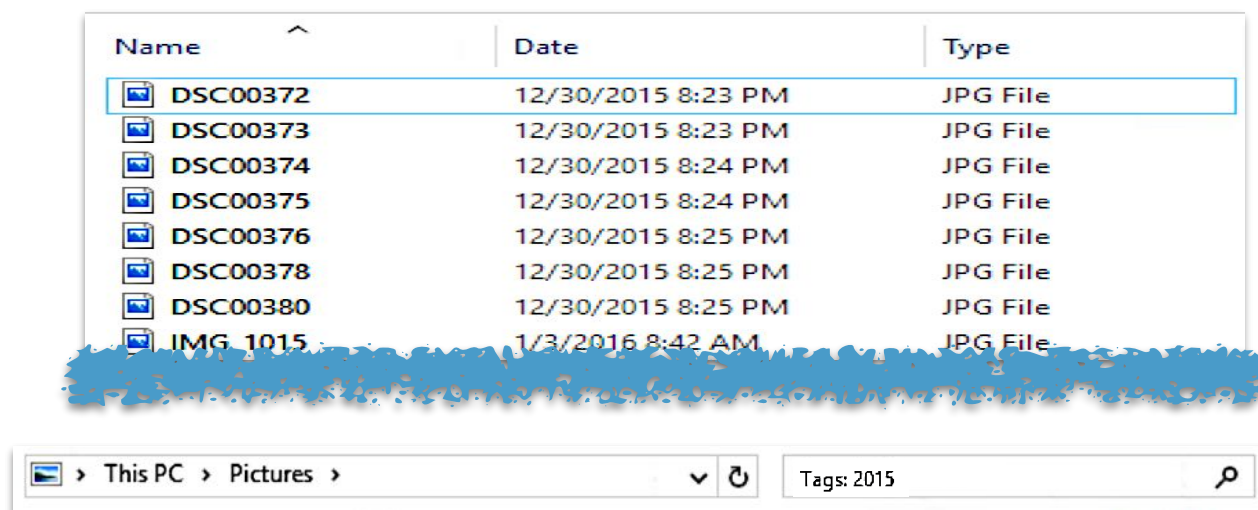# Using "Metadata" to Organize & Find Your Files

Most of us know that you can label photographs or documents with a filename. However did you know that you can attach more information to those files than just a filename? This additional information is called "Metadata" defined as a set of data that describes and gives information about other data. This information is then searchable to find multiple files across different file folders.

Here's an example: The following list represents only a fraction of 1000's of photos. You can see the TAGS that are associated with the photos.
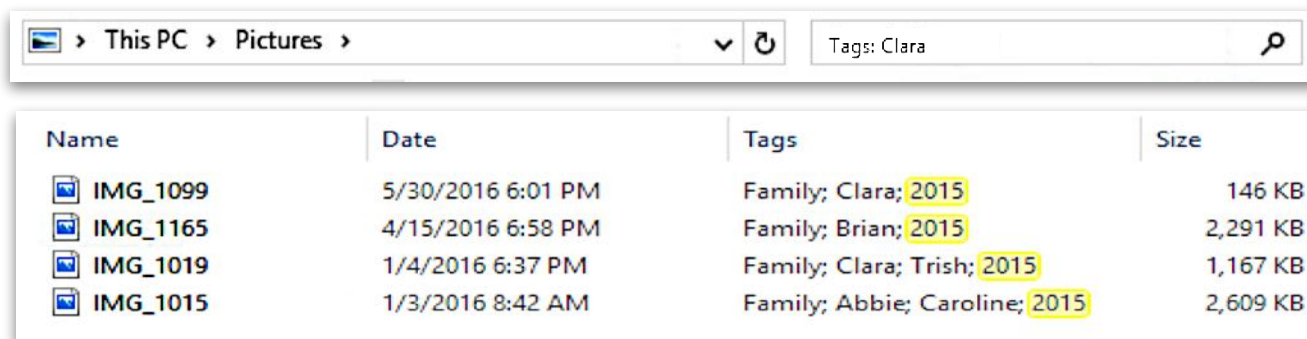

Let's say that we want to find ALL the photos that are tagged with "2015".

In the File Explorer "Search Box", enter Tags: 2015. Four photos come up that are tagged with 2015.

Let's search for all the files that are tagged with "Clara". Enter "Tags: Clara "in the Search Box.

Nine photos come up in the search window below.

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Name	Date	Tags	Size
IMG_1099	5/30/2016 6:01 PM	Family; Clara; 2015	146 KB
IMG_1019	1/4/2016 6:37 PM	Family; Clara; Trish; 2015	1,167 KB
DSC00380	12/30/2015 8:25 PM	Clara; 2014	5,268 KB
DSC00378	12/30/2015 8:25 PM	Clara; 2014	5,013 KB
DSC00376	12/30/2015 8:25 PM	Clara; 2014	5,376 KB
DSC00375	12/30/2015 8:24 PM	Clara; 2014	4,783 KB
DSC00374	12/30/2015 8:24 PM	Clara; 2014	5,064 KB
DSC00373	12/30/2015 8:23 PM	Clara; 2014	5,747 KB
DSC00372	12/30/2015 8:23 PM	Clara; 2014	4,911 KB

What if we want to search for only Photos with Tags of 2015 and Clara?

Enter "Tags: Clara AND Tags: 2015" for the search criteria. The "AND" tells the system that you are looking for any tags with "Clara" AND "2015".

	This PC > Pictures >		Tags: Clara AND Tags: 2015

Two photos are displayed that meet the above criteria.

Name	Date	Tags	Size
IMG_1099	5/30/2016 6:01 PM	Family; Clara; 2015	146 KB
IMG_1019	1/4/2016 6:37 PM	Family; Clara; Trish; 2015	1,167 KB

You can search with "OR" as well. If you want to search for photos of Clara in 2014 or 2015, type in "Tags: Clara **AND** 2014 **OR** 2015" in the search box. This search would yield all photos of Clara in 2014 or 2015, but not any other years.
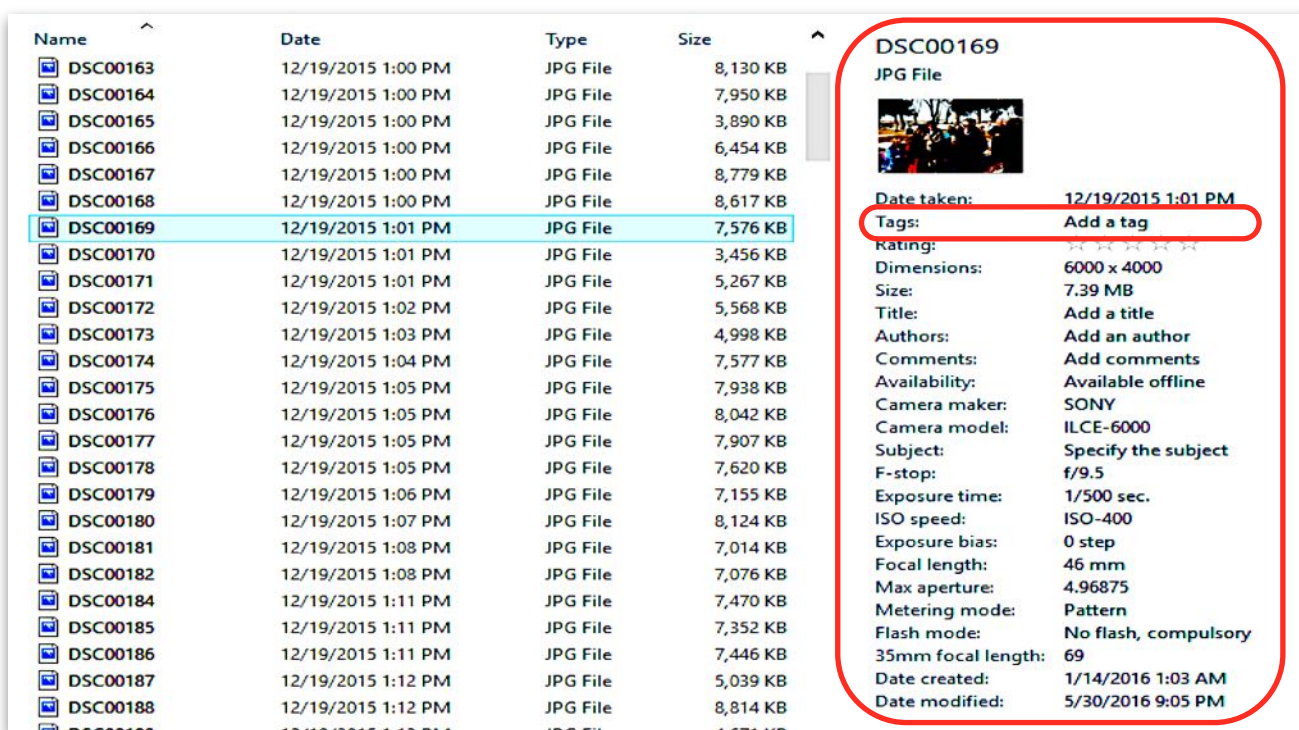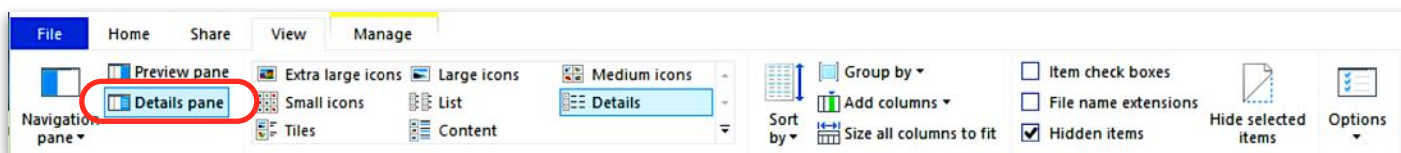
Hopefully you can see the usefulness of tagging your photo files. You can still organize the photos into separate groups of folders, but if you wanted to display all the photos of someone over several years, searching for tags allows you to do this. Tagging photos also allows you to add additional information about a picture, such as who they are without having to put all the names into the photo filename for example.

Let's say that you want to look at all your camping photos where you visited Yellowstone. If you have tagged your applicable photos with "Yellowstone", "Camping" as tags then all you need to do is type "Tags: Yellowstone AND Camping" (no quotes) into the search box. All the photos, over all the different years that you have camped in Yellowstone will display in the file explorer window.

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You now know that you can search for specific tags in Windows File Explorer, but how do you add them?
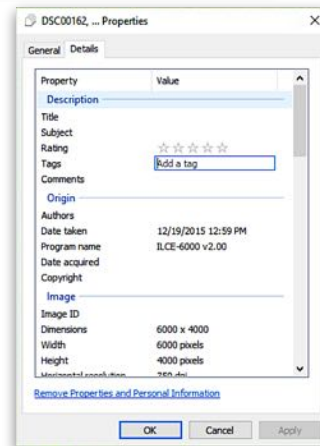
The first thing you need to do is to, is to make sure that the "Details Pane" option is selected so that you can see the Metadata associated with the photo file.

Notice all the different information that is associated with the filename as in the circled information above. That is the Metadata. It shows what camera was used, what camera settings the photo was taken with creation and modified dates, etc.

Notice the small label called "Tags:" (2nd property down). Click into the "add a tag" box and enter a descriptive tag, like a year, or name of person in it, or what the event was, like "parade", "camping", etc. Try to keep your tags simple one words if you can. If you enter a couple of tags, put a semicolon in-between the different tags. Click "Save" at the bottom of the "Details Pane".

Though you can enter metadata in this way, it would be a literal pain to

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have to enter tags for EACH photo file.   This is what software programs called "Digital Asset Managers" do best. You can easily and quickly add all sorts of metadata to files with this software.

Notice the small field right below the Tags field called Comments:. This is another field that can be used to store additional information about your photos. For example you could type in "Funeral of Charles Meyers in August 2015 at Houston, Texas. Family members present were … (list them)". Add any information you would like to add. It is also searchable, and will give more "story" information about your photos. Other fields that can be accessed include location fields, like City, State, Country. There are also others as well, like File Creation Date. If you scan a group of photos in May 2020, but the photos were of an event in December 1987, you can change this date to reflect the actual event date.

And that's how you add Metadata to your photos to help you more easily search for them. As your library grows to 1000s of photos, this will be a great help to you in finding specific files you are looking for. Remember also that the Metadata you add **STAYS WITH** the files, so if you share the files with others, they can also search for the same Metadata.