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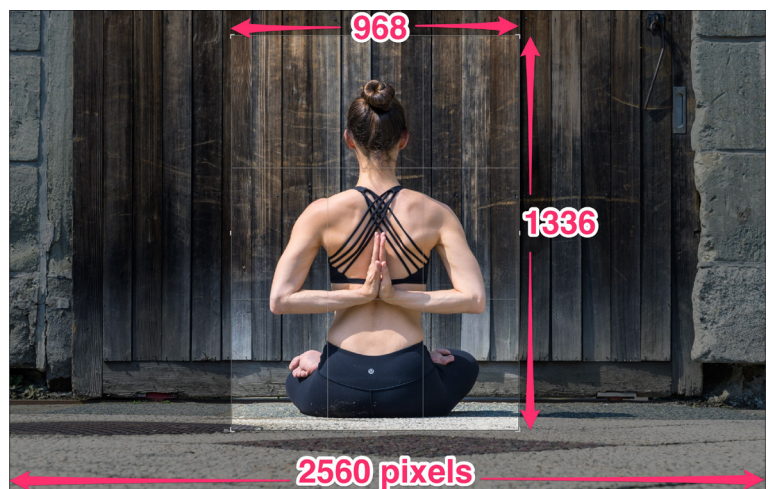
Hyper-Smart Workflow

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Let's explore how we can extend the utility of Lightroom Smart Previews (which allow you to adjust your images even when the hard drive that contains the originals is not available) so that they can be used in Photoshop while you're traveling without the hard drive that contains your original images. This way, you can produce complex images that will be updated once the original high resolution raw file becomes available. We can accomplish this by using a Linked Smart Object in Photoshop that points to a Smart Preview-derived placeholder image. Once the hard drive containing the original file is available, we can update the Linked Smart Object so that it points to the high-resolution raw file, which will cause our Photoshop document to be updated so that it ends up being based on the high quality original while retaining all the changes that were made in Photoshop (filters, scale, rotate, masking, adjustments, etc.). That way, we can create complex designs while traveling and have them update when we return to our office and have access to the original raw files.

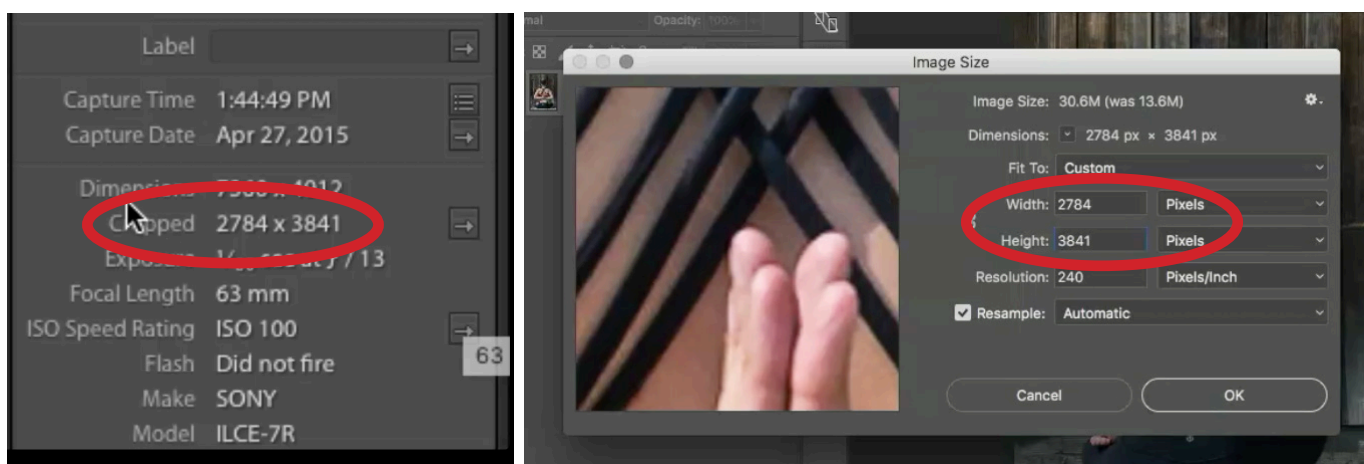
Selecting a series of images and choosing Library > Previews > Build Smart Previews in Lightroom will create special previews for each image that is 2560 pixels on the long dimension. Those previews can only be created while the original raw files are accessible by Lightroom. Once Smart Previews have been made, you can both adjust and export images even while the hard drive that contains the originals is not actively attached to your computer, which makes them a great way to work while traveling.

When you export a Smart Preview-laden image while the original raw file is unavailable (when traveling with the hard drive containing the originals is back at your office, for instance), Lightroom treats the image as if the original, uncropped image was 2560 pixels on its longest dimension. If you ask for a size larger than that, then it will scale the image up, which will produce a softer looking image than what you would get if the full resolution original was available. If you export the image without resizing, then Lightroom will act as if the original uncropped im-



age was 2560 pixels on the longest dimension even if the original raw file was much larger. For example, the original raw file I used as an example was 7360x4912 pixels uncropped and 2784x3841 after it was cropped. Exporting that file without resizing it produced an image that is only 968x1336 pixels since Lightroom thinks the uncropped version was 2560.

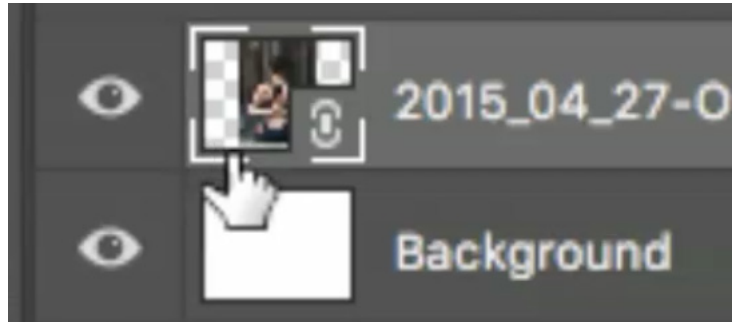
If we want to use a Smart Preview-derived JPEG file as a placeholder in Photoshop, then we just need to be sure to scale it up to the exact size of the original raw file (which will be bigger than the Smart Preview version). To see what that size is, go back to Lightroom and look in the Metadata panel for the image. There you will find the file dimensions, both the original image dimensions and the cropped image dimensions. You'll want to make note of the cropped image dimensions. Back in Photoshop, go to the Image menu and choose Image Size, enter in those cropped image dimensions into the width and height fields, and click OK. Now, save the image by choosing Save from the File menu.



Left: You'll need to make note of the original, cropped image's dimensions and you can find this info in Lightroom's Metadata panel. Right: In Photoshop, you will need to resize the Smart Preview image so that it matches the original, cropped image's dimensions.

Next, create a new, empty Photoshop document. You'll want to move the image you just saved into this Photoshop document, but you'll need to do this in a special way so that you can go back and replace it with the high res version later. To do this, go to the File menu and choose Place Linked. A Linked Smart Object is a layer that is referring to a file that is on your hard drive. If the file on your hard drive changes, it will be updated in the Photoshop document. Navigate your hard drive to the location of the image you just saved and click Place.

The image will appear as a separate layer in the document and you will see a little link icon on top of its thumbnail in the Layers Panel indicating that it is a Linked Smart Object. Now you can work on the document as usual, creating a montage, composite, adding adjustment layers, filters, etc. Save the document when you're done.



You can tell that this layer is linked by the little link icon in the lower corner of the thumbnail.

When you reconnect the hard drive containing the high resolution versions of your images, you can then easily replace the low res linked file in the Photoshop document with the high resolution version. Make sure that the linked layer is active. Then, go to the main menu and choose Layer > Smart Objects > Replace Contents. This will allow you to choose a new file to use in the place of the linked image. An easy way to locate the image file on your hard drive would be to drag the thumbnail from Lightroom directly into the Photoshop dialog that's asking you to choose the new image. This will auto-navigate to the file and then you can click the "Place" button in the lower right corner. This will replace the linked layer with the high res image and all of the changes you had made will be applied to that high res version.

If you want to continue to edit the image in Lightroom and have those changes be reflected in the Photoshop document, you will have to save out an XMP file. With the photo active in Lightroom, go to the main menu and choose Metadata > Save Metadata to File. Now, all changes you make in Lightroom will be reflected in the Photoshop document as well.