

Digitizing Photo Negatives

MCPL MEMORY LAB

The Memory Lab is supported by the Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act as administered by the Missouri State Library, a division of the Office of the Secretary of State.

Getting Started

Welcome to the Memory Lab. Review the next few pages to introduce yourself to the equipment and software you will be using. Then, you will begin the do-it-yourself digitization process.

Before beginning, please make sure you brought everything you need:

- Photo negatives
- Memory device such as a USB drive or external hard drive

The Memory Lab can digitize photos in the physical formats of photo prints, photo slides, and negatives. These are the instructions for photo negatives. Negatives look like this.

Review the other instructions provided if you would like to digitize other photo formats.



Getting Started: Equipment and Software

Epson Scanner: The Epson Scanner is what will be scanning your negatives. The tray containing your negatives should be placed on the scanner glass and the lid should be closed when scanning.

Tray: The tray holds your negatives. You will manually insert your film negatives into the tray.

Tray Guide: The tray guide helps you correctly position the tray on the scanner.

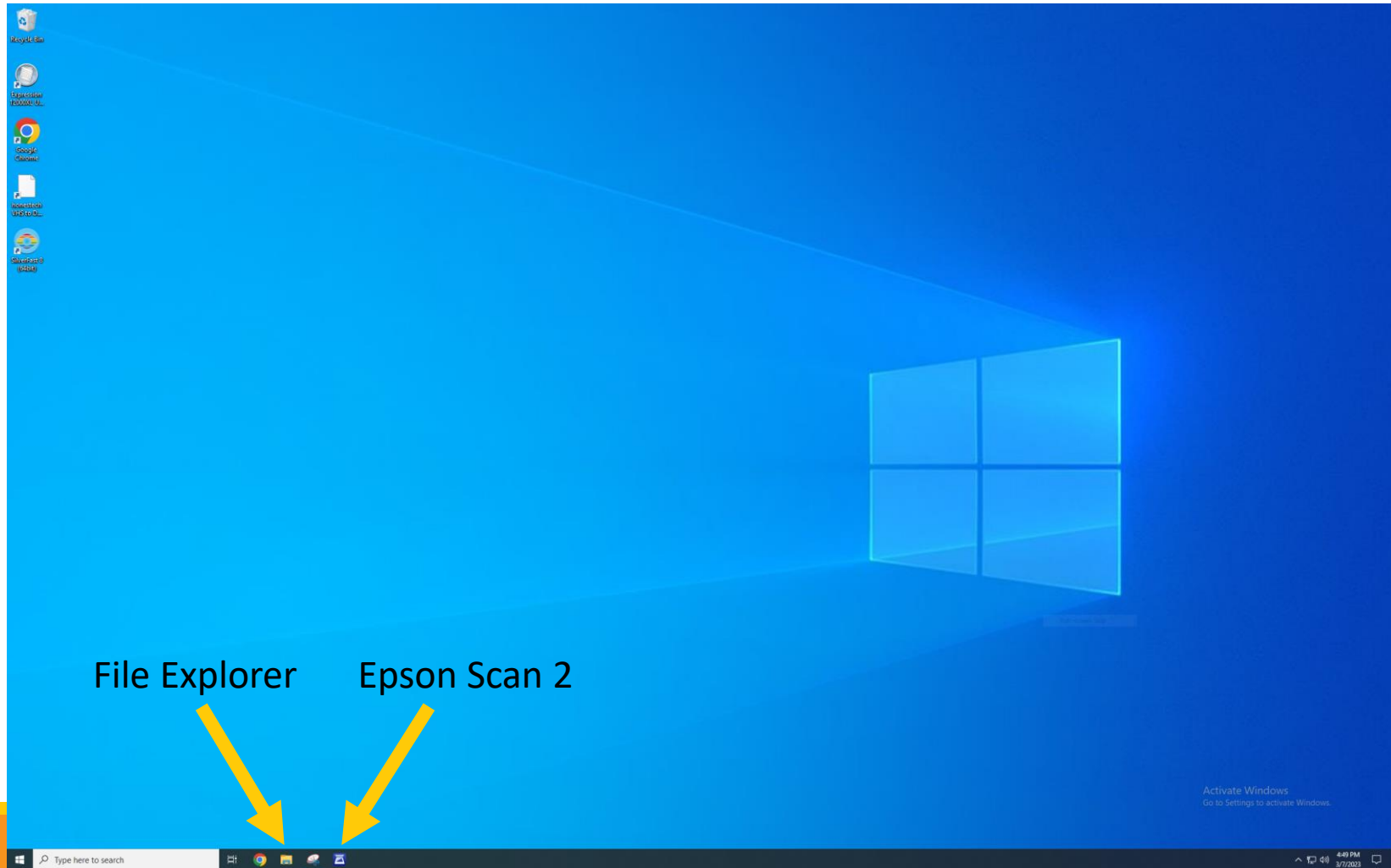
Epson Scan 2: Epson Scan 2 is the software you will use to set up and initiate the scanning of your negatives. The icon looks like a blue scanner.

File Explorer: File Explorer is the file system for Windows. This is where you can find your storage device and files after scanning. The icon looks like a yellow file folder.



More information about the equipment and the desktop location of the programs is on the following pages.

Getting Started: Desktop Screen Guide



Getting Started: Equipment Guide

Tray Guide



Tray



Overview of Digitization Process

Now that you are aware of the equipment and software you will be using, you are ready to digitize your negatives.

The digitization process is broken down into three parts:

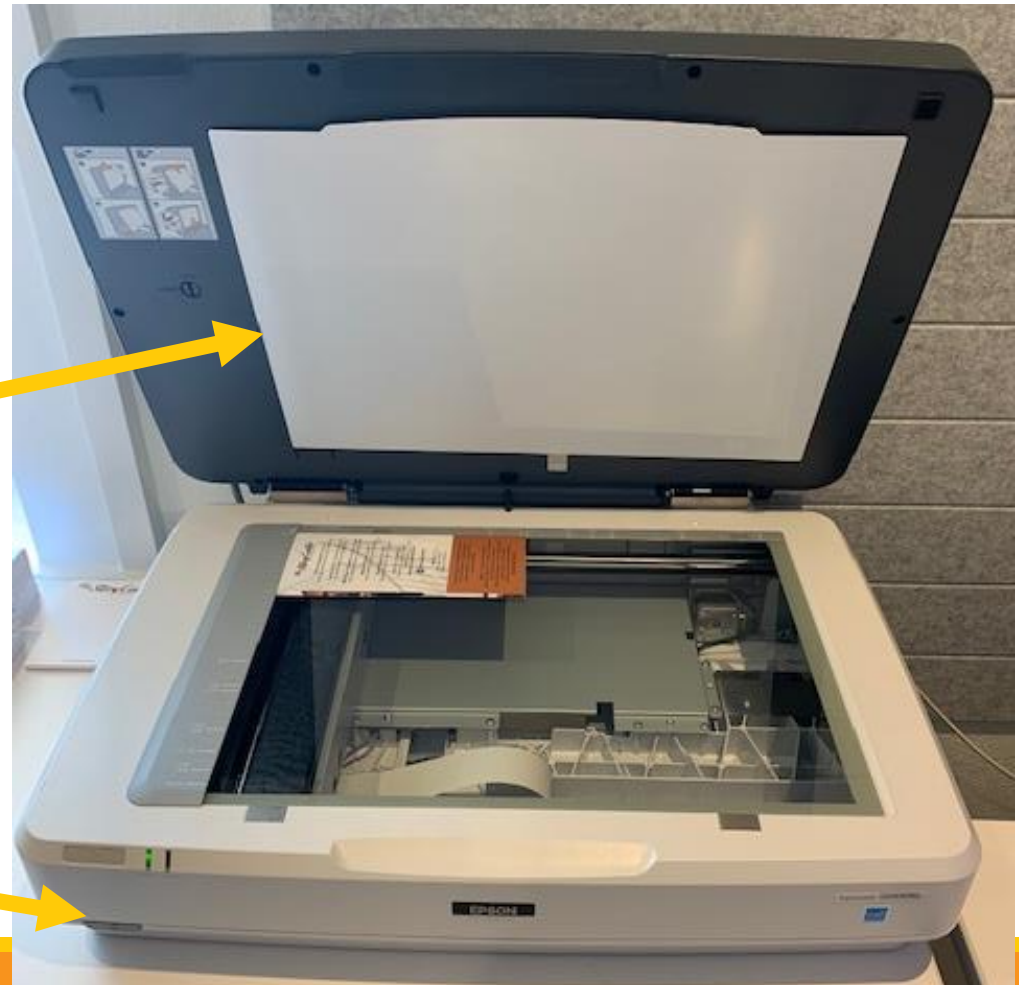
1. Prepping the scanner and negatives: To begin, you will turn on the scanner and remove the white background from its lid. You will also insert your negatives into the tray and put the tray and tray guide onto the scanner bed.
2. Scanning and saving your negatives: During these steps, you will use the Epson Scan 2 software to setup and preview your scan. You will then frame your negatives and scan them one by one to your memory device. You may repeat these steps if you wish to scan multiple images.
3. Finishing up: During the final steps, you will have a chance to view your scans. You will also close the software, eject your storage device from the computer, and restore the scanner to its original state.

Prepping the Scanner and Negatives

Before you begin scanning your negatives, you will first get the scanner ready, turn it on, and load your negatives into the tray.

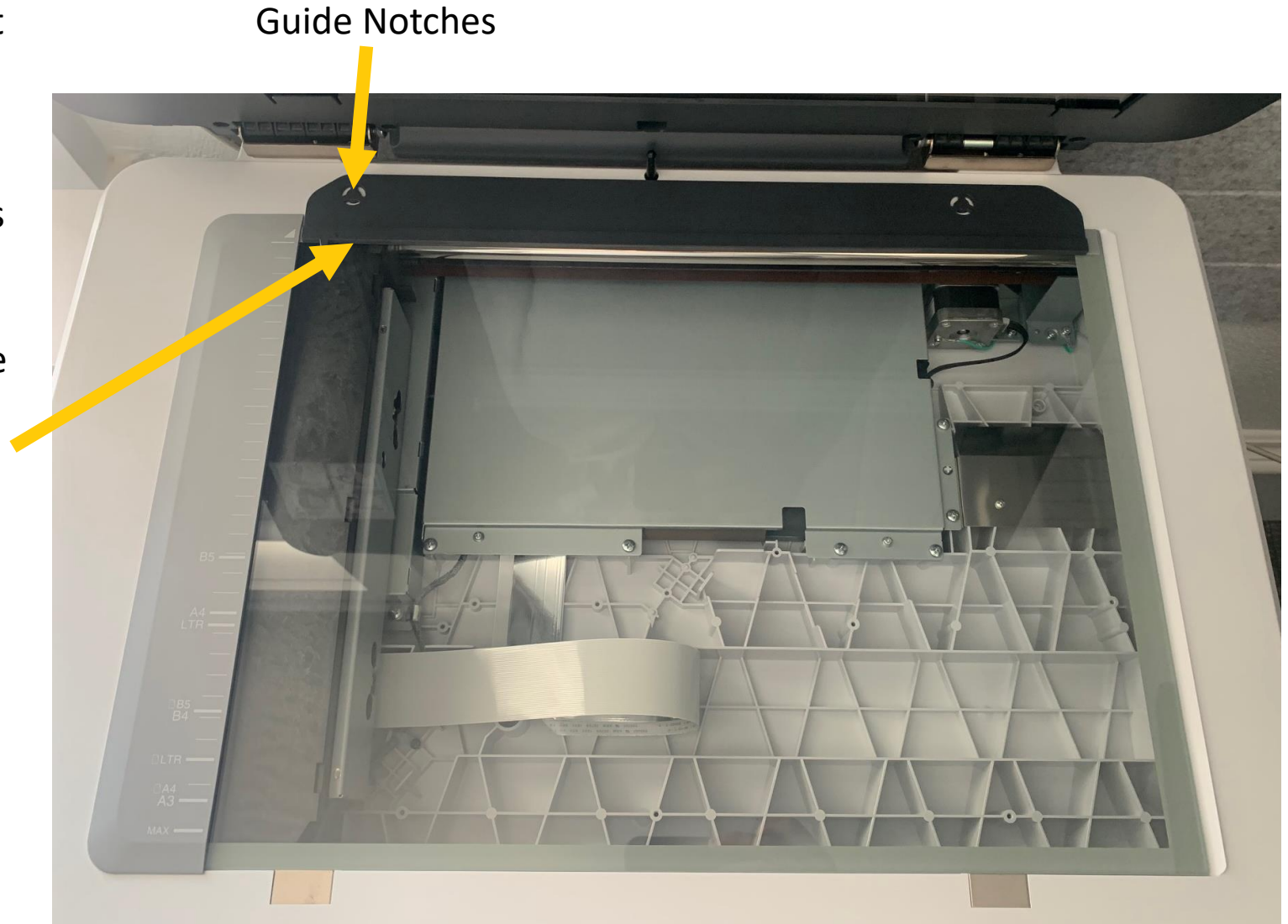
1. Remove the white background from the inside of the scanner lid and set it aside. You can remove the background by pulling it up from the top then out from the bottom.

2. Push the lower grey button on the scanner to turn it on.

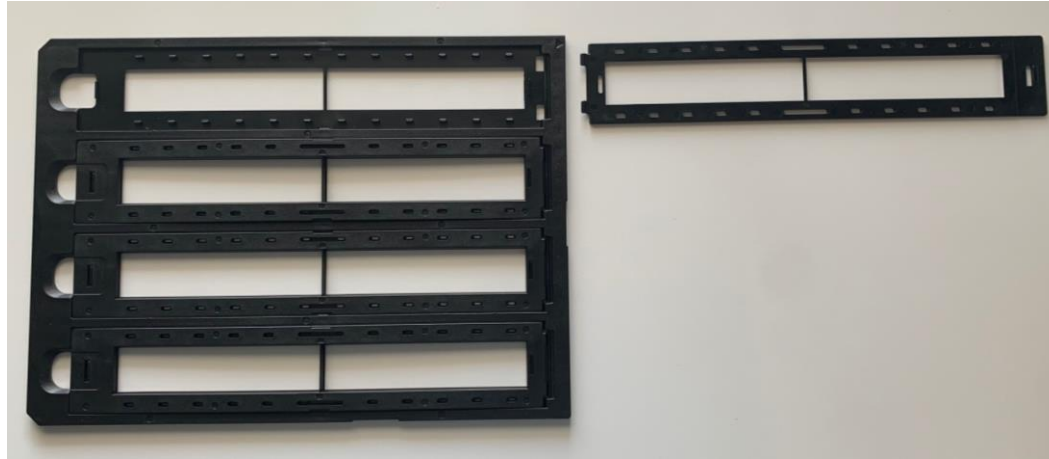


3. Place the tray guide at the top of the scanner glass. Find the notches on the guide and set them in the indentations of the scanner.

The scanner will look like this when the guide is in place.



4. Next, insert your negatives into the tray. First, pop open the top of one row and remove the top piece.



5. Lay your negative down into the tray with the front of the image facing down. If you need help identifying the front of your negatives, hold them up to the light and look through them.



6. Click the top piece back in place using the grooves as a guide. This will hold your negatives in place for scanning. The filled tray will look similar to this.

7. Place the loaded tray onto the scanner bed vertically. The front of the tray should be facing down.

8. To ensure the tray is placed in the right position, line the arrow on the top left corner of the tray with the arrow on the tray guide.

9. Close the top of the scanner.



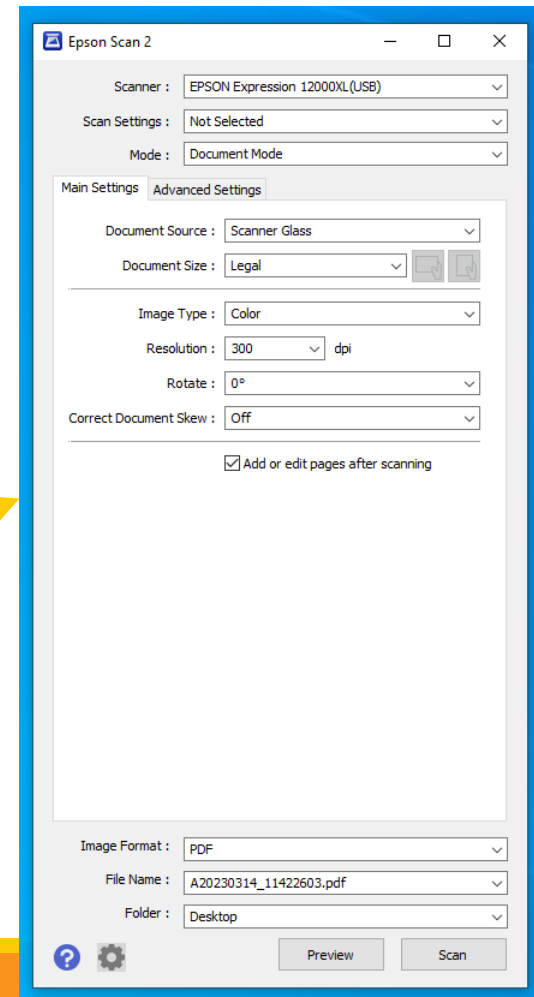
Scanning and Saving Your Negatives

It is now time to scan your negatives. You will use the Epson Scan 2 software to setup and initiate your scan.

1. Open the Epson Scan 2 software by double clicking the icon on the lower tool bar of the screen.



The software will look like this when it opens.



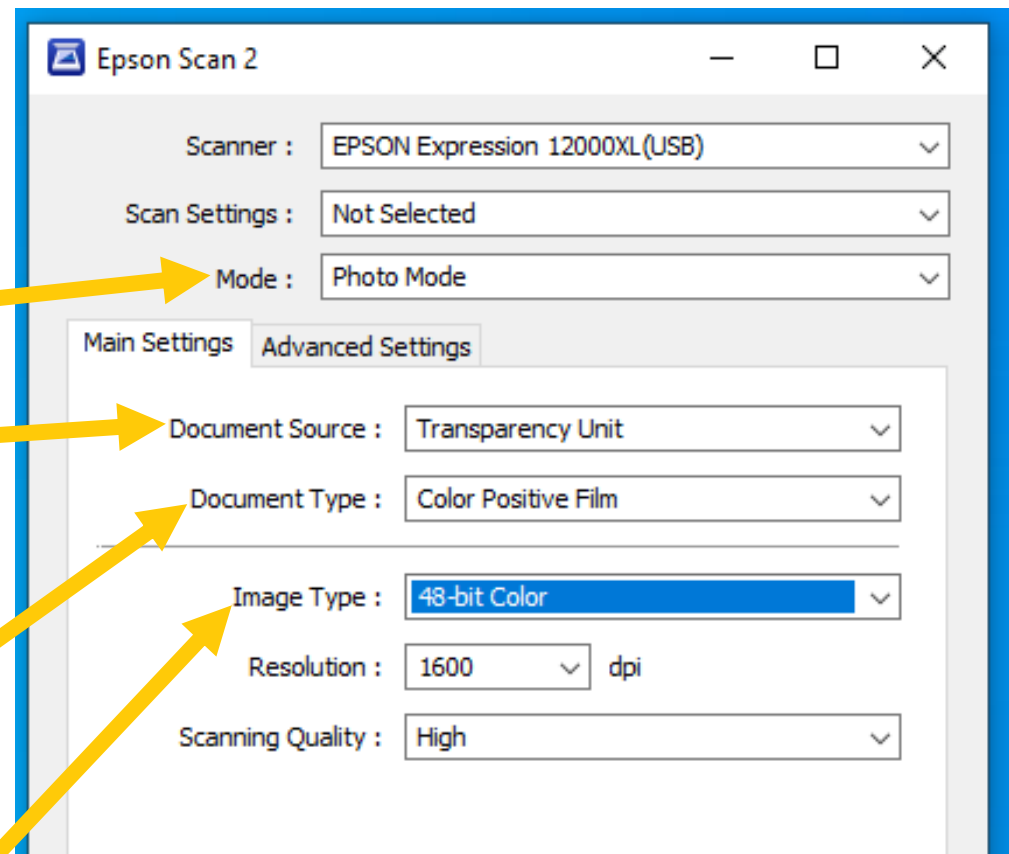
The settings for your scan will be slightly different depending on whether you are scanning color negatives or black and white negatives.

2. Change the Mode to “Photo Mode.”

3. Change the Document Source to “Transparency Unit.”

4. Change the Document Type to “Color Positive Film” for color negatives or “B&W Negative Film” for black and white negatives.

5. Change the Image Type to “48-bit Color” for color negatives or “16-Bit Grayscale” for black and white negatives.



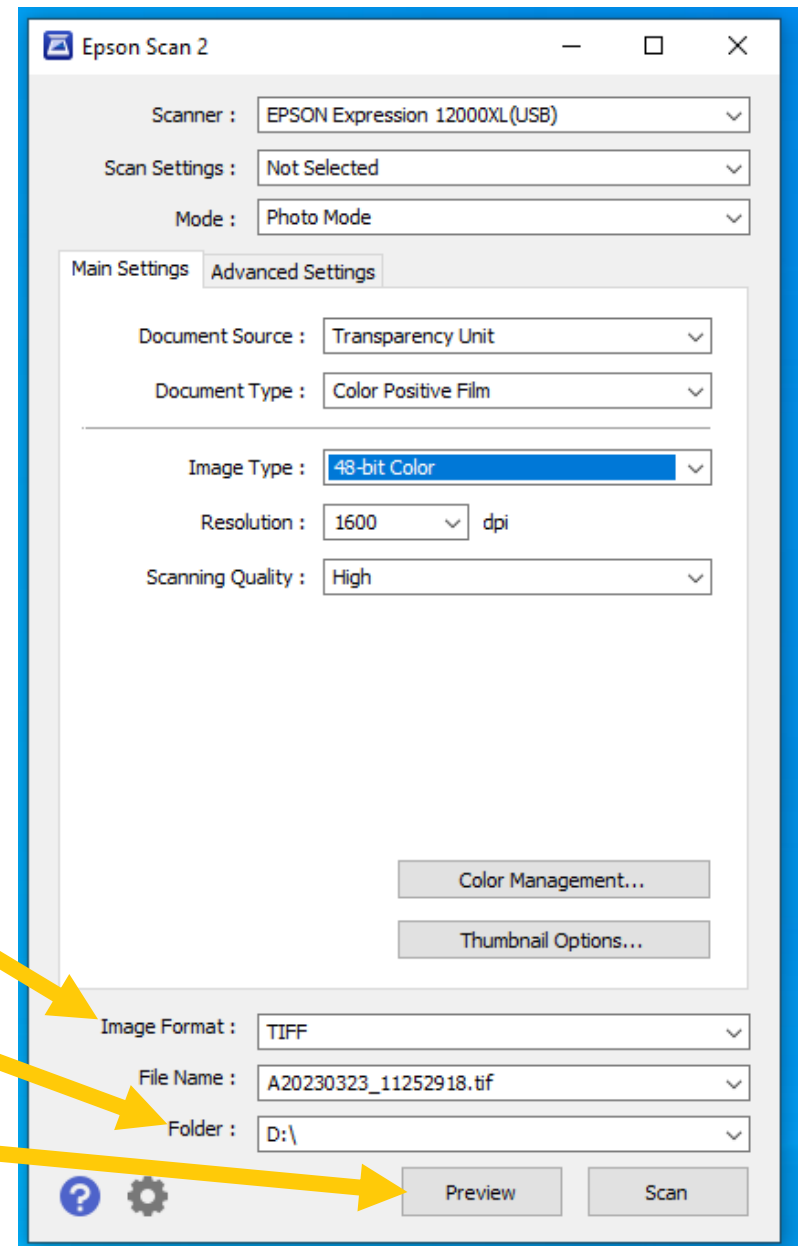
You may also adjust the Resolution if you would like, but note that the higher the resolution, the longer the scan will take. It will also take up more storage and be harder to share. A resolution between 300 dpi and 1600 dpi will produce a good quality image.

6. Change the Image Format to “TIFF.”

7. Leave the File Name as is.
You will change it later.

8. Change the Folder to your external storage device.

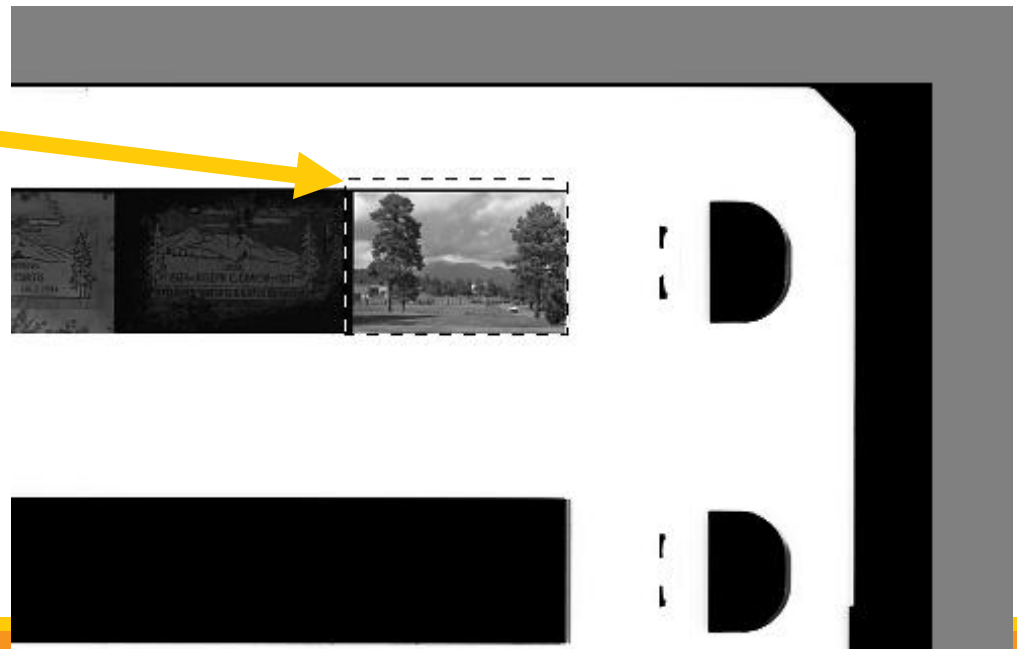
9. Click the Preview button to begin a preview scan of
your negatives.



10. After the scan is complete, you will see a preview of all your negatives. It will look similar to this.

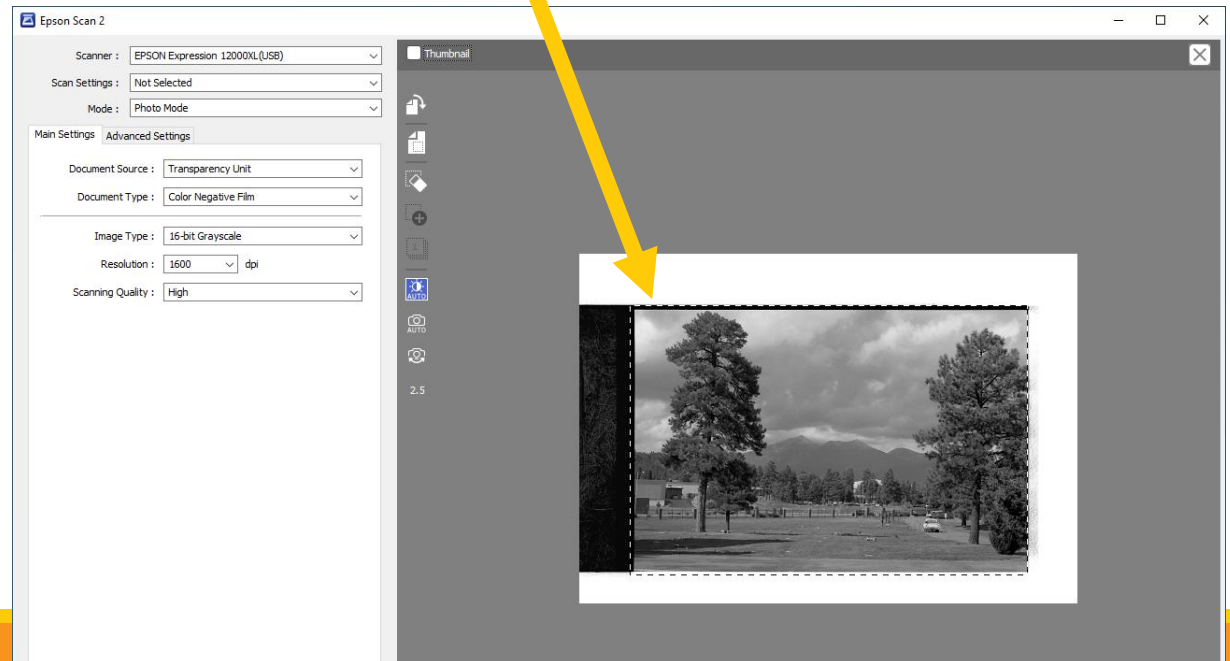
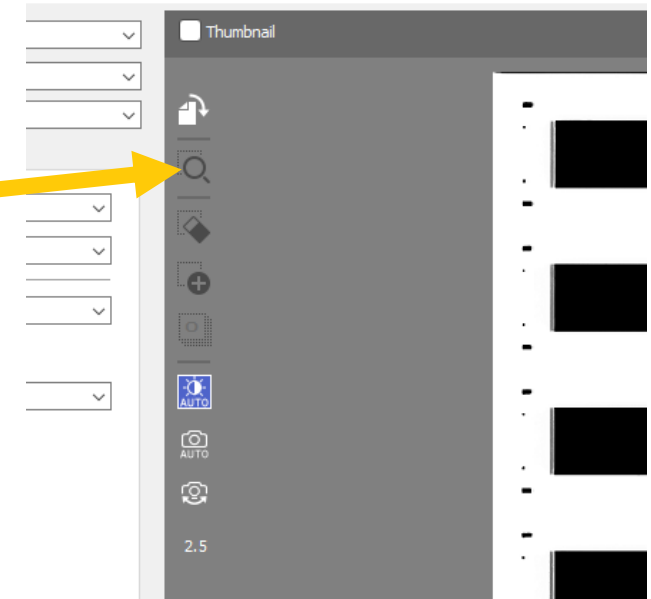


11. You now need to click and drag your cursor around the negative you want to scan. As you do this, a dotted line will appear. This will frame your negative and indicate the area that will be scanned.



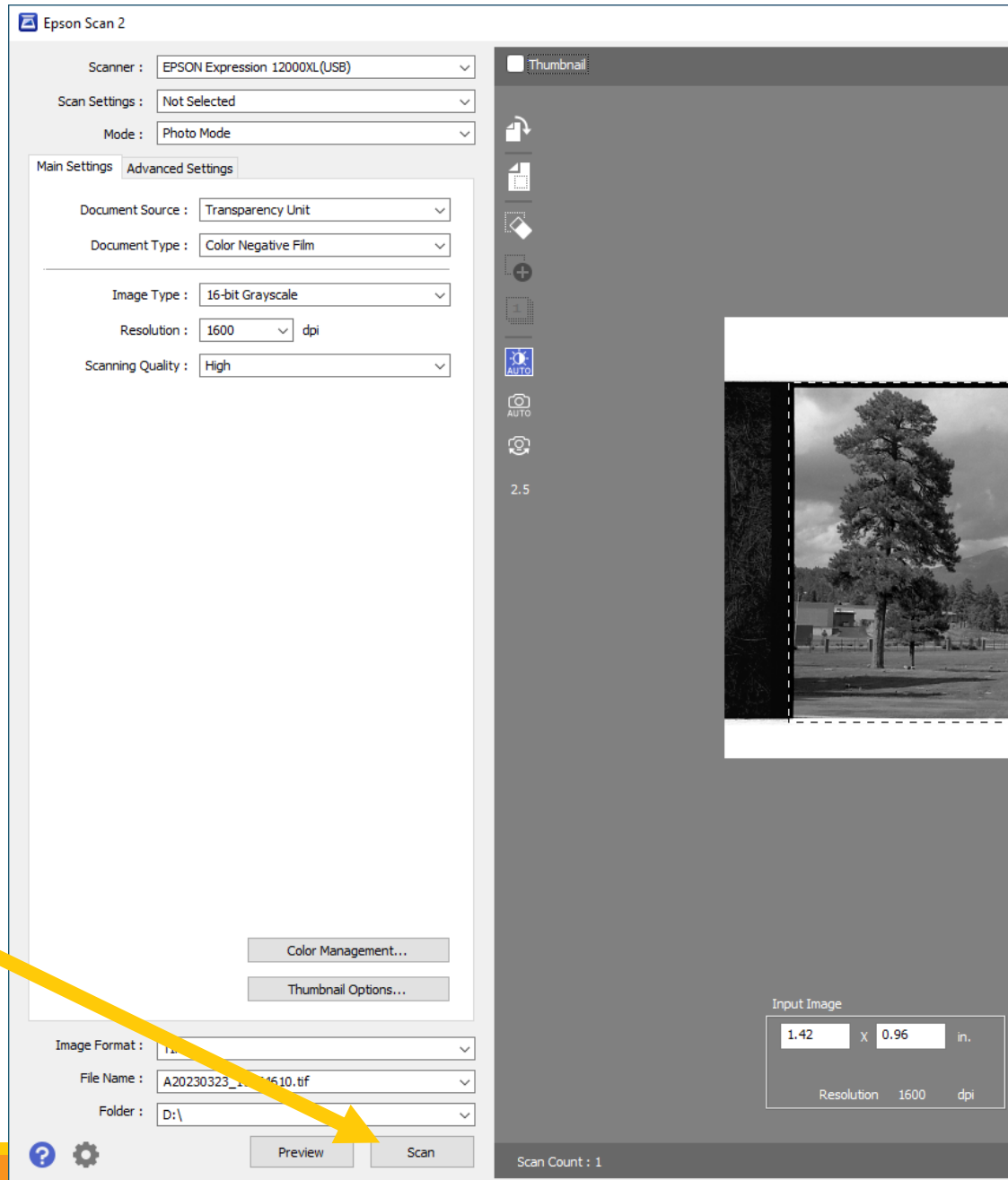
12. Click the magnifying glass to the left of the scan preview to zoom in on the highlighted negative.

13. This will start another preview scan. The highlighted negative will appear larger. You can continue to click and drag to dotted line to more precisely frame your image.



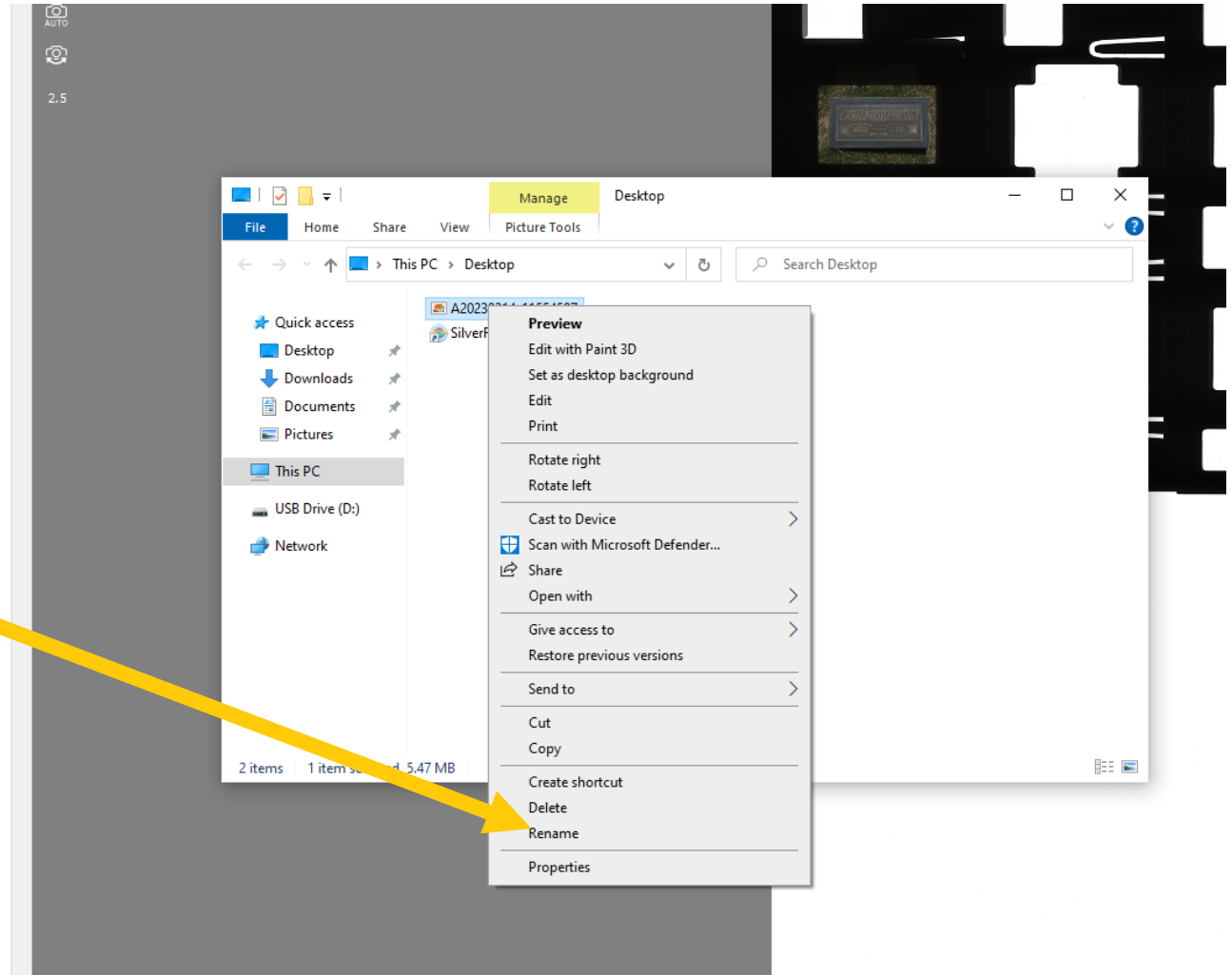
14. After your negative is framed and ready, click the scan button.

It takes about a minute to scan each negative.



15. Once your scan is complete, File Explorer will open up showing your new scan file.

16. Rename the scan to your desired name. Right click on the file name. A gray box will appear. Click “Rename” toward the bottom of the popup. You can now type in the new file name.



17. To view your new scan, double click on the file name.

18. A photo preview window will open. If the image is upside down, rotate it by clicking the arrow buttons.

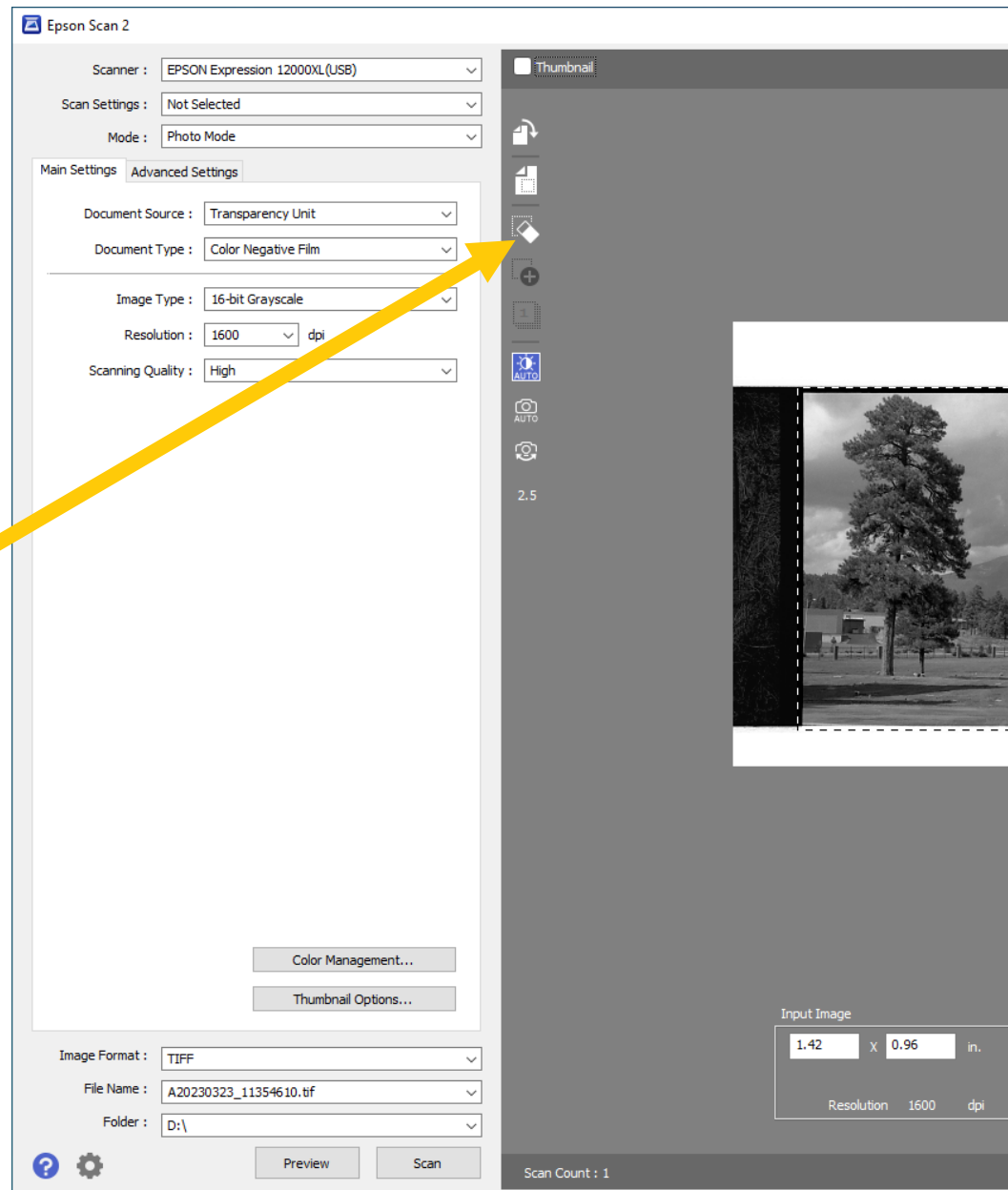


19. After you have inspected your file, you can exit the image preview window by clicking the "X" on the top right.

20. To scan another negative, minimize the File Explorer window by clicking on the “-” at the top right of the window. The Epson Scan 2 window should now be back at the front of the screen.

21. Click the button that looks like an eraser to the left of the scan preview. This will remove your previous selection. You will now be able to see a preview of the entire tray again.

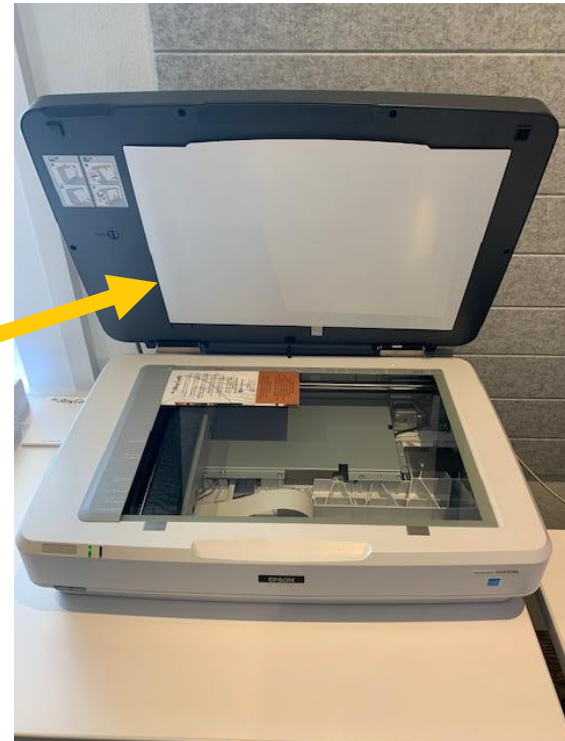
22. Repeat steps 11 through 19 to continue scanning negatives.



Finishing Up

Once your negatives have been scanned, you are almost finished with the digitization process. You are now ready to remove your negatives from the tray and eject your storage device.

1. First, open the scanner lid.
Remove the tray and tray guide.
Set them to the side.
2. Insert the white background back onto the top of the scanner.
It should now look like this.
3. Close the scanner lid.



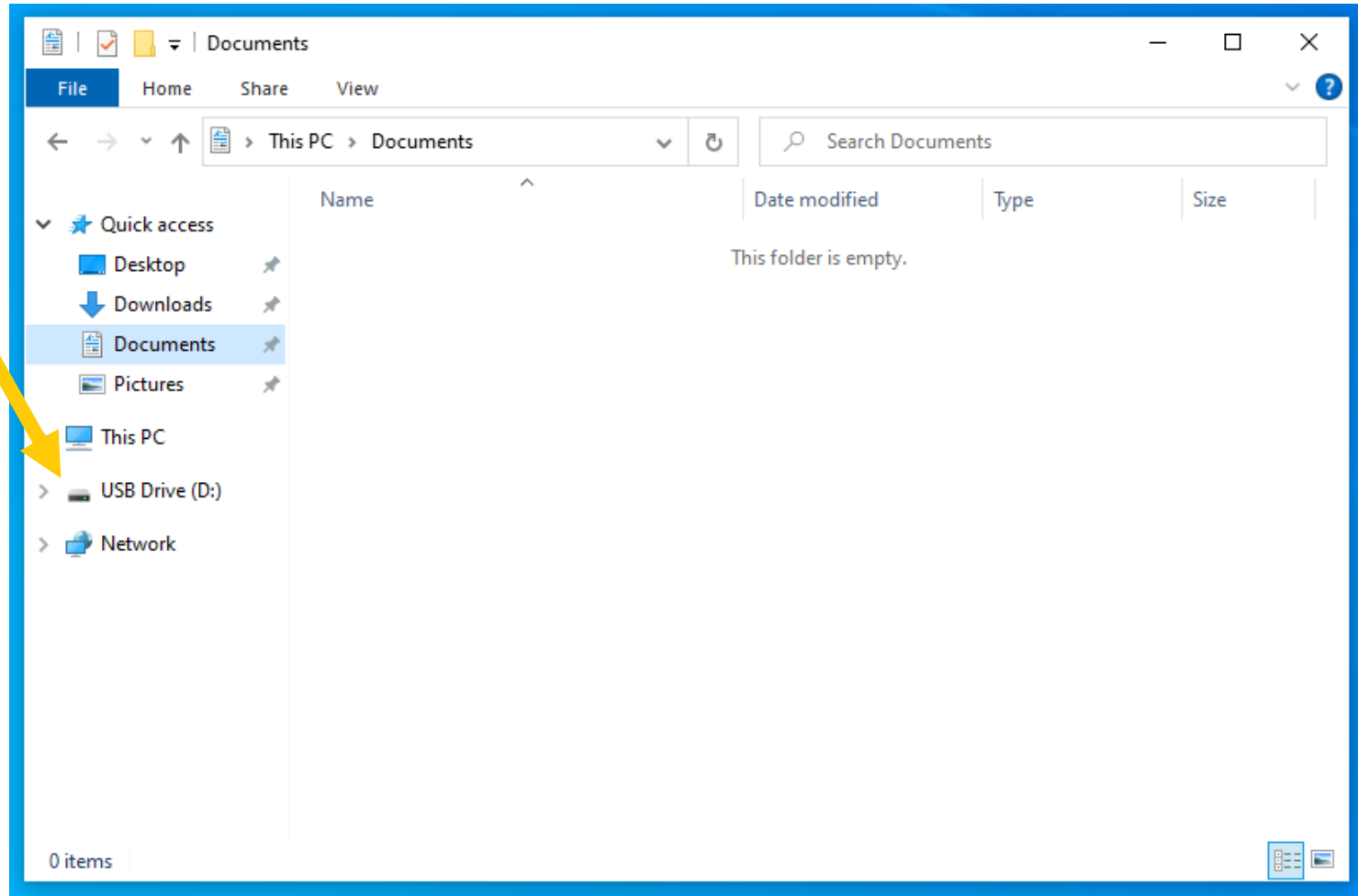
4. Click the Preview button to complete one more preview scan. This will reset the scan preview area and ensure that the next user does not see your previous scan.
5. After the preview scan is finished, close Epson Scan 2 by clicking the “X” at the top right of the window.
6. Turn off the Epson Scanner by pushing the same grey button you used to power it on.
7. If you would like to view your scans again, locate them on the computer by clicking the file explorer icon on the bottom toolbar. It looks like a yellow file folder.



8. When File Explorer is open, look for your storage device on the left side of the window.

9. Double click on your device to open it and double click on any of the files inside to view your scans.

10. When finished, right click on the name of your storage device and click Eject. Your device can now be safely removed from the computer.



11. Remove your negatives from the tray and make sure they are stored safely in the container your brought them in.