Plug-in Manager... and check whether all of the plug-ins have green circles, rather than red. If any plug-ins are incorrectly loaded, remove and add them again at their new locations.



Also check...

"Lightroom thinks my photos are missing—how do I fix it?" on page 200 and "Plug-ins" section on page 399