

Fixing Photos' Times And Dates

March 23th, 2011

Intended for: [advanced](#)

Digital photographs' "picture-taken" time and date, stored in their EXIF data, are very important, not just because you can use them to tell when a picture was taken, but also because they make it easier to organize your photo archive. They can even help for some special purposes like marking pictures' GPS location.



Badly set camera time can cause lingering problems that aren't discovered until it's too late. But before we go further into this, let's back up a bit: what's "EXIF?" It's a standard describing how to store "metadata": text and similar associated information inside a digital photograph file. There is a lot of information about things such as the date and time the picture was taken, precise exposure data, or even whether or not color shifting was active in the camera during a shot. If you still remember the days of classical photography, you can think of EXIF as being like the text information that some older cameras printed between filmstrip frames.

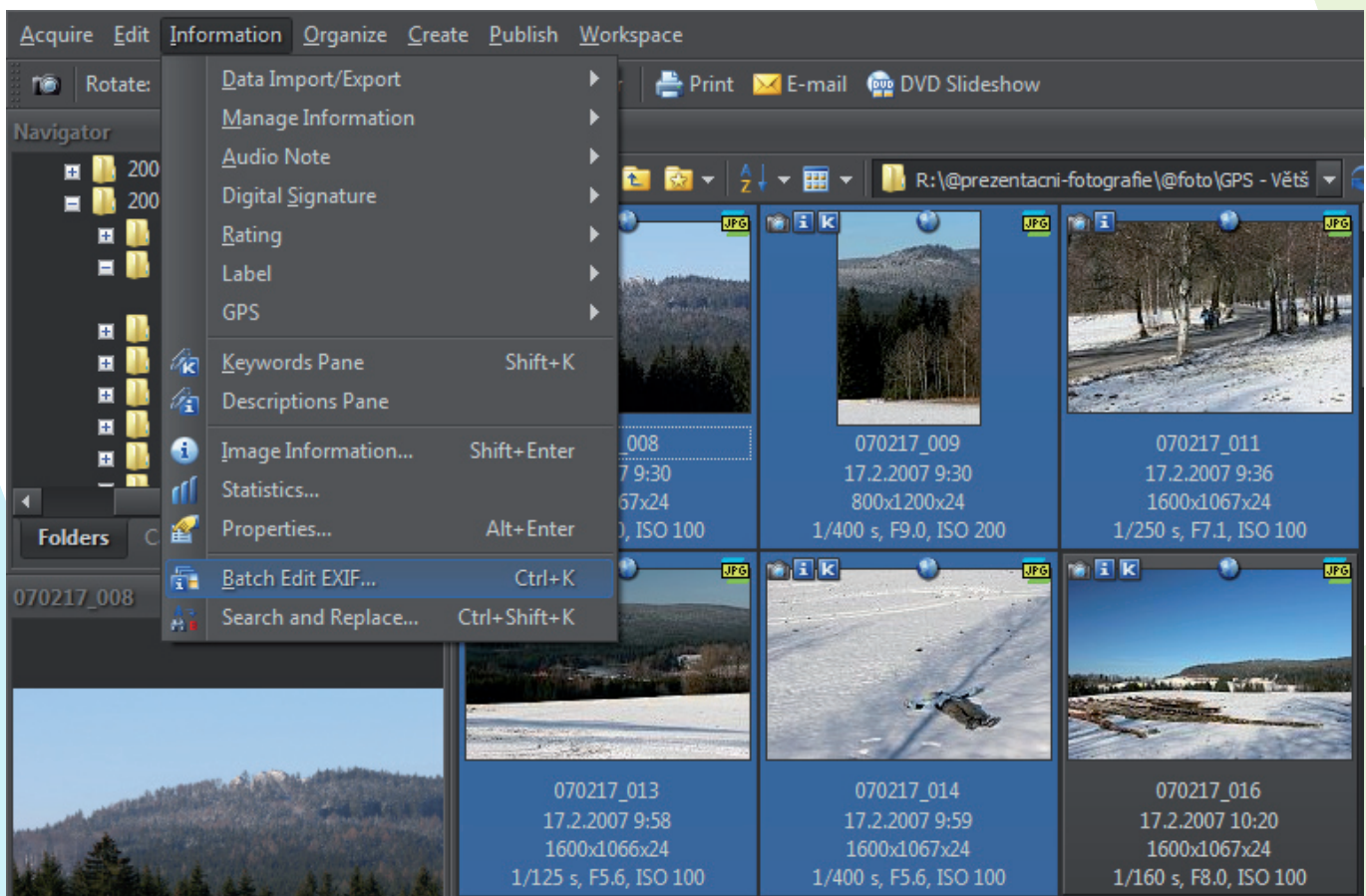
Practically every photo editor today can show EXIF data, and advanced cameras can store some impressive kinds of information in EXIF—for example, GPS data telling where a picture was taken. Some photo software can edit EXIF data, though most can only read it. [Zoner Photo Studio](#) is among the programs that can edit EXIF data.

Shifting Times And Dates

With EXIF editing, it's no problem to fix a bad time or date for your photos. The most common cause of badly recorded times is when a camera battery dies and is replaced, and the camera settings are erased in the process. Travel among time zones also causes time shifts, of course, and many countries switch into and out of Daylight Saving Time every year.

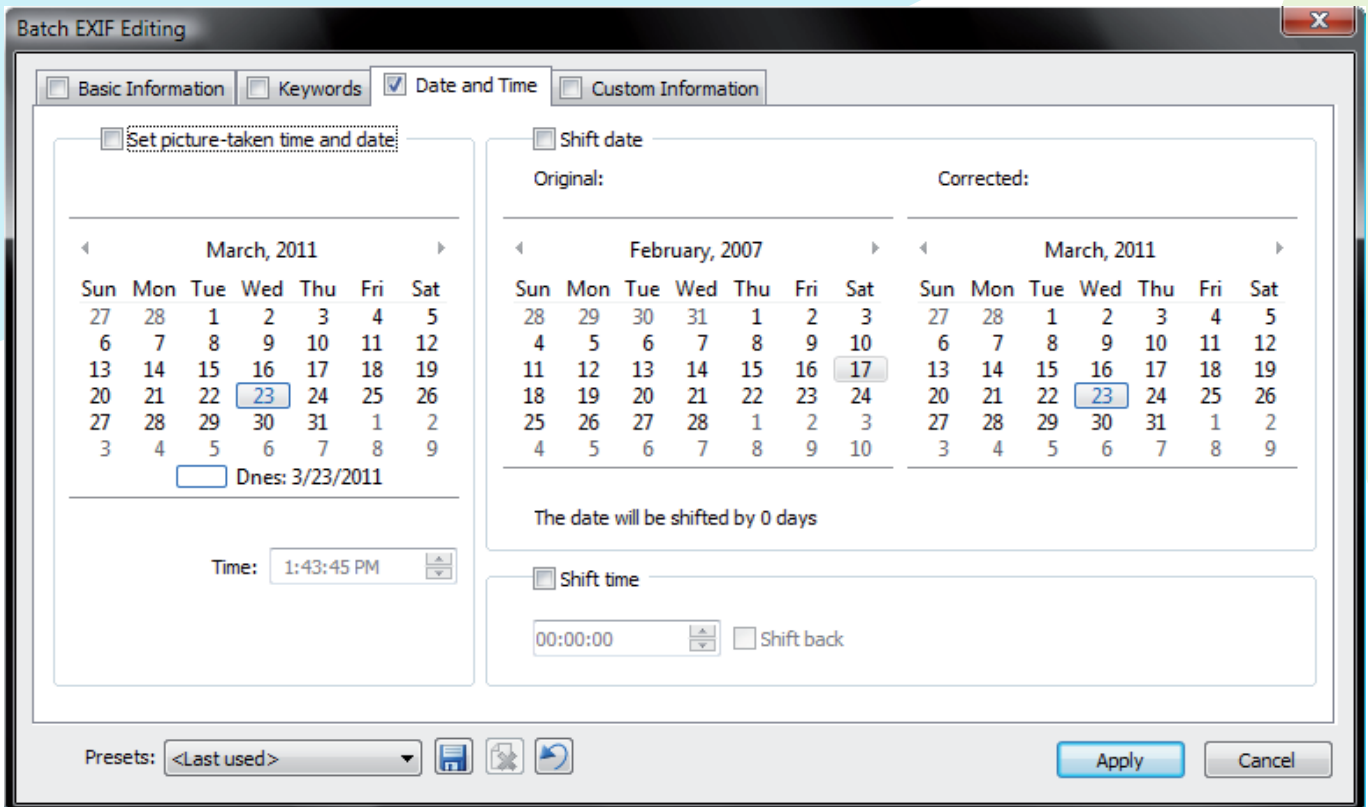
Don't forget to change your camera's time setting at the next Daylight Saving Time shift. But if you do forget, Zoner Photo Studio is here to help.

Just as the program can batch-edit pictures themselves, it also offers a window for batch-editing EXIF data. To show it, use **Information | Batch Edit EXIF** (Ctrl+K). It only affects pictures that you have selected, so start by selecting pictures.



Batch Edit EXIF affects only selected files

Using this command opens a new window with four tabs: **Basic Information**, **Keywords**, **Date and Time**, and **Custom Information**. For us it is the third of these—Date and Time—that is important. To use this tab, switch to it **and check the box next to its name**. (Note that this window is a great way not just to fix times and dates, but also to add keywords or other custom information.)



Activate the third tab. That is, don't just switch to it, but also check the box by its name

If the pictures never had a time and date to begin with, use **Set picture-taken date and time** in the left part of the window to provide one. Make sure the box by the control is checked; otherwise, it is not applied. But to change existing picture-taken times, use **Shift Time** and/or **Shift Date** in the right half of the window. Use the calendar on the left to indicate the photos' original, incorrectly-set picture-taken date. Use the calendar on the right to set what date should have been set. (The key here really is the number of days to shift, shown beneath the two calendars, but that can be hard to calculate, so the program calculates it for you based on the calendars.)

Use **Shift time** to shift the picture-taken time by hours, minutes, and/or seconds. To shift backwards—e.g. after having forgotten to switch out of Daylight Saving Time in the fall—turn on the **Shift back** option.

Shift date

Original: Corrected:

◀ March, 2011 ▶							◀ March, 2011 ▶						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
27	28	1	2	3	4	5	27	28	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31	1	2	27	28	29	30	31	1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

The date will be shifted by 0 days

Shift time

01:00:00 Shift back

The controls for batch-shifting time and date

As soon as you have set the new date or time, click **Apply**. The EXIF picture-taken data is then overwritten for all selected pictures. Since this window enables batch editing of many different things, make sure that nothing unwanted has been filled into the window's other tabs. To avoid this risk entirely, uncheck every tab except **Date and Time** when batch-editing date and time.