Photo Library Export – User Guide

User Manual

Version 4.6.2 · macOS · English

Welcome to **Photo Library Export** — a simple and reliable way to save your photos and videos from your Mac's Photo Library or a connected digital camera to any folder on your computer.

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What This App Does

Photo Library Export copies photos and videos out of your Mac's **Photos Library** (or from a connected camera) and saves them as regular files in a folder you choose. This is useful for:

- Creating backups of your entire photo collection outside of the Photos app.
- Sharing specific albums or date ranges with others.
- Importing photos from your camera or memory card to your Mac.
- Archiving your memories in a format that doesn't depend on any particular software.

The app only *copies* your photos — it never deletes or changes anything in your Photos Library or on your camera.

Getting Started

When you open Photo Library Export, you will see the main screen with a few options to configure before starting the export. The setup only takes a minute:

1. **Choose a source** – where the photos come from (your Photo Library or a connected camera).
2. **Pick what to export** – all photos, a specific album, or a date range.
3. **Choose how to organise the files** – how folders and file names should be structured.
4. **Select a destination folder** – where the exported files will be saved on your Mac.
5. **Click Export** – sit back while the app does the work.

Scenario 1: Export Your Entire Photo Library

Use this when you want to make a full backup or archive of everything in your Photos app.

1. Open Photo Library Export.
2. Make sure the **Device** dropdown at the top shows **"Photo Library on this Mac"**.
3. In the **Source** dropdown, select **"Photo Library – All photos and videos"**.
4. Choose your preferred **Folder naming** style (for example, *Year / Month* groups your photos into folders like `2024/06/`).
5. Leave **Media types** set to **"Photos and videos"** to export everything.
6. Click **Export photos and videos**.
7. A window will appear asking you to **choose a destination folder** — this is where all your exported files will be saved. Create a new folder if needed (for example, `My Photo Backup`).
8. The export will start. You can watch the progress bar and see a preview of the current photo being exported.
9. When it's done, a summary will appear telling you how many new files were exported.

> **Tip:** If you run the export again later, the app will automatically skip photos that have already been exported, so only new additions will be copied. This makes it perfect for regular backups.

Scenario 2: Export a Specific Album

Use this when you only want to export photos from one particular album in your Photos app — for example, a holiday album or a folder of photos you want to share.

1. Open Photo Library Export.
2. Make sure the **Device** dropdown shows **"Photo Library on this Mac"**.
3. Click the **Source** dropdown. You will see a list of all your albums. Select the album you want to export.
4. Configure any other options you like (media type, date range, folder/file naming).
5. Click **Export photos and videos**.
6. Choose the destination folder and let the export run.

> **Note:** When a specific album is selected, you can also use **"Album"** as the folder naming style. This creates a subfolder named after the album inside your chosen destination.

Scenario 3: Export All Albums (Preserving Album Structure)

Use this when you want to export all albums and keep them organised into separate folders, one per album.

1. Open Photo Library Export.
2. Make sure the **Device** dropdown shows **"Photo Library on this Mac"**.
3. In the **Source** dropdown, select **"All Albums"**.
4. In the **Folder naming** dropdown, choose **"Album"**. This will create a separate subfolder for each album.
5. Click **Export photos and videos**.
6. Choose the destination folder and start the export.

> **Note:** Photos that belong to multiple albums will be exported once per album they appear in. Photos that are not in any album will not be included in this export — use **"Photos and videos not in any album"** from the Source dropdown to capture those separately.

Scenario 4: Export from a Digital Camera or Memory Card

Use this when you connect a digital camera, smartphone, or memory card reader and want to copy photos to your Mac.

1. Connect your camera or insert your memory card. Make sure it is recognised by your Mac.
2. Open Photo Library Export.
3. Click the **Device** dropdown at the top. Your connected device should appear in the list (for example, *"Canon EOS R50"* or *"USB Memory Card"*). Select it.
4. Choose the **Folder naming** style you prefer.
5. Select a **Media type** if you only want photos or only videos.
6. Click **Export photos and videos**.
7. The app will first read the contents of your camera. This may take a moment depending on the number of files.
8. Choose a destination folder and the export will begin.

> **Note:** Album selection, the camera model filter and the geographic tags of the customized folder pattern are not available when exporting from a connected device. The app will only export from the device's storage.
>
> **Tip:** If you run the export again with the same destination folder, previously exported files will be detected and skipped automatically — only new shots will be copied.

Choosing What to Export

Media Types

The **Media types** dropdown lets you choose which kind of content to export:

Option	What it exports
Photos and videos	Everything — photos, videos, Live Photos, etc.
Photos	Only photos (no videos)
Videos	Only videos (no photos)

Date Range Filter

You can limit the export to photos taken within a specific time period:

- **"Export photos and videos from and including [date]"** — only exports photos taken on or after the selected start date. Check the box next to this option and pick the date.
- **"and before [date]"** — only exports photos taken before the selected end date. Check the box next to this option and pick the date.

You can use one or both filters together. For example: - Enable the start date filter and set it to 1 January 2024 to export everything from 2024 onwards. - Enable both the start date and end date filters and set them to specific dates to export a particular time period, like a summer holiday.

> **Note:** While **"Recently added photos only"** is enabled, the date range is ignored — only photos in the system's Recently Added album are exported. Your date selection is kept and applies again when you turn that option off.

Camera Model Filter

The **Camera model** dropdown lets you restrict the export to photos taken with a specific camera, based on the EXIF camera make and model stored in each photo.

- **All camera models** (the default) exports everything regardless of which camera was used.
- Select a specific model (for example, *Canon EOS R50* or *iPhone 15 Pro*) to export only photos taken with that camera.
- Click the **refresh button** next to the dropdown to rescan your library for camera models.

> **Note:** The camera model filter is only available for Photo Library exports, not for connected devices.

Choosing How Files and Folders Are Named

Folder Naming

The **Folder naming** dropdown controls how subfolders are created inside your chosen destination. Your photos will be sorted into these folders automatically based on the date they were taken.

Option	Example folder structure
Year / Month	`2024/06/`
Year / Month / Day	`2024/06/15/`
Year - Month	`2024-06/`
Year - Month - Day	`2024-06-15/`
Year / Monthname	`2024/June/`
Year / Monthname / Day	`2024/June/15/`
Year	`2024/`
Year / Year-Month / Year-Month-Day	`2024/2024-06/2024-06-15/`
Year / Year-Month-Day Albumname	`2024/2024-06-15 Summer Holiday/`
Album	One folder per album (only available with album sources)
No Subfolders	All files in one folder
Customized	Your own pattern, built from tags — see below

The **Example** line just below the dropdowns shows you a live preview of the folder and file path that will be used.

File Naming

The **File naming** dropdown controls how individual files are named when they are saved.

Option	Example filename
Original Filename	`IMG_2870.HEIC`
Year-Month-Day_Filename	`2024-06-15_IMG_2870.HEIC`
Year-Month-Day_HourMinute_Filename	`2024-06-15_1430_IMG_2870.HEIC`
YearMonthDay_HourMinuteSecond.Extension	`20240615_143025.HEIC`

> **Tip:** If you later change the folder or file naming style and re-run the export, the app will warn you that the naming has changed — this could result in duplicate files being created. It's best to keep the same naming style once you have chosen one.

Customized Folder Pattern

If none of the ready-made folder styles fit, choose **"Customized"** in the **Folder naming** dropdown. A pattern builder opens where you assemble your own folder structure from tags — including geographic tags such as continent, country or city, which is ideal for sorting travel photos by destination.

To build a pattern: 1. Select **"Customized"** as the folder naming style. The **Customized Folder Pattern** window opens. (You can reopen it any time with the slider button next to the dropdown.) 2. **Drag tags** from the **Tags** area into the **Pattern** area, in the order you want the folders to be created. 3. **Reorder** tags by dragging them within the pattern, and **remove** them by dragging them back out to the Tags area. 4. The **Example** line at the bottom shows a live preview of the resulting path. 5. Click **Apply** to use the pattern, or **Cancel** to discard your changes.

Available tags:

Group	Tags
Date	Year, Month, Month Name, Day of Month, Day Name
Place	Continent, Country, City Name, City Area, "City, Country"
Camera	Camera Manufacturer, Camera Model, Camera
Library	Album
Separators	`/` (new subfolder), `-`, `_`, Space

Examples:

Pattern	Resulting path
Country `/` Year `/` Month	`Germany/2024/06/IMG_2870.CR3`
Year `/` Country `–` City Name	`2024/Germany–Nuremberg/IMG_2870.CR3`
Camera Model `/` Year	`Canon EOS 90D/2024/IMG_2870.CR3`
Continent `/` Year `/` Month Name	`Europe/2024/June/IMG_2870.CR3`
Camera Manufacturer `/` Camera Model	`Canon/Canon EOS 90D/IMG_2870.CR3`
City Area `/` Year `–` Month	`Altstadt/2024-06/IMG_2870.CR3`

Worked Example: a Canon EOS 90D Travel Archive

Suppose you shoot with a Canon EOS 90D, travel a lot, and want an archive sorted by camera, then by where each photo was taken, then by year.

1. Set **Folder naming** to **"Customized"** and build this pattern: **Camera Model** `/` **Country** `/` **City Name** `/` **Year**
2. Set **File naming** to **"Year-Month-Day_HourMinute_Filename"**, so each file carries its capture time.
3. Export to a folder called `Photo Backup`.

The result on disk:

```
Photo Backup/
└── Canon EOS 90D/
    ├── Germany/
    │   └── Nuremberg/
    │       └── 2024/
    │           ├── 2024-06-15_1430_IMG_2870.CR3
    │           └── 2024-06-15_1432_IMG_2871.CR3
    └── Italy/
        └── Rome/
            └── 2024/
                └── 2024-08-03_1015_IMG_3311.CR3
```

If you shoot with several cameras, put **Camera Manufacturer** in front of the model — or use it on its own to keep each brand in its own tree:

```
Photo Backup/
├── Canon/
│   └── Europe/
│       └── Germany/
│           └── 2024/
│               └── 06/
│                   └── IMG_2870.CR3
└── Apple/
    └── Asia/
        └── Japan/
            └── 2025/
                └── 03/
                    └── IMG_9042.HEIC
```

> **Tip:** The **Camera** tag combines manufacturer and model into a single folder name. Note that many cameras — Canon among them — already include the brand in the EXIF model field, so **Camera Manufacturer** `/` **Camera Model** produces `Canon/Canon EOS 90D/`. Use **Camera Model** alone if you prefer a single, shorter folder level.
>
> **Note:** Geographic tags rely on the location data stored in your photos. Photos taken without location information are placed in a generic folder instead. Camera tags rely on the EXIF data written by the camera, so the exact spelling of a model name comes from the camera itself.

Further Settings

These options are found in the **Further settings** section and give you more control over the export.

Setting	What it does
Export original photos and videos	When turned on (recommended), the original, unedited file is exported. When turned off, the edited version (with any adjustments you have made in Photos) is exported instead.
Recently added photos only (faster)	Speeds up the export by only scanning the system's Recently Added album, a small, recent subset — not your whole library or selected date range. Best for regular incremental backups. Disable this if you want a full scan of your entire library. This option is unavailable when a specific album is selected (because the album already defines the exact set of photos to export) or when exporting from a connected camera (which always provides a complete file listing).
Include alternative versions (e.g. RAW)	When your camera saves both a JPEG and a RAW version of the same shot, this option ensures the RAW file is also exported. Not available for connected devices.
Exclude screenshots	Skips photos that are marked as screenshots in your Photo Library, so your export only contains real photos. Not available for connected devices.
Favorites only	Exports only the photos and videos you have marked as favorites in the Photos app. Not available for connected devices.
Overwrite existing files if smaller than original	If a file already exists in the destination but is smaller than the file in your library, it will be replaced. Useful if you previously exported lower-quality versions.
Dry run (no actual export)	Goes through all the motions of an export but does not actually copy any files. Use this to check how many photos would be exported and see any potential issues, without touching your files.

Running the Export

Once you are happy with your settings, click the **Export photos and videos** button (or **Export photos** / **Export videos** depending on your media type selection).

A **folder picker** window will appear — navigate to where you want to save your files and click **Choose**. You can create a new folder directly in this window.

The export screen will show: - A **progress bar** showing how far through the export you are. - A **thumbnail** of the current photo or video being processed. - A **count** of how many new items have been

exported so far. - The **total file size** exported so far.

You can click **Cancel** at any time to stop the export. Any files already copied will remain in the destination folder.

Index Printout

The **Index Printout** feature creates a printed or PDF page listing all the photos and videos that match your current settings. It is great for keeping a paper or digital record of what has been exported.

Print before export: Click the **printer icon** button (next to the Export button) to generate an index of what *would* be exported with the current settings, before actually running the export. This is useful for reviewing what will be copied.

Print after export: After a successful export, a **"Print Index Printout"** button will appear in the summary dialog. Click it to print or save a PDF listing all the newly exported items.

> **Note:** The index printout is only available for Photo Library exports, not for connected cameras.

After the Export

When the export finishes, a summary dialog will appear showing how many photos and videos were exported.

From the app's **File** menu you can also: - **Reveal Recent Export in Finder** — opens the export destination folder in a Finder window so you can browse the exported files immediately. - **Reveal Recent Log in Finder** — opens the log file of the most recent export. - **Reprint Last Index Printout** — reprints the index printout from the most recent export.

Free Tier and Unlimited Export

Photo Library Export is free to use for up to **100 photos and videos per app launch**. Each time you open the app, the counter resets and you can export another 100 items for free.

If you need to export more, you can **Unlock Unlimited** either with an inexpensive **Yearly Subscription** or with a **One-Time Purchase**. Both remove the 100-item limit and let you export your entire library in one go — the subscription renews every year until you cancel it, the one-time purchase never expires.

To purchase or restore a previous purchase: 1. Click **"Unlock Unlimited"** at the bottom of the app window. 2. In the sheet that appears, both options are shown side by side with their price. Click **"Subscribe"** or **"Buy"**, or **"Restore Purchases"** if you have already bought unlimited export on this or another Mac.

If you subscribed, you can change or cancel the subscription at any time with **"Manage Subscription"** in the same sheet, which opens your App Store account settings.

You can also restore purchases from the app's menu bar.

Tips and Frequently Asked Questions

Will the app delete my photos? No. Photo Library Export only *copies* your photos and videos. Nothing in your Photos Library or on your camera is ever deleted or modified.

I ran the export twice — will I end up with duplicates? No. The app checks whether a file already exists in the destination folder and skips it. Only truly new files will be copied on subsequent runs.

What does "Dry run" do? A dry run simulates the entire export without actually copying any files. It is a safe way to see how many items would be exported and preview the folder structure, with zero risk.

The export says "No new photo or video found". Why? This means all the photos matching your current filters have already been exported to the chosen destination. Either change your destination folder, adjust the date range, or add new photos to your library first.

My camera is connected but doesn't appear in the Device list. Make sure the camera is powered on and in the correct mode for file transfer (check your camera's manual). If it still doesn't appear, try disconnecting and reconnecting the USB cable.

Should I use "Export original" or the edited version? For backups, we recommend keeping **"Export original photos and videos"** turned on. This preserves the original file exactly as it came from your camera. If you want the version with your edits applied (crops, colour adjustments, filters), turn this option off.

What file formats are supported? The app exports whatever format is stored in your Photos Library or on your camera — this includes JPEG, HEIC, RAW formats (such as CR2, ARW, NEF), MP4, MOV, and more.

Where are the export logs? Export logs are saved automatically. You can open the most recent one from the app's **File** menu under **"Reveal Recent Log in Finder"**.

In which languages is the app available? Photo Library Export is localised in 14 languages: English, German, French, Spanish, Italian, Dutch, Polish, Portuguese (Portugal and Brazil), Russian, Ukrainian, Hindi, Japanese and Simplified Chinese. The app follows your macOS language setting automatically.

Made in Nuremberg, Germany. For support, use the Contact link at the bottom of the app window.

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