

Creating a Contact Sheet

In traditional darkroom photography a contact sheet was created by placing the strips of developed negative film directly in “contact” with the “sheet” of light sensitive photographic paper. This would then be exposed to light and developed. It was a quick method of being able to see ones photos in the positive. The photographer could then decide which images to invest more time on to enlarge and develop.

In the digital darkroom, we no longer need to make a positive from a negative, but it is helpful to see all of ones images side by side to make decisions about which ones to keep and work on and which images can be discarded. It is also a good way to see if there is some overall problem occurring with your photos. For instance a color tint problem will become obvious if all your images have a blue tint or yellow tint.

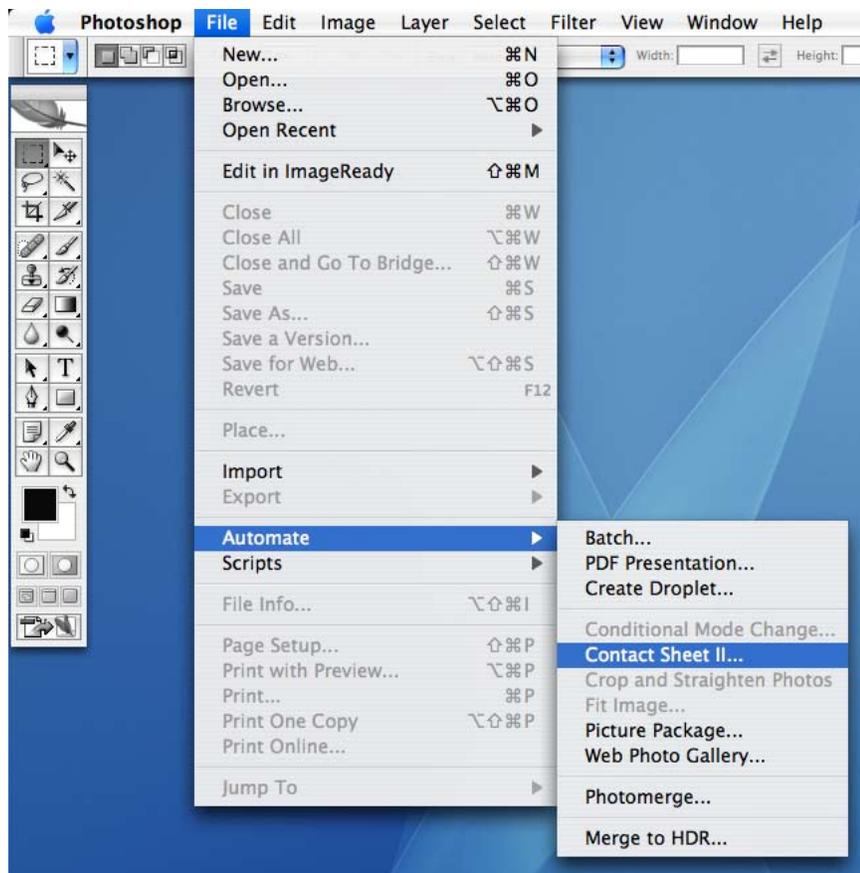
Since we are working from positive images you could remove any obvious failures before creating the contact sheet. This will allow you to make larger images on the contact sheet.

Step 01: Upload to hard drive

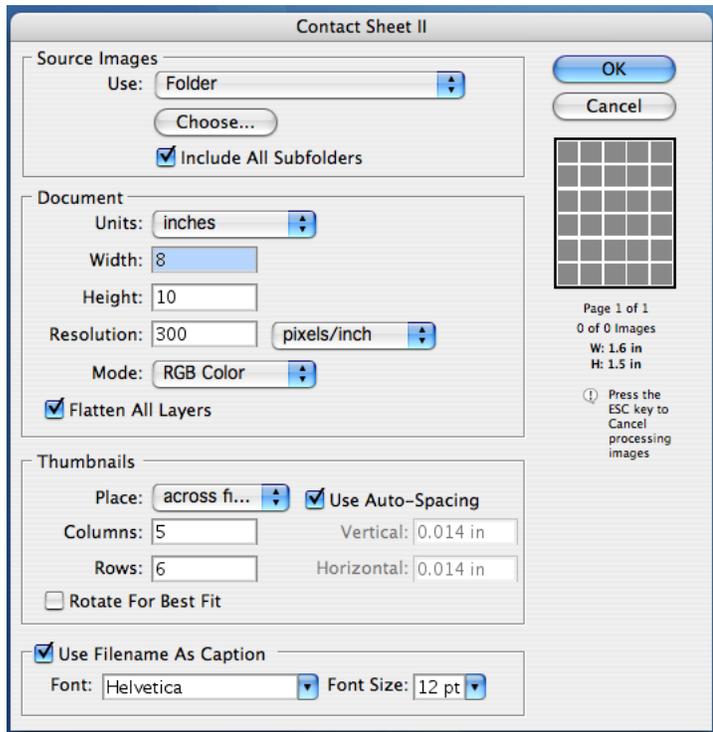
Step 02: Remove any real losers

Step 03: Place all the remaining images in a named folder. It is a good practice to place your images in a named folder that makes sense, i.e.: benches. Otherwise you will end up being confused by what is where.

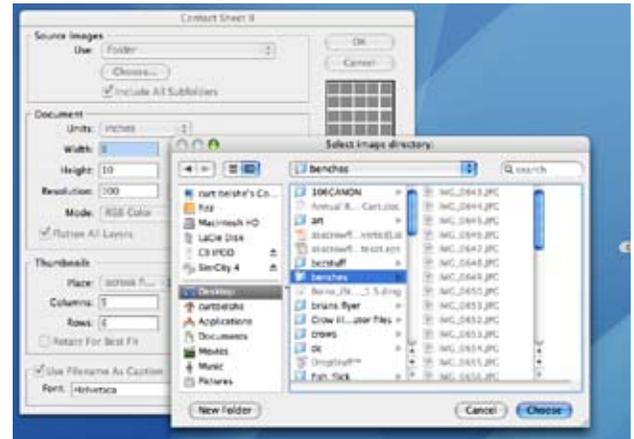
Step 04: Open Photoshop: In the Menu go File > Automate > Contact Sheet II...



This will open the Contact Sheet floating pallet...



Under Source Images, you will be using the Folder you created in Step 03. Click on the word Choose... and a navigation window will open...



Navigate through and find your folder. It is easiest to find if you place the folder on the Desktop. You can save it to your media later when you are finished working.

Under Document:

Units: leave in inches

Width/Height: 8 inches by 10 inches prints out nicely on an 8.5 x 11 sheet of paper.

Resolution: 150 dpi is high enough

Mode: RGB is fine.

Flatten All Layers: keeps your file size smaller

Thumbnails: describes the layout and size of the images on the sheet

Place: leave as across, its the same as the way we read

Columns/Rows: defines how many images per page, you should do 4 x 5 (20) or less, otherwise the images become too small to be of any use.

Rotate for Best Fit: if this is clicked on than vertical images will be rotated sideways. This is OK but means you have to turn the paper back and forth, I wouldn't bother.

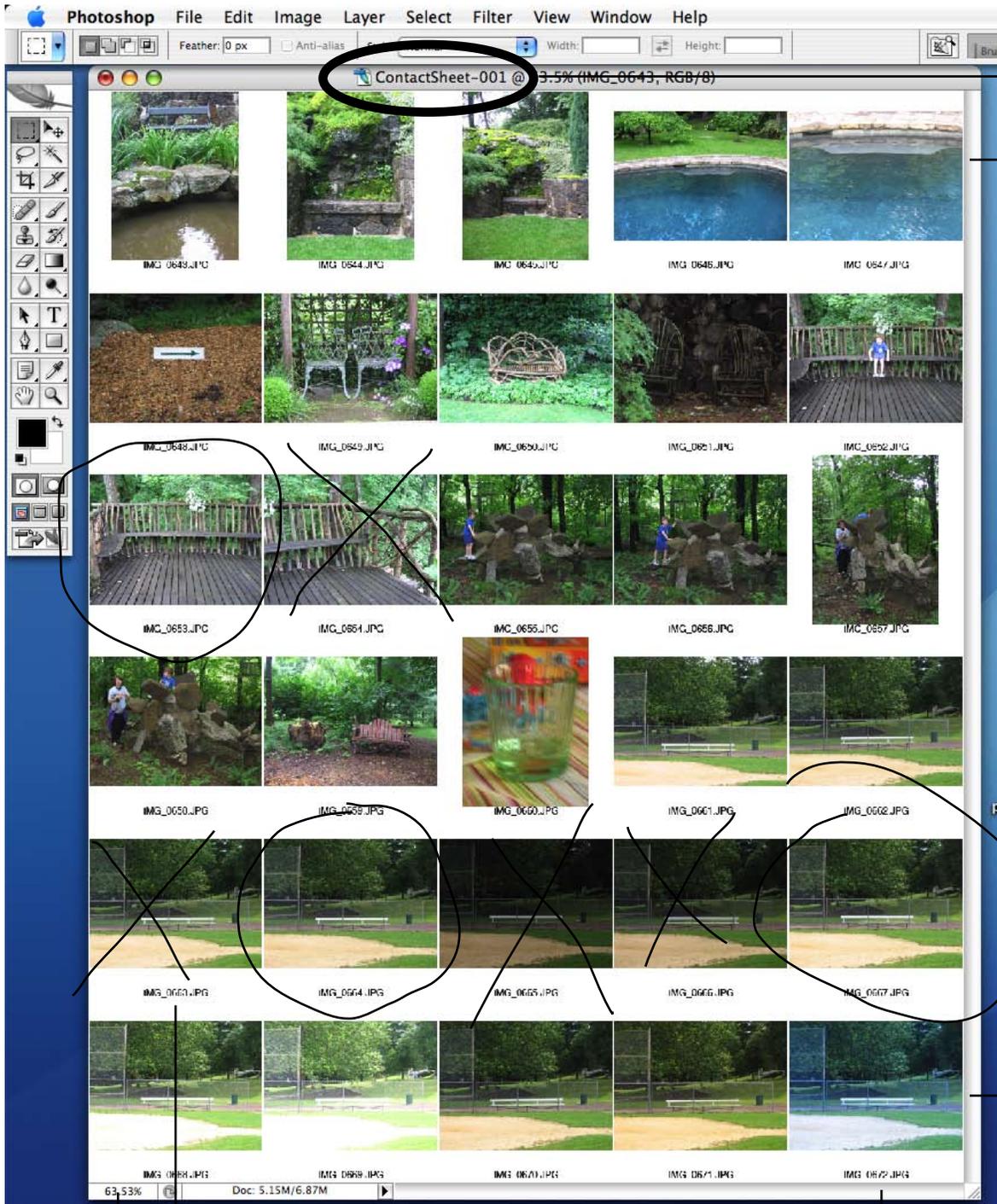
Use Filename As Caption: leave this selected, you will need the filename to find the image.

Font: leave as Helvetica

Font Size: Click on the pointer and set the Font Size to 6pt. You need the filename, but you don't need it to be huge.

When all the parameters are set, click OK

Photoshop will now automatically process your images and create numbered contact sheets for as many pages as you need. This may take a few minutes depending on how many files you are processing.



Contact Sheet 001

6 rows

Filename-6 pt Helvetica

5 columns