

PHOTOSHOP RAW FILES

What is a RAW File?

A RAW file is the unprocessed file produced by a digital camera. Unlike a JPEG file where some image information can be lost, the RAW file will contain the maximum amount of data to produce the best possible image quality.

Advantages and Disadvantages

Because the file has not been processed by the camera it will contain the maximum amount of information. This will allow you to make all the decisions about exposure and white balance etc. The disadvantages are that the file sizes are larger and it will take time to carry out the processing yourself.

Opening RAW Files

Photoshop from CS onwards, Elements from 3 onwards and Lightroom all have a built in Camera RAW Interface which will automatically open when the RAW file is opened. Each camera manufacturer has their own version of RAW formats which can also vary between different models. If your camera is older than the Photoshop version you are using you should be able to open the RAW files without any problem. However, if your camera is newer, there is the possibility that the files will not be recognized and it will be necessary to update the Camera Raw Interface with the latest plug-in. This can be done by checking the Adobe website at:

www.adobe.com/support/downloads/detail.jsp?ftpID=4220

There is a chance that the plug-in covering your camera type will only work with the latest version of Photoshop so, if you are using an older version, you will still have the problem of not being able to open the files. If this is the case don't worry as there is another option of downloading and using the Adobe DNG converter. This is a free download from:

www.adobe.com/support/downloads/detail.jsp?ftpID=4214

This standalone program will convert the camera RAW file into the universal DNG file (Digital Negative File) which all of the Adobe Raw Converters will open. This program comes with full instructions and is very easy to use.

