

**TIP** Your camera may give you several different JPEG compression options to help you fit more pictures on your memory card. Always choose the *least* compression possible. Your photo file sizes are slightly larger, but the quality is much, much better. It's worth sacrificing the space.

## Changing the File Format

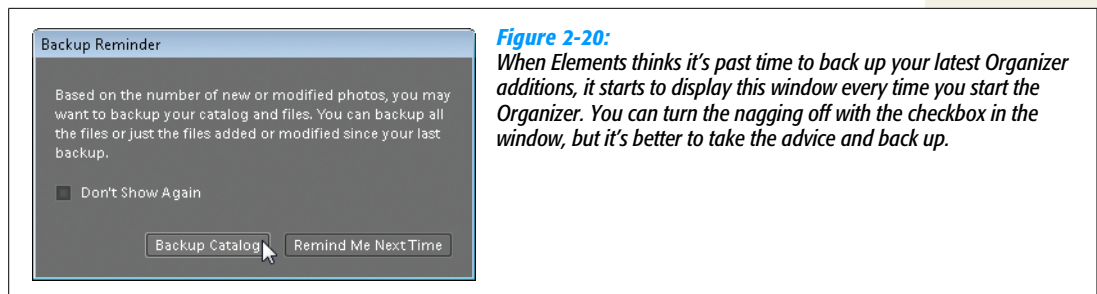
It's very easy to change the format of a file in Elements. Just press Ctrl+Shift+S or go to File → Save As and, from the Format pull-down menu, select the format you want. Elements makes a copy of your file in the new format and asks you to name it.

## Backing Up Your Files

With computers, you just never know what's going to happen, so “be prepared” is a good motto. If your computer crashes, it won't be nearly so painful if all your photos are safely backed up someplace else.

Elements makes it very easy to save your files to any add-on storage device like an external hard drive. Of course, you can just do a Save As and choose your storage device as the destination, but it's also easy to back up to CDs (and DVDs, if you have a DVD burner). If you just want to burn some photos or a project to a disc without saving your catalog information as well, see the section later in this chapter on making quick CDs and DVDs.

But when it comes to easy backups, you're in for a treat with the Elements Organizer. You can burn CDs or DVDs right from the Organizer, and you get many different options for backing up your photos and catalogs. All these options are covered in the next section. Elements even reminds you when your catalog needs backing up (Figure 2-20).



**Figure 2-20:**

*When Elements thinks it's past time to back up your latest Organizer additions, it starts to display this window every time you start the Organizer. You can turn the nagging off with the checkbox in the window, but it's better to take the advice and back up.*

**NOTE** Elements has a much-requested feature for making backups: You can create *multi-session* discs. That means you can tell Elements to leave your CD or DVD open, so that you can come back later and use the disc again to add more files to it, instead of wasting an entire CD or DVD to burn a handful of pictures. To use this feature, go to Organizer → Edit → Preferences → Files and turn on “Enable multisession burning to CD/DVD.”

## Organizer Backups

The Organizer offers a really helpful way to back up your photos. It's one of the best parts of Elements, and it's certainly very thorough, even going so far as to remind you to label the disc you create. You can back up your catalog, or just copy specific photos. Just follow these steps:

1. **Make sure your catalog is in tip-top shape.**

Go to File → Catalog → Repair, just in case. It's also not a bad idea to go to File → Reconnect → All Missing Files, although the Organizer warns you if you have unconnected files when you start your backup.

2. **Call up the Backup dialog box, and let Elements make sure your catalog is in shape for backing up.**

Go to File → “Backup Catalog to CD, DVD, or Hard Drive”, or press Ctrl+B.

3. **Decide what kind of backup to make.**

In the window that opens, you have to decide whether to back up your whole catalog or make an incremental backup. *Full Backup* backs up *everything* in your catalog. Pick that one the first time you make a backup, or if you're backing up everything to move to a new computer. *Incremental Backup* finds only the stuff that's new since the last time you made a backup, and that's all it copies—a major time- and space saver. (You must make a full backup at least once before Elements will let you do an incremental backup.)

Your backup will have the same name as your catalog. You can see the name in the dialog box, but you won't be allowed to change it. Click Next to continue.

**NOTE** If you have multiple catalogs, you can back up only one catalog at a time.

4. **Choose a destination for your files.**

Your choices include a CD, a DVD, or any hard drive connected to your computer (either built-in or external). Choose by selecting from the list in the Select Destination Drive dialog box.

If you're backing up to a hard drive, click the Backup Path Browse button to select the location where you want Elements to create your backup. Navigate through the folder structure in the window that appears, and create a new folder if you'd like to keep your backups tidy (a good idea). Once you're done, the path appears in the Backup window.

If you're making an incremental backup, you have to show Elements where to find your previous backup. Either insert the CD or DVD with the original full backup, or click the letter name of the drive where you made your previous backup and use the “Previous Backup file” Browse button to show Elements the existing backup file.

5. If you're backing up to a CD or DVD, insert a disc in the drive when Elements asks you to. (If you're backing up to any other kind of media, including internal or external hard drives, skip ahead to step 6.)

Elements needs to calculate how many discs you need to create your backup. As Elements burns each disc, it asks if you want Elements to verify the disc to be sure it's OK. You do. Elements prompts you to feed it more discs if your backup doesn't all fit on one disc.

You can also change the write speed for your disc, if you wish. Just choose one of the other options from the pull-down menu. (A slower speed takes longer but may be more reliable.) As Elements burns each disc, it asks if you want to verify the disc. Do this, so that Elements can check for any burn errors.

**NOTE** Always check your backup discs once you've burned them, even if you verified them during backup. Take a moment to put the disc in your computer and make sure that all your files are there. If there's an error, you want to know about it now, not six months from now.

## 6. Create your backup.

Click Done, and Elements generates your backup. If you decide you don't want to make a backup, click Cancel instead.

If you chose to burn CDs or DVDs, don't forget to label the discs when Elements finishes burning them, so you'll know what they are.

**TIP** These directions cover how to back up your images and your catalog. Some people also like to back up their catalog database (the data file where the Organizer keeps track of where your photos are) by itself every once in a while. To back up just the catalog information, use Windows Explorer to search for files with the extension .psedb, and burn those files to a CD or copy them to an external hard drive.

When you want to restore your catalog, in the Organizer, just go to File → "Restore Catalog from CD, DVD, or Hard Drive" and follow the onscreen directions. The Organizer asks for the last disc from your backup, not the first one as you might expect. (You may want to back up and then restore you catalog if you have to reinstall Windows, for example.)

## Making Quick CDs/DVDs

So far, you've learned how to back up your photos so that you can restore them to the Organizer with all your cataloging information intact. But what if you just want to burn a few photos or a project to a disc and you don't care about the tags and such? Say you want to send your latest editing masterpieces to a friend, for instance. In Elements 6, it's super-easy to do this.

1. Select the photos and/or projects you want to burn.

You can start from either the Editor or the Organizer, but in the Editor make sure you save your work first.

2. **Go to Share → CD/DVD.**

A window pops up where you must select the drive you want to use for burning. Just click its name in the window. If you want, you can also name your disc here. If you don't enter any text, the disc will be named with today's date.

3. **Insert a blank CD or DVD when Elements asks you to, and click OK.**

Elements has to see a disc to know how many photos will fit on it and to figure out how many discs you'll need, if all your photos won't fit on one disc. When the program is through figuring this out, you'll see the size and write time (how long it will take Elements to burn the disc) in the "Make a CD/DVD" window, in the Size area.

4. **Click OK to create your CD or DVD.**

When Elements is done, it asks if you want to verify the disc. This is always a good idea. When Elements is done verifying your disc, it ejects it and reminds you to write its name on it so you'll know what it is.

When you make copies of just a few photos (rather than the whole catalog), you're copying only the photos, not the catalog information about the photos. If you want to include your tags along with the photos, before you start, go to File → "Write Keyword Tag and Properties Info to Photos". This makes your tags part of the files' EXIF data (see the box on page 59), so that if you send the photos to someone using Photoshop or another program that can read metadata, the tags appear as keywords in the file info.

**NOTE** One drawback to including your tag and property info is that you can't use Elements to remove tags from the metadata later. So, for instance, if you attach a "stupid boss" tag to a photo and then have second thoughts, you can remove that tag from your catalog, but it will still exist in the files themselves, unless you use another program to edit the metadata. Exifer (<http://www.exifer.friedemann.info/>) is a popular program you can use to remove that "stupid boss" tag from the file's metadata before you email the photo to the editor of the company newsletter.