



Saving Images for Digital Competitions

Saving image to fit certain dimensions need not be a complicated process. Below will be a set of guidelines on how to save or export your images for the Toowoomba Photographic Society digital competitions on MyPhotoClub. As of July 2022, the only restriction for images is a maximum file size of 5MB. Your image may be of any dimension provided the image is smaller than 5MB
To maximise image quality output, follow the below steps.

Based on numerous tests, using a 3000px on the long edge of your image produces the best results in MyPhotoClub and gets you pretty close to the 5MB file size.

What could go wrong using 3000px?

If you are using a camera body with a small Megapixel count – your original RAW image files may not be much larger than 3000px on either side. This will leave you less room for cropping. Please note though that 3000px is just a recommendation for maximum image quality, if you get 2500px, 2000px on the long edge that will still be acceptable.

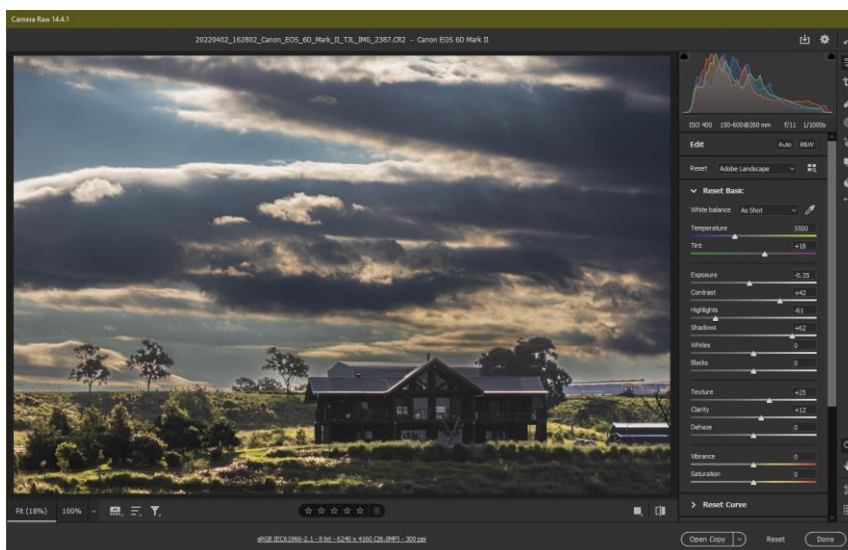
Similarly, if you are photographing a bird off in the distance for example, and need to crop the image significantly, this may also reduce the room you have to play with image dimensions. As above, 3000px is just a recommendation for maximum image quality, try and get as close to it as you can.

If you use Adobe Camera Raw and Photoshop to process your images follow the below steps:

To start with lets look at Adobe Camera Raw:

What is Adobe Camera Raw?

Many photographers start their editing journey in Lightroom. Lightroom is a nice cataloguing and Raw image processing application. Adobe Camera Raw functions in a similar way to lightroom, all the same sliders are there and if you edit the image using the same adjustments as lightroom then you should come out with an identical image. Adobe Camera Raw does not catalogue your images, you use another application called Adobe Bridge – but this is another class all on its own.



Sample image in Adobe Camera Raw (ACR)

At the bottom of ACR you will see a section that lists the colour space of your image, the bit depth, the megapixels and the PPI. By default this will probably come up as Adobe RGB. Unless you have a very specific requirement to edit in AdobeRGB, or ProPhoto RGB then change this to sRGB. I have generally found that it causes far less issues if you just process the image from the start as sRGB and flow through the process from there. In some cases I have had colours drastically change when converting from an AdobeRGB or ProPhoto RGB to sRGB.

You will also find that the Depth is probably 8 Bits/Channel. It's true that by going to 16 Bit gives you more data to work with. However, a 16 bit image is significantly larger, and even some functions of photoshop no longer work if you have a 16bit image. So as above, unless you specifically need it, just leave this as 8 Bits/Channel.

Do not change anything within Image sizing.

Once you have done this for the first time, the setting will save. Occasionally it will reset when an Adobe Camera Raw update occurs, so make sure you glance at this every image to confirm.

Once you're happy with how your Raw Image has been processed press Open to now load photoshop fully.

1. Process your image as normal, use the sliders in Adobe Camera Raw to fine tune your image, and then use photoshop to do any editing etc.
2. Once you are finished editing the image, you can now resize it. In photoshop select from the top menu "Image – Image Size"

In the image size box, take note of the largest number. This is what's called the "long edge". For a landscape oriented picture, this will be the width, for a portrait oriented picture this will be the height.

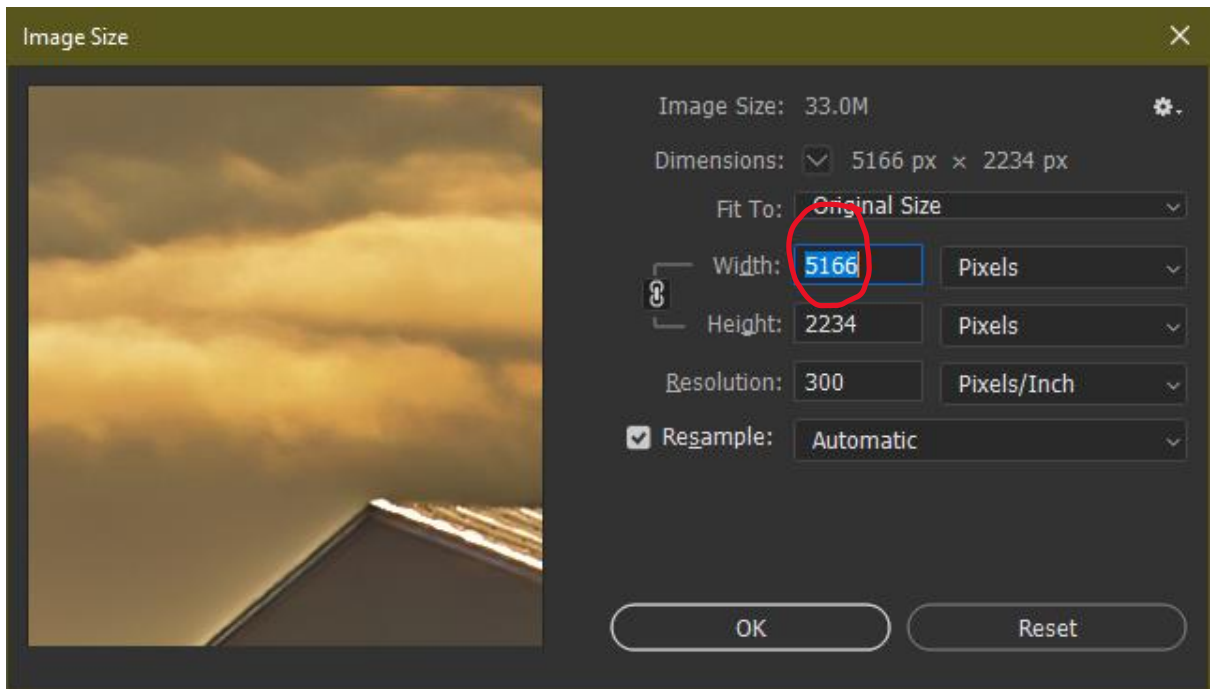
What is "long edge"?



You will now be prompted to input the desired image dimensions.

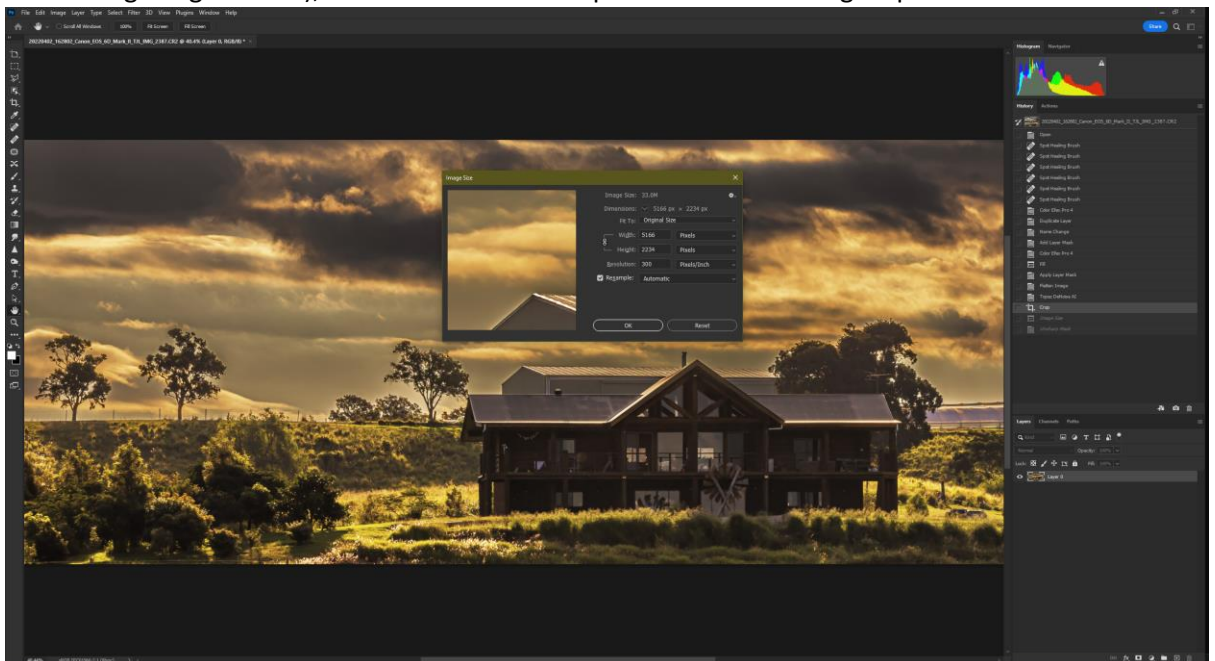
Before proceeding, ensure that the link between width and height is enabled. This is evident by lines going through the chain link and to the numbers.

The image below shows the link as enabled.



If before you resize the long edge is larger than "3000" then set the long edge to 3000 pixels. There is no need to touch the resolution as part of this process.

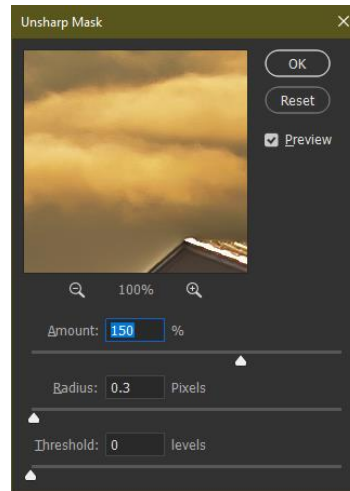
If before you resize the long edge is smaller than "3000" do not resize the image as your image is currently smaller than 3000 pixels (resizing here would be enlarging and possibly cause image degradation), cancel this box and skip down to the "saving step".



3. After resizing, it's a good idea to do some image sharpening. By resizing you have modified the size of the pixels and adding some sharpening will bring back some of the clarity from before.



Go to the top menu and select “Filter – Sharpen – Unsharp Mask”.



Set the amount to 150%

Radius to 0.3

Threshold to 0

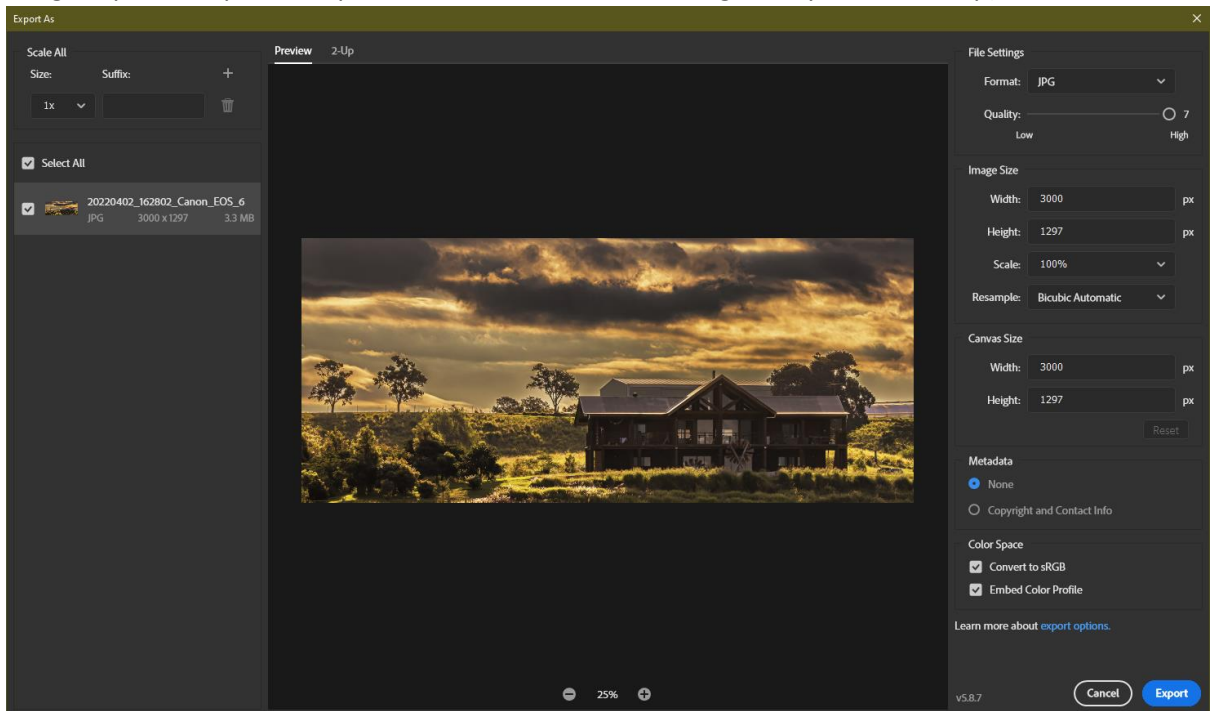
If you find the sharpening is too strong, lower the Amount percentage, if the sharpening isn't enough then increase the Amount percentage.

Why such a small radius and threshold? – By having them set to these numbers, you are making micro-adjustments to the sharpening. A larger radius and threshold will sharpen a much larger area and allows for less fine tuning.

Once you are happy – click OK.

4. Now you are ready to save your image. On the top Menu – go to File – Export – Export As (this is a new menu with less options making it less confusing to look at, if you have multiple

images opened in photoshop this menu can save all the images for you in one step).



In the format section, select JPG. On the left you will see your image, you should see the estimated MB of the image. Ensure the quality slider is as high as it goes, if your image is under 5MB in size then proceed, if not then try a quality of 6 and see if this is enough to bring down the size.

There is no need to modify image size here, or the canvas size – leave these two alone.
Metadata: There is no requirement to include your metadata, this is entirely up to you.

In color space, make sure convert to sRGB and Embed Color Profile is ticked.

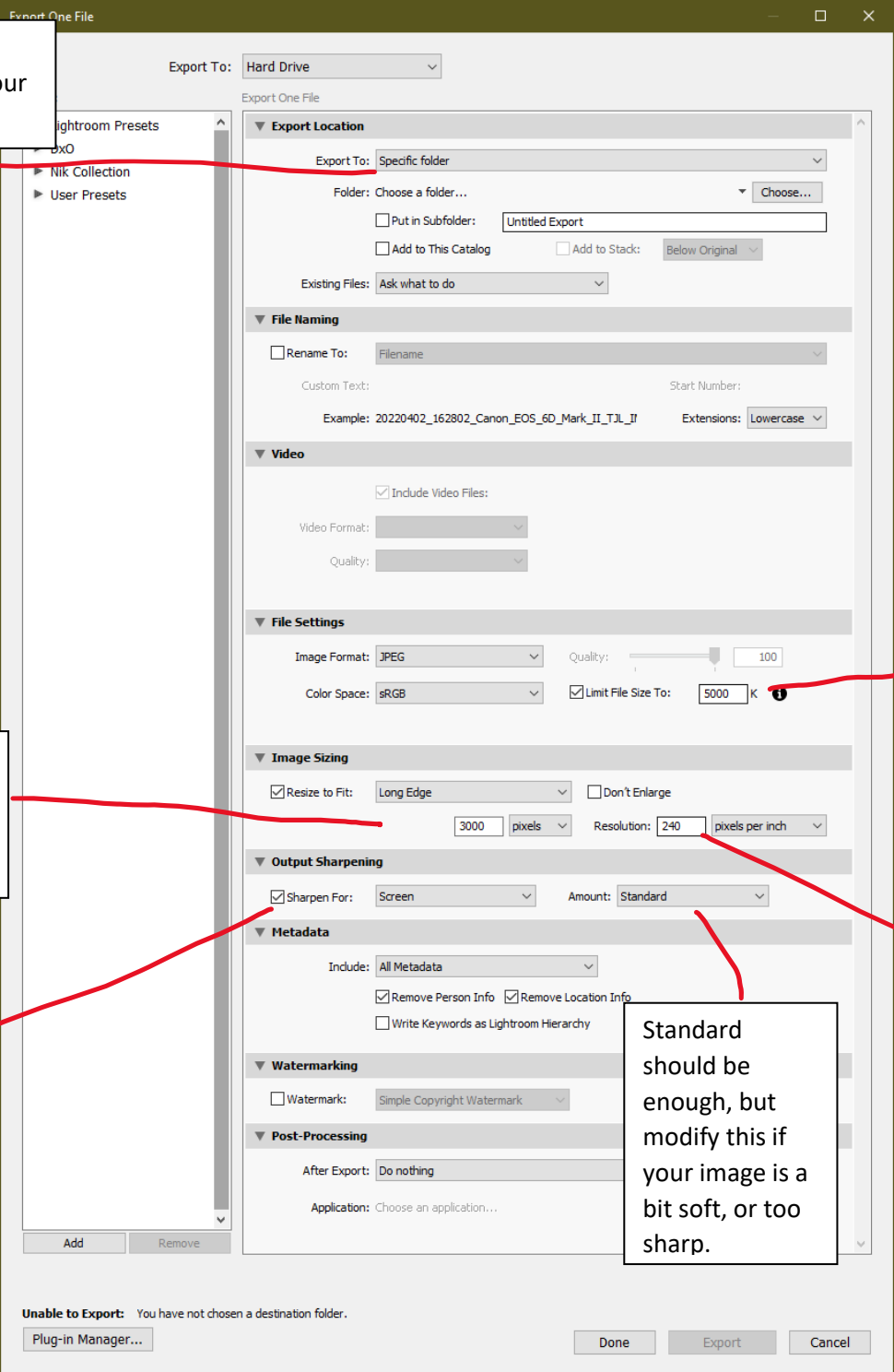
Click Export – You can now choose where to save the file.

If you are familiar with “Actions” in photoshop, I have created an action for all of the above, you just need to import it and run it.

The action can be downloaded here: XYZ

If you use Adobe Lightroom Classic to process your images follow the below steps:

Edit your image using the sliders as normal. Once you have completed editing on the Menu go to File – Export. Using the export module use the following screenshot as a guide.



The screenshot shows the 'Export One File' dialog box in Adobe Lightroom Classic. The dialog is divided into several sections: Export Location, File Naming, Video, File Settings, Image Sizing, Output Sharpening, Metadata, Watermarking, and Post-Processing. Red lines connect various settings to explanatory text boxes:

- Export Location:** A box points to the 'Export To:' dropdown menu, stating 'Use this to select where to export your image to'.
- File Settings:** A box points to the 'Image Format' dropdown (set to JPEG) and the 'Quality' slider (set to 100), stating 'This will save the image to 3000 pixels on the long edge'.
- File Settings:** A box points to the 'Limit File Size To:' field (set to 5000 K), stating 'This tells lightroom to not allow the image to be larger than 5MB'.
- Image Sizing:** A box points to the 'Resize to Fit' dropdown (set to Long Edge) and the '3000 pixels' field, stating 'This will save the image to 3000 pixels on the long edge'.
- Output Sharpening:** A box points to the 'Sharpen For:' dropdown (set to Screen) and the 'Amount' dropdown (set to Standard), stating 'Add some sharpening as we are resizing the image'.
- Output Sharpening:** A box points to the 'Amount' dropdown (set to Standard), stating 'Standard should be enough, but modify this if your image is a bit soft, or too sharp.'
- Metadata:** A box points to the 'Include:' dropdown (set to All Metadata), stating 'Leave this as default – there is no need to change this'.

At the bottom of the dialog, there is a message: 'Unable to Export: You have not chosen a destination folder.' and buttons for 'Done', 'Export', and 'Cancel'.



Additional Notes:

Currently on the MyPhotoClub website, there is slightly different terminology around long / short edge of an image. As I don't have access to modify this particular section, please ignore the wording here until it is updated.

The Dimensions shown below are the MINIMUM size your image can be. This has been set at 1500px to avoid even smaller images being uploaded.

The screenshot displays the MyPhotoClub website interface. On the left, a list of competition categories is shown, including 'PRINT Salon Grade Open Colour', 'PRINT Salon Grade Open Mono', 'PRINT Salon Grade SetSubject Colour', 'PRINT Salon Grade SetSubject Mono', 'PRINT Salon Grade Creative', 'PRINT Salon Grade Field Day', and 'DIGITAL Salon Grade Open Colour', 'DIGITAL Salon Grade Open Mono', 'DIGITAL Salon Grade SetSubject Colour', 'DIGITAL Salon Grade SetSubject Mono', 'DIGITAL Salon Grade Creative', and 'DIGITAL Salon Grade Field Day'. A pink 'ENTRY HELP' button is visible below the list. A blue box at the bottom left contains the following information: 'Maximum number of images: 2', 'Max print entries: 2 Max digital images: 2', 'Minimum image dimensions on the shortest side: Width: 1500 pixels, Height: 1500 pixels', and 'Maximum file size: 5 megabytes'. The text 'Entries close Tue, 9th Aug 2022 11:59 PM (Australia/Brisbane)' is also present. On the right, a blue header reads 'First step - upload / select your image.' with a green button 'SELECT FROM EXISTING UPLOADED IMAGES'. Below this, a white box contains the text 'click to add or drag image file here' and a note '(page will refresh and show your image when uploaded)'. An orange button at the bottom right says 'CLICK HERE TO VIEW COMPETITION RULES AND DEFINITIONS'.