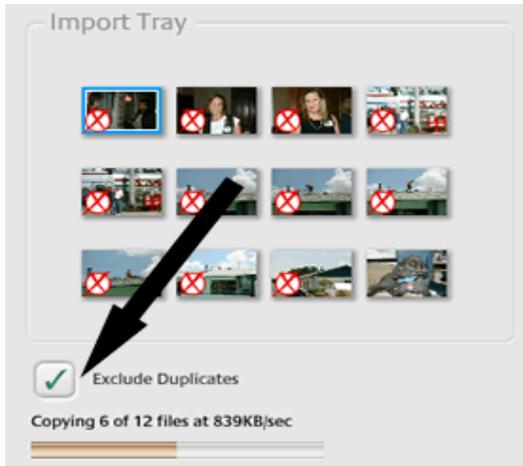


Finding Duplicate Pictures on Your Computer with Picasa

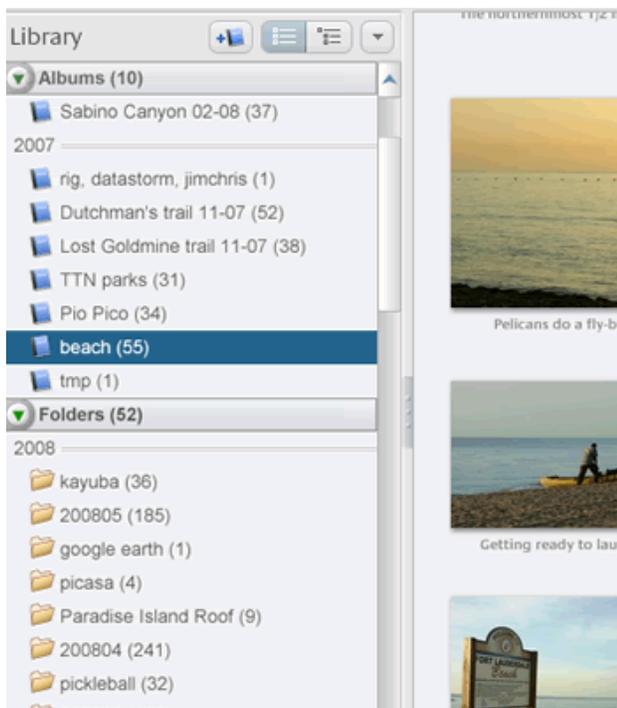
If you experience duplicate photos, and you use Picasa, there are a couple things you should know. Can Picasa be responsible for creating several sets of duplicate photos on your computer? No, you do that – but Picasa can help you find them.

Don't import duplicates



If you use Picasa to import your photos from the camera to the computer, make sure you have the 'Exclude Duplicates' option checked. Picasa will mark with a red X the pictures it has already imported previously, and it won't import them again. I prefer to delete all photos from my camera after I import them so there are no duplicates possible

Pictures in 'Albums' are not duplicates



Notice, in the image at the left, that there are two sections in Picasa's 'Library.' The top section is referred to as 'Albums', and the bottom section is 'Folders.' You could have thousands of photos on your computer without one Album. Albums are just pointers to photos. You create albums for the convenience of viewing groups of photos together such as all your beach photos. The actual photo files 'live' in the folders.

Think of it like a juke box full of records. Imagine that this juke box has the ability for you to make a list of your favorite music. You can push a button on the juke box to play 'Chris' songs.' But that list of songs is not a copy of the records, it is just a list that points to the records to play. It's the same thing with albums. The picture is not copied into the album. The album is just a list of pointers to the actual photos. The actual photos live in the folders. If you delete the photo from the folder, it will be gone from the album. If someone removed a record from the juke box, it will no longer play as part of Chris' songs.

Picasa can help you find real duplicates

If you have exported photos to another album, or if you have imported without checking the exclude duplicates option, you may have real duplicates on your computer. Picasa cannot automatically erase duplicates – and I wouldn't trust any program that says it does – but it can help you find them.

Click on Tools, Experimental, Show Duplicate Files. This is a special search in Picasa. Although labeled as experimental, I find it works pretty good. With all your duplicates displayed, you can study them and delete the duplicates manually. Just click on the photo to remove, or Ctrl-Click on multiple photos, and then press the delete key on your keyboard.

BE CAREFUL! I'd rather have a few duplicates than accidentally delete too much. But then, you **DO** have a backup right?! Make sure to note what folder each of the duplicate files is in – you may find that you have a duplicate folder and you can get rid of a lot of duplicates by deleting the entire folder. Also make sure to note the file size and resolution. Many times duplicates exist because you exported a picture to a smaller size. Make sure that you delete the smaller size picture not the original, higher resolution picture.

1. To find what folder a picture is in: you should be able to see the folder name above the picture, or click on the picture and see what folder is highlighted at the left. But the sure fire way to know what folder a picture is stored in is to right-click on the picture and click "Locate on Disk."
2. To know the file size and/or resolution of a picture: When you click on a picture, the status bar (blue bar at the bottom) displays details about the picture, including resolution and file size. To have the resolution showing for every picture you can: View | Thumbnail Caption | Resolution.
3. To see duplicates side by side: When you use the 'Show Duplicate Files' command, it filters all your pictures to show you only the ones that have duplicates, but it keeps the view organized by folders. Usually the duplicates are in different folders, so you won't see them side by side. In the upper left of the screen, at the top of the Album list, you will see "Search Results." If you click on that, you will be viewing all the search results (duplicates) in one group regardless of folders.

When you're ready to view all your photos again, just click on the button at top that reads, "Back to View All."