

Update & Q&A: LRC Printing

In this lesson I'll start with a quick update on Masters Academy and my take on the AI-built copies of Adobe's apps that have been getting a lot of attention online. Then I'll answer a member's question about moving from printing in Photoshop to printing in Lightroom Classic.

Key Concepts

1. **Masters Academy Updates** (00:15)
2. **AI-Built Copies of Adobe Apps** (03:19)
3. **Why Adobe Is Speeding Up** (06:03)
4. **Q&A: Photoshop to LRC Printing** (07:51)
5. **File Formats and Layers** (08:53)
6. **Photoshop Sharpening Workflow** (09:45)
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Masters Academy Updates (00:15)

I've taken over customer service myself and put new systems in place, so if you send in a support ticket you should hear back the same day, usually within half a day, unless I'm on a flight.

Notifications for lesson comments and Masters Forum posts had been turned off during some website changes, so I only saw comments when I checked lesson pages by hand. They're back on, and I'm catching up on older comments that haven't had a reply yet.

I'm also working on the website again, starting with bringing back the ability to mark lessons as completed and adding lesson notes. If you have ideas for what would make the site more useful to you, let me know.

AI-Built Copies of Adobe Apps (03:19)

There are a lot of clickbait articles and videos about the ArtCraft suite, which Brandon Thomas built to mimic Adobe's apps without using any of Adobe's code. It includes replacements for Photoshop and Lightroom. Most of the coverage either defends Adobe on everything or claims people have dropped Photoshop and Lightroom because of it.

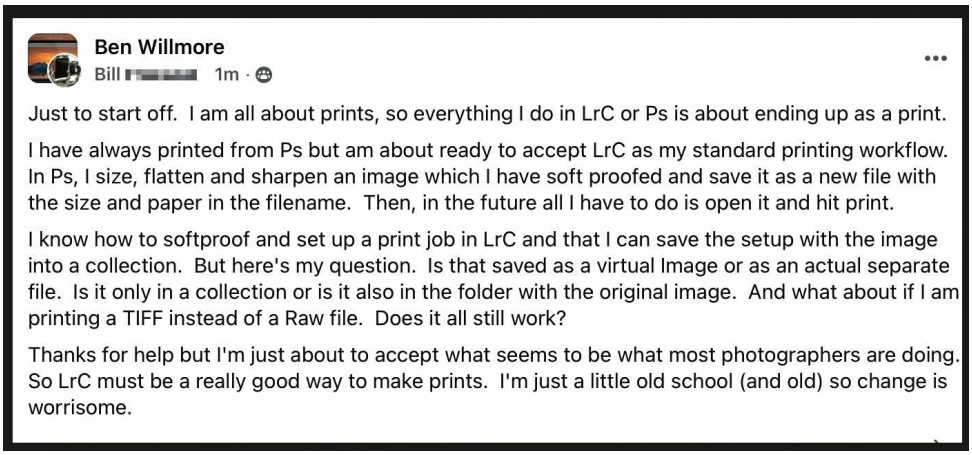
The developer himself says it only has a small part of what he plans to build. If you try it now you'll find many familiar features, but they're clunky and lower in quality. Automated masks have rough edges, and asking it to mask the sky gives you something closer to a gradient. Give it a few months and it may start to catch up, so it's worth keeping an eye on.

Why Adobe Is Speeding Up (06:03)

Adobe has noticed projects like this, and vibe coding (describing what you want and letting AI write the code) has become a common way to build software. My interpretation, not official word from Adobe, is that we'll see new features in Photoshop and Lightroom arrive much more often. That's fine with me as long as the tools we already use don't change; you can learn the new ones or ignore them.

Q&A: Photoshop to LRC Printing (07:51)

Bill has always printed from Photoshop and asked how the mechanics work in Lightroom Classic: whether a saved print is a virtual copy or a separate file, and whether it matters if he prints a TIFF instead of a raw file.



File Formats and Layers (08:53)

Lightroom Classic handles raw, TIFF, Photoshop (PSD), GIF and PNG files, and unlike Adobe Camera Raw it can work with layered files. When you print, it never sends the layers to the printer. It creates a temporary flattened version, so the printer gets the look of your image as a single layer.

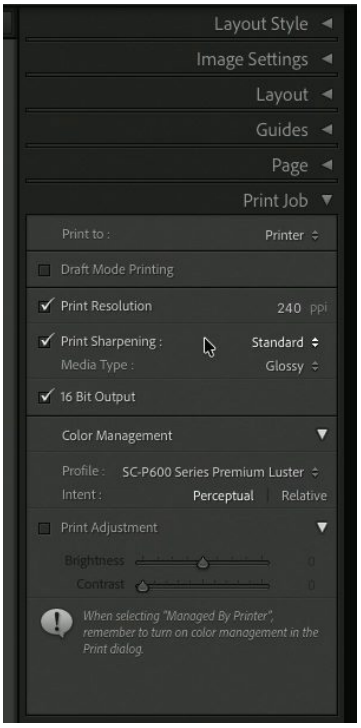
Photoshop Sharpening Workflow (09:45)

When you print from Photoshop, the image needs to be at the resolution it will be printed at before you sharpen it. If the resolution is too high, the halos that sharpening adds are too small to see; if it's too low, they're too obvious. So in Photoshop you scale to the output resolution (the resolution it will be printed at, not your printer's resolution) and then sharpen. Lightroom Classic handles both of those steps for you.

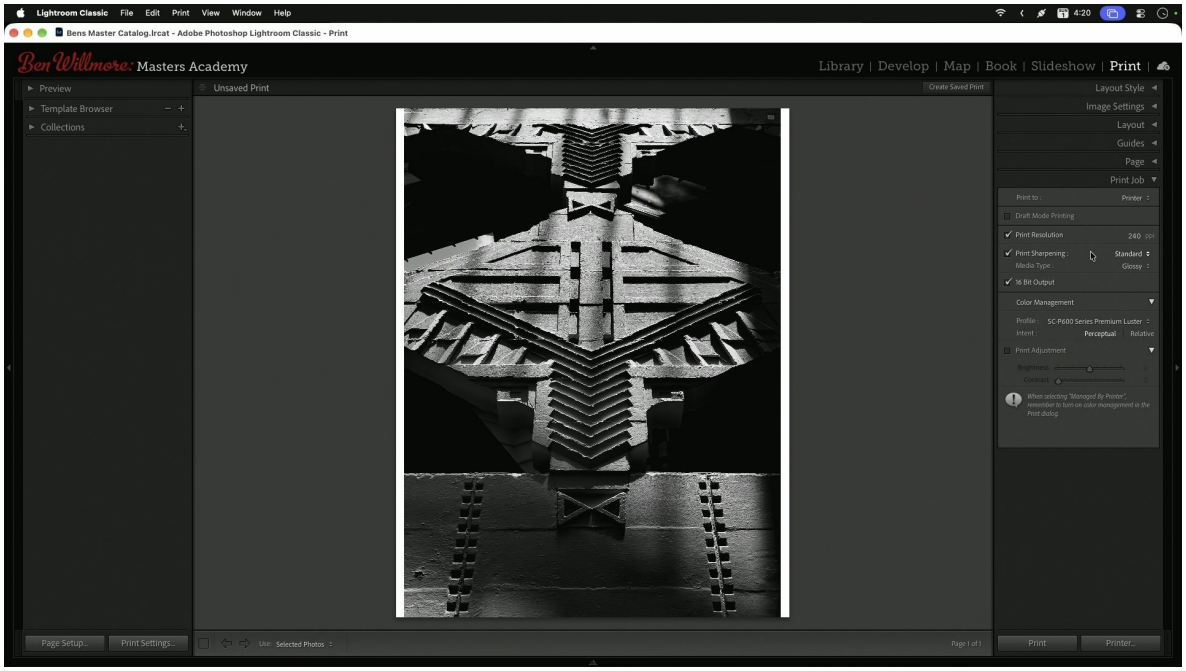
Print Job and Resolution (10:50)

In the Print module, everything that replaces the Photoshop steps is in the **Print Job** panel on the right.

1. **Choose the Output:** Set **Print to** to **Printer**. Choose JPEG File only if you send your images to a service to be printed.
2. **Set the Print Resolution:** Turn on **Print Resolution** and type a number. Lightroom scales the image to that resolution when it prints. 240 ppi is a good choice for most inkjet printers.

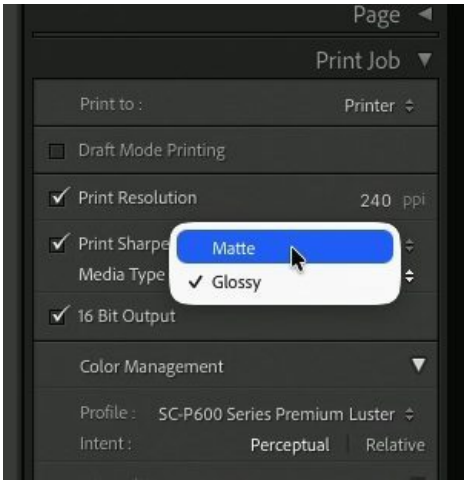


The page preview also shows how the image fits the paper. The white bars at the sides show this image hasn't been cropped to the shape of the 8.5 x 11 paper (more on that below).

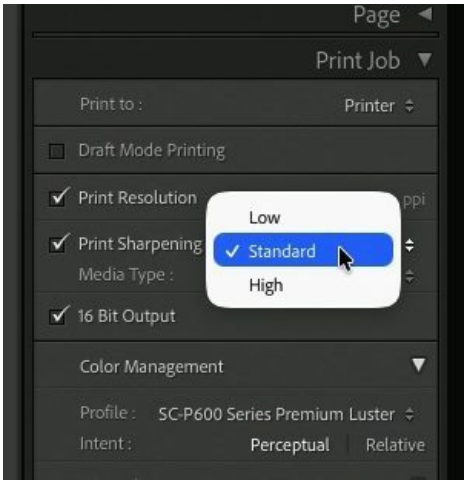


Print Sharpening (11:36)

Instead of sharpening in Photoshop, turn on the **Print Sharpening** checkbox.



Media Type



Sharpening amount

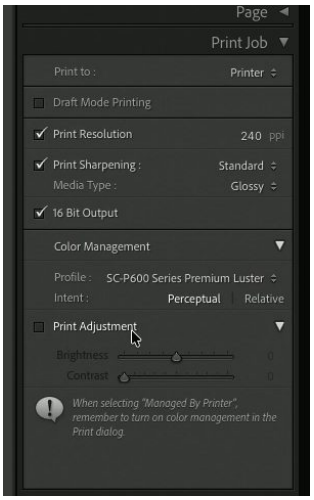
1. **Choose the Media Type:** Pick **Matte** or **Glossy**. Matte sharpens more aggressively because fine detail doesn't show as much on uncoated paper; Glossy is milder because coated paper shows all the fine edge detail.
2. **Find Your Default Amount:** Choose Low, Standard or High. To decide, print the same image at all three settings, write the setting on the back of each print, and compare them without looking at the back. Standard works for most images if you're not sure.
3. **16 Bit Output (Optional):** This sends all the information in the file to the printer. Most of the time you won't see a difference and it slows printing down. I'd only use it if a smooth gradient across a wide area, such as the sky in a panorama, shows any hint of stair-stepping.

Below that is **Color Management**. If you're not sure what to use there, learn about soft proofing first; Bill already knows how to soft proof, so I skipped it.

Print Adjustment (13:51)

Photoshop doesn't have an equivalent to **Print Adjustment**.

When you turn it on and move the Brightness or Contrast slider, the picture on your screen doesn't change, but the print does. It's there in case you don't have an accurate profile for your printer or your screen isn't calibrated and you notice a difference between the two. If your profile is accurate and your screen is calibrated, leave it off.



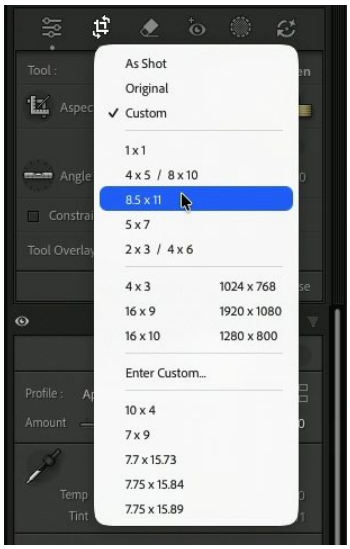
Crop to the Paper Shape (14:26)

Cropping works differently than in Photoshop. You could fill the sheet by choosing **Zoom to Fill** in the **Image Settings** panel, but you don't get to choose how the image is cropped.

For consistent results, crop before you go to the Print module:



1. **Open the Crop Tool:** In the Develop module, select the Crop tool.
2. **Set the Aspect:** Click the **Aspect** menu and choose the shape of your paper, such as **8.5 x 11**. If your size isn't listed, choose **Enter Custom** and type it in.



The Aspect menu

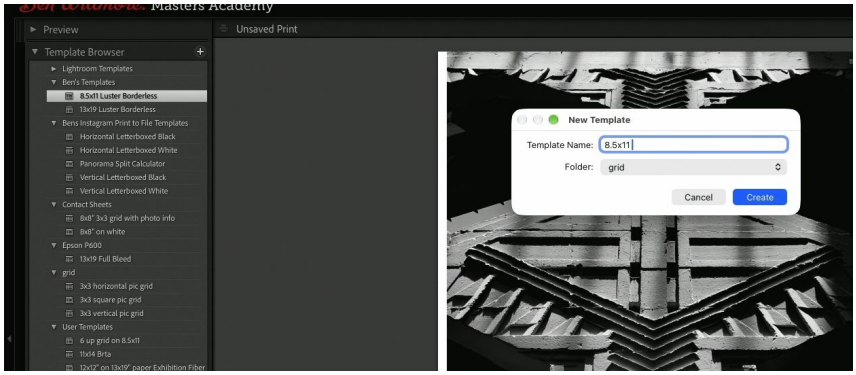


Enter Custom

There's no unit of measurement in the custom dialog because you're defining the shape of a rectangle, not its size (1 x 1 would be square). Once the image is cropped to the same shape as the paper, the white bars in the Print module go away.

Save a Print Template (16:17)

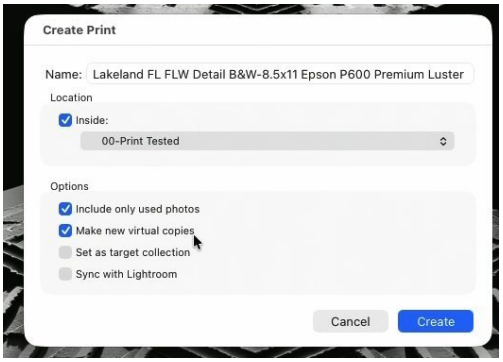
Once your paper size and all the settings are right, save them as a template.



1. **Add a Template:** Open the **Template Browser** on the left and click the **+** sign.
2. **Name It:** Include the paper size and anything else you'd want to know, such as the printer or paper. Mine is called 8.5x11 Luster Borderless because I use it for borderless prints on luster paper.
3. **Reuse It:** Next time, select an image, go to the Print module and click the template before you touch anything on the right. All the settings load for you.

Create a Saved Print (17:47)

If you've tested a print and want it to look exactly the same every time (for example, an image you sell), changing settings later would change the next print. Notice the upper left of the preview says **Unsaved Print**. Click **Create Saved Print** above the right panel.



1. **Name It:** Describe the image, then add the paper size, printer and paper, because the settings are customized for that exact printing condition. Mine is Lakeland FL FLW Detail B&W-8.5x11 Epson P600 Premium Luster.
2. **Choose a Collection:** Turn on **Inside** and choose a collection. I keep one called 00-Print Tested for images I've tested and am ready to sell.
3. **Check the Options:** Leave **Include only used photos** on, turn on **Make new virtual copies**, then click **Create**.

Virtual Copies (19:38)

In Photoshop, preparing an image for a particular print means saving a second file. A virtual copy is a separate version in Lightroom without a second file on your hard drive. All the settings are saved in your Lightroom catalog, and nothing changes in the folder where the original is stored. That also makes it important to back up your catalog.

Because the virtual copy is only used for this print, you can do anything you like to the original, such as cropping it to 16 x 9 for a slide show or turning it back to color, and the print version won't change.



The saved print appears in your collection with a small printer icon. Click the arrow next to it to jump into the Print module with all the settings loaded, then click **Print** to get a print that matches the previous one.

The exception is fancy sharpening. For selective sharpening you can add a mask to the virtual copy in the Develop module. If you use a specialized sharpening technique, do it in Photoshop, save the image, bring it back to Lightroom and turn off the Print Sharpening checkbox.

Avoid HDR When Printing (22:42)

If your images are mainly for print, avoid the **HDR** checkbox below the histogram in Lightroom. I don't mean shooting multiple exposures or merging them; that's fine. HDR viewing makes the brightest parts of your image brighter than the normal white on an HDR display. Paper is nowhere near as bright as the normal white on your screen, so a print will look much duller side by side. Instead, leave the HDR checkbox off and move the sliders to fit the image into the normal range between black and white (known as tone mapping), then print.