rawline rename

The complete guide.

Everything RawLine Rename does, from the first folder to the last rename: the name in blocks, long night, camera clocks, presets.

2026-11-03 _ Lanzarote _ AP1 _ 001

Beta 1.4 · November 2026

rawline.app/en/guide

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01 First steps

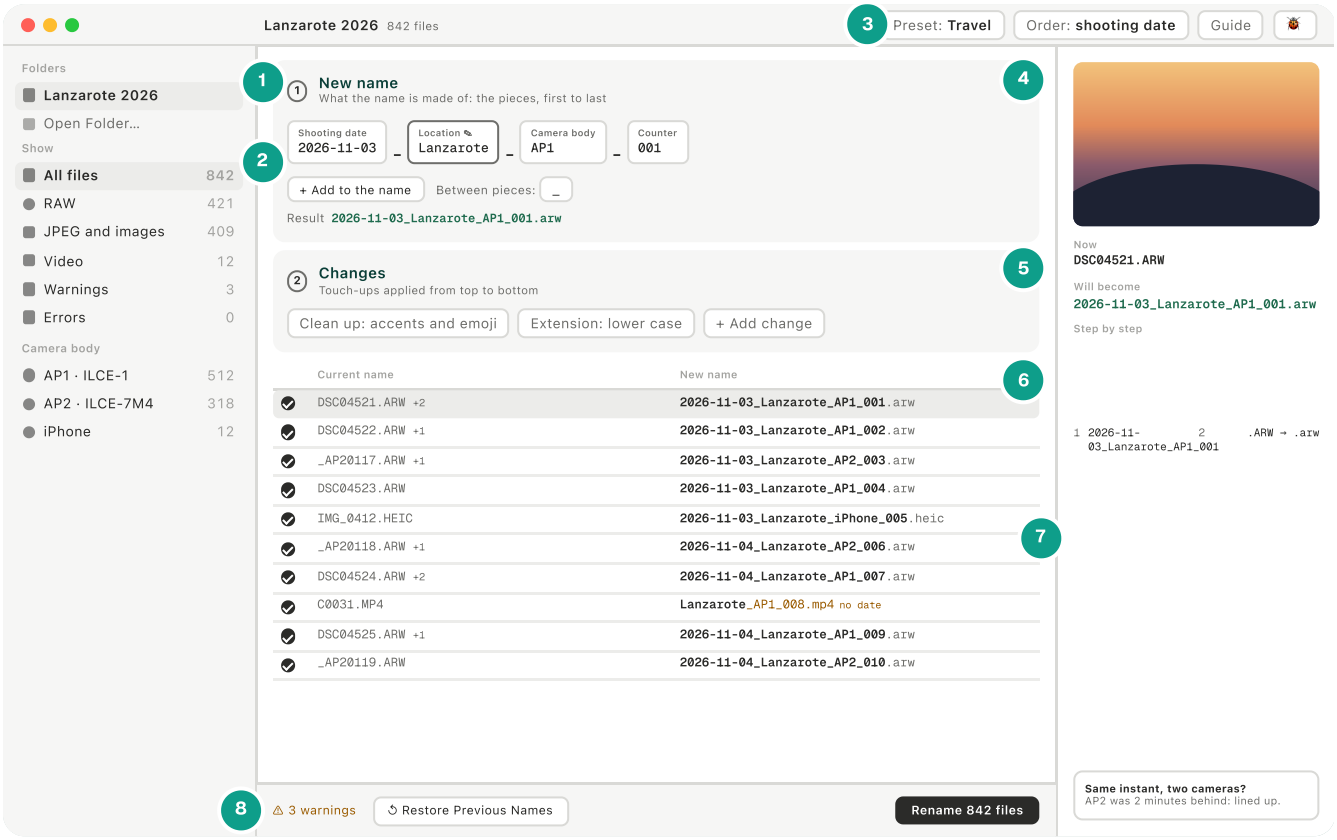
RawLine Rename gives the files of a shoot a name that says what they are: date, place, camera, number. You build it in blocks, see the result on every file before applying it, and can always go back.

1. **Open the folder.** Drag it onto the window or choose **File › Open Folder…** (⌘O).
2. **Build the name.** In the **New name** panel add the pieces you need: shooting date, place, camera body, counter, your own text.
3. **Check the list.** For every file you see its name now and the new one. Warnings in amber, errors in red.
4. **Rename.** Click **Rename** (⌘↩). Changed your mind? **Restore Previous Names** (⌥⌘Z).

No file is touched until you click Rename. And no file is ever overwritten: if a name is taken, the app stops before it starts.

02 The window

An open folder, with its parts numbered.



1. **Folders.** The folder you're working on, and *Open Folder…*.
2. **Show.** Filter by type (RAW, JPEG, video), by warnings and errors, by camera body.
3. **Toolbar.** Presets, file order, the guide and reporting a problem.
4. **New name.** The pieces of the name, first to last, with the result below.
5. **Changes.** Touch-ups applied after the name, top to bottom.
6. **List.** Current and new name of every file, with a tick to include it.
7. **File panel.** Photo, new name, steps and clock alignment (`⌥⌘I`).
8. **Bottom bar.** Warnings, restore and the Rename button.

03 Opening folders

You work on **one project at a time**: opening a folder replaces the previous one, so files from two shoots

never get mixed.

- **Drag** a folder (or some files) onto the window or onto the Dock icon.
- **File › Open Folder…** (⌘O).
- From the **Finder**: right-click the folder › Services › **Open in RawLine Rename**.
- **File › Open Recent** keeps the last ten folders; they're on the start screen too. *Clear Menu* forgets them.

The files in the folder are read, not those in subfolders. If you copied more files in the meantime, **File › Reload Folder** (⌘R) reads it again.

When you reopen the app it brings back the name you were building and, if you chose so in Settings, the folder too.

04 The new name

The name is made of **pieces**, the tiles in the New name panel. Each tile shows the value of the first selected file.

`2026-11-03` _ `Lanzarote` _ `AP1` _ `001` `.arw`

Add, move, remove

- **+ Add to the name** lists the pieces by group: *Date and time* (shooting date, shooting time), *Camera* (camera body, model, lens, serial number, ISO, shutter speed, aperture, focal length), *Numbers* (counter, frame number), *File and place* (original name, current name, folder, city, place, author, title) and *Text*.
- **Click** a tile for its options: format, your own value, delete.
- **Drag** a tile to move it.

Your text

Your text… adds a fixed word: the client, the project, the trip. It can contain spaces and is always a piece of its own: two texts side by side stay two separate tiles.

Between pieces

Between two tiles is the **separator** for that spot: `_`, `-`, space, dot or nothing. Click it to change it there only; **Between pieces** changes them all at once.

The result

Below the tiles is the full name of the first file. The list further down shows it for every file.

Starting from the camera name. *Name › Start from the Original Name* makes the name the file had out of the camera the first piece: handy when you only want to add a date or a prefix. *Write by hand* lets you type the pattern as text, such as `{date}_{body}_{counter}`. With *Use the new name* turned off, the names stay as they are and only the changes apply.

05 File data and your own values

Most pieces come from the file's data: the camera's EXIF, IPTC and XMP written by Lightroom, Photo Mechanic or Capture One, and the `.xmp` files next to the RAWs.

Overriding a value

Any value can be changed. Click the tile, then **Your value**:

- **For all files**: what you write applies to the whole folder. The file says *Japan*, you write *Niseko*.
- **Only where it's missing**: files that have the value keep it, the others take yours. Useful for a friend's camera with no author set.

The menu next to the field offers the file's value and the ones you wrote recently, so you don't type them again every shoot.

Empty pieces

If a value isn't in any file (the author, say, if you never set it in the camera), the tile stays empty and is highlighted. The button at the bottom becomes **Fill in or remove “Author”**: one click opens the tile, write the value or delete the piece. RawLine Rename never makes a value up.

If the value is missing in some files only, those files show a warning and use the text chosen in **Settings › Names › Text for missing data** instead (nothing, by default).

Formats

Some values come in several forms. The author, for example: full name, surname only, initials, all joined. Pick one in the tile's options.

06 Date, time and long night

The shooting date comes from the photo's EXIF or the video's metadata. In the tile's options pick the format: `2026-11-03`, `20261103`, `03-11-2026`, the year only, the time `21-47-05` and more. The

starting format is set in **Settings › Names**.

Long night

A wedding that ends at two, a concert, an aurora: with long night, photos after midnight stay in the day the evening began. Turn it on in the date options (the moon icon).

- **By sessions.** The day changes only after a pause in shooting as long as you choose (1 to 12 hours). A continuous evening stays together.
- **From an hour.** The day starts at the hour you choose (5:00, say): shots before it count for the previous day.

> Leave it off if you shoot at dawn: photos at 5 in the morning would land in the day before.

Hundredths of a second

If the format has seconds you can add **hundredths**: `HHmmss` becomes `HHmmssSS`. Bursts in the same second then get different names, no counter needed.

Wrong clocks

If a camera's clock was behind, or still on home time, the date is corrected in the name without touching the file: see Camera bodies and clocks.

07 The counter

The counter numbers the files in the order chosen at the top: **Order › shooting date** (the real order, even with several cameras) or **file name**.

- **Automatic**: continues after the highest number already in the folder for names that start the same way. A card added later keeps the sequence.
- **Manual**: always starts from the number you write in *Start*.
- **Digits**: how many (001, 0001…), and the **step** if you want to count in tens.
- **Restart**: never, every day or in every folder.

The **frame number** is something else: the number the camera wrote in the original name (`DSC04521` → `04521`). It helps find the shot again after renaming.

08 Changes

After the name, the **Changes** panel applies touch-ups in a row, top to bottom. **+ Add change** adds one.

Change	What it does
Add text	A prefix, a suffix, or text before or after a word.
Replace text	Changes a word into another in every file, matching case or not.
Remove	Deletes some text, some characters, or what comes before, after or between two words.
Move a part	Moves a part of the name to another position.
Upper and lower case	All upper case, all lower case, capitalized.
Clean up	Removes double spaces, accents, emoji and characters that aren't allowed.
Extension	`.ARW` or `.arw`, as you like.
Regular expression	Find and replace with a regular expression, for the tricky cases.
Advanced rule	A rule made with an earlier version or written by hand: you can turn it on or off.

Each change can be **turned off** without deleting it, **duplicated** (⌘D) and **moved** (⌥⌘↑ ⌥⌘↓, or by dragging).

09 Camera bodies and clocks

Each camera is recognised by its **serial number**: two bodies of the same model stay apart. Phones, drones and cameras without a serial number are recognised by their model (for example *iPhone 15 Pro*).

The tag

In **Settings › Camera Bodies** give each body a short tag, such as `AP1`, `R5` or `B` for the second shooter. The **Camera body** piece puts it in the name. The sidebar shows how many files each body has and lets you see them alone.

Correcting the time

If a body's clock was 2 minutes behind, write `+0:02:00` in its row. If it was ahead, `-0:02:00`. Dates and numbering of its files are corrected; the files aren't changed.

On a trip the **time zone** works the same way: was the camera still on London time in Tokyo? Write `+9:00:00`.

Lining up two cameras

1. In the list, select **two photos taken at the same instant** with two different cameras (the same kiss, the same finish line).
2. The file panel asks **Same instant, two cameras?** Choose which of the two had the right time.
3. The other camera gets the difference in its row, and all its files fall into order.

Exporting the table

Export… and **Import…** take the bodies table to another Mac or to the second shooter. Imported rows are added; for the same body the imported one wins.

10 Twins and same names

Twins are files of the same shot: the RAW, the JPEG, Lightroom's `.xmp` file, the video and its proxy. They all take the RAW's name, so they stay together: `_AP19581.ARW` and `_AP19581.JPG` become `2026-10-23_0001.ARW` and `2026-10-23_0001.JPG`. In the list they're marked **+1**, **+2**.

Which kinds count as twins is chosen in **Settings › Files**. With **Keep twins together** turned off in the sidebar, every file is renamed on its own.

Two files with the same name

If two files would end up with the same name, the app says so before renaming. In **Settings › Names › Same names** choose what to do:

- **Mark as error**: both files stay put until you add something to the name that tells them apart (the counter, the time with hundredths). The warning offers the fix in one click.
- **Add -2, -3**: the second file gets `-2` at the end, the third `-3`.

11 Preview and checks

The list shows each file's current and new name, updated as you type. The parts that change are highlighted.

- **Tick**: untick the files to leave as they are.
- **List and grid**: `⌘1` and `⌘2`. The grid shows thumbnails.
- **Quick Look**: `Space` on the selected file.
- **Find a File**: `⌘F`, by name.
- **Filters** in the sidebar: RAW, JPEG and images, video, warnings, errors, a camera body. `⌘`-click to pick more than one, `⌘0` for all files again.
- **First Error**: `⌥⌘E` jumps to the first file with a problem.

The file panel

On the right (`⌥⌘I`) you see the photo, the name it will get and, **step by step**, how it gets there: the name, then each change. If a name looks off, this is where you see which step changes it.

Warnings and errors

A **warning** (amber) doesn't block: a value missing in that file, a format that doesn't apply. An **error** (red) stops that file: an empty name, too long, with characters that aren't allowed (`/` `:`), the same as another one or as a file already in the folder.

12 Renaming and going back

Rename (`⌘↩`) applies the new names to the ticked files. It first checks that no name is taken: if one is, it doesn't even start. If something goes wrong halfway (a drive that disconnects), the files already renamed go back as they were.

- **Restore Previous Names** (`⌥⌘Z`): undoes the last rename.
- **History** (`⌘Y`): every rename you made, and any of them can be undone.
- **Restore Original Names** (`⇧⌥⌘Z`): brings back the camera's name, even after several renames and weeks later. The original name is kept inside the file (see Settings › Files).
- **Show in Finder** (`⇧⌘R`): opens the folder. The app can do it after every rename.

13 Presets and blueprints

A **preset** keeps the new name and the changes, ready for the next shoot.

- **Save Preset** (⌘S) updates the one in use; **Save Preset As…** (⇧⌘S) makes a new one.
- The **Preset** menu at the top lists them all: one click and the name is rebuilt on the open folder.
- From there you duplicate and delete them. **Show Presets in Finder** opens the folder where they're saved, to copy them to another Mac.

Ready-made blueprints

So you don't start from scratch, there are blueprints built around how clients and agencies work:

Blueprint	The name
Personal and portfolio	Date, your name, subject, number, camera name.
Commercial and advertising	Adds client and shoot. Put a job code instead of the client for confidential work.
Editorial	Your name and the story, as editors want them.
Weddings and private events	Couple, number, then the body to tell the second shooter apart.
Sport, agencies and pools	Initials and event, for Getty, Reuters, AP and the like.
Studio job number	Year and job number first, as on quotes and invoices.
Video	Videos only; the clip name stays whole at the end, so proxies and sidecars can still be found.

Blueprints contain placeholder words (*Subject*, *Client*, *Couple*): click them and write your own, then save the result as a preset.

14 Settings

RawLine Rename › Settings… (⌘,).

General

- App **language** (Italian, English or same as the Mac) and light or dark **appearance**.
- **Updates**: once a day the app looks for a new beta. Only the version number is read.
- **Resume session**: reopens folder and name at launch.
- **Show in Finder** after renaming.
- **Thumbnails**: turned off, the list shows the file type icon; faster with network drives and huge folders.

Names

- **Date** and **time** format and **separator** used when you add a piece.
- Starting **counter** (digits, start).
- **Extension**: a new name starts with the lower or upper case change already added.
- File **order**, **same names** and **text for missing data**.

Camera Bodies

The table of tags and time corrections, with import and export. See chapter 9.

Files

- Which kinds of file count as **twins**.
- **Original names**: where to keep them inside the files. With *Only on Mac disks*, SD cards and Windows drives (exFAT) stay clean, without the hidden "._" files macOS would add. History can always undo a rename, wherever the files are.

15 Keyboard shortcuts

Keys	Command
⌘O	Open Folder
⌘R	Reload Folder
⌘↩	Rename
⌥⌘Z	Restore Previous Names
⇧⌥⌘Z	Restore Original Names
⌘Y	History
⇧⌘R	Show in Finder
⌘S / ⇧⌘S	Save Preset / Save Preset As
⌘F	Find a File
⌘1 / ⌘2	List / Grid
⌘0	All Files
⌥⌘E	First Error
⌥⌘I	File Panel
⌘D	Duplicate Change
⌥⌘↑ / ⌥⌘↓	Move Change
Space	Quick Look
⌘?	This guide

16 Speed

Measured on a MacBook Pro M1 Max with 15,000 files on the internal drive:

Operation	Time
Preview of every name	0.5 s
Rename	1.8 s
Restore previous names	1.8 s
Reading shooting data	about 1,700 RAW files per second, while you work

On SD cards, external and network drives, times depend on the drive. With very large folders on a network drive, turn thumbnails off in **Settings › General**.

17 Questions

Are the files changed?

Only the name changes. Photos and videos stay identical. The only thing the app writes is the original name, in an attribute of the file, so it can be restored; you can turn that off in Settings › Files.

Does it work with SD cards and external drives?

Yes. On exFAT and Windows drives, to avoid leaving “._” files, the original name stays in History instead of the file.

Why is a piece empty?

The value isn't in the files: the author not set in the camera, the place not written in Lightroom. Write it in the tile or remove the piece.

Photos after midnight land in the next day.

Turn on long night in the date options. See chapter 6.

Two cameras mix up the order.

One of them had the wrong time. Line up two photos of the same instant or write the difference in Settings › Camera Bodies.

I renamed by mistake.

⌥⌘Z undoes the last rename. History (⌘Y) undoes earlier ones too.

Will Lightroom find the photos?

Rename before importing, or rename from Lightroom itself. If you rename files already in the catalog, Lightroom marks them missing until you relink them.

18 Updates and reports

RawLine Rename is in beta. When a new version comes out the app offers it at launch and once a day; you can check yourself with **RawLine Rename › Check for Updates…**.

If something's wrong, the **ladybug** at the top (or **Help › Report a Problem…**) prepares a report: write what you did, what you expected and what happened. You can include what the app was doing. Nothing is sent by itself: the report opens in your mail app and you decide whether to send it.

If the app quit suddenly, it offers to send a report the next time you open it.

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