On the PSA Website

By Sharon Powers • PSA Webmaster • webmaster@psa-photo.org

Browsers and the PSA Website

Using the PSA website, like using any other website on the internet, requires an internet browser. Browsers are so much a part of our lives that we don't even think of them much in our day to day internet usage. People often boast that theirs is the best, while others could care less what they use, just as long as it gets them there! But browsers do require some care once in a while and not all browsers are the same.

You may ask, "Really? They're not all the same?" Absolutely not. First off, putting it simply, a browser is a program that allows you to see HTML files—without it, you would only see coding language and the internet would be for the very few who could read it with ease. Many of the big players have their own browsers, which are commonly used. Popular browsers include Chrome (Google), Firefox (Mozilla), Safari (Mac), Edge (Microsoft), and Internet Explorer (Microsoft). Popular mobile browsers include UC (UCWeb) which is also on desktops, Samsung Internet, and AOSP (Android Operating System). By far the most popular overall browsers today are Chrome and Safari. The information in this article focuses on desktop and laptop computers, not mobile devices.

Even though all browsers' jobs are to read html, they don't all do it the same way. This is where the differences come into play. It's not just the overall look of a browser and how you interact with it—it's mostly what goes on in the back end, and without getting too technical about it, that's where things can get wonky. One browser may have no difficulty displaying a web page while another may not be able to do more than display an error message. Or the layout may be really out of whack. Sometimes a browser may go through a major upgrade which interferes with the programming on a website and if the developers can't work with the upgrade, the web pages fail. There are so many reasons that browser updates can wreak havoc and there's little a typical internet user can do about it—other than to change browsers.

The best browser to use on the PSA website is Chrome and this is important to know because sometimes, when the PSA website does not seem to be displaying properly, the fault can be in the browser—you will always get better results when you use Chrome. Safari does not always work well on the PSA website.

How to get the Most out of your Browser
Choosing the correct browser is just half the battle. You also have to maintain it. This requires some simple steps:

Keep the browser updated
Chrome, like other browsers, allows for automatic updates. This is the easiest solution—set it (using the Preferences) to automatically update and you won't have to worry about this again. Browser updates are routinely done to protect from unwanted attacks and to keep up with the latest advancements in coding. If your browser has not been updated in a while, you will find it difficult to access many websites, especially those with advanced features.

Clear your cache
Cache is both a positive and a negative for computers. Cache is a temporary storage place for data that your computer uses to make your web experience more pleasant, i.e. quicker. The cache holds data that has recently been read so it can be read again quickly. This is a great thing unless and until the cache builds up so much that it actually slows performance down. That's when you need to clear it. If you are someone who spends many hours a day on your computer, then you should clear your cache at least once a week.

There are three main things you can clear in your cache: your browsing history, cookies and other site data, and cached images and files. More advanced cache clearing can include your passwords, your autofill form data, and even more.

What you choose to clear is a matter of personal preference—if you clear your cookies and other site data, you will most likely have to re-enter passwords when you visit again. That's not always a good thing and certainly can be time-consuming in the long run. Browsing history is good to clear if you typically visit many many websites in your internet usage. Cached images and files is the first place you should clear (and sometimes the only one you need)—this choice keeps track of individual pages you visit and often builds up quickly. I recommend this as the minimum that should be cleared.

On a Mac, choose the name of your browser, i.e. Chrome, and then click the choice for "Clear Browsing Data." On a PC, open your browser and then in the top right, click More, More tools, clear browsing data.

Choosing a good browser and maintaining it will enhance your internet experience, especially on the PSA website. If things are not working the way they should, addressing what is going on with your browser can fix many issues. ◼

Please Support the PSA Print Collection

![PSA Photographic Society of America WORLDWIDE logo and 2019 calendar cover featuring an Arctic fox roaming in snow]

This calendar contains images taken from the PSA Print Collection. The images are copyrighted and may not be reproduced without permission of the publisher, the Photographic Society of America, Inc. (PSA).

Arctic Fox Roaming © **William Lewis**

Donate $20.00 to the PSA Print Collection and receive a beautiful 2019, 8 ½" x 11", wall calendar with images from the PSA Print Collection. A calendar will be mailed for each $20.00 donation so you may receive multiple calendars.

All calendars will be delivered in December, in time for holiday gift giving. You will also receive a tax donation receipt.

Send in your donation online today by going to this link https://psa-photo.org/index.php?generic-payment

Enter the word Calendar in the Payment Purpose field.

If you need assistance, contact PSA Headquarters. HQ@psa-photo.org.

Elena McTighe, FPSA, MPSA, President PSA

https://psa-photo.org/index.php?psa-collections