

# YOUR ULTIMATE FAMILY PHOTO PROJECT

element	definition	notes
yyyy	year	Year photograph was taken 1800 if unknown*
mm	month	Month photograph was taken 01 if unknown
dd	date	Date photograph was taken 01 if unknown
(underscore)	spacer	Aids reading Cross-platform compatible
familyname	family name	Family name at time photo is taken 'Unknown' if not known Tags in the metadata distinguish family members
XXX	sequence	Unique number assigned to filename
.extn	file type	Automatically assigned

\*An estimate of the date is better than unknown.  
Some software will not accept 0001, hence 1800 is used (when no photographs existed).

of the party (see below).

### ORGANISE 3 - Filenames

Good filenames should:

- start with a date to facilitate chronological sorting
- convey some (but not too much) information
- be unique, short and platform independent
- be in a format that is easy to remember and read

For example: yyyyymmdd\_familyname\_XXX.extn. (See Figure 3).

Date-based file naming relies on knowing, or being able to estimate, the date a photograph was taken<sup>6</sup>. With practice, dates can usually be estimated to within 5-10 years.

Once named and tagged as described, photographs will be automatically sorted by date, and can be searched for and located without the need for any folder structure.

### ORGANISE 4 - Folder structure

Having said that there is no need for a folder structure, a simple folder structure, based on family name, will allow you to browse your digital photographs when required (Figure 4).

This structure can also provide the basis for organising your physical photograph collection, meaning that once your physical photographs are scanned and included in your digital photo hub, the folder structure becomes

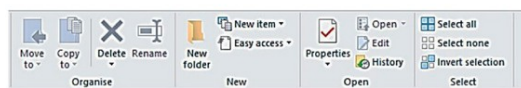


Figure 3. Left, Definitions of the elements of a date-based filename

Figure 4. Digital photographs in Windows File Explorer, showing a simple family folder structure and date-based filenames

a finding aid for your preserved physical photographs (Step 3).

Utilising the search capabilities of your chosen browser and the file naming process described above, your files can easily be arranged into this simple folder structure (within which the files will be automatically sorted by date).

### Sorting physical photographs

A range of equipment is available<sup>7</sup> to aid the sorting process.

#### SORT 1

Sort your photographs into three categories: **Preserve**, **Store** or **Dispose**, according to the criteria in Figure 5. Your 'best' photographs will be **preserved** as your legacy. Photographs that you don't want to include in your legacy, but still wish to keep, can be **stored**. Any remaining photographs go into the **dispose** category. Each category will be explained in Step 3, next month.

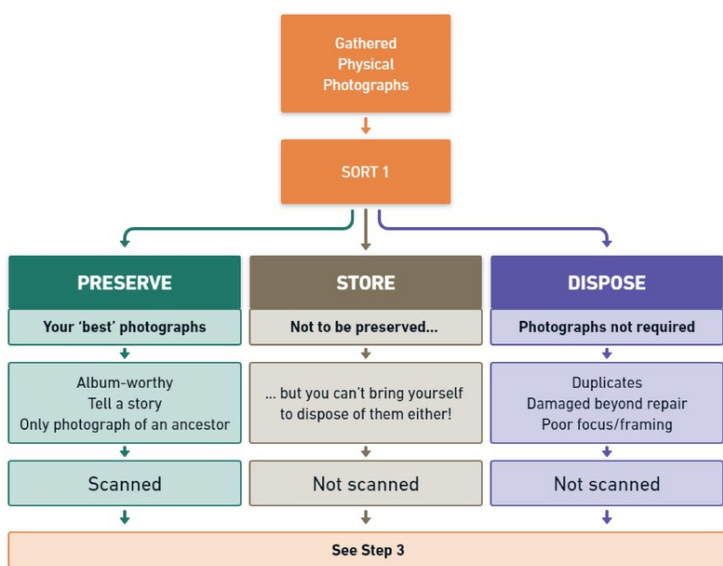


Figure 5. Categories for sorting physical photographs

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

*Ann Larkham is a qualified genealogist, passionate photogenealogist and fledgling author, who is planning a photogenealogy book and business to help others on their photogenealogy journeys. Follow her on Twitter @photogenealogy & find out more at [photogenealogy.co.uk](http://photogenealogy.co.uk)*

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