

ORGANIZING DIGITAL PHOTOS

"The bottom line: If you want a happier family, create, refine and retell the story of your family's positive moments and your ability to bounce back from the difficult ones. That act alone may increase the odds that your family will thrive for many generations to come."

-Bruce Feiler, "The Stories that Bind Us", NYT, March 15, 2013

-Based on the work of Marshall Duke & Robyn Fivush

Getting Started	
Decide WHAT you want to save? For WHOM? HOW will it be shared?	
Will you hire a professional or DIY?	
Hire Professional Service	DIY
Roots Tech sponsors & exhibitors	Make an appt at Alpine FSC
Online search and referrals	Prepare per website directions
Label flash drive with your name & return address. Create a folder on the inside that says "If you find this memory drive, please return to....."	

Use a 4-Step Cycle with your Digitized Materials
Useful for total collection or smaller project that you want to complete. Continue the process as you add more photos.
See "Personal Digital Archiving" BYU Family History Webinar by Jeremy Myntii on Youtube

Step 1 Identify Where are photos, stories & media stored?	
Can you access older technology formats?	
Physical Memories	Digital Media
Photo albums	Phone or tablet
Boxes	desktop or laptop computer
Envelopes from Developing Services	Flash Drive or CD's or Portable Drive
Negatives	email, texts, social media, blogs, cloud storage
Slides	Camera or mini disk

Step 2 Decide	
Scan First	Organize the “Box” of physical photos first
- Slides are easier to view after scanning. - Scan whole pages of albums & scrapbooks to preserve context.	- Food service gloves for delicate materials (nonlatex, powder free) - Clean before scanning - Sort by types of materials, i.e. slides, negatives, prints, albums - Insert identifying card before each group with name, date, location, # of photos-(easier to add details after scanning)
Consider the types and number of images & your personal preference.	
What content is important for long term storage?	
Choose standardized, universally supported programs and software.	

Consider the Value of Printed Photos in your Planning Process
Enjoyable now, and can always be scanned & edited to enhance in future
Is a format that will not become outdated
Organize and keep in safe environment
Archival tips from some experts: Maureen Taylor, “The Photo Detective” Denise May Levenick, “The Family Curator” Author of <u>How to Archive Family Keepsakes</u>

Step 3 Organize
Design a logical hierarchy of files that work for you, can be understood by others and is flexible enough to grow with collection. Digital and physical files can parallel each other in general organizational plan.
File names Descriptive enough to have meaning
By years, months, major events, themes
Family surnames of previous generations, then sub files with given names.
Write down your naming convention so you remember it and keep it standardized.

Step 3 Organize with File Naming Conventions recognizable by most systems & devices	
Use upper & lower case letters, numbers, hyphens & underscore	no other special characters
Use dashes, not spaces.	Brown-Nancy
Use CamelCase, not spaces. (capitalize first letter of each word)	BrownNancy
Use standard date format (not FH style dates)	2024-05-17 or 20240517
Zero pad sequential numbers to sequence photos in file	001,002,003,004...999
Assume that upper and lower case will be read the same	

Step 3 Organize with Metadata Details				
This step is essential in adding meaning to the images you save. Think of it as “writing on the back of the picture”				
WHO	WHAT	WHERE	WHEN	WHY
Camera or phone records the technical metadata, but YOU add the most important details.				
You can go back to tag and add more detail to images you upload but can only comment on things added by others.				
Consider working through these first 3 steps (identifying, deciding what to keep, scanning and organizing) with a smaller group of photos to learn what works for you.				
Most efficient to work with a batch of photos that you can scan, add file names & metadata & organize completely within reasonable time frame. Finish a chunk while its fresh in your mind.				

Step 4 Maintain		
Make sure your hard work is safely preserved and then continue to monitor your collection.		
3-2-1 Backup System		
3 copies Prints count!	2 types of storage- computer, hard drive, cloud	1 off-site cloud or family member
Use most current storage device		
Plan to check for obsolescence every 5 years		
Careful preservation of printed photos and other physical artifacts		

Now the FUN--- Sharing is an effective backup and a way to connect.
Share flashdrive containing your files - Create an archive index book with attached storage - Flashdrive in secure pockets in a binder with printed thumbnails or screenshots of files Share images with Family History Websites Send photo w/ story to family on specific event or holiday Share on family social media sites like fb family groups or the new FS family group feature

Popular photo editing & organizing programs to purchase or pay for cloud storage	
Free	For Purchase
Adobe Photoshop Express is a free photo app for iOS & Android mobile devices	Adobe PhotoShop for yearly subscription of \$268.00 with professional edits Lightroom
Google Photos up to 15 GB	Adobe Elements Photo Organizer buy 1 time
Apple Photos (icloud) up to 5 GB	
Edit pics & docs with Irfanview, a free download, simple & widely used by family historians	

Family History Sites with editing & organizing capabilities

FamilySearch and Ancestry offer similar features but with some differences in terminology and the appearance of the interface. My Heritage is most unique with hi-tech photo enhancements. All 3 sites have “helps” ? with articles to answer questions and help you learn features. Explore and see what you prefer. All will change & update features regularly.

	Family Search	Ancestry	My Heritage
Editing	Rotation only, so edit before uploading	Colorize, sharpen, filter, add stickers	Colorize, sharpen-excellent for faces,
Your photos only	Gallery & Albums	Gallery & Albums	Albums you create
Contributions of others	Person page-you can comment only	Some suggested in hints on profile page	Syncs w/ FS so lots of photos in “my photos”
Privacy	Each memory allows you to select private, public or limited sharing w/ family groups	Memories follow privacy setting of your trees-private or public	Set in “My Privacy” under your account on home page
Special features	Slideshow, Create a Story w/ text and up to 10 photos	Slide show, Photo collage, Photo Lines=a generational picture	Animate photos, Deep Story will speak your message, AI Time Machine, Facial Recognition for Photo Tagging Reimagine app to scan & edit on mobile device
Searchability	Audio, Photo, doc, story	Audio, Photo, doc, & many other filters	Limited to names
Image File types supported	Jpg, tif, bmp, png, Pdf up to 15 MB	Same as FS but also rtf, doc, docx, text	
Audio File types supported	Mp3, mp4, wav up to 15 MB	Ancestry App only	none
Strengths	Ease of use Widely used	Edits, You control content	Fun & unique photo features

Mylio is an additional FS partner claiming strength to “organize and search all your media in one place –Effortless organization, backup automation, stored privately on your devices.”
It has a free version for 1 device so you can try it out. Register with email at mylio.com
Paid version is Mylio + which runs on unlimited devices, has enhanced features and vault storage
Syncs metadata with FS galleries and albums.

In conclusion,

Where will you start? What projects call to you?
Who can you involve in sharing this work?

For more information, check these resources:

SCANNING:

“Alpine North Family History Center- Utah “ [Alpine North Family History FB group](#)

Fb group contains 2 videos about using the slide scanner in our Family Search Center. Video 2 is an hour long video with an index to chapter topics. It includes a variety of reliable information about best scanning practices and organizing and naming files.

[Pictures and Stories](#) Website by Alison Taylor offering her professional services but also free downloadable ebook for scanning, along with other tips for DIY, links to her RootsTech talks

ORGANIZING:

Roots Tech 2024

<https://www.familysearch.org/en/rootstech/series/discover-tell-and-share-your-story>

a series with a section titled “Leveraging your photos and Photography to Enhance Your Family Story has excellent short videos with a 3 part “Unlocking the Shoebox” which is another helpful look at the key ideas of today’s presentation.

Wikihow “How to Print Thumbnails”. Simple to follow instructions with step by step pictures using Mac OS or Windows to print thumbnails of your photos for easy reference.

For Iphone users with huge camera rolls & icloud storage, Google [Stacy Julian](#) , The Story Coach & The Principles of **Photo Freedom** professional scrapbooker with great ideas for organizing digital photos, Her Instagram account has a 100 day project called “Camera Ready Roll” that gives short, simple daily productivity tasks.

ARCHIVING:

Maureen Taylor, “The Photo Detective”

Denise May Levenick, “The Family Curator” Author of [How to Archive Family Keepsakes](#)

