

A beginners guide to Canon's Digital Photo Professional 4

Especially written for Canon EOS users



2020 Revision
DPP Version 4.12

By Nina Bailey

About the author

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Nina started her career in the retail sector of the photographic industry and then moved to Canon UK where she had a successful nine years looking after training, exhibitions and marketing both in the UK and also within Europe. This gave Nina an unrivalled knowledge of not only the Canon EOS system but also how to develop and enhance the skills of photographers of all ability levels. Whilst working at Canon Nina worked on the very first digital camera models, both compact and D-SLR, to enter the market and this has given here a unique insight about the work-flow and processing for digital images.

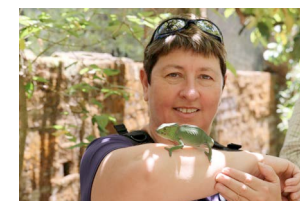
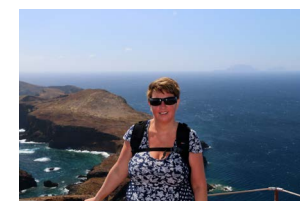
Nina started her own business in 1999, concentrating on training for amateur photographers. She is also at the forefront in developing and producing the new Online EOS Training Academy. As well as developing the online training academy and direct training of photographers, Nina is a prolific professional photographer producing images not only for the EOS Training Academy but for a variety of outside organisations.

In 2014 Nina started producing her own range of ebooks to bring photography training to an ever wider audience. Nina writes, shoots, produces all graphics and designs all the layouts of the books herself and this gives her a very good in-depth understanding of all the processes involved in producing digital images and how they are used.

In Summer 2015 Nina was appointed as Technical Editor of EOS Magazine, a role that she is doing in addition to her active role as the principal lecturer for the EOS training Academy and writing her ebooks.

Nina started taking images when she was very young and is still a very keen photographer both professionally and personally. Nina loves travel, landscape and wildlife photography and still occasionally shoots commercially within the travel photography market. However, most of the images she now shoots are for her own picture library for use in the books and articles that she writes.

Written, designed and images by Nina Bailey www.ninabailey.co.uk



Above: Some of the locations that my quest for images have taken me to along with some of the encounters with the local wildlife along the way.

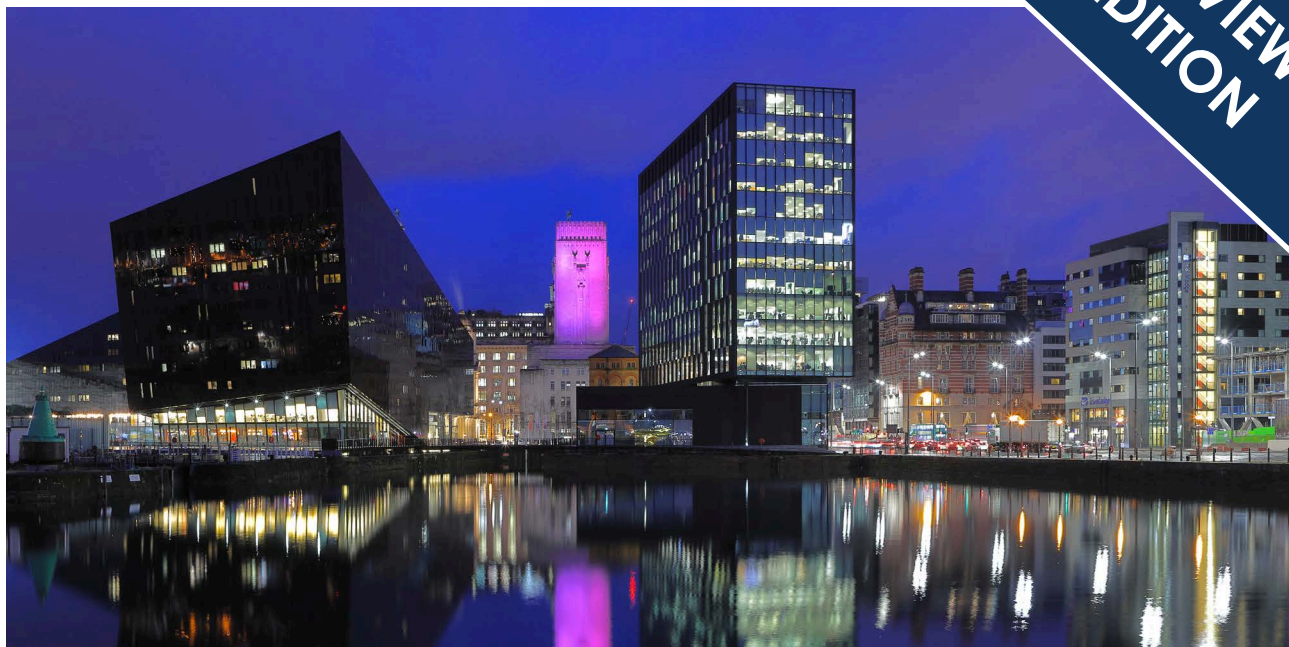
What's changed in this version

This book has been written based on the 2020 version (4.12) of the Digital Photo Professional 4 program which was launched to go with the EOS 1DX Mark III. If yours is not the latest version, it can easily be updated for free from the Canon website.

For those that have had several versions of the book (each time I update the DPP 4 book you get an invitation to update to the latest version for free providing you are on our email mailing list). I normally try and list where the main changes are, but this is a major update and I have added pages and amended text to reflect new options and changes within the EOS market, so there is not space to list all of it so have a flick through to see what's new. This has been a little bit more involved as an update as I have reformatted the text and layout a little bit. I have also added a reference section at the start which is bringing it into line with a lot of the other new books I've released recently.

The main additions from the program's point of view is adding in the RAW burst feature, which is currently only found on the EOS M6 Mark II, though in the normal fashion I'm sure it's going to be on lots of other models shortly.

I am also adding in the details for High Dynamic Range Perceptual Quantizer (HDR PQ) processing and the new High Efficiency Image File Format (HEIF). Currently this only apply to a relatively small number of models, however it's very clear from some of the information coming out from Canon that it's going to provide the new standard in the future.



The final item is the new Clarity option, which at the time of writing is only found on the EOS 1DX Mark III. However, in the coming months we expect to see it appear on other models.

I have also updated and expanded the section on the Digital Lens Optimization feature. This has now become a standard feature on the EOS R series mirrorless models and the latest M and DSLR models appearing from late 2019 onwards. It is now turned on as standard and so is worth a more significant inclusion, especially with the EOS R system, because on some of the RF lenses it is now a very necessary feature.

Digital Photo Professional software can be easily downloaded from the Canon website, look for

support and then go to the software section. Make sure you have your camera's serial number to hand as you will need to enter it to download the free software. There is a minimum screen resolution for this program which is: XGA (1,024 x 768) or more (1,600 x 1,200 or more recommended). Most computers will easily fulfill this but be aware that some netbooks and ultra small screen laptops may be too low and if so, the program will not load.

It does not matter what operating system you use, as Digital Photo Professional looks and works identically on both PC and Mac. I use a Mac and so the screen grabs are from a Mac system. If there are differences, for example when the keyboard shortcuts are different, I will explain this in the book.

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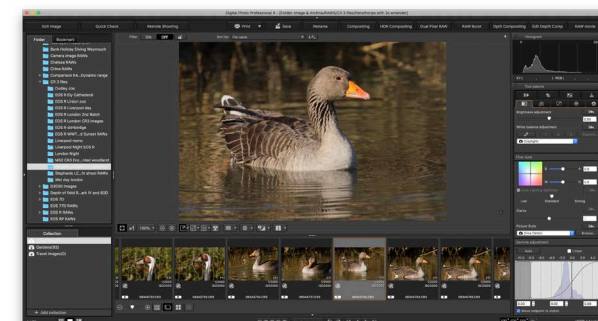
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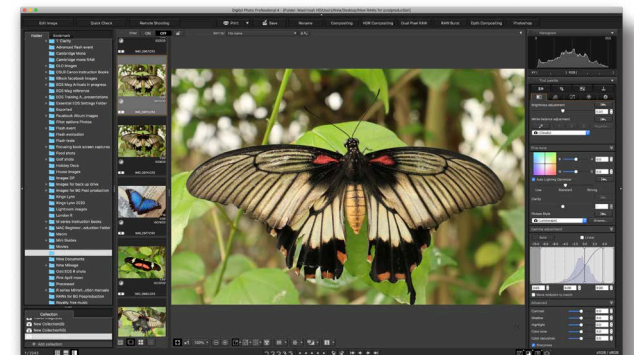
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Getting familiar with DPP

The thing most photographers struggle to start with in Digital Photo Professional is the navigation of the program. It's not that difficult but you do need to learn your way around. With any imaging program there is a methodology in the way that you need to work.

If you are new to digital imaging, you are going to find that this is very different to any other type of programs you use. The main reason for this is that when we use programs such as Word or Excel, we only really use text input so there is only really a text tool that we use to any degree.

When we start to use an imaging program we are not working with text and so we're using the mouse to do several different things. We also have more controls that can be used, and these may well be giving you controls that you've not yet come across and therefore some of the terms that are used can be difficult to understand. So, in this chapter we are looking to build up that basic familiarity.



Getting familiar with DPP



The icon for DPP 4 is shown to the left. When you click on it and the program opens it will show a screen that looks like one of the images to the right.

The top image shows DPP as it normally opens with the folders bar down the side and thumbnails. The bottom images are the other two options with a larger main image and thumbnails either along the bottom or down the side. The folders bar allows you to navigate to the folders on your computer.

To change the view of DPP you press the buttons at the bottom left of the screen underneath the folders panel. The left hand button gives the thumbnail view, the centre one gives the horizontal thumbnails along the bottom and the right hand one gives the thumbnails down the left side of the screen.

The very first time you open DPP you may have no images showing at all, as the program has not been pointed at any location where there are images. Once you have used the program it normally opens up showing the last lot of images that you were working on and maintains the last view that you were using.

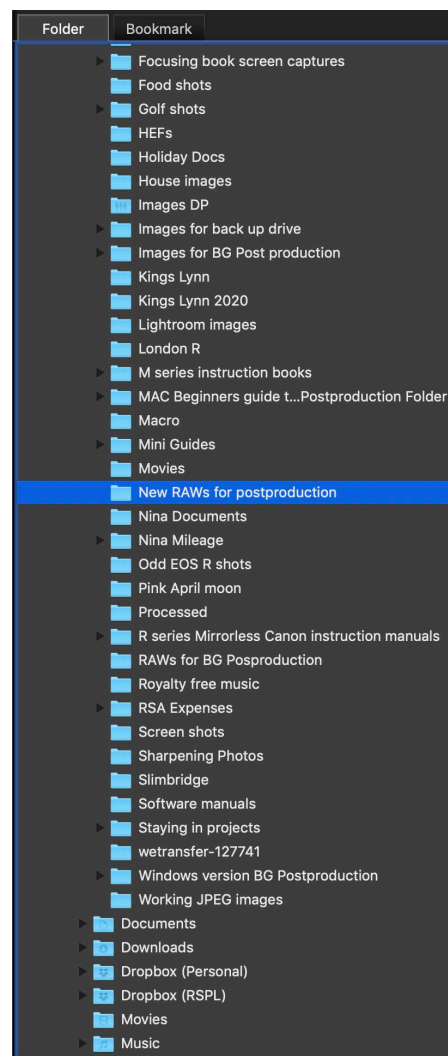
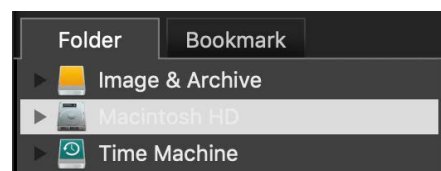
DPP is actually a very easy program to use, however, it does assume that you have a reasonable understanding of computers and how navigation works. If you are new to using imaging programs and computers then it's going to take you a little while to find your way around.



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Finding and displaying your images

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DPP is a little different to some of the other programs that you may encounter, as it does not automatically download and file your images for you. If you want the Canon software to do that then EOS utility can be set up to do this for you.

Personally I prefer to do the downloading and filing myself. As I said earlier this allows you to know where the images are being put and what the folders are going to be called.

When you first open DPP it may be showing the folder view a little bit like the image top left and you need to tell it where the images are. Exactly how it looks will depend on your computer. On the one to the left it is showing some of my external drives as well as the computer's main hard drive.

To the left of the hard drive is an arrow that when clicked will collapse the folders within it. A lot of those folders may well have arrows by them and when clicked collapses another lot of files and folders.

This is why knowing where the images are located and having a meaningful name pays dividends as it make them so much easier to find.

When I first download the images I tend to put them on my desktop, as it reminds me that they need sorting and working up. You may prefer to put them in the location where they are going to be filed.



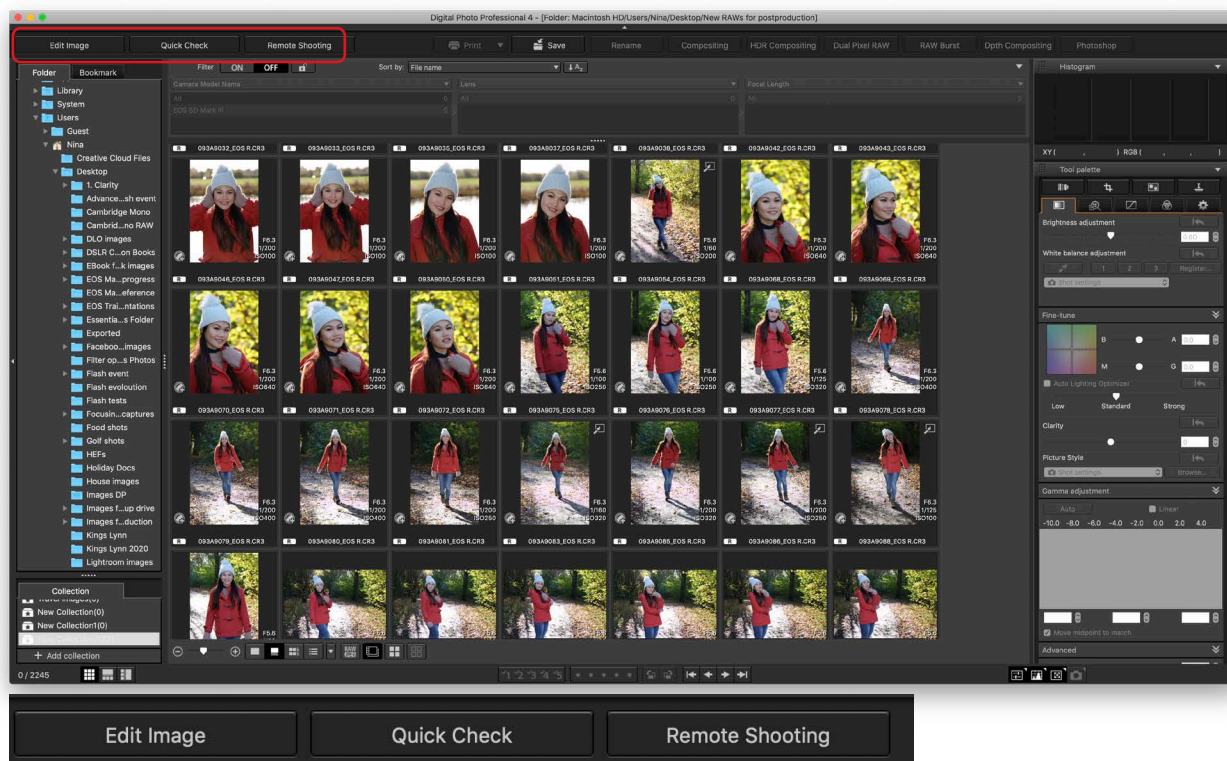
Wherever they are, once you have located them, clicking on the folder will open them up in the window as thumbnails.

The computer generally remembers where you were the last time that you used the program and so after the first time, the folders are normally visible and it will go to the last location that you used.

The thumbnail view is the easiest way to locate a particular image to work on. If you want to see a larger version of an image you can click on one of the other two view options or you can simply double click on it and this will open up the image in its own larger preview window, which is the option shown above.

About the Multi Layout window tool bar

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Digital Photo Professional version 4 is not a difficult program to use, however like most other imaging software it requires you to be familiar with the key buttons and controls so that you are set to the right screen and options for what you want to achieve.

The first controls that I want to look at are the main buttons at the top of the screen which are highlighted in the illustrations above. The window as displayed is the Multi Layout window and it is here that we can sort, rate and select the images that we want to use. This is the Multi Layout window that I will be looking at for most of the rest of this chapter.

It is now possible to edit images within the Multi Layout window without the need to have to go into the edit window anymore.

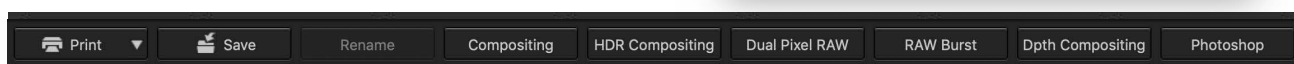
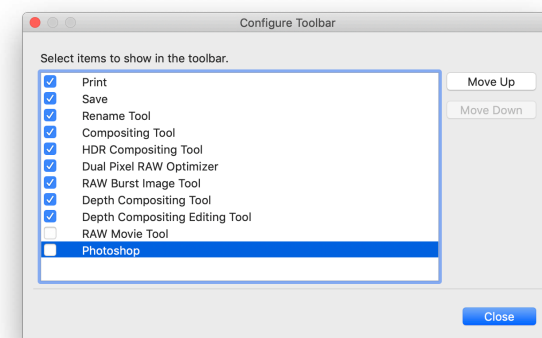
On this button bar you also have options to enter the Quick Check window that allows the sorting of images and a Remote Shooting button that allows you to operate the camera with it connected to the computer. More about these options in later chapters. You also have a Print button that allows you to print a selected image, even without converting it from a RAW file. There is also a Save

button that allows you to save the image as either a JPEG or a RAW file.

In the Tools menu, there is an option to configure the toolbar, see illustrations below. The first options and Print and Save are always displayed but the others can be added to, giving direct access to the Rename, Compositing, HDR tool, Dual Pixel RAW, RAW Burst, Depth Compositing, RAW movie tool and also the transfer to Photoshop command.

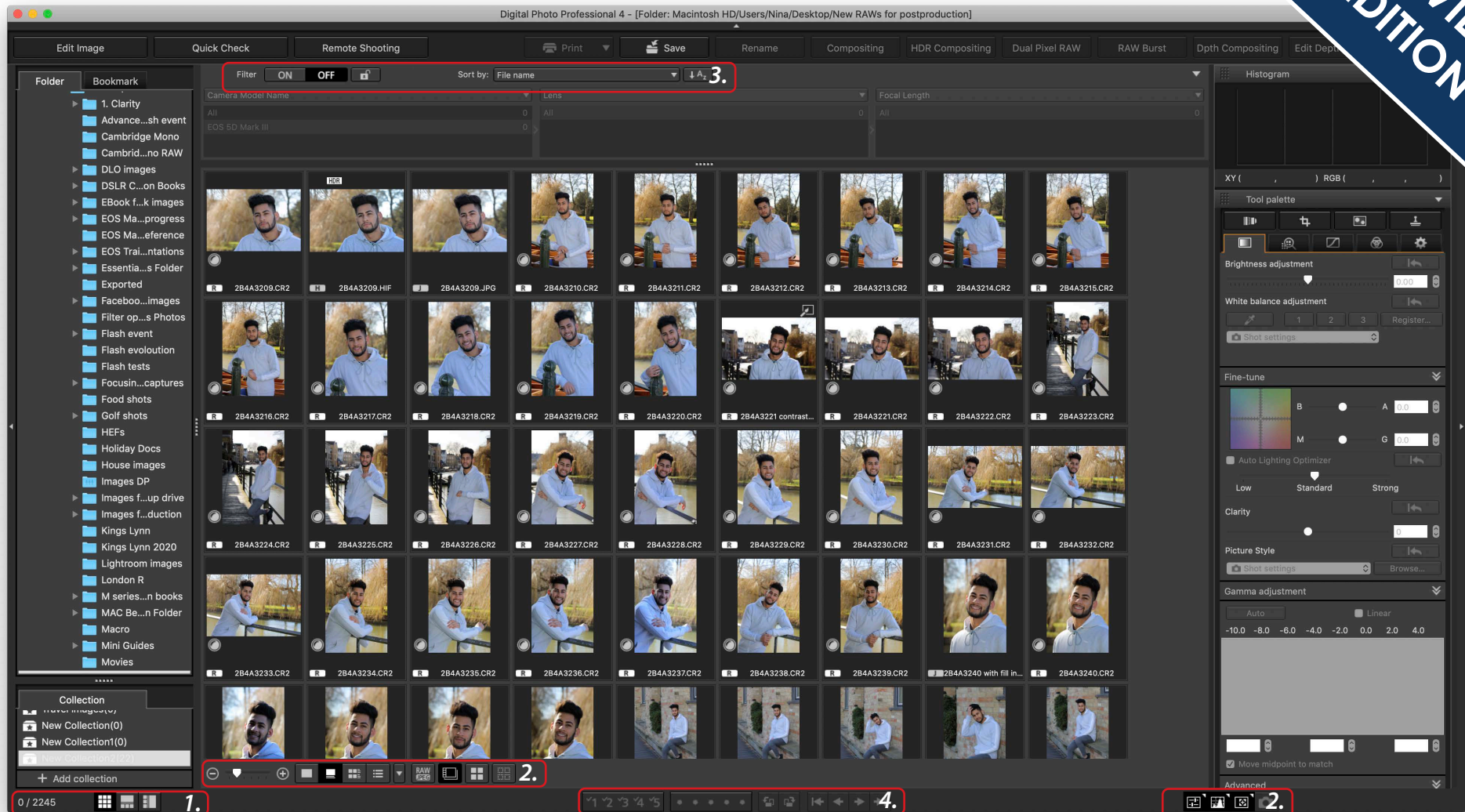
I generally work with them all available except for the RAW Movie and Photoshop which is done by ticking all the options in the configure toolbar window. It is worth setting the buttons up you are likely to use as it makes the operation of the program much easier.

This can minimise the amount of times that you need to enter the menus to find a specific control, I will look at these options later in this book.



About the thumbnails control panel

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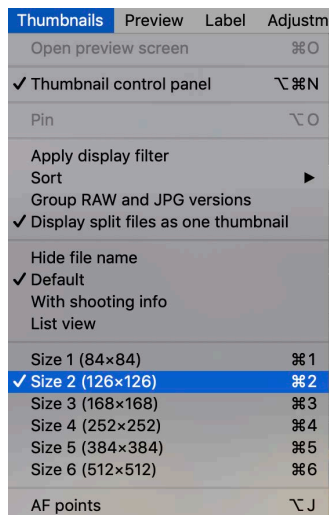


The thumbnail window is the easiest place to locate the images that you want to use and it has its own set of controls. If you switch to the other two displays many of the controls change and I will look at those shortly.

If you want the other displays then the controls that we have already looked at, as shown above, shown as 1. on the main display above, will enable you to change between the display options. The numbers to the left show how many images are selected out of the total number within that folder.

You can only look at the images in one folder at a time. Unless you use the Collections option that we look at later in the book. The next Collection of controls marked as 2. on the image above are the controls used for how the thumbnails appear.

About the thumbnails control panel



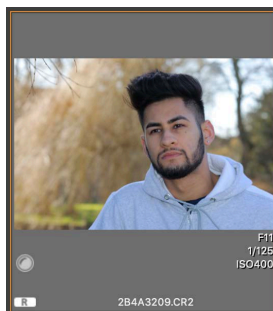
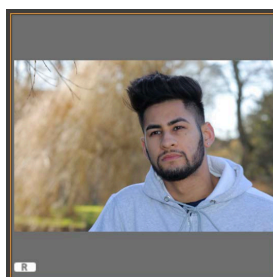
On the far left of this area there is a slider at the bottom of the screen, as highlighted in the image above, or you can click on the + and - buttons to change the size of the thumbnails. It is also possible to get the thumbnails to appear as different sizes from the thumbnails menu at the top of the screen where there is a choice

of set sizes available. The other options can also be set from this menu, though it is quicker to use the tool buttons.

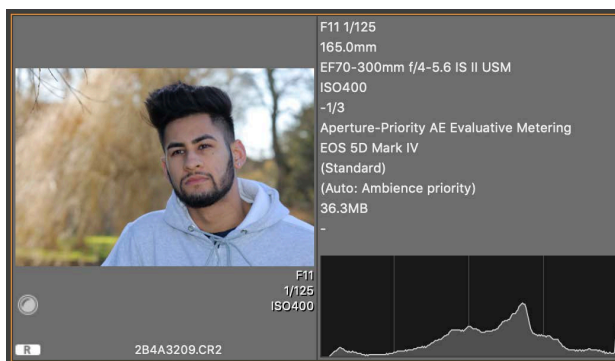


The next two options along allow you to choose the information that will be displayed along with the thumbnail. If an image is selected it will have a lighter grey surround and have an orange box highlighting it.

It is possible to select multiple images using keyboard shortcuts which I will look at later. The size and shape of the thumbnail areas change to accommodate the information shown.



showing at the top of the surround. Like so many things within the Canon system it is important to look at the information displaying as it tells you all you need to know.

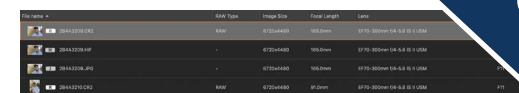


The third button gives the display above top right that has more shooting options displayed, again which can be modified using the drop down arrow

The first two options allow you to choose how the image should be shown, with or without basic shooting information.

I personally prefer the basic shooting information showing. It will also show you certain other things such as if a lens correction has been applied which is what the circle on the left-hand side is indicating. If the image has been taken in the new HDR PQ format then it will have HDR

to the far right. There is also image shown.



The final button gives a list with the shooting information displayed. This is a fairly new option in DPP and seems to be evolving with each release of the program. It allows you to sort the images by clicking on the column headings. It also works with the filter options above, shown as number 3 on the previous page. I will look at these options shortly. In this view it is not possible to change the size of the thumbnails.

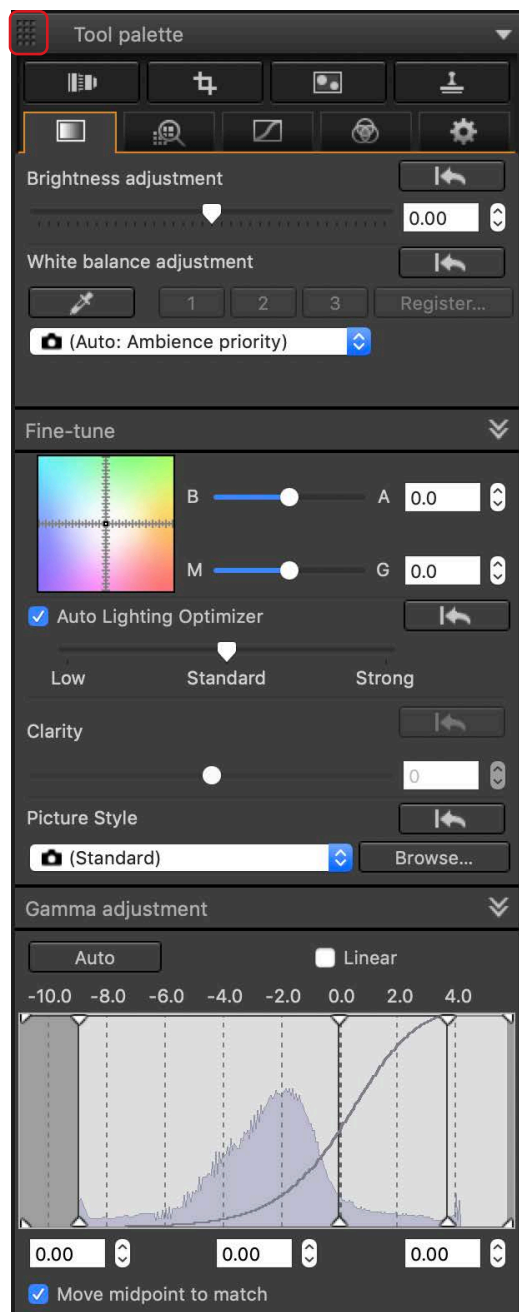
I showed this option earlier when I was discussing the difference between RAW and the new CRAW format as it is one of the few places where it is easy to distinguish between the two types of files.

When this option first appeared, I did not actually see that I would be using it very much although I do find myself going here now to get a lot more information about the image and things such as the focal length of the lens. For me this option is very useful as I need to pick lenses taken in a specific way or particular lens however a lot of people may not find the option so useful.

Some of the new changes do make DPP a lot more similar to Lightroom to use and I suspect this is why some of the options have appeared.

About the thumbnails control panel

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The final control on the thumbnail screen are the options to bring up the palettes as shown above. These become black when the palette is displayed and grey if not displayed.

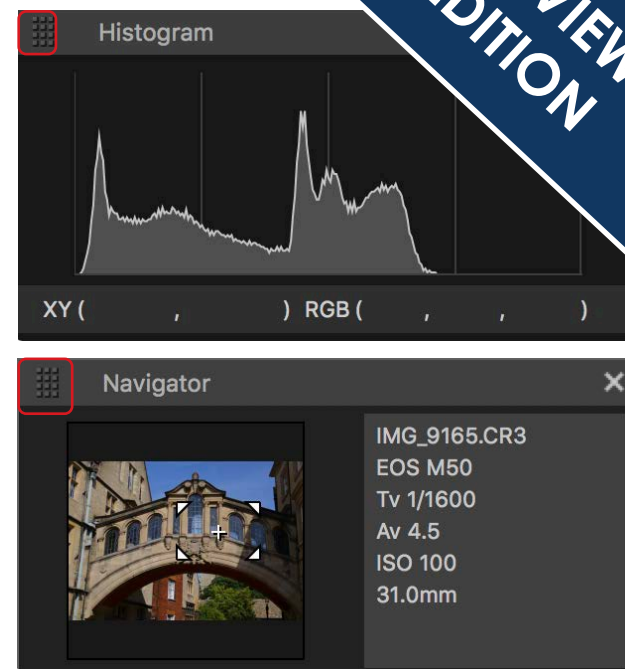
The first button will bring up the tool palette (shown left) where adjustments can be made to an image, this actually works in any of the three viewing options, however, normally you would go to the edit window to edit images. However this can be useful if you need to apply a single correction to all the images in a specific folder, for example to convert all of them onto monochrome.

Clicking on the button brings a palette up and then clicking again on the button closes it. The palettes can be dragged with the mouse to wherever you want on the screen, or they can be docked which is the default.

The second button brings up the histogram display as show at the top right. If you make any adjustment to a single selected image the histogram will change to reflect those changes.

The third button along brings up a navigator panel as shown above, which gives basic information about an image. If you have zoomed in on an image the navigator controls shows where you are correctly looking at, the size of the area and can also be used to navigate around the image you are looking at by dragging the square shown.

The final button in this cluster is a camera button which is only used to go between the remote camera settings and the image display when you have the program set up for remote capture.



At other times this control is greyed out. To choose between the pallets being docked in their normal places or floating where you can move them around you simply double click in the checkerboard pattern top left of the control which I have highlighted on each of the palettes.

Double clicking again puts them back to where they were. It is a personal choice which pallets you have displayed and whether they are floating or docked. If you're only working with DPP open then floating pallets can work well however if you have several programs open at a time it becomes quite easy to lose pallets. The other time where floating pallets can make sense as if you work with twin screens.

About the Multi Layout window

The other alternative to the thumbnail display is called the Multi Layout window. There are two options to choose from and they are selected from the bottom left hand corner of the screen as shown to the right. The centre button gives the left hand display above and the right hand button gives the display on the next page above. In practical use they work the same way but you have the choice of the thumbnails going along the bottom or down the left hand side. These used to be for just previewing images but you can now also edit in them.

Which of the two displays work best may well be governed by the shape of the monitor that you use. The more traditional squarer monitors suit the layout shown on this page with the thumbnails running along the bottom. If you have a wide-screen monitor then often the thumbnails down the side with the image larger to the right will fit the screen better.

The position of the controls varies a little between the two displays. The controls that I have already looked at work exactly the same in both of these two other windows so I am not going to repeat what I have already looked at.

Once in this screen you have some additional options appear as shown bottom left.

The first one is the magnification of the main image. The default is for the image to fit the screen, but there are options to view at magnifications from 12.5% up to 400% and also a x1 or actual size options.



The next buttons along allow you to zoom in or out on the image simply by clicking on the plus or minus buttons.

When zooming in it is important to be realistic, so often I see people assessing images with the screen at 400% this is viewing the image at a ridiculous size all it allows you to do is to see the individual pixels. Generally the highest magnification that I

would work is 100% and this is only normally when I am setting up Sharpening for the image. At other times I'd work with the image full screen unless of course checking for sharpness but even then 50% to 100% is the most I would normally go.

Going higher than this, is just viewing at a magnification simply for the sake that you can do it, it's not giving you any useful information.

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About the Multi Layout window

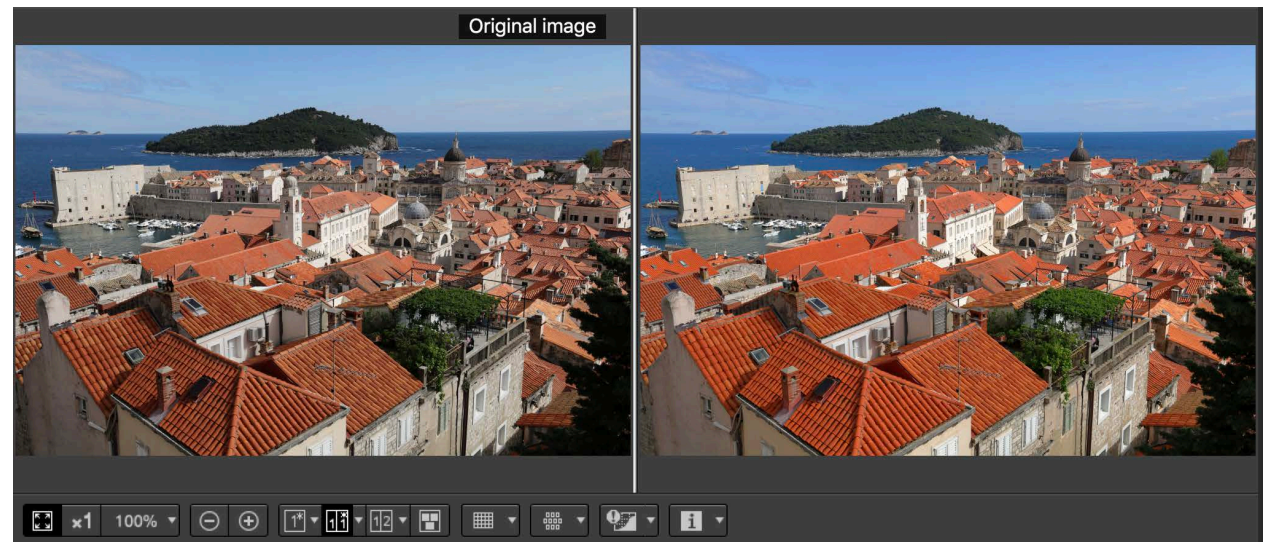
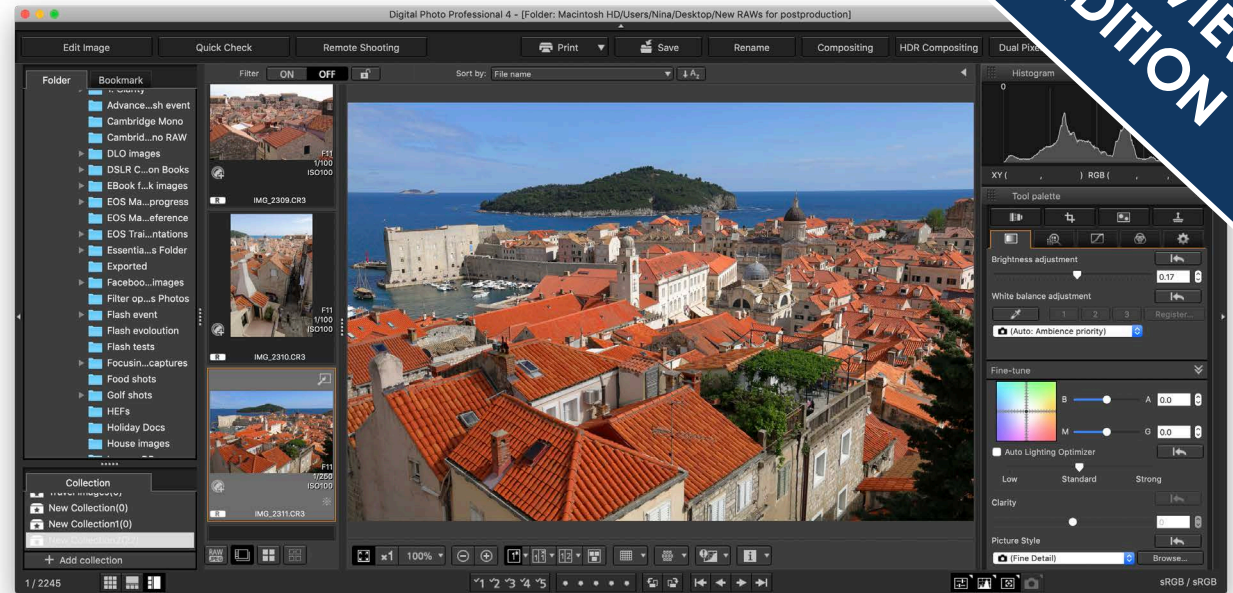
The screen grab to the right shows the Multi Layout window with the thumbnails down the left-hand side. Remember if you click the bottom right hand corner of the window you can drag it to whatever shape you want it. If you have a wide-screen monitor, the wider view with thumbnails down the left may well fit a lot better.

Note that the position of the controls that I am looking at now changed to be down the bottom rather than sandwiched between the thumbnails and the preview.

The next buttons (highlighted on middle screen grab) allow you to choose how you want the images to display. The first button with the 1* will allow you to see just the one image in the main pane. The arrow to the right of this allows you to choose between seeing the image in its original state or the image if it has been edited.

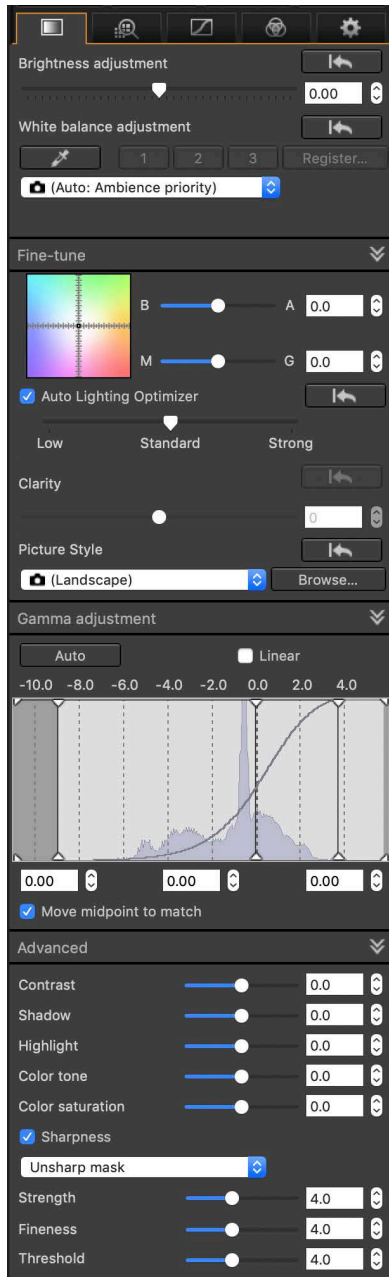
The next button along which has 1 and 1* allows you to compare the original image with the adjustments that you have made to allow you to see if the corrections that you have done have actually improved the image as shown to the right at the bottom.

The original image is marked at the top of the screen and is normally the one on the left. The drop down arrow allows you to choose how they are positioned with options for side by side or above one another.



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Basic adjustment tool palette



The basic adjustment tool palette is the one that you are likely to use to adjust images most of the time. It allows all the normal imaging adjustments to be made from one location. The other tool palettes are used, but nowhere near as much and they tend to be used for more specific applications.

The tool palette is split into sections, at the top is the brightness adjustment. This allows you to make the image lighter or darker which is going to be one of the most commonly used settings on the palette. The brightness adjustment is very straightforward you simply have a slider to make the image lighter or darker and a reset option. What the brightness adjustment is doing is almost the same as using exposure compensation on the camera. You do need to remember that it is doing an electronic adjustment rather than a physical adjustment using shutter speed and aperture so it will have an effect on the image quality whereas exposure compensation in the camera will not.

Underneath you have the white balance adjustments which are a little bit more complex because you have several ways that you can adjust. White balance is allowing you to change the colours of the image and the controls you have available replicate the options on the camera.

The fine tune section allows you more subtle adjustments for the colours within the image. It's doing the same thing as the white balance shift that is available on the camera. The other option you have within this section is to change the Auto Lighting Optimizer setting. This is on the camera and is turned on to standard automatically, but you have the option on the computer to turn it down, up to strong or disable it. The option underneath it, Clarity is a new control which is only appeared in this version of Digital Photo

Professional. It will be greyed out with the camera set to Professional. Currently the only model in the range to support this is the EOS 1DX Mark III, although by the end of the year there will probably be other models that support this feature.

The Picture Style options are the same as on the camera and you also have the option to browse to use several other Picture Styles that are available within the program and you can also import your own Picture Styles that you have created within Picture Style Editor to apply to your images. Picture Style Editor is another piece of free software from Canon which allows you to create an adjustment that can either be done on the camera at the time of shooting or within post-production. The Picture Styles are created using a RAW image that you have taken. Picture Style Editor can be a great tool for photographers that always photograph the same type of subject as it can allow them to produce much more finished images in camera which saves a lot of post-production time.

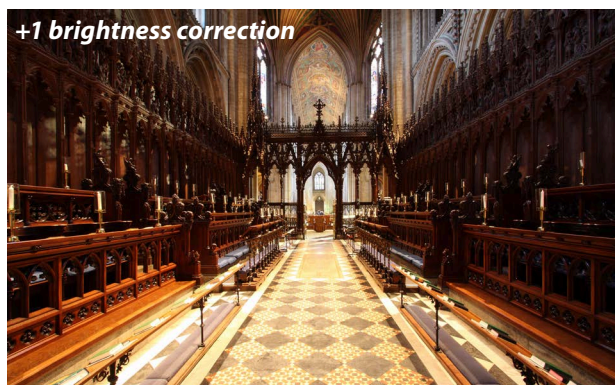
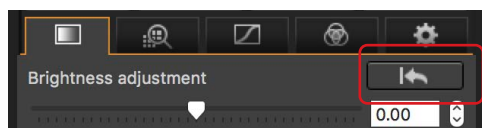
Moving down the adjustment tool palette you have the Gamma adjustment which allows you to adjust using the histogram and this is unusual as it uses both horizontal and vertical axis for adjustment.

Underneath the Gamma adjustment we have the advanced options, and this allows you to adjust Contrast, Colour Tone, Colour Saturation and Sharpening controls which are actually all part of the Picture Style setup. There are also options here to adjust Shadow and Highlight detail which you will find you will use a lot.

The rest of this chapter will go through these options and explain in depth how to use the settings and also how they are applied to images.

Brightness adjustment

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The brightness correction is the easiest of all the adjustments to understand as it simply allows us to make the image a little lighter or darker. Moving the slider to the right will make the image lighter and to the left will make the image darker. The slider works in very fine steps and displays decimally. So 0.33 is a third of a stop, 0.67 is two thirds of a stop.

You can see in the images to the right that this can be a very subtle control. Although the image above looks OK, if we lift the image by just 0.67, it just lifts the shadows areas a little without making the rest of the image too bright.

Its important to try and get the image as close as possible to the correct exposure in the camera at the time of taking the image. However, this is great for those small final corrections to get the image at its very best.

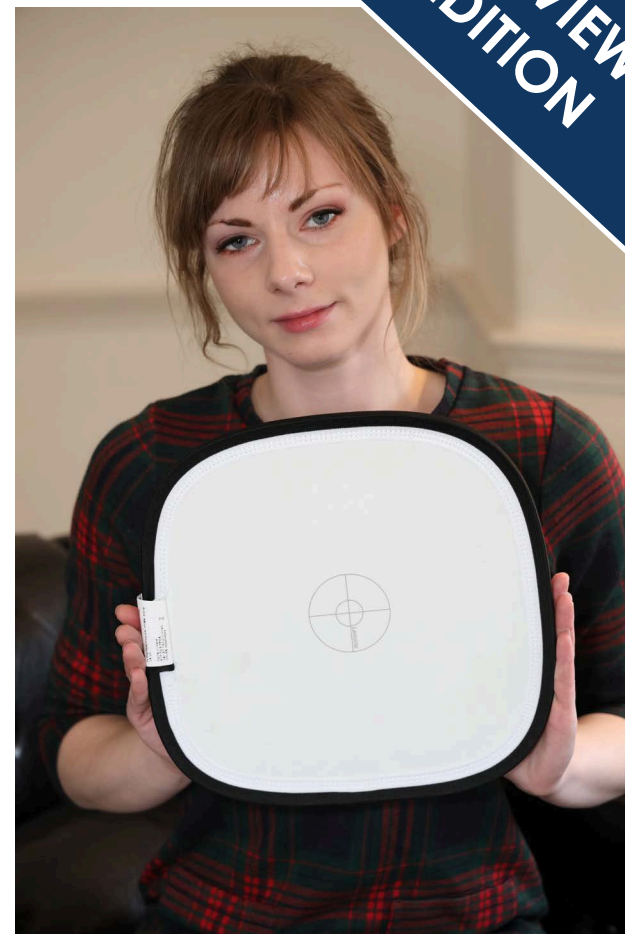
About the click white balance

The other time that click white balance can be very useful is for those that shoot subjects where the colour needs to be very accurate. Portraits are a good example of this as often shot in mixed lighting conditions and any colour cast on skin normally shows up quite badly.

The image to the right is from a shoot that I did and there was a mix of artificial lighting with some flash but also some daylight coming in. When you have a mix of lighting it can be difficult to get the colours spot on. The model is holding a Lastolite light grey card, which is grey on one side to give you a target for exposure and white on the other side which is ideal to allow you to do a click white balance.

Obviously you don't want that target in every single shot but if you use it for the first in the sequence you can then set up the white balance on that image and it is possible within Digital Photo Professional to save the recipe, in other words the adjustments used for that image, and then paste that recipe onto all the other images taken at the same time which will have exactly the same colour. I will show you later in the book how to work with recipes. This works well for studio shooting and generally when you are shooting indoors. Shooting outdoors the light can be very variable and fluctuate from one image to another and so it is of less value.

The only correction between the two large images here is simply the click on the white in the picture. The images along the bottom are from left to right AWB-W, Daylight, Cloudy, Tungsten, Fluorescent and Flash. None are the right white balance.



Picture Style adjustments

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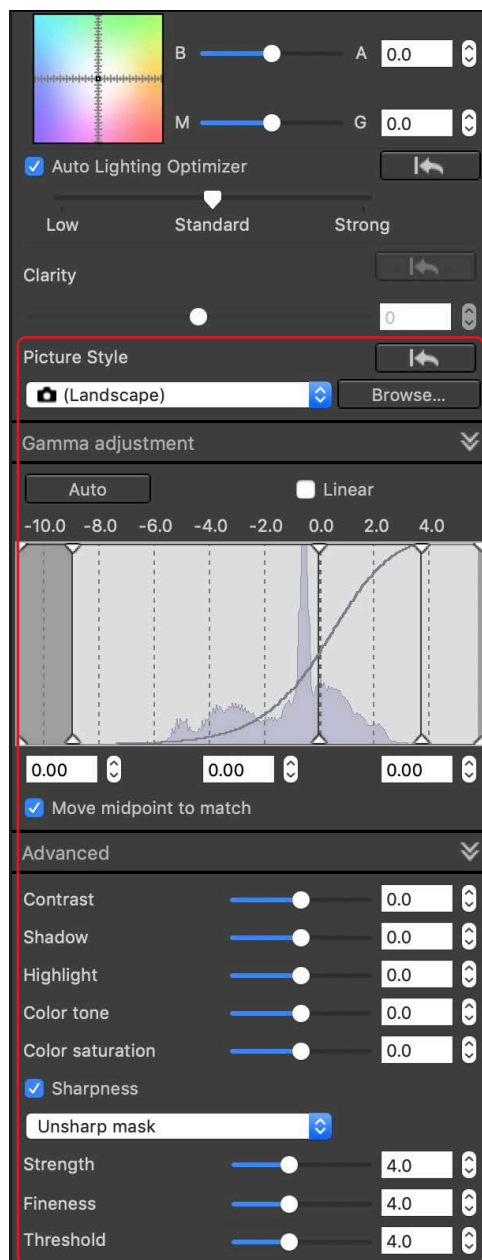


The Picture Style controls the image processing that goes on inside the camera when you shoot a JPEG to make it look as good as possible in the camera. A lot of photographers who shoot RAW assume that the Picture Style is irrelevant to them as they are shooting RAW and can do everything in the computer later.

To a degree this is true, all these things can be done when you process the RAW file, but if you set them correctly on the camera at the time of shooting you may find that there is little or nothing to do to each image when you get them into DPP, as the program applies all the things that were set on the camera at the time of shooting, including the Picture Style.

This can significantly cut down the amount of work that you have to do to each image. Within the Picture Style there are adjustments for the Contrast, Saturation, Colour tone and Sharpening, though these are only available when the advanced tab is expanded.

On the computer you also have two additional controls for Shadows and Highlights which are not available on the camera.



Understanding the Highlight option

This is a good example of the normal time that the Highlight option may be used to help bring the brighter parts of the image down to a more acceptable level. The Highlight adjustment is mostly used in the minus range and it is only going to affect the brighter parts of the image. What the plus settings here does show well is that it does affect the sky but the boat in the foreground is mostly unaltered by the adjustment.

This is a useful control where the sky is just that little bit too bright and you're losing some of the more subtle cloud detail. It is a picture where if a polarising filter had been used at the time of shooting, the cloud detail would be more pronounced as the blue sky would have gone darker. Also waiting for the sun to come out and shine on the boat would have also made a difference in the overall exposure and made the sky go that little bit darker. The image below has had slightly more adjustment using the Auto Gamma, Contrast, Shadow and Highlight adjustment to produce a slightly more finished image.



Standard Picture Style



Landscape Picture Style



Standard Picture Style +5 Highlight



Landscape Picture Style +5 Highlight



Standard Picture Style -5 Highlight



Landscape Picture Style -5 Highlight

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