

Have your pictures really been hijacked by photo software?



*Stump the PC Club is a free tech-advice column written by members of the **North Orange County Computer Club**, which has been in existence since 1976. Visit the club's site at noccc.org. And don't forget to stop by the Gadgetress' home for the PC Club, at ocregister.com/link/pcclub, to find out how to ask a question and read past answers.*

QUESTION: On my other computer I have Jasc After Shot that I use to organize my older photos. Sometime ago, like a year or so ago, I downloaded Picasa to see what it was all about. It was OK and I left it in place. However, Picasa hijacked many of my albums from Jasc and I'd like to return them to the original setup. I can do it manually but it is a tedious process. Is there any way to move a bunch of photos from Picasa to Jasc?

PC CLUB: One of the most frequent questions I get asked is, "If all of my pictures are in Picasa (for example), how do I move them into Photoshop Elements?" I always fire back, "Pictures do not reside in an application, they simply reside on your hard drive." Then I follow up with an explanation.

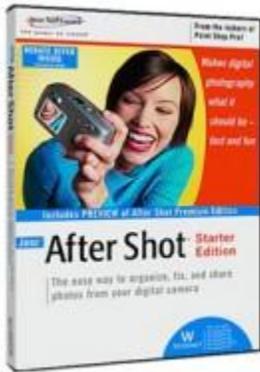


Current software programs that manage or catalog pictures, including Picasa, do not move, copy or relocate pictures without your explicit permission. Therefore, they cannot be "Moved back."

When you install a program, such as [Google's Picasa](http://www.google.com/picasa/), it asks whether it should scan your entire hard drive for photos or only select folders, like My Documents, My Pictures and the Desktop folders. This process finds and catalogs your pictures by adding thumbnails to Picasa. But it leaves the photos in their original locations.

Picasa keeps track of where all the photos are located on your computer so you can remain oblivious to where everything is located. Even if you create albums in Picasa, the software creates virtual albums only without moving any photos around in your computer. An album can contain photos that are located in multiple folders on your PC. As long as you're viewing the album within Picasa, you won't notice or need to know where files are stored.

You can always add more folders for Picasa to monitor. And you can purposely move pictures in Picasa by dragging them between folders, but you are always warned beforehand since this would change their physical locations.



After Shot, a 7-year-old photo organizer that is no longer available from publisher [Corel Corp.](#), behaves quite differently. When you create albums in After Shot, your pictures are actually copied to a new location. The default location is C:\Documents and Settings\User Name\My Documents\My Pictures\Jasc After Shot Images\Album Name but you can instruct After Shot to use any folder.

As a result, you end up with duplicate copies of your images, which wastes hard drive space and is confusing since you now have to keep track of both copies. What's worse, if you create an album using pictures from another album, you now have triplicates. What a nightmare!

Most picture management programs neither duplicate nor relocate your pictures. I strongly recommend against using a program that does either. I can assure you that Picasa did not relocate any pictures on its own. If you decide to stick with After Shot, you will need to search for all of your pictures and add them back to After Shot one folder at a time. There is no need to add them back individually.



The easiest way to find all your photos on your computer is to use the Windows Search feature and search for any files with a .jpg extension, assuming your photos are stored as JPG files.

Just click the Windows Start button, Search and select "All files and folders." In the next window, in the box labeled "All or part of the file name:" type in "*.jpg" and click the Search button (see image on right). When Windows completes its search, click View, Details and the locations of all your picture folders will be revealed.

You can write these locations down and go back to After Shot, use the Browser and ask it to add these folders to an existing or new album. For Windows Vista users, you can search by click the Start button and entering *.jpg in the Search box. Next click Search Everywhere. When the next window opens showing your search results, the folders containing your jpg's will be listed.

If you're ever in doubt as to where After Shot is copying your pictures to, click the Info tab on the left, then click any picture and look at the bottom of the window.

Of the two programs you mentioned, After Shot is more likely the culprit than Picasa due to its picture duplicating philosophy. I'm not promoting Picasa but only using it as an example. There are many other cataloging programs available including the ACDSee Photo Manager which is available at www.acdsee.com for \$49 but Picasa is excellent and the price is right — it's free. ~Ed Schwartz, NOCCC member. View his blog at www.edwardns.com/blog.