Getting Started with Picasa: Getting Started Guide

Using Picasa and Picasa Web Albums together, you can now organize, edit, and upload your photos to the web from your computer in quick, simple steps. Arrange your photos into folders and albums and erase their blemishes using powerful editing tools in Picasa. Then use Picasa Web Albums to share those perfected photos online with family, friends, and the world.

This guide walks you through the main features of Picasa.

Table of content

Organizing photos in Picasa

When you first install Picasa, it scans folders on your hard drive and displays any detected photos. These folders, along with the customized albums you create, make up the organization of your photos within Picasa. Within your folders and albums, Picasa displays icons on your images to help you quickly see which photos have been uploaded, marked as a favorite, geo-tagged, and more.

Folders

Folders represent actual directories on your computer's hard drive that contain photos. Changes you make to folders in Picasa affect corresponding folders on your computer's hard drive. For example, moving a photo from one folder to another in Picasa will also move the photo in Windows Explorer (Windows).

Picasa 3 Manual

Albums

Unlike folders, albums exist only in Picasa. For example, you might create an album called 'Pictures with Grandma,' and include photos from various folders on your computer. Unlike Picasa folders, your albums don't correspond to real folders on your hard drive -- so when you delete or move photos from an album, the original files remain in their original locations on your hard drive.
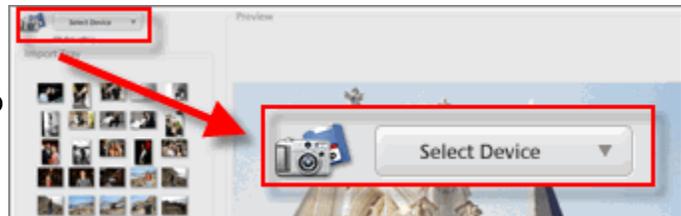
Library icons

Picasa display small icons on your photos in the Library to provide you with at-a-glance updates on the status of your image.

Click these icons to see short descriptions of their functions:

Importing your photos

Of course, not all your photos reside on your computer. You can import photos into Picasa from many sources, including cameras, CDs, memory cards, scanners, webcams, and more.

Follow these easy steps to import from your camera:

1. From within Picasa, click the **Import** button.
2. Select your device or folder from the drop-down menu (your camera should automatically be detected). To help you import images from a particular day or event, Picasa segments your images according to the time period in which they were taken. Each group of images in the import window will be marked by a clock icon.
3. Select the specific photos you'd like to import, or choose all. These photos will be saved on your computer and displayed as a new folder in Picasa.

Using another device? View more articles on importing photos in Picasa.
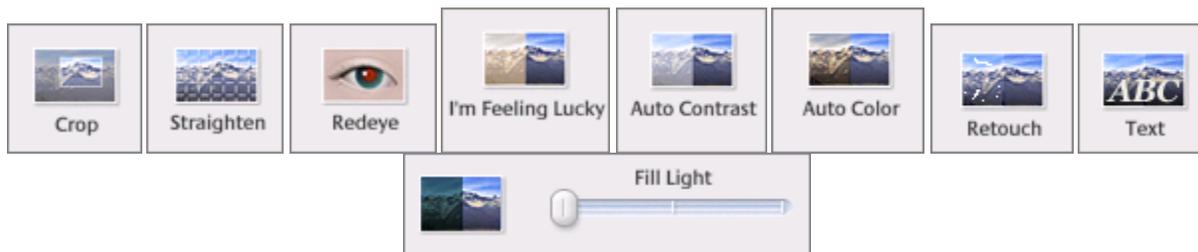
Quick and easy editing

Now that your photos are organized, you can start editing. With Picasa's advanced photo editing, you can use basic one-click fixes to improve almost any photo, adjust color and lighting, and add effects like black and white or sepia. Add captions to help tell the story.

First, double-click a photo to open the 'Edit Photo' screen. Then find your editing tools on the left-hand side, within the three tabs Basic Fixes, Tuning, and Effects.

Don't worry - Picasa never overwrites your original file. The photo edits you make are only viewable in Picasa until you decide to either export or save your changes. Either way, your original photos are always safe and sound, accessible at any time. Learn more.

Basic Fixes tab

Use the **Basic Fixes** tab to make simple edits on your photos. **Click a basic fix button below to see a short description of its function:**
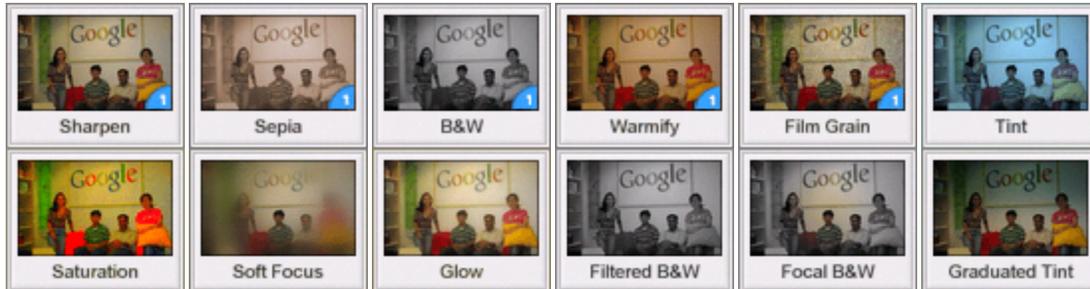

Tuning tab

Control the color and adjust the lighting in your photo to produce a more visually enhanced image. Click the magic wands for lighting or color to let Picasa automatically adjust the photo or use the provided sliders to manually control the color and lighting aspects of your photo.

- **Fill light**

- **Highlights**

- **Shadows**

- **Color temperature**

- **Neutral color picker**

Effects tab

The **Effects** tab contains 12 effects that you can apply to any still photo. **Click a button below to learn about each effect:**

Add captions

Tell the story behind a photo using captions. While editing a photo, click the text underneath that says 'Make a caption!', then add a caption. If you upload the photo to Picasa Web Albums, your captions will also appear in your online albums.

Captions are searchable from the top search bar within Picasa. Locate photos with ease by searching through your photos by the captions that go along with them.

Sync your edits

So how do you keep your online photos updated with your most recent Picasa edits? By enabling **Sync to Web** for a folder or album, edits made to your photos in Picasa will be reflected immediately in your online Picasa Web Album. In addition to photo edits, you can sync the changes you make to captions, tags, and geotags. Learn more about syncing your photos online.

You can also control many of your online album settings directly from Picasa. Use the down-arrow menu to the right of the **Share** button to control online album privacy, online image size, and much more. Learn more about the different types of online controls.
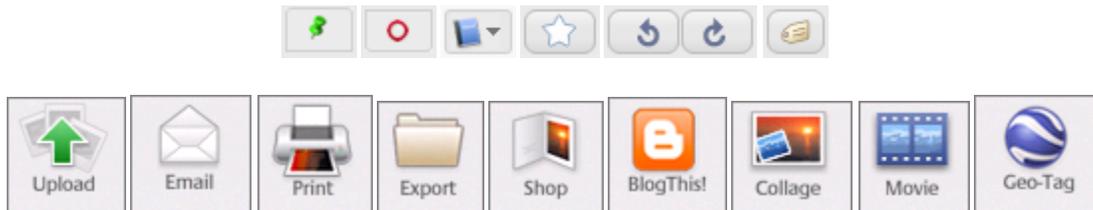
Sharing in Picasa

Now that you've organized and edited your photos, you're ready to share them with others. If you'd like to share an entire folder or album, click the **Share** button located in the folder or album header. Your photos will then be uploaded to Picasa Web Albums. You'll also be prompted to send email invitations to your friends and family to view the album.

You can also use the button bar at the bottom of your Library to share your photos in creative ways. Just <u>select the photos</u> you'd like to share and click the action you'd like to take. You can email or upload your photos, create a collage or movie, or order prints online from any number of providers.
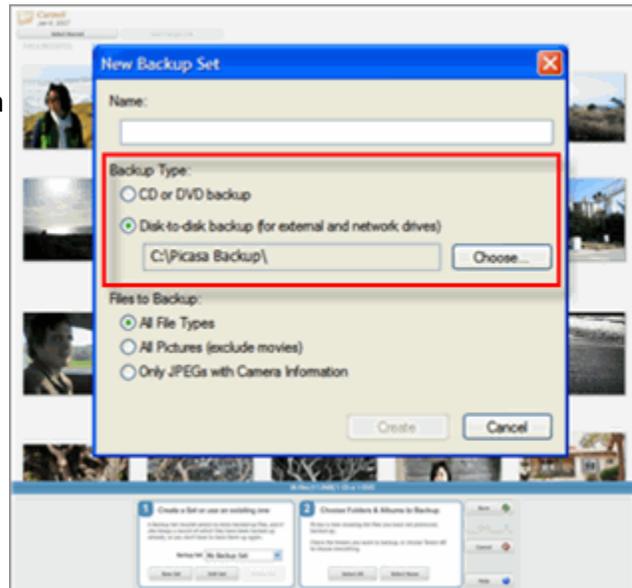
Click a button below to see a short description of its function:

Backing up your photos

Backing up your photos is a good way to make sure that they're always safe and sound. Picasa makes it easy to do this. Just click the **Tools** menu, select **Backup Pictures**, and select **New Set** to get started.

<u>External hard drive</u>**:** If you have a large collection of photos, you may want to store your backup file on an external hard drive to save some room on your local hard drive. Once you've initially backed up your entire collection, Picasa will then only back up the recent changes that you've made. This saves you time and ensures that your entire collection will be protected. Using an external drive with Picasa's backup feature is also a great way to migrate your photos to a new computer.

<u>Back up to CD or DVD</u>: Burning your photos to CD or DVD is also a convenient option. Should your hard drive ever fail, or should a power surge hit your external drive, you will thank your lucky stars as you recover all of your photos and edits.

Printing your photos

In the era of digital pictures, sometimes it's gratifying to see and hold a hard copy of a photo. Picasa makes it easy to print your photos at home or order prints online through your choice of print providers.

The **Print** button lets you print your selected photos using a local or networked printer. You can select a print layout size, such as 4 x 6 or wallet size, and Picasa will automatically size your selected photos to those proportions. Opt to include a border or your photo captions. These print layout options make it easier to print multiple photos on one page.

Click the **Shop** button (Windows only) to access a list of Picasa's online print providers. After you sign in to the provider's website, Picasa will automatically upload all of your selected photos to the print provider's website, enabling you to order prints as you wish.

Picasa Photo Viewer

Want to quickly preview your photo? Picasa Photo Viewer is installed with Picasa and lets you quickly view photos on your computer desktop or in Windows Explorer. This lightweight application gives you access to view, make minor edits, and upload an image to your Picasa Web Albums without having to fully open Picasa. You can set the Picasa Photo Viewer to be the default photo viewer for all photo file types supported by Picasa.

Using Picasa: Keyboard shortcuts

Use the following keyboard shortcuts to save time when viewing and editing in Picasa.

Shortcuts for selecting photos

- **Ctrl-A**: Select all photos in a folder/album
- **Ctrl-D**: Deselect photos
- **Ctrl-I**: Invert photo selection
- **Home**: Select the first photo in your folder/album
- **End**: Select the last photo in your folder/album
- **Ctrl-H**: Hold selected photos in Photo Tray
- **Ctrl-O**: Choose a file on your computer to display in Picasa.

Shortcuts for viewing photos

- **Ctrl-1**: View your photos as small thumbnails
- **Ctrl-2**: View your photos as large thumbnails
- **F11**: Use Picasa in full-screen mode
- **Ctrl-4**: Start a slideshow
- **Ctrl-5**: View your timeline
- **Ctrl-Enter**: Locate the photo file in Windows Explorer
- **Hover over a photo and use Ctrl-Alt**: Full-screen photo preview

Shortcuts for editing photos

- **Ctrl-3**: Open an image in 'Edit Mode'
- **Ctrl-R**: Rotate the image clockwise
- **Ctrl-Shift-R**: Rotate the image counter-clockwise
- **Ctrl-Shift-H**: Flip image horizontally
- **Ctrl-Shift-V**: Flip image vertically
- **Ctrl-Shift-B**: Add black and white effect
- **Ctrl-8**: Add a star

Shortcuts for watching videos

- **/** [slash]: Pause or play video
- **,** [comma]: Rewind video
- **.** [period]: Fast forward video

Miscellaneous shortcuts

- **Ctrl-E**: Email selected photos
- **Ctrl-P**: Print selected images
- **Ctrl-Shift-P**: Print album contact sheet
- **Ctrl-T**: Add tags to your photos

- **Ctrl-N**: Create a new album
- **F1**: View help content
- **X**: Exclude a photo when importing
- **Ctrl-M** Open the import room

Shortcuts in the Picasa Photo Viewer

- **Ctrl-U**: Single image upload
- **Ctrl-R**: Rotate the image clockwise
- **Ctrl-Shift-R**: Rotate the image counter-clockwise
- **Ctrl-8**: Add a star
- **Left and right arrow keys**: Scroll through images
- **Mousewheel**: You can both zoom and scroll through photos. Adjust mousewheel behavior by clicking the down arrow menu > Configuration. You have two options:
    - Zoom with mousewheel (hold Ctrl to navigate)
    - Move filmstrip with mousewheel (hold Ctrl to zoom)