

Google Photos Course Notes

You Need a Google account (gmail)

To use Google photos, you must have a Google account or what is also called a Gmail account.

Later in the course we will learn about sharing photos. The people who you share with do not need a Google account to view your photos.

At the beginning of each class, please come in and sign in using the Chrome browser with your Gmail address and your Gmail password. You need them both when you sign in on the computers in the classroom, even if you don't need to enter them at home.

You may even need to use your cell phone to satisfy second level verification if you have that set up.

After you are logged into your Google account, click the nine-dot icon (3 by 3) in the upper right area of the window. In the menu that appears, click Photos.

Cloud storage vs computer storage - Google Photos vs Picasa

Until March of 2016, Google offered Picasa as its photo program. Picasa was a nice program that you installed on your computer and it helped you organize, edit and share photos. The photos were in folders on your hard drive in your computer. If you wanted to share them online, you created Picasa Web Albums and those pictures were uploaded and stored in Google's Cloud so that others could look at them.

You can still use the Picasa program but you can no longer get it from Google. If you want to install it, let the instructor know and he can give you the install file. It still works just fine.

Google has replaced Picasa with Google Photos.

Google Photos is NOT a program you install on your computer. On your computer it is simply a website you go to. On smartphones and tablets it is an app you may need to download and install.

The idea behind Google photos is that instead of storing pictures in folders on your hard drive in your computer, you store them in the Google cloud associated with your Google account.

Your pictures are in the Google cloud associated with your Google account.

Uploading and downloading

Uploading is the process of copying photo files from a computer or a smartphone or tablet to the Google Photos cloud associated with your Google account. After photos are uploaded, they are still in both places.

Downloading is the process of copying photo files from the Google Photos Cloud associated with your Google account to a computer. After photos are downloaded, they are also still in both places.

If you take pictures with a smartphone, either Apple or Android, there is an option to automatically upload the pictures you take to the Google Photos cloud associated with your Google account if you have the Google Photos app installed on your smartphone. Your instructor recommends this.