



Lightroom Map Module: Advanced

Lightroom Map Module: Advanced

In this lesson, we're going to take a deeper dive into Lightroom's Map Module. Note that there is separate lesson where we cover the essentials, learning how to navigate the module and place images on the map.

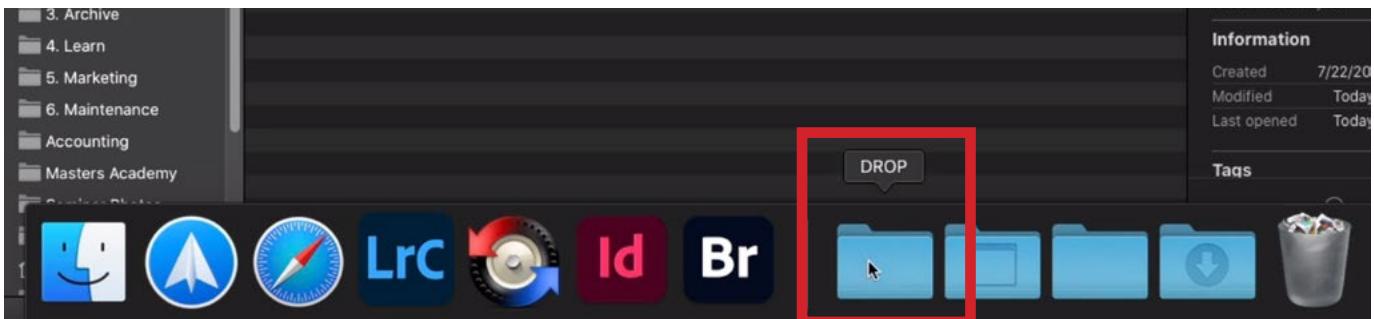
Here, I am going to show you how I research locations, get images into Lightroom quickly, track down the location of those images and get them on a map. Then, we'll look at some of the features in Lightroom that you can use once the locations have been tagged.

How to Quickly Import Images from the Internet (Timestamp 1:00)

Whenever I research locations online, I usually am saving many location images at the same time. Then, I need to quickly get these location images into Lightroom. It's important to note that I use a completely separate Lightroom catalog for this purpose. One reason for this has to do with keywords. If you download and use images from the Internet, these images might have keywords attached to them. In the case of stock photo websites, there will likely be dozens of keywords attached to each image.

Whenever you import an image that has keywords attached to it, those keywords will be added to your keyword list (even if you remove them from the image). If you want to remove the keywords from your list, you can only do so one at a time. I keep a very organized keyword list and I don't like outside keywords cluttering it up. Keeping these location images in a completely separate catalog prevents the keywords attached to them from getting into my main photography catalog. This is a personal preference. If you don't use or care much about keywords, then this would not be an issue for you.

Create Auto Import Folder Lightroom has an auto-import feature that allows for incoming images to be automatically placed inside a specified folder. You can then have Lightroom monitor that folder and automatically import any images that are placed inside of it.

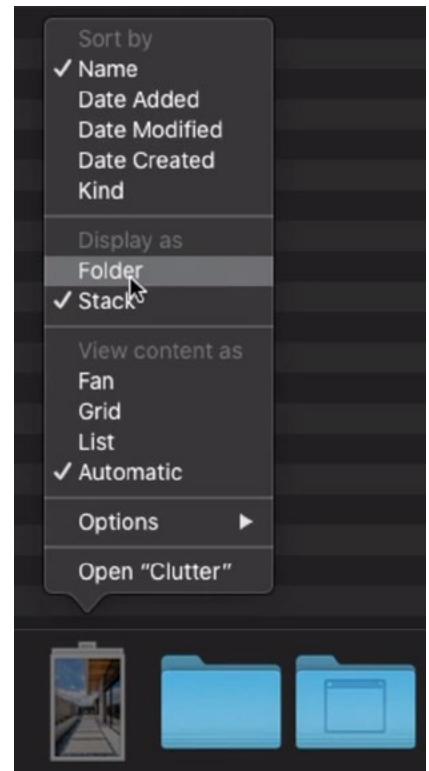


ABOVE: I created a folder, titled “DROP,” in which to place location images and I placed the folder in the dock.

RIGHT: Right-click on an icon in the dock to access options that allow you to specify how the icon should appear.

Before using this feature, you'll need to set up the folder you want to use. I created a folder titled “DROP,” which I keep on my desktop. Then, in order to quickly access that folder, I also placed it in the dock on the bottom of the screen. (On a Mac, you can store folders in the dock. It doesn't move the folders on your hard drive. It just gives you easy access to them.)

To place a folder in the dock, simply drag its icon into the dock, to the right side of the vertical line. You can also choose how the folder appears in the dock. Right-click on the folder in the dock and a pop-up menu will appear. Here, you can choose to display the folder as a Folder icon or Stack (of piled images). I keep mine set to Folder. When viewing websites, you can drag an image from a web page and drop it directly into this folder in the dock.

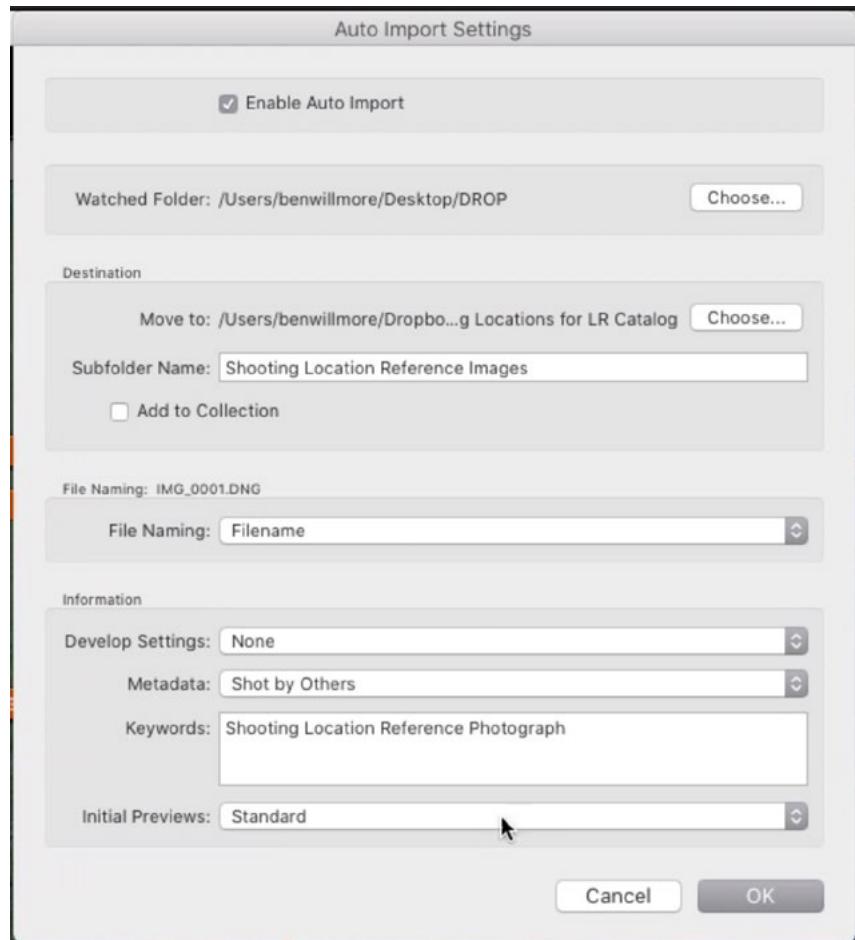


Auto Import Settings In Lightroom, you'll need to work with some settings so that it knows what folder to use. Click on the File menu and choose Auto Import > Auto Import Settings. A dialog will appear on the screen. Make sure the “Enable Auto Import” check box is turned on. At the top of the dialog, there is a setting that allows you to specify the “Watched Folder.” This is where you tell Lightroom what folder on your hard drive to monitor. Note that when choosing this folder, it needs to be empty to begin with. (If there is anything in the folder, it will give you an error message.)

Then, you will need to choose the destination folder. This is the folder that the images will be moved to when imported into Lightroom. I use the same folder that contains the Lightroom catalog file that I use for locations. Below this option, you will need to create a subfolder in which to place the images. Note that Lightroom does not let you skip this step. Type in the name you would like to use for this subfolder. I call mine “Shooting Location Reference Images.” If you would like the images to automatically be added to one of your Lightroom collections, turn on the “Add to Collection” check box and a list of your collections will appear. Click on the collection you’d like to use.

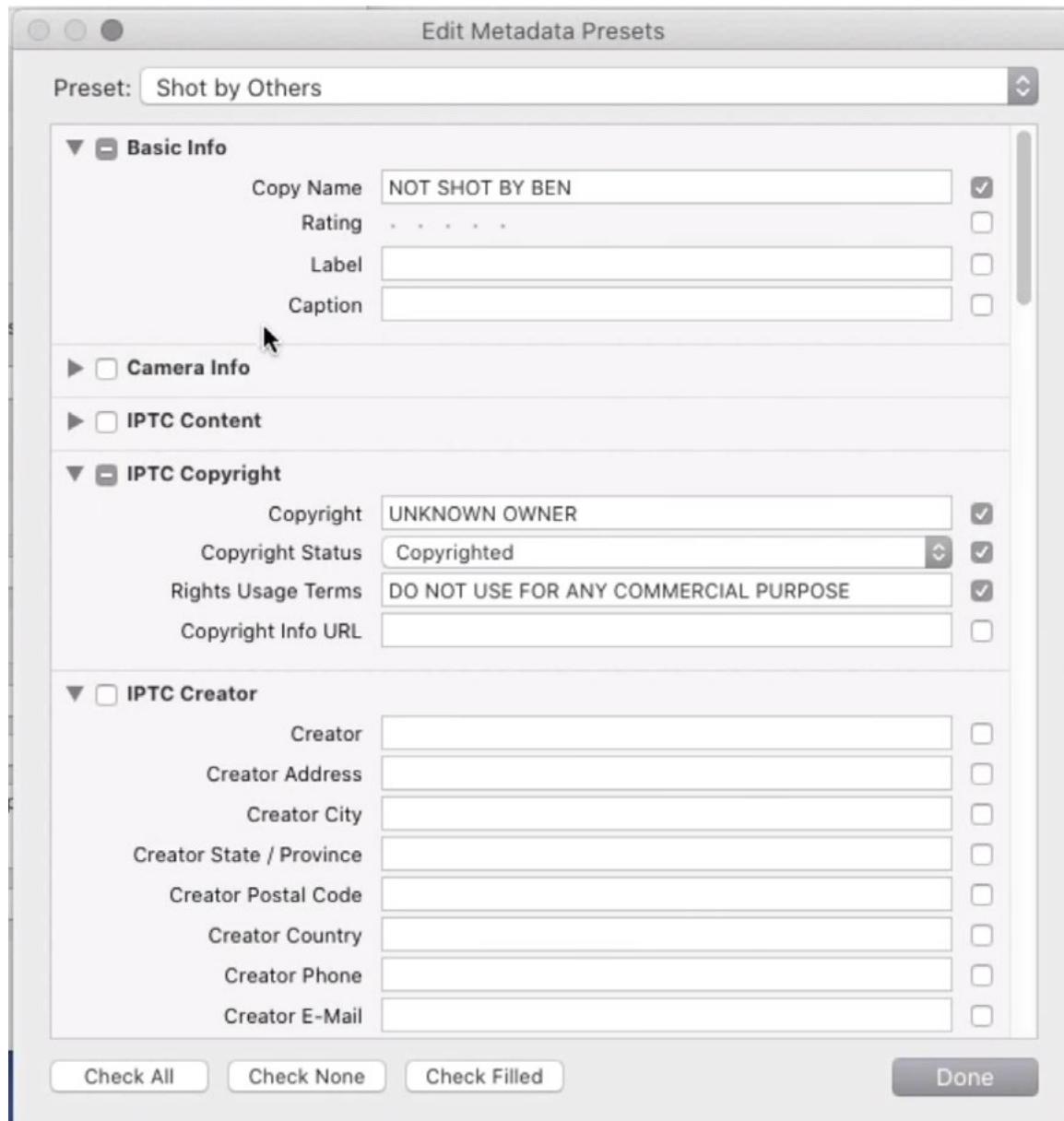
The next setting in the auto import dialog is for File Naming. You could use this if you’d like Lightroom to change the image file names on import. If this setting is left on “Filename,” it will not change the file name.

The last category of settings allows you to choose a develop preset and specify what information should be attached to the images. The Metadata menu can be used to choose a metadata preset, which can include copyright info, file info, etc.



Use the Auto Import Settings to specify which folder Lightroom should monitor. Any images moved into this folder will automatically be imported into Lightroom.

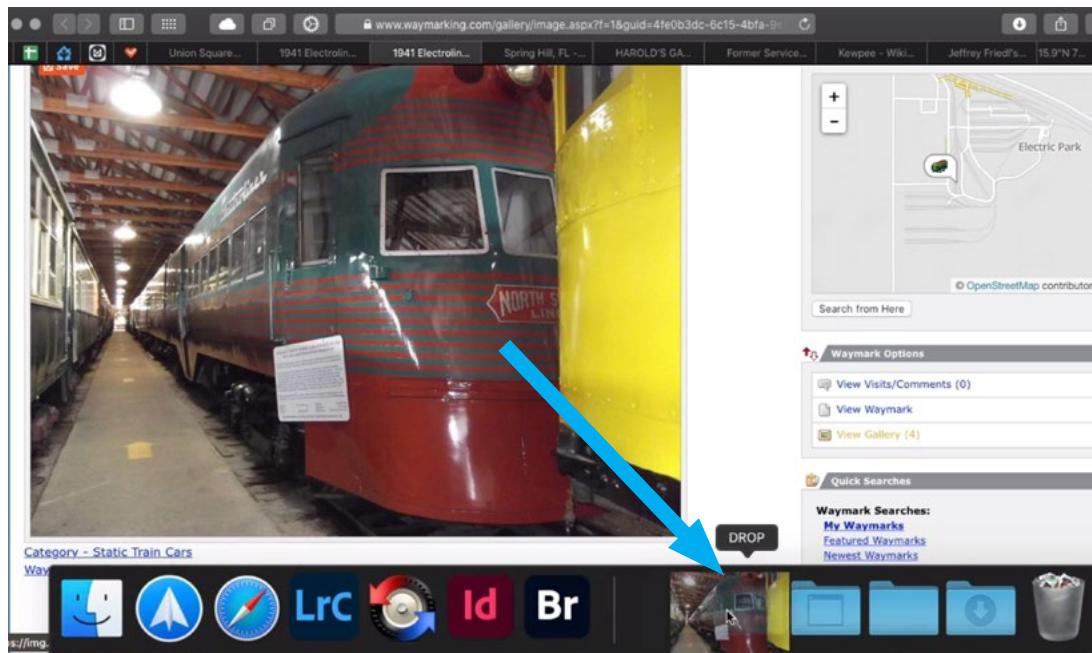
I like to set up a specific preset for this purpose. You can create a new preset by choosing “New” from the Metadata menu. The “Edit Metadata Presets” dialog will appear. Here, I enter “Unknown Owner” to the copyright field and include a note, “Do not use for any commercial purpose,” in the Usage Terms field. I name the preset “Shot by Others.” Click OK to exit the Auto Import Settings dialog.



I create a special metadata preset for location images I download from the Internet. This notes that the images were not shot by me and should not be used for commercial purposes.

Lightroom is now set up to quickly import images moved into the folder you specified. When you find an image that you'd like to save from the Internet, drag it directly from the web page to the folder in your dock or desktop. When you do this, Lightroom will automatically import the image.

Click on the image to make it active. In either the Library Module or the Map Module, expand the Metadata Panel on the right side of the screen. Here, you can enter in Location/GPS data. After you enter the location info, the image will appear on the map.



An image is being dragged from the web browser into the DROP folder in the dock. The image will automatically be imported into Lightroom.



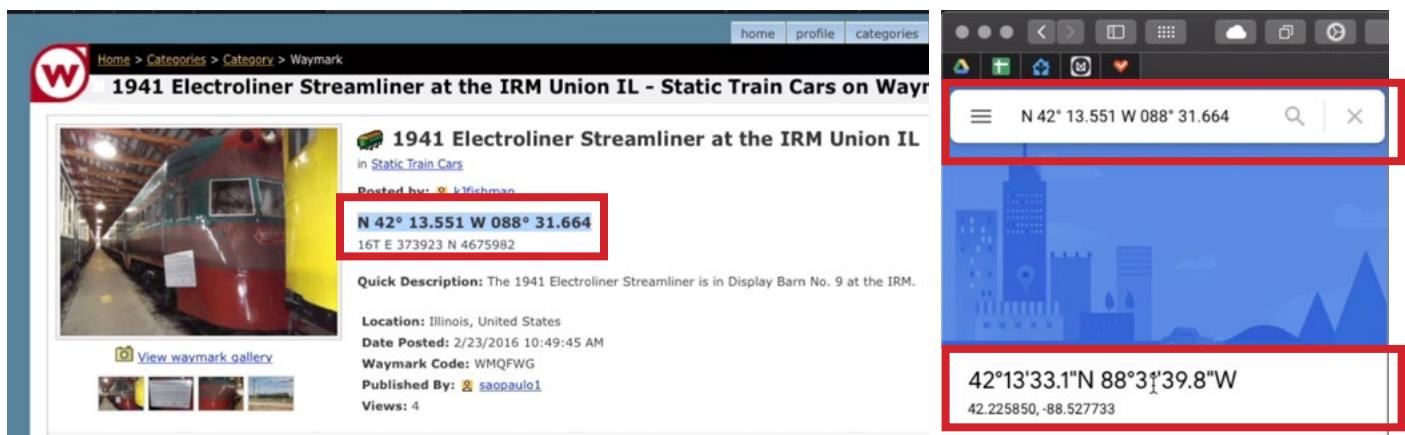
The image is selected in Lightroom and we are pasting the GPS coordinates into the Metadata Panel.

Sort Images There is one more step I take in creating this easy-import setup. In Lightroom's Library Module, I click on the View menu and choose Sort > Added Order. This will display the images in the order in which they were added into Lightroom. This means that the last image I imported will be shown at the end of the image list. I like to do this because it allows me to stay in the Map Module, knowing that the newest images will always appear at the end (on the far right side) of the Filmstrip.

Formatting of GPS coordinates (13:08)

Some location-related websites provide GPS coordinates for the images/locations. It's important to know that Lightroom needs these coordinates to be in a specific format in order to be correctly registered in the GPS field. If you paste coordinates that are formatted differently from what Lightroom likes, you will get an error.

How do we make sure that our coordinates are in the right format? By using Google Maps. Select the coordinates and copy them to your clipboard. Then open Google Maps in another window. Google Maps can accept many different types of GPS coordinates. Paste the coordinates into the location search field and hit Enter. When Google finds the location, you will find that it shows the coordinates of the location beneath the search field. These coordinates are in the exact format that Lightroom needs. You can copy these and paste them into Lightroom's GPS field (in the Metadata panel).

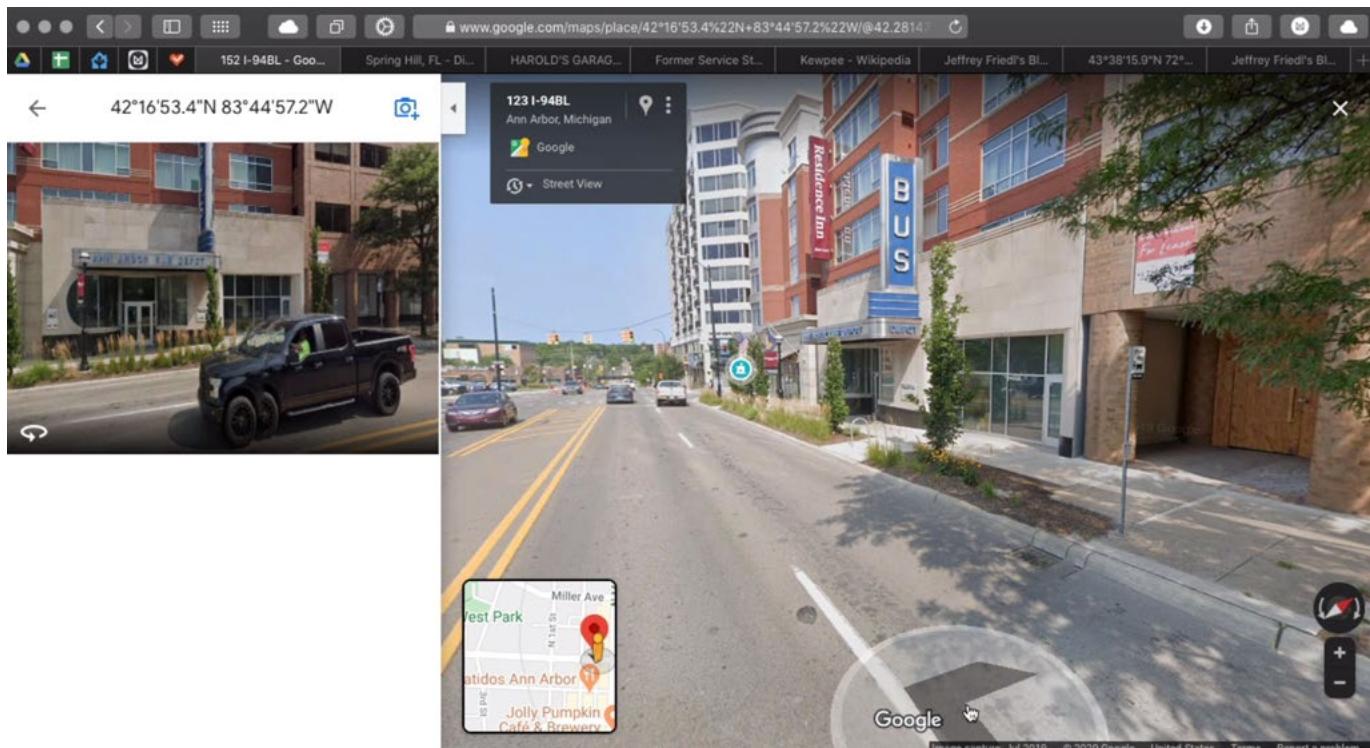


LEFT: GPS coordinates were copied from a website. **RIGHT:** The coordinates were pasted into the Google Maps search field. The search results provide the formatting that Lightroom needs.

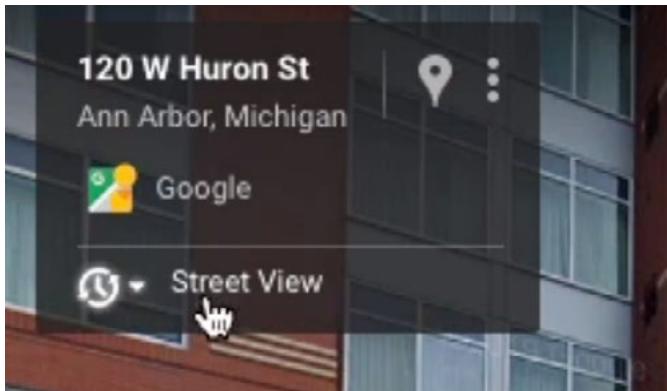
Google Street View (15:51)

I find that Google Maps contains a lot of helpful tools for using maps in Lightroom. The Street View can be very useful because it allows you to move around and see a location from different angles. You can capture images of these different angles by taking screen shots.

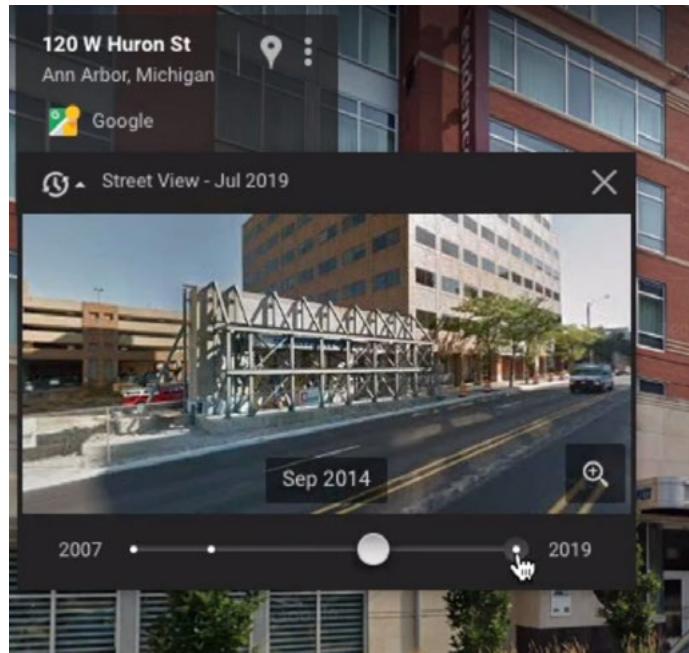
In the top left corner of the Google Street View, there is a little box with information inside of it. If you see an icon that looks like a clock, you can click on it to access a setting that allows you to see the location at different periods of time. Every time the Google car passed by and took pictures, they were recorded here. You can drag the slider to see the different points in time. This isn't available for all locations.



Google Street View can be useful for viewing the location at different angles. You can then take screen shots from various angles and add them to the Lightroom location database.



ABOVE: If the little clock icon appears in the informational box in the corner of Street View, it means that there are images from different periods of time. **RIGHT:** Click the icon to get a box that allows you to see the location at different periods of time.



Stacking Images When taking screen shots from various angles, I can end up with several shots from one location. In Lightroom, I like to keep multiple images from the same location in a stack. You can stack a series of images by first selecting the images, then right-clicking on them and choosing Stacking > Group into Stack. This makes it so that the Filmstrip displays only one image for each location.

Use Filters to Ensure all Images Have Location Data (22:17)

The purpose of this shooting locations catalog is to keep track of the interesting places I would like to photograph one day. This requires that all of the images have location data so they appear on the map. I am always adding new images to this catalog, so I will frequently take some steps to ensure that I didn't forget to tag any images.

In the Library Module, the Filter Bar appears above the image window. If it is not visible on your screen, you can click on the View menu and choose “Show Filter Bar.” I will use a filter to limit the number of images I’m viewing based on the parameters I set up in the Filter Bar settings.

I’ll click on the Metadata option to expand the bar to show the related filters. Each Metadata column allows you to filter the images based on a specified parameter. I’ll click on the header for the left-most column to access the menu of possible search parameters. If I choose to search by “GPS Data,” then that column will show me how many images have been tagged with GPS coordinates and how many have not. If I click on the “No Coordinates” results, Lightroom will filter the Grid View to show only the images that are not tagged with GPS coordinates. I can then manually add the location data to those images.

Note: After using the filters, you can click the None option to return to viewing everything.

The screenshot shows the Lightroom Library module interface. At the top, the title "Ben Willmore" is displayed. Below it is the "Library Filter" panel, which is currently set to the "Metadata" tab (indicated by a red box). In the left sidebar of the filter panel, the "GPS Data" option is highlighted with a gray bar and has a cursor pointing at it. A callout box points from the "No Coordinates" option in the "GPS Data" dropdown menu to the "No Coordinates" button in the main filter panel. The main content area shows a grid view of three images, each with a small thumbnail and a crop tool icon. The filter panel itself shows a breakdown of images by camera and lens, with a total of 228 images. The "GPS Data" dropdown menu shows two results: "All (2 GPS States)" and "Coordinates".

ABOVE: The Filter Bar is set to Metadata (circled) and we are choosing to filter images based on GPS data. **RIGHT:** The results show how many images are tagged with coordinates and how many are not.

Copy metadata from one image to another Let's say you have two images of the same location. One of the images has location info and the other does not. There is an easy way to copy that GPS info (or any metadata) from one image to another. You will need to make sure that both images are selected and that the image with the GPS info is MOST selected. You can tell which image is most selected because its thumbnail will have a brighter highlight than the rest of the selected images.



The left image is not selected. The middle and right images are both selected, and the right image is MOST selected. The most selected image will have a brighter highlight.

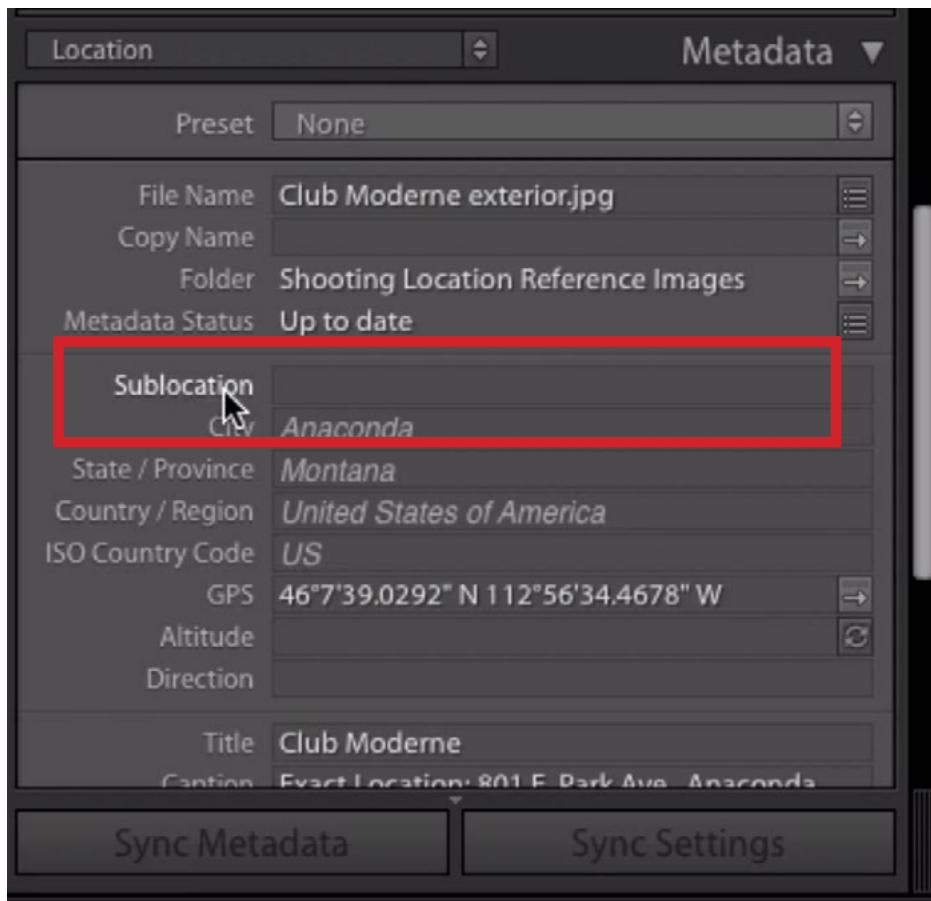
If you have multiple images selected, simply click on the thumbnail for the image you would like to be most selected and it will get that brighter highlight. With more than one image selected in the Library Module, click the “Sync Metadata” button in the bottom right corner of the screen. When you do this, a dialog will appear. It will show you all of the metadata for the most selected image. Each piece of info will have a check box to the right of it. Turn on the check boxes for all of the metadata that you would like to sync across the selected images. If you'd like to sync all the metadata, click the “Check All” button in the lower left corner of the dialog. Click the Synchronize button to close the dialog and sync the metadata across all the selected images.

Filter Bar Options When using the Filter Bar menus to search images, you will notice that there are multiple location-related options. For example, there is a “Location” option and there is a “Map Location” option. This can sound a little confusing.

Sublocation filter If you filter using the Location option, Lightroom is using the information entered into the “Sublocation” field within the Metadata Panel. Sometimes Lightroom automatically fills this field when you enter in GPS coordinates, and other times it doesn’t. That means the filter/search may result in many images showing up as having an “Unknown Location.” Therefore, this search parameter can be a little unreliable.



There are several location-related search options in the Filter Bar.



The Sublocation filter option is looking at the coordinating field within the Metadata panel. This field is sometimes filled in automatically when you enter GPS coordinates. More times than not, it's left empty.

Map Location filter When you choose the “Map Location” filter option, Lightroom is looking at the Saved Locations. In the Map Module, you can save locations that you would like to quickly access in the future. The Saved Locations Panel is on the left side of the module. To add a new saved location, click on the little plus icon to the right of the module name. A dialog will appear where you can name the location. Use your mouse to click and drag a circle around the map area you would like to use for this location. You can also fine-tune the size of this circle by using the Radius slider within the New Location dialog. Click the Create button and the location will be saved within the Saved Locations panel. Click on the name of the location to quickly navigate the map to the area.

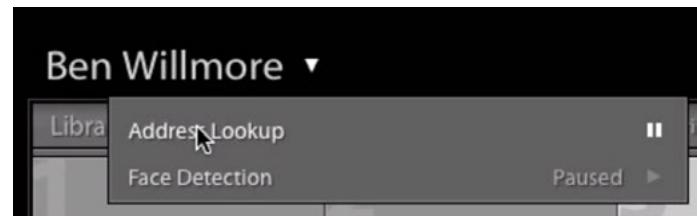
In the Filter Bar, the Map Location option is looking at these saved locations that you have defined within the Map Module.

The screenshot shows the Lightroom interface with the Map module active. On the left, the Navigator panel displays a small map of the United States with a red box highlighting the Southeast region. Below it, the Saved Locations panel is open, showing a list of existing locations: My Locations (Spain 0, USA 225, Venice, Italy 0). A red box highlights the '+' icon at the top of this panel. The main area shows a map of the Southeastern US with several orange location markers. A large circular selection tool is overlaid on the map, centered over South Carolina. A 'New Location' dialog box is open, prompting for a 'Location Name' (South Carolina) and a 'Radius' (158 Miles). The 'Options' section includes a 'Private' checkbox and a note about exporting photos. On the right, the Filter Bar shows the 'Map Location' filter applied, with results for All (5 Map Locations) 228, Current Map Location 31, and South Carolina 14 (which is highlighted with a cursor).

Category	Location	Count
All (5 Map Locations)		228
Current Map Location		31
South Carolina		14
Spain		0
USA		225
Venice, Italy		0

ABOVE: We clicked the + icon at the top of the Saved Locations Panel (circled) in order to create a new Saved Location. The circle on the map is being used to define the location. **RIGHT:** The Map Location filter is looking at the locations you saved within the Map Module.

City, State & Country filters The City, State, and Country filter options refer to those matching fields in the Metadata Panel. When you enter GPS coordinates into this panel, Lightroom can fill these fields in for you. You need to tell Lightroom to do this by clicking on the identity plate in the top left corner of the screen and turning on the “Address Lookup” option.

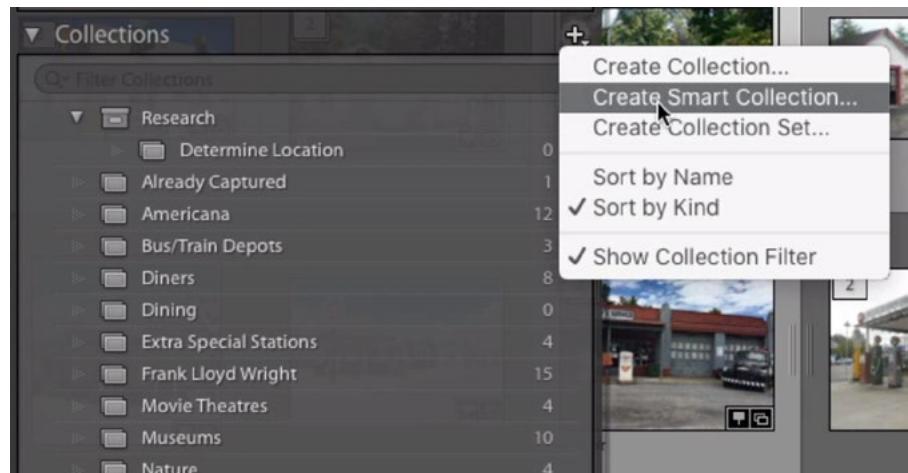


If you want Lightroom to automatically fill in the City, State & Country fields, turn on the Address Lookup setting.

Using Smart Collections to Create Saved Searches (34:02)

The Filter Bar is really useful for searching for images based on location, but you may not want to go through that process all the time. If that's the case, you can automate the process by using a Smart Collection. A Smart Collection is essentially a saved search, where any images that meet a set of pre-defined parameters will automatically be placed in the collection.

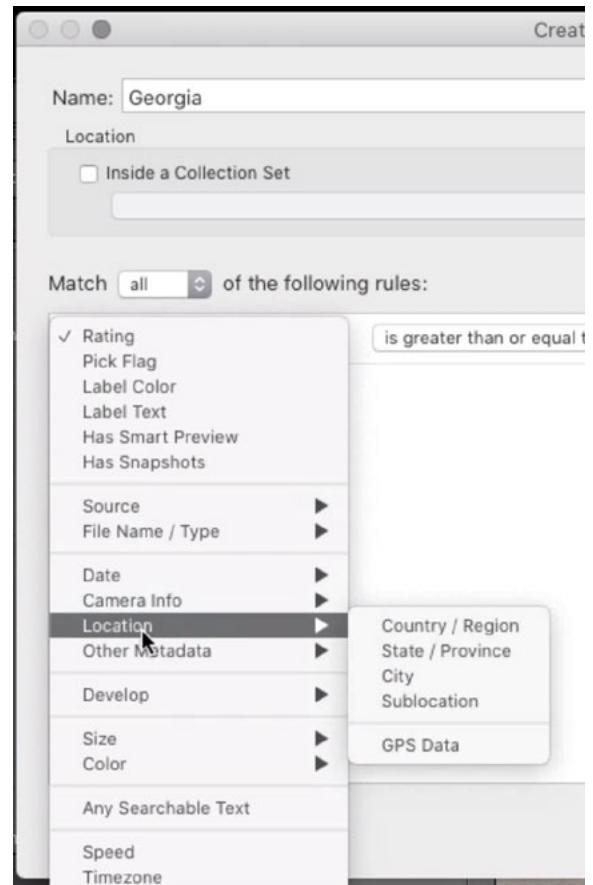
The Collections Panel can be found on the left side of Lightroom's interface. To create a new Smart Collection, click on the little plus icon (+) in the upper right corner of the panel and choose “Create Smart Collection” from the pop-up menu. The Smart Collection dialog will appear. Use the field at the very top to name the collection.



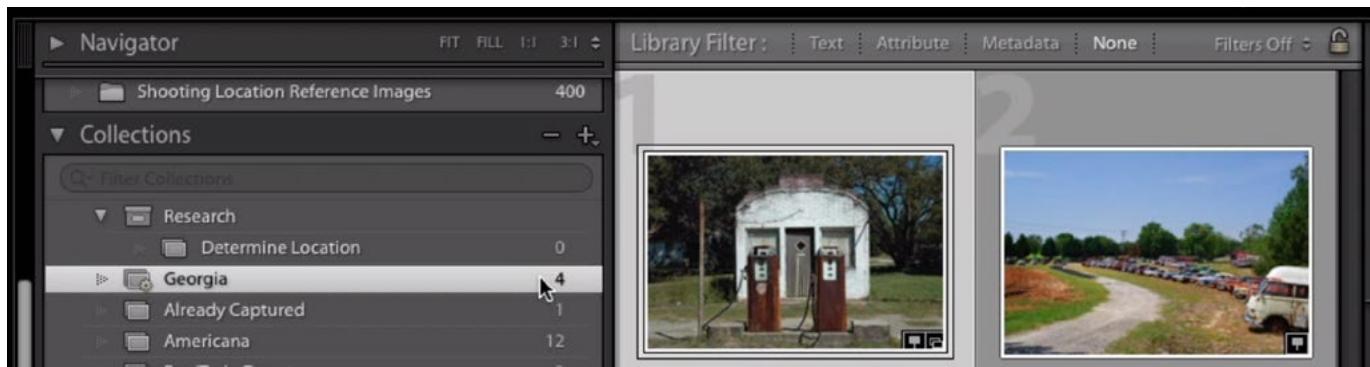
We are clicking the plus icon at the top of the Collections Panel and choosing to Create Smart Collection.

In the main part of the dialog, you can set up the search criteria. Click on the left-hand menu to access a list of search parameters. These are the same parameters that can be found in the Filter Bar, and you will see that there is an entire category of location-related searches.

Let's say that you would like to create a collection that automatically contains images shot in one particular state. In the video example, we used Georgia. (We also named the collection "Georgia.") Click on the left menu and choose Location > State/Province. This will cause a second menu to appear to the right of the first. Set this menu to "is." Then, a text field will appear to the right of the second menu. Type in the state you want the collection to use. I typed in Georgia. This tells the collection to include images where the State field (in the metadata) is set to Georgia. Click the Create button and the collection will now appear within the Collections Panel. It will automatically include all images that were shot in Georgia (as long as they are tagged).



When creating a new Smart Collection, there are several types of location-related searches.



A new Smart Collection was created to include all images that were shot in Georgia.

Other Methods for Tagging an Image with GPS Coordinates (35:25)

I already described how you can add GPS data to an image by copying the GPS coordinates from a web page (or Google) and pasting them into the GPS field within the Metadata Panel. Let's look at another way.

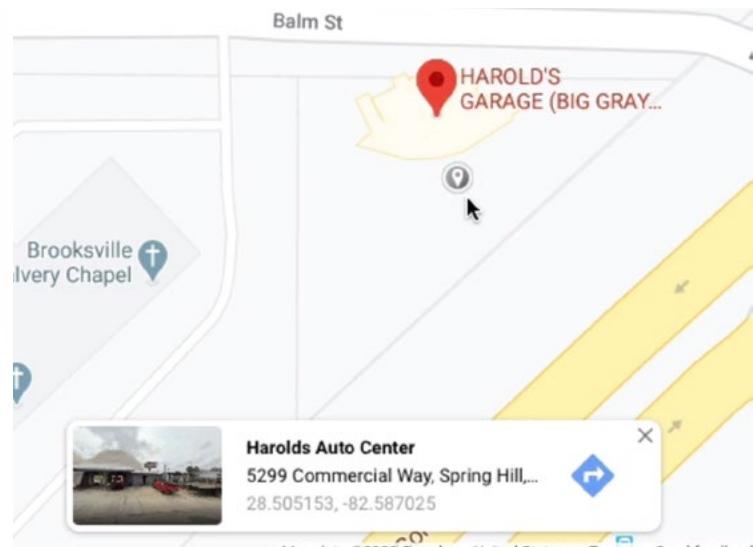
Let's say that the website describing the location only lists the address, and not the GPS coordinates. In that case, copy the address and paste it into the search field in the top right corner of the Map Module. Tap the Enter key and Lightroom will try to find the location. If it does find the location, it will navigate to that address on the map.

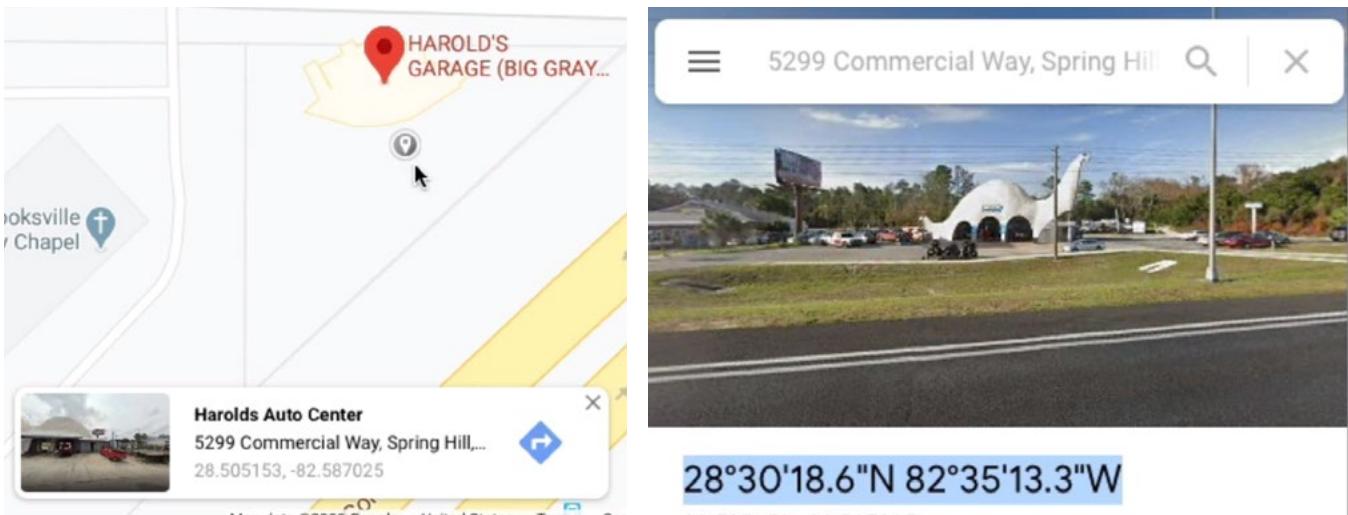
Often times, however, Lightroom has trouble finding the exact location. If the address you paste is not in the exact format that Lightroom likes, it will run into an error. Make sure that there is a comma and a single space after the street name and before the city name.

If Lightroom still can not find the location, you'll have to do the following. Copy the address and then open Google Maps (maps.google.com). Paste the address into the search field and hit Enter. Google will navigate the map to the location. Because you typed in an address, however, the search results will not display the GPS coordinates. Use your mouse to click in an empty map area just outside the location pin for the address you searched. A little informational box will pop up. This box does contain the GPS coordinates, but they are not in the format that Lightroom likes.



ABOVE: An address is copied from a website. **RIGHT:** We searched the address in Google Maps and clicked just outside the location in order to get the informational box shown below.



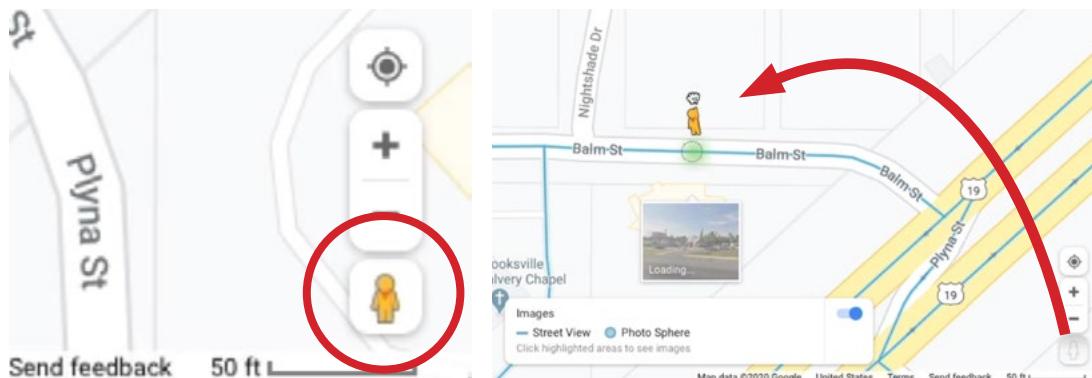


We clicked on the address that shows up in the info box (left) and the info is expanded (right) on the left side of the screen. The coordinates shown here are in the format that Lightroom likes.

Click on those coordinates and the information will expand to be displayed in the panel on the left side of the screen. Here, the GPS coordinates appear again and they are now in the correct format. You can copy and paste them into Lightroom.

NOTE: If you click in an empty map area and no informational box appears, you can instead right-click on the area. A pop-up menu will appear. Choose the “What’s here?” option. This will force the map to add a pin and present the informational box.

Another useful tool is the little yellow person icon in the bottom right corner of the Google Maps interface. If you click and drag the little person over the map, you will see blue lines appear. These lines indicate where the Google Maps cars have traveled with cameras and taken pictures of the surroundings.



The little yellow person icon is being placed on the map.

As you move the little yellow person somewhere on the map, pay attention to the little green circle that appears over the blue line. This is where Google will place the person when you release the mouse button. When you place the person, Google Maps will switch to Street View and show you the images shot from that location. You can click to move around the area in this view. Here, you can capture screen shots that you can use in the Lightroom location database.

In the lower right corner of this street view, you will often times find little plus and minus buttons. These can be used to zoom in and out on an area. This can be useful if you want to get a higher resolution image of the location.



After the little person was placed on the map, it switches to street view, showing you the images shot by Google from that location.

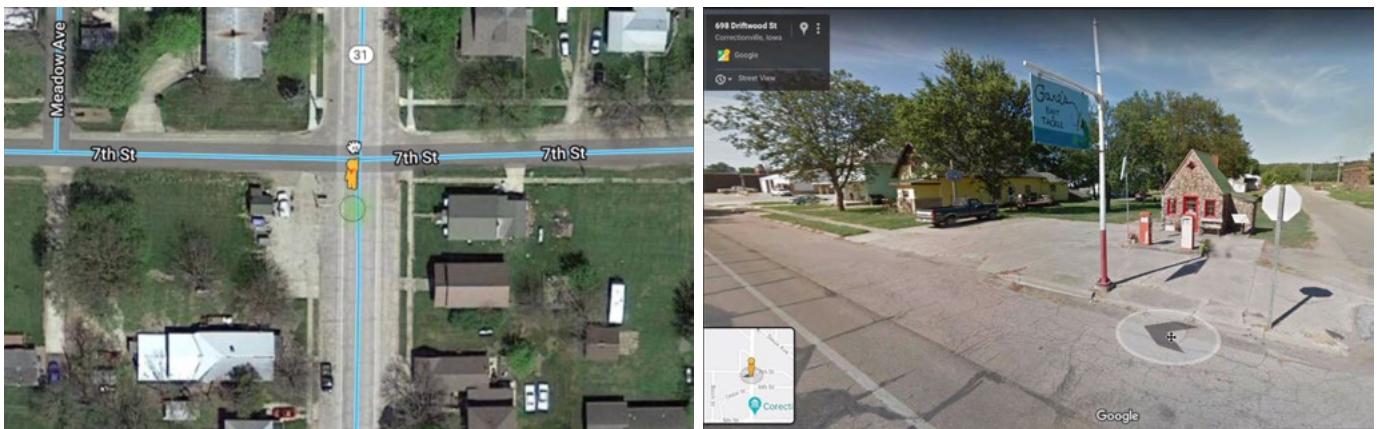
Find a Location with only City, State Info (41:25)

There are some instances where I'll find a picture of a location that I want to photograph, but the only location info available is the state and town name. If this is the case, you can still paste that info into Google Maps to see a more generalized location on the map.

Here, you can do some investigative work. Enter the Satellite View in Google Maps and then examine the picture you have of the location. How big is the building? Is it on a street corner? Does it have a large parking lot? Are there surrounding buildings? Zoom in and scan the map area to see if you can find the location. This will obviously be easier if the place is located in a smaller town. If you think you found the location, drag that little yellow person icon into the map in order to view the location in Street View. Here, you can move the view around to confirm that you've found the correct location.



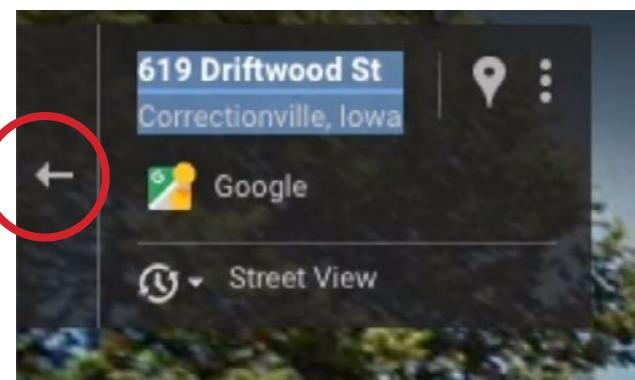
We only had city/state info for an image so we are viewing the city (town) in the Google Maps Satellite View. At left is the entire town. At right, we zoomed in to find the location based on info we gathered from the reference picture.



LEFT: We are placing the little yellow person icon in the location we want to view. **RIGHT:** After placing the person, Google enters Street View and we can confirm that this is the location that matches the image.

If you're in the Street View and would like to return to the map view, click on the back arrow that appears in the little informational box in the upper left corner of the screen. Be careful though! Sometimes, when you do this, it will return the map to the entire city view and you will no longer be able to get precise GPS coordinates. Before clicking the back arrow, copy the street address that appears in that box. This will ensure that you have the precise location. Then, click the back arrow. If it happens to zoom out on the entire town view, simply paste that address back into the search field so that you can access the precise GPS coordinates.

After searching for a location on Google Maps, there may be more than one search result. If that's the case, you can click through the various search results to see images of each location. This can help you to determine which result is the location you're looking for.



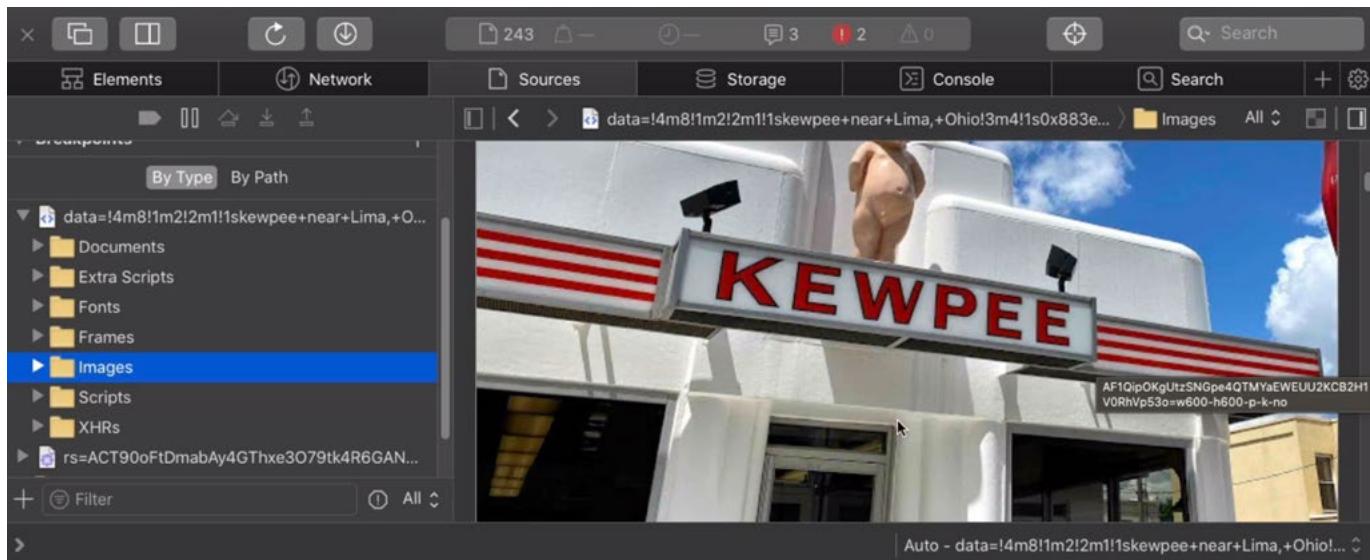
The back arrow (circled) will take you back to the map view. Before clicking this, copy the address in case you need to paste it back into the search field.

Another Way to Access Website Images (49:11)

There may be instances where you find a photo of a location that you'd like to save, but when you drag the image to the folder on your desktop, it just doesn't move. If this happens, you COULD take a screen shot, but this can sometimes be less than ideal (especially if there is something overlaid on the image).

If you happen to use the Safari web browser, there is a trick for accessing the image another way. In order to do this, you will need the "Develop" option to appear in Safari's main menu. This can be set up in the Preferences. Click on the Safari menu at the top of the screen and choose Preferences. In the Preferences dialog, click on the Advanced tab. Different settings will appear. Turn on the check box at the bottom that reads "Show Develop menu in menu bar." Know that the options in this menu are designed for people who write websites.

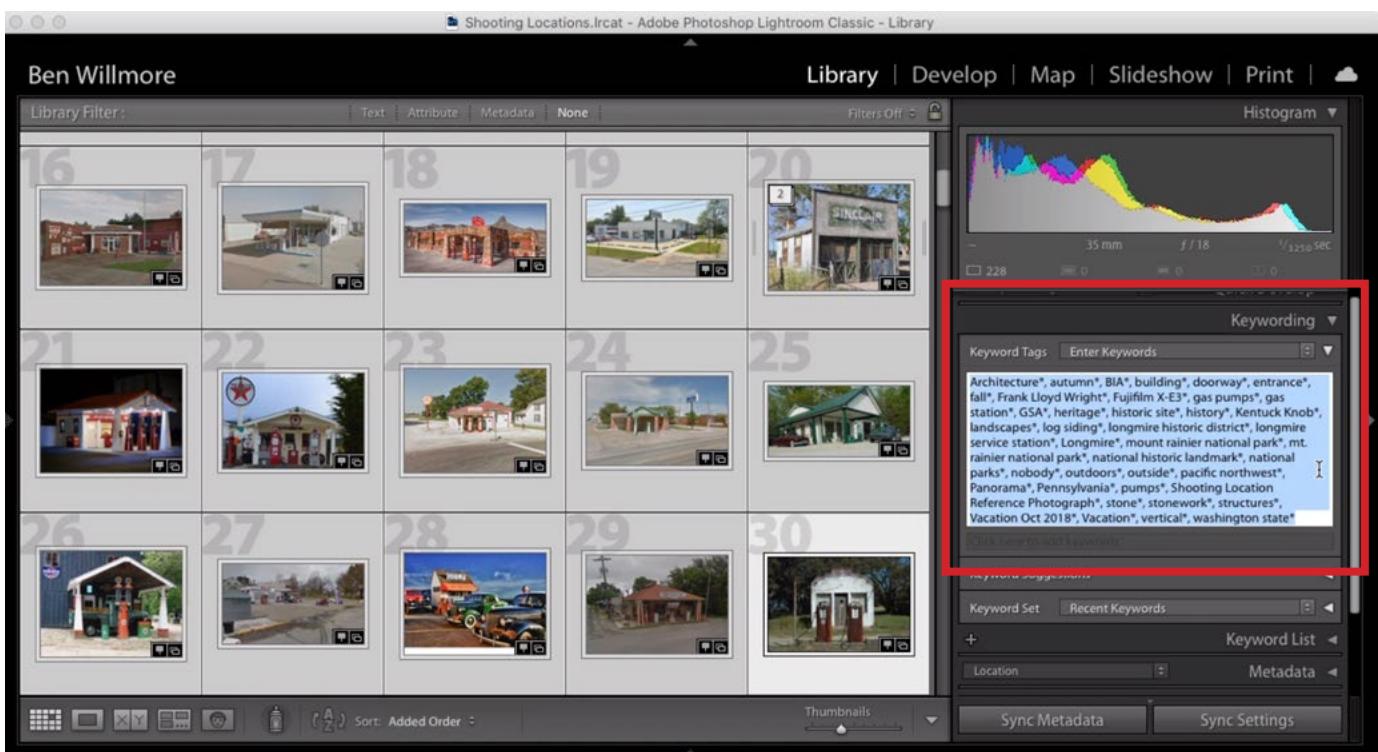
Now that you have the Develop menu visible, click on it and choose "Show Page Resources." A list of resources will appear on the left side of the screen. Click on the Images folder and a list of images that appear on the web page will appear. Here, you can access the location image you need.



We clicked on the Develop menu and chose "Show Page Resources." We chose "Images" from the options at left and a list of the images used on the web page appears.

Remove Keywords in Lightroom (52:06)

When you take images from the Internet and import them into Lightroom, many of them will likely have keywords attached to them. I, personally, do not want other people's keywords in my Lightroom catalog so I will remove them. To remove keywords from a series of images, first select all of the images in the Library module. Then, expand the Keywording Panel on the right side of the screen. This panel contains a text field with all of the keywords from the selected images. Simply select all of the text in this field and hit the Delete key.



All of the images are selected in the Library Module. We selected all of the text in the Keywording panel and are about to tap the delete key to remove the keywords.

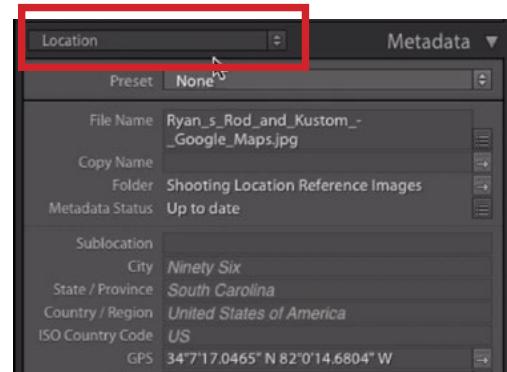
Useful Plug-Ins (53:00)

Plug-ins provide ways of extending what Lightroom is capable of when it comes to locations. There are two plugins that I really like. The first allows you to customize the Metadata Panel.

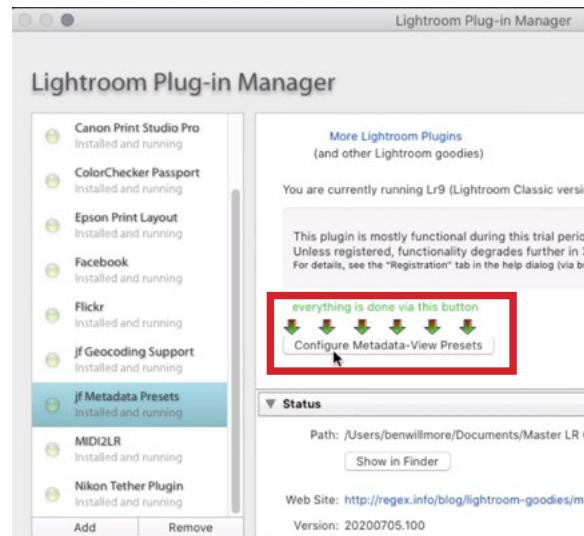
Metadata Preset Plugin The Metadata Panel is located on the right side of Lightroom's Library Module and there are ways of customizing what appears within this panel. Click on the menu at the top of the panel and you will find several options for types of metadata that can be displayed. "Location" is one of these options. When you choose one of these options, the panel will show a pre-selected group of informational fields. Often times, the panel is still showing fields that I never use. Also, there may be a field that I DO use but it doesn't appear in the panel.

There is a plug-in that will allow you to create custom presets for the Metadata Panel, allowing you to determine exactly which info fields appear in the panel. It's called "jf Metadata Presets."

To create a metadata preset using this plugin, click on the File menu and choose Plug-in Manager. A window will appear and the left side will show all plug-ins that have been added to Lightroom. Click on the name of the plug-in, "jf Metadata Presets," and the preset info will appear in the main window. Click on the "Configure Metadata-View Presets" button. This will bring up another window that will allow you to customize the panel.



The menu at the top of the Metadata Panel allows you to choose what types of info fields are visible in the panel.



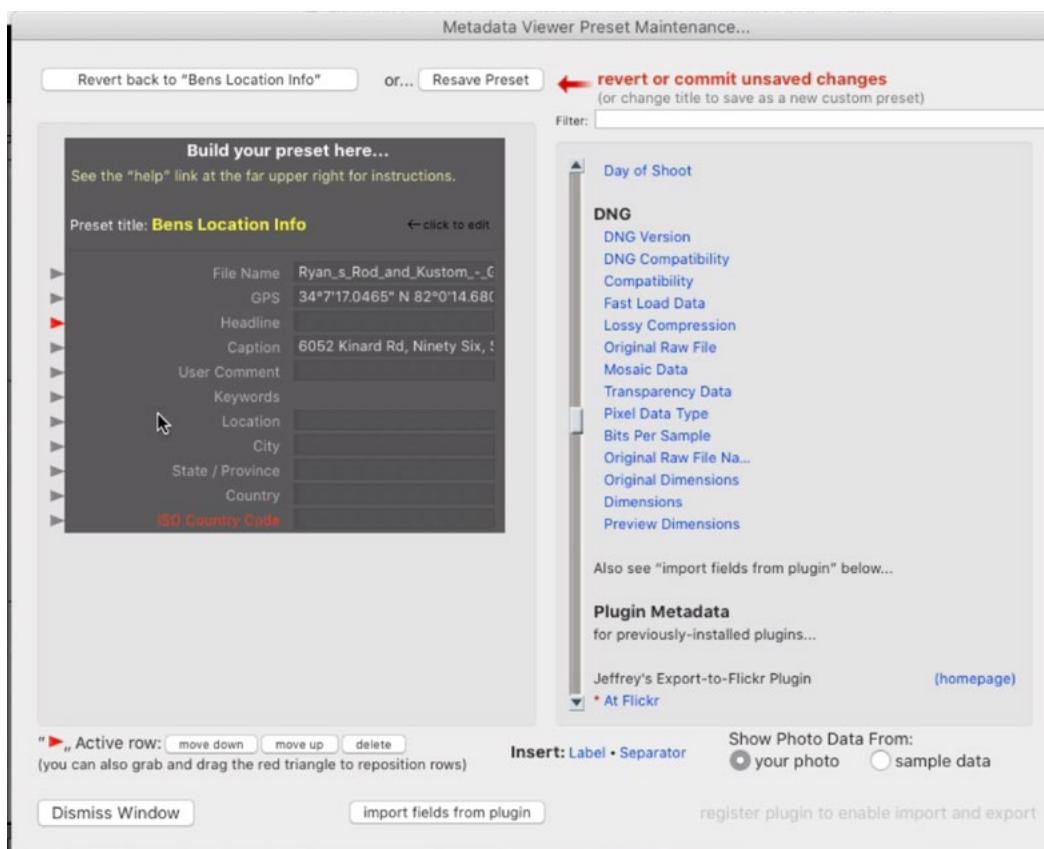
We selected the Metadata Presets plug-in from the left side of the Plug-In Manager and are clicking the Configure button in order to create a preset.

The left side of the window contains a view of the Metadata Panel and you can click the arrow to the left of a field name to make it active. Then, you can use the buttons below the panel to move the field up or down in the panel. You can also tap the Delete button to remove the field. This will not remove the metadata information. It will simply remove the field from view.

The right side of the window contains a list of all the metadata fields that are available in Lightroom. Click on any of these items and it will be placed in the panel on the left.

After you have customized the panel, click the Save button in the upper left in order to save this panel setup as a preset. You'll be prompted to give the preset a name. Close this window to return to the Plug-In Manager window. Here, you will need to click the "Reload Plugin" button in order for the changes to take effect.

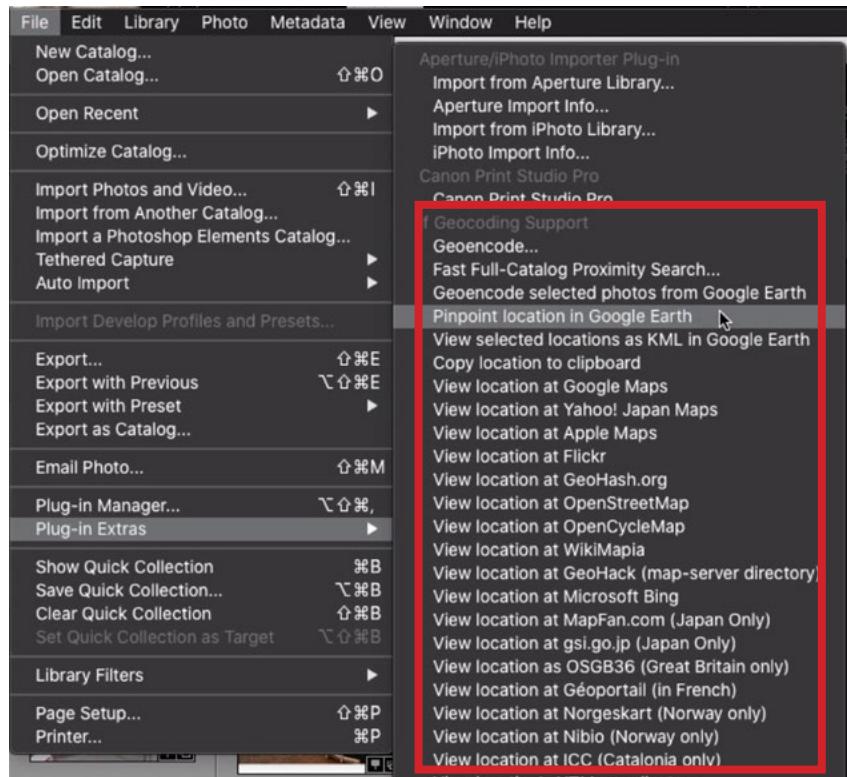
After you've done this, your new preset will appear within the menu at the top of the Metadata Panel.



The Metadata Presets plug-in is being used to add and remove info fields from the panel in order to create a custom preset.

Geocoding Support Plug-in

The next plugin I use for location info is called “jf Geocoding Support” and it provides a lot of useful tools for working with locations. After the plug-in has been installed, these tools can be accessed by clicking on the File menu and choosing Plug-in Extras. This will expand a menu to show an entire category of Geocoding Support options. Many of these options allow you to quickly view the location of the active images in websites like Google Maps, Flickr, etc. One of the options I really like is called “Full Catalog Proximity Search.” This will search the entire Lightroom catalog for other images that have nearby location tags. I like this because it allows me to see other good shooting locations that are close to the one I’m planning to visit.



Access the Geocoding Support options by clicking on the File menu and choosing Plug-In Extras.

Great websites for finding interesting things to photograph:

www.waymarking.com

www.roadsideamerica.com

Plug-in websites (These pages include installation instructions.):

Metadata Presets Plug-in: <http://regex.info/blog/lightroom-goodies/metadata-presets>

Geocoding Support Plug-in: <http://regex.info/blog/lightroom-goodies/gps>