

How to organise photos



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Windows Live Photo Gallery has a range of options for organising and finding your photos. You can apply 'tags', or keywords, to a photo to find all other related pictures, you can give photos a star rating from one to five, or maybe you just want to search by date and time. Below we'll explain how to do each.

For this guide, I've used the free Windows Live Photo Gallery (see our guide [How to download Windows Live Photo Gallery](#) for more information). However, you'll find that other programs such as [Photoscape](#) and [Paint.net](#) follow a very similar process.

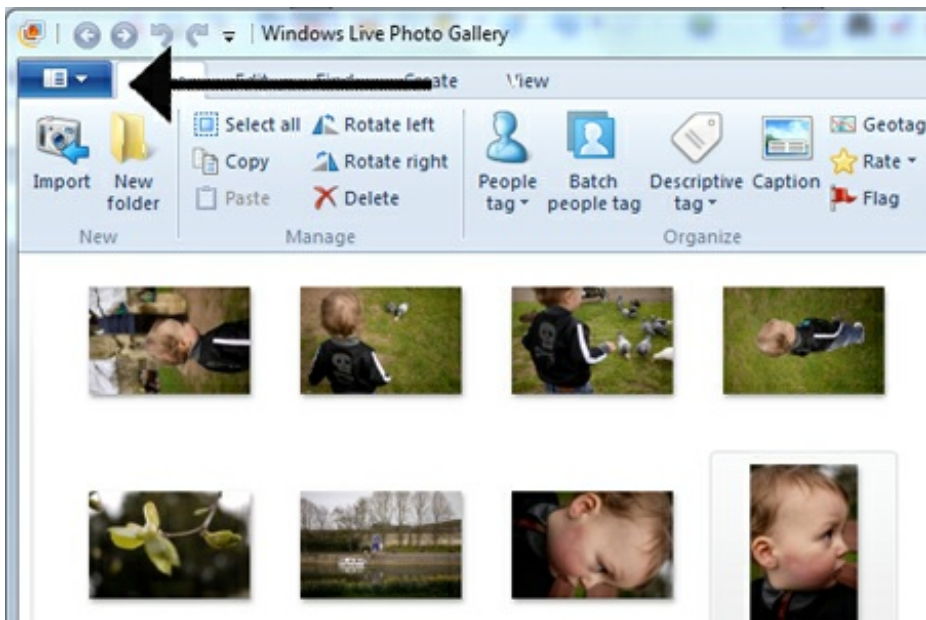
You'll need:

- a computer
- any images you want to organise, saved in a folder on your computer or to an external storage device.

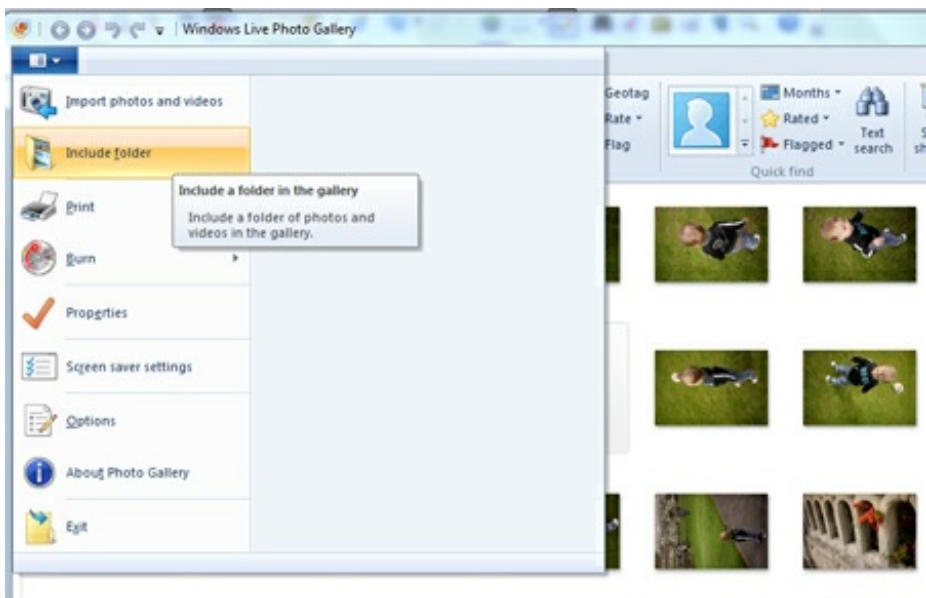
Follow these step-by-step instructions to organise photos in Windows Live Photo Gallery

Locating your photos

Step 1: The first step in organising your photos is, of course, to find your photos! Open Windows Live Photo Gallery. To the left of the 'Home' tab at the top of your screen, you'll see a small square icon. Click this.

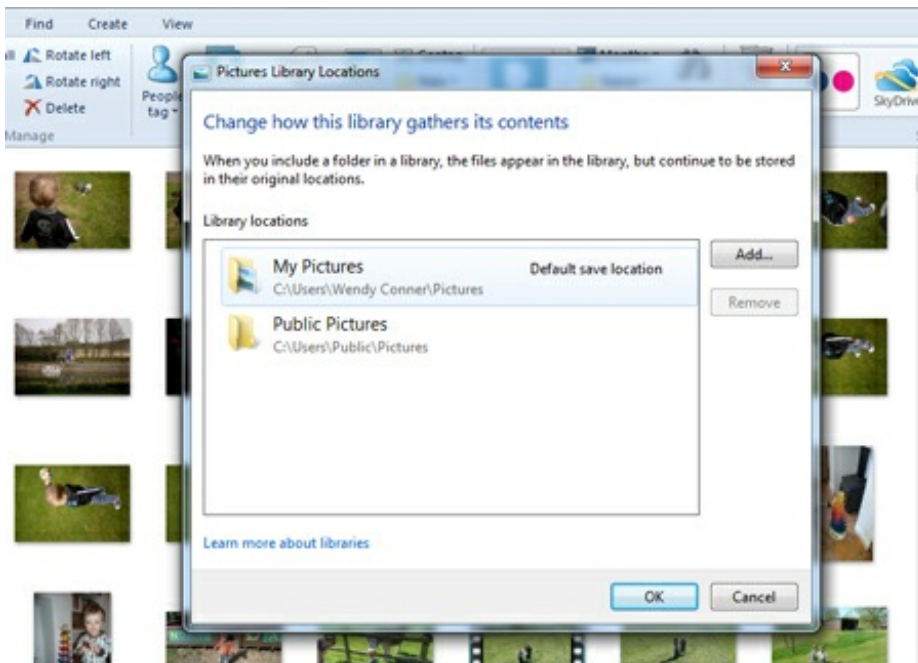


Step 2: You'll now see a drop-down list with a range of options. Choose the second item: **Include folder.**



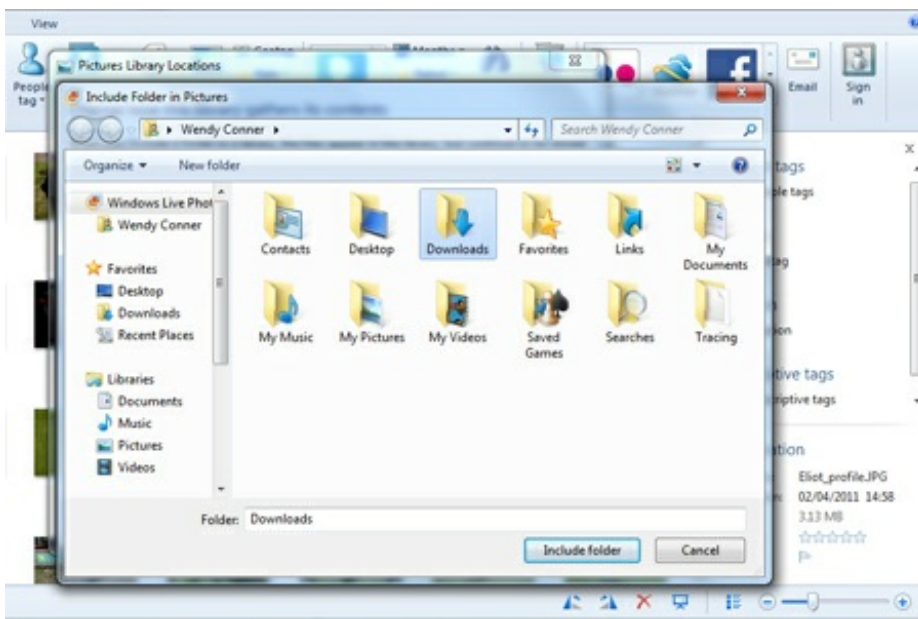
Step 3: A pop-up window will appear that will show any folder already attached to your Windows Live Photo Gallery. You might find that the folder where you keep your pictures is already listed. This is because Windows Live Photo Gallery automatically locates your computer's default 'My Pictures' folder when you install it. If this is the case, you're all set to start editing.

If, however, you use a different folder to store your photos, click **Add**.



Step 4: You'll see another pop-up window. On the left side of this, you can scroll down and find the location of your desired folder (for example, most people keep such folders in the C:/ section of their computer).

When you click this location, a list of folders will appear on the right. Click once on the folder you want (it will turn pale blue), then click Include **Folder**.



Step 5: Your photos from this folder will now be visible in your Windows Live Photo Gallery main screen. And now you're ready to start organising your photos!

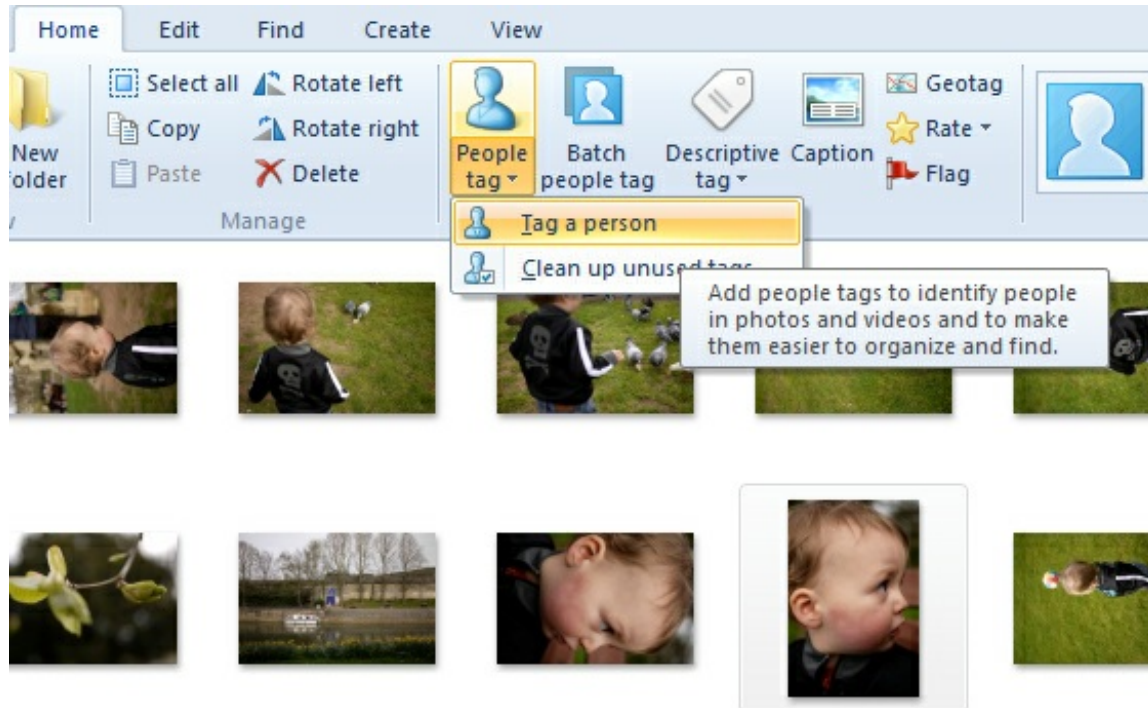
Tags

'Tags' are keywords that you can attach to a photo that describe what it is. For instance, if you like to take pictures of your cat, you might apply the tags 'Fluffy' and 'cat' to each of the images. Then in future, when you want to find pictures of your cat, you can search for these tags, which will bring up all of your cat photos.

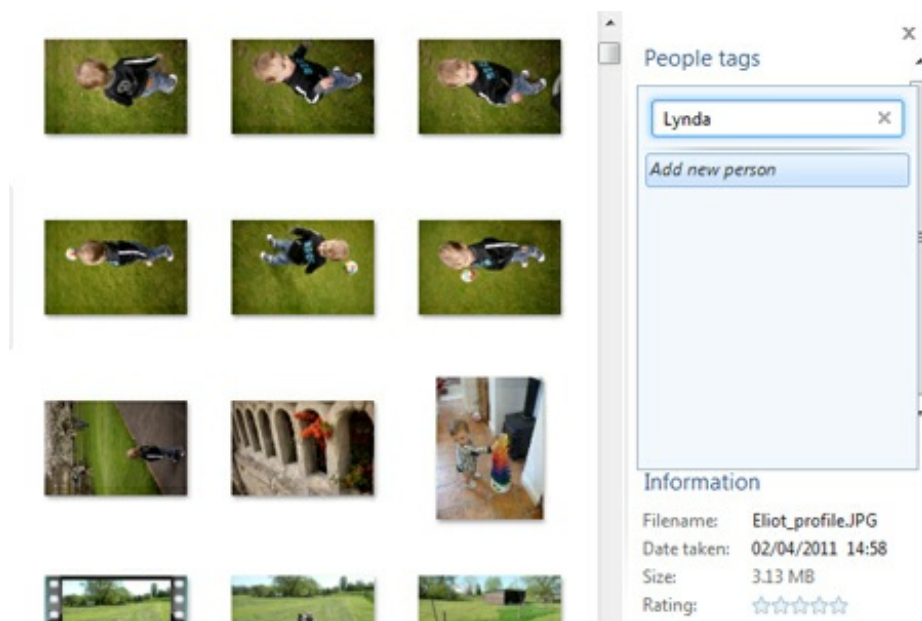
Follow these step-by-step instructions to apply a tag

Step 1: Applying a tag to a photo in Windows Live Photo Gallery is very simple. In your main picture viewer, select the photo you would like to tag. If you wish to apply the same tag to a large group of photos, no problem. Just hold down **Ctrl** on your keyboard and click every photo you'd like to be tagged.

Step 2: Once you've made your selection, you will notice several tagging options in the 'Organize' section of the 'Home' tab at the top of your screen. If you click **People tag**, you can 'Tag a person' for the first time.



Select this option. A window will appear on the right side of your screen where you can type the name you want to apply to your selected photo or photos. Click **People tag** again if you ever want to edit the name – for instance, if you've misspelled your sister-in-law's name Lynda.

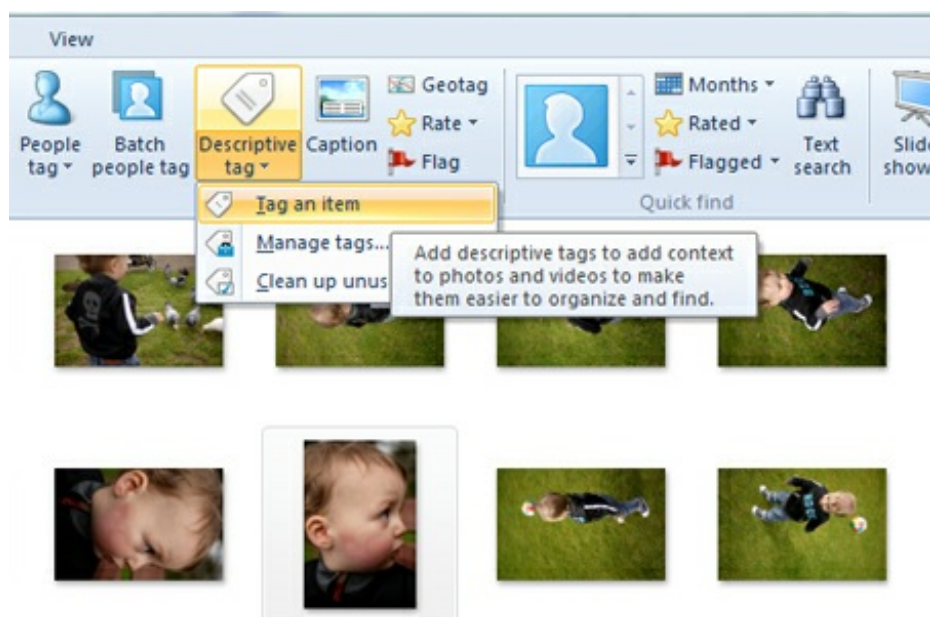


Step 3: The 'Batch people tag' button is a very clever function. With your photo or photos selected, click this and Windows Live Photo Gallery will automatically analyse all of your other pictures to find a similar face or faces. The software can do this with startling accuracy.

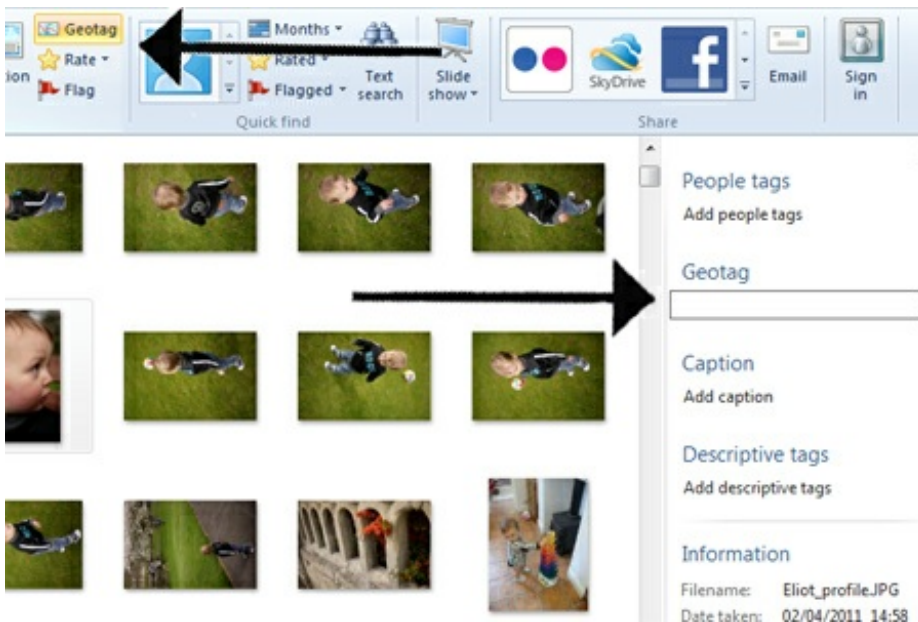
You'll be shown a spread of all the pictures in your folder containing that person. A series of buttons at the top of this screen will let you confirm each photo as being the same person. Another button lets you apply a tag to all of these photos. This is a great option if, for instance, you've just taken photographs at a friend's wedding and didn't know many of the people there.



Step 4: A 'Descriptive tag' is probably the tag you'll use most often. Again, select your photo(s) and click **Descriptive tag**. As before, a window will appear on the right side of your screen in which you can type the tag you'd like to apply to all of your selected pictures. Clicking this also gives you the option to edit, or 'manage', existing tags or 'clean up' (delete) old, unused ones.



Step 5: Finally, a 'Geotag' lets you add the location where an image was taken. Simply click **Geotag** at the top and the familiar window will appear on the right. Type in the image location, and this will be applied to your picture.



Star rating

Giving your images star ratings is another easy way to organise your photos and is actually a system that a lot of professional photographers use. Windows Live Photo Gallery will let you rank a picture (or selected group of pictures) by giving it a star rating from 0 up to 5 stars.

Why would you do this? Let's say you like to travel and take pictures while you're doing it. At the end of the year, you want to make a collection of all your best photos.

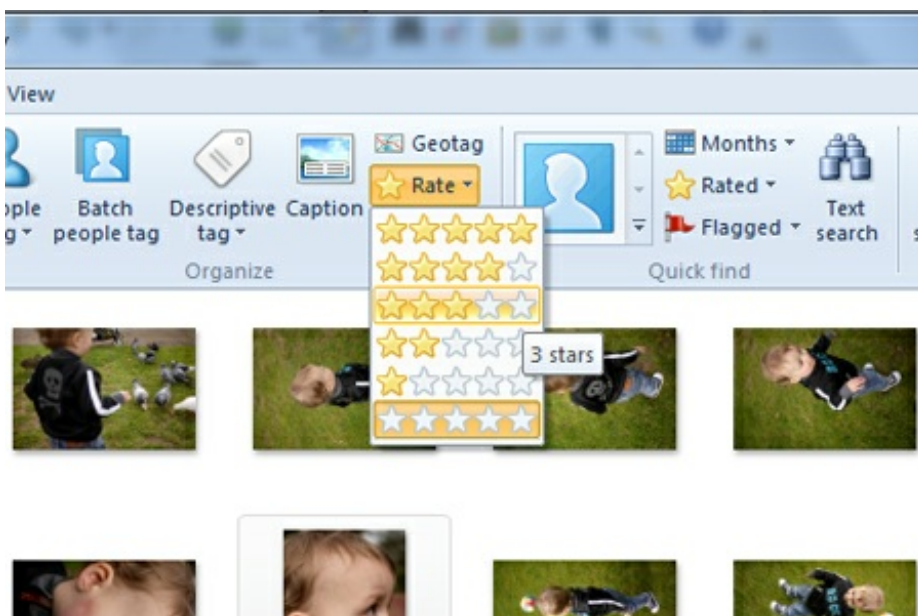
Rather than going back through an entire year of pictures, if you star rate them as you take them, all you'll have to do in December is find the ones with a 5-star rating. So how do you do this? It's easy.

Follow these instructions to give your photos a star rating

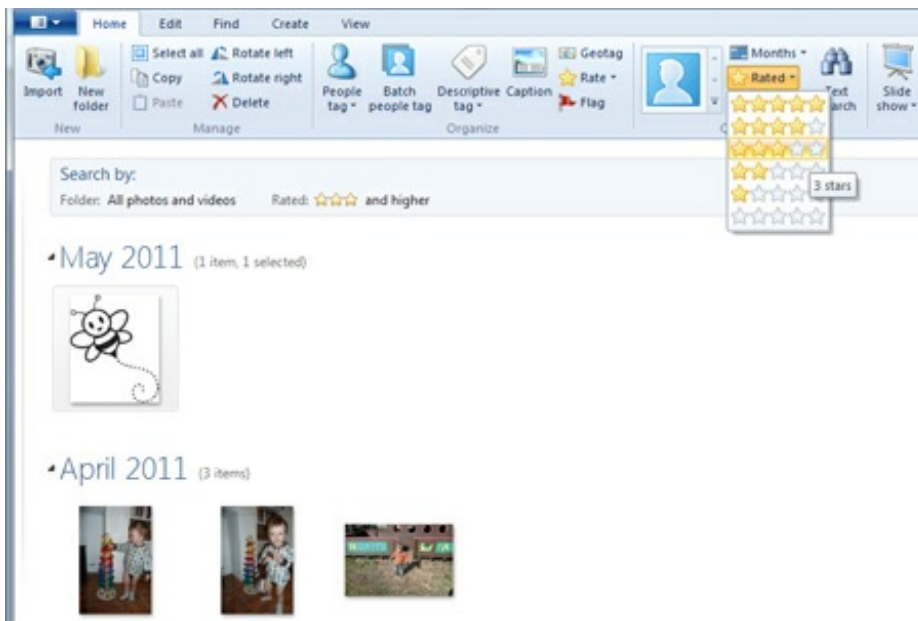
Step 1: Select the pictures you'd like to give a rating of 5 stars, for example. As before, hold down **Ctrl** on your keyboard and click each image.

Step 2: When your image selections are made, click the small star button at the top of your screen labelled **Rate**.

A drop-down list will appear, giving you the option of applying a rating of 0 up to 5 stars to your group of images. Make your selection.



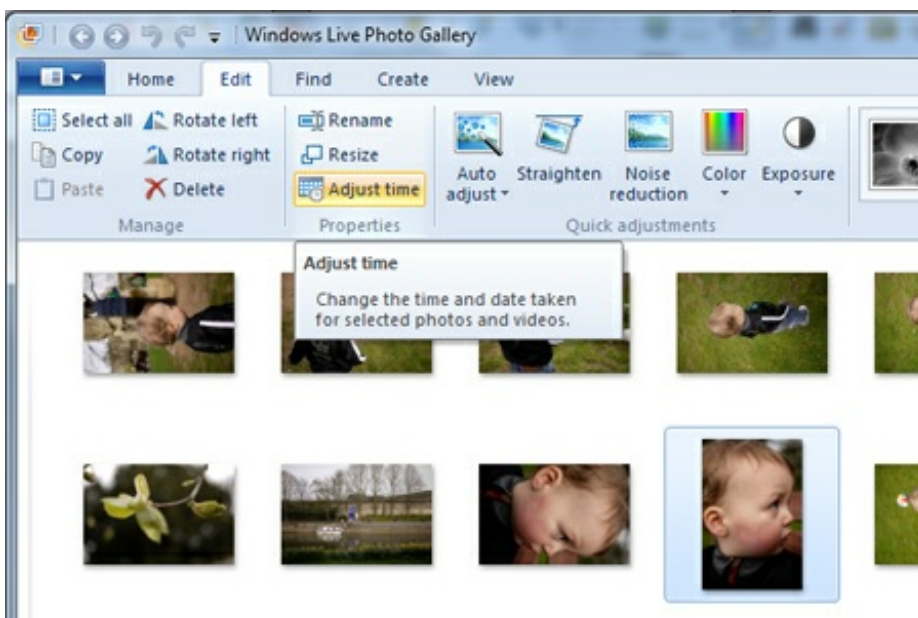
Step 3: In the section next to your 'Organize' options at the top of your screen is a series of 'Find' functions. Here you will see another star button, this time labelled 'Rated'.



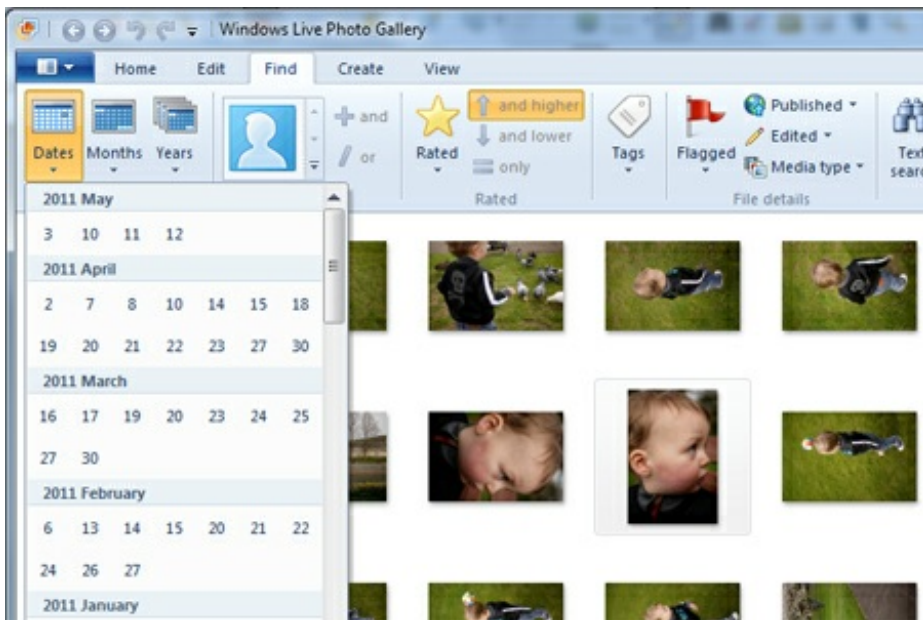
Step 4: Click **Rated** and the same drop-down list with 0 to 5 star options appears. Depending on which one you choose, Windows Live Photo Gallery will then show all of your images with that star rating plus, if you want, ratings higher or lower than that.

Sort by date and time

Another way to organise your photos is by date and time. Windows Live Photo Gallery allows you to edit the date and time information embedded in each of your photos. You can find this edit option by clicking **Adjust time** in the 'Edit' tab at the top of your screen.



Later on, if you want to find all the photos you took at Christmas, they can be easily found. Go back to the 'Find' options in your 'Home' tab. Click **Months** or **Dates** at the top and a calendar will drop down showing months going back as far as you want to search. If you click **December 2010**, all your Christmas photos from that year will then appear in the picture viewer.



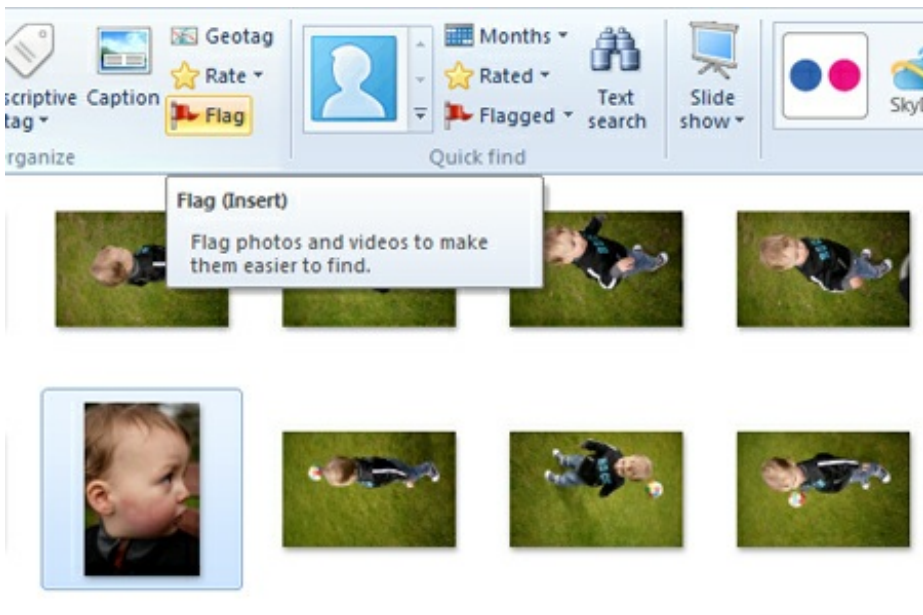
Flagging

A final way of organising your photos is to 'flag' a picture. People often do this if they've started to edit a photo but want to revisit it later. It's very easy to do.

Follow these step-by-step instructions to flag a picture

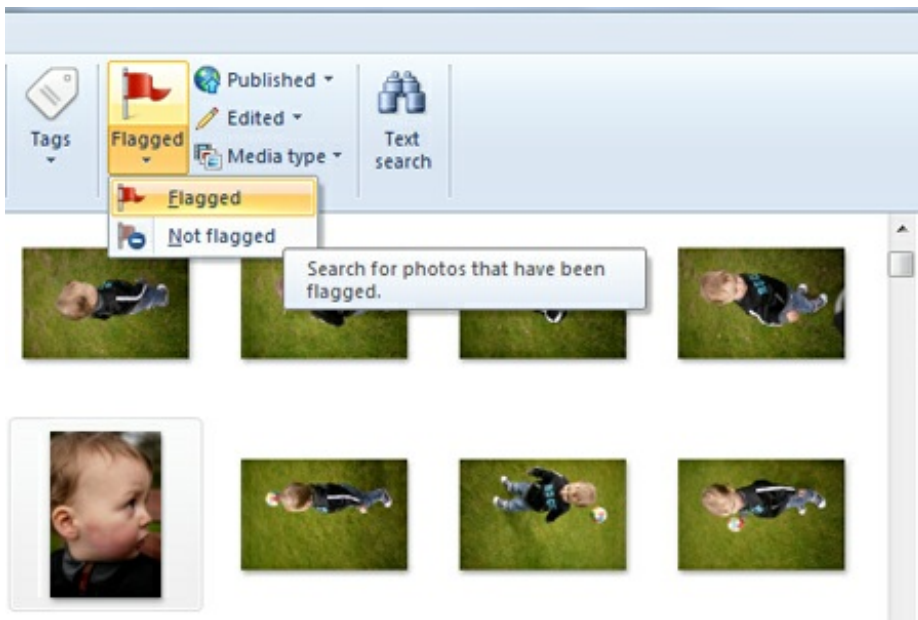
Step 1: Make your selection of photos as described above.

Step 2: In the 'Organize' section of your 'Home' tab, click **Flag**, which has a red flag icon. This will apply a small red flag to all of your selected photos



Step 3: To remove this flag, simply press **Flag** again.

Later on, you can find all of your flagged photos by clicking **Flagged** (which also has a red flag icon) in the 'Quick find' section at the top of your screen. This will let you choose to view either all of the photos you've flagged or those that aren't flagged.



Jeff Meyer writes about camera techniques and other aspects of photography for PhotoRadar.com.

Next steps

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