

User Guide — Shot Notes V 1 (mobile app)

Overview

Shot Notes lets you create notes linked to photos using audio or text, assign keywords, and optionally save GPS coordinates. It works together with a Lightroom Classic plugin: notes are recorded on the phone while shooting, and the plugin later applies that information to the photo metadata on the computer.

The app does not communicate directly with the camera. The link between a note and a photo is established by the time each was created, so it is important to keep the phone clock and camera clock in sync (see [Synchronization](#)).

Installation on Android

The app is distributed as a `.apk` file (the standard Android application format). Because it is not installed from the Play Store, you need to follow the steps below.

Step 1 — Copy the file to your phone

There are several ways to copy `ShotNotes.apk` to your phone. Choose whichever is most convenient.

Via USB cable:

1. Connect your phone to the computer with a USB cable.
2. A notification will appear on the phone screen; tap it and select **"File transfer"** (or "MTP"). If it does not appear, swipe down from the top of the screen to open the notification panel and look for that option.
3. The phone will appear on the computer as a storage drive (similar to a USB stick). Copy `ShotNotes.apk` to any folder on the phone, for example the **Downloads** folder.

Via email or messaging:

1. Send `ShotNotes.apk` to your own email address or a messaging app (WhatsApp, Telegram, etc.) from the computer.
2. Open that message on the phone and download the attachment.

Via Google Drive or another cloud service:

1. Upload `ShotNotes.apk` to Google Drive (or another service) from the computer.
 2. Open Drive on the phone and download the file.
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Step 2 — Allow installation from unknown sources

Android blocks installation of apps that do not come from the Play Store by default. This needs to be enabled once.

The exact menu name varies by brand and Android version. If the names below do not match exactly, look for similar options.

1. Open the **Settings** app on your phone.
2. Go to **Apps** (on some devices: **Apps & notifications** or **Application manager**).
3. Look for **Install unknown apps** or **Unknown sources**.
 - On modern Android (8 or higher) this setting is per app: find it inside the file manager or browser you will use to open the `.apk`.
 - Enable **Allow from this source**.

If you cannot find the option there, try **Settings** → **Security** and look for **Unknown sources** or **Install unknown apps**.

Step 3 — Install the app

1. Open the file manager on your phone (usually called **Files**, **My Files**, or similar).
2. Navigate to the folder where you saved `ShotNotes.apk` (typically **Downloads**).
3. Tap `ShotNotes.apk`.
4. A dialog with app information will appear. Tap **Install**.
5. Wait a few seconds until you see the "**App installed**" message.
6. Tap **Open** to launch it, or find it on your home screen or app drawer under the name **Shot Notes**.

If the phone shows a security warning ("app from unknown source"), this is normal for apps distributed outside the Play Store. You can proceed with the installation.

The phone may also ask you to verify the application. If so, allow it to perform the verification and follow the instructions shown on screen.

Permissions the app will request

The first time you use the app it will ask for access to:

- **Microphone** — required to record audio and use voice dictation.
- **Storage** — required to save audio files and export notes.
- **Location** (optional) — only if you enable the **Save GPS data** option in Settings.

It is recommended to grant microphone and storage permissions to use all features. Location can be granted or denied according to your preference.

Usage flow

Before you start shooting:

1. Open the app.
2. Record a sync point from the **Synchronization** screen.

After taking each photo you want to document:

1. Open the app.
2. Tap **New photo** to create a new entry.
 - Record audio or dictate/type text.
 - Assign keywords.

When the photo session is over:

1. Open the app.
2. Export the notes from **Export / Delete notes** and transfer the file to the computer to process it with the Lightroom Classic plugin.

Main screen

From the main screen you can access:

- **New photo** — creates a new entry.
- **View saved notes** — shows, edits and deletes notes; also allows exporting.
- **Synchronization** — manages synchronization time points.
- Settings icon (gear) — opens the **Settings** screen.

Synchronization

A sync point is essential for correctly linking each note to the right photo, since the camera clock and the phone clock may differ. Pressing **New** records the phone's current time; you then enter a reference that identifies the corresponding camera time.

The most practical method is to press **New** and simultaneously take a photo, then write down the resulting file name as the reference. The Lightroom plugin will read the camera timestamp from that file. It is also possible to manually note the time shown on the camera at that moment, although this is less precise because most cameras do not display seconds on screen, and even when they do there may be a slight reading delay.

Notes:

- Record the sync point *before* saving any notes, as the time reference applies from that moment onward.
- Multiple sync points can be recorded, for example at the start of each shooting session.
- All times are local, not GMT.

New entry

The **New entry** screen provides:

- **Record voice / Stop and save** — records audio and saves it when the recording is stopped.
- **Dictate voice / Stop dictation** — uses real-time voice recognition via the Google engine.
- **Enter/edit text** — write or edit the note text manually.
- **Keywords** — opens the keyword selection screen.

The note must be created *after* taking the photo, since the plugin identifies the associated photo as the one taken immediately before the note.

If the configuration allows it and the app has the necessary permission, the GPS coordinate is also saved. Location reading happens in the background so it does not slow down the interface.

Detailed behavior:

- Text can be entered by keyboard or by voice. Depending on the settings, voice input is transcribed by the Google engine (requires internet) or the internal engine (offline, lower accuracy). If the internal engine is used, transcription may complete after you leave this screen.
- Tapping **Keywords** opens the selection screen. There you can enter a new keyword or select an existing one. As you type, suggestions appear from keywords already stored in

the app. You can also quickly select from the shortcut buttons showing the most recently used keywords.

- The note is saved when you return to the main screen only if it has at least some text, audio, or keywords; otherwise it is discarded automatically.
- If the auto-transcription option is active, the note is transcribed automatically on save.
- If a note already had audio and you record again, the previous audio is replaced and the previous transcription is discarded to reflect the new content.
- If auto-transcription was active, the app automatically starts a new transcription after re-recording; otherwise the note is left pending manual conversion.
- If the previous transcription was still running when you re-recorded, that task is canceled and only the result of the most recent audio is kept.
- Tapping **Keywords** temporarily disables the button until the selection screen finishes opening, preventing duplicate entries from repeated taps during GPS or save delays.

Settings

Notes can be created by typing text or by transcribing audio. Transcription can use the Google engine (requires internet) or the internal engine (offline, lower accuracy).

Available options:

- **Automatically transcribe on save**

Transcribes using the internal engine as notes are saved. If the model is already downloaded, no internet connection is needed.

- **Allow download or transcription with mobile data**

Mobile data can be used to download the internal model (one-time operation) or to transcribe with the Google engine. The app prefers Wi-Fi; mobile data is only used if this option is enabled and Wi-Fi is unavailable. Without any internet connection, only the internal engine can be used.

- **Save GPS data**

Saves GPS coordinates along with each note. Requires location permission.

- **Prefer Google transcription**

Uses the Google voice dictation service when connectivity is available (Wi-Fi, or mobile data if enabled), for higher transcription quality.

- **Language for audio transcription**

The language that will be used for voice recognition when transcribing audio.

- **Transcription engine**

Selects the local Whisper model: *tiny*, *base*, or *small*, ordered from lowest to highest transcription quality. Higher quality requires more device resources. Try each version to find which runs most smoothly on your phone.

- **Whisper models on device**

Shows which models are downloaded, the storage space they use, and allows deleting the ones you no longer need.

- **Keyword Administration**

Add and delete keywords. The list grows automatically as new keywords are entered in notes. The **Import** option lets you load a list from a `.txt` file with one keyword per line, compatible with the Lightroom keyword export format (leading spaces and tabs on each line are ignored).

View saved notes

Shows all saved notes and lets you edit or delete them individually. The **Export / Delete notes** button is also accessible from here.

Export / Delete notes

Centralizes bulk export and deletion operations. Exporting generates a file with ".vn" extension containing all recorded information, which must be loaded into the Lightroom plugin to synchronize notes and keywords with the photos. The file can be saved locally on the phone or shared with another app (for example a messaging or email app) to transfer it to the computer.

Export all

- Exports all recorded notes.

Export by range

- Lets you choose a start and end date.
- Exports notes and sync timestamps within the range.

- If the first event in the range is a note, it attempts to also include the last sync time point prior to the range.

Delete by range

- Deletes notes within the selected date range.
- If there are unexported notes in the range, a second confirmation is requested.
- Redundant sync time points are then cleaned up.

Delete all exported

- Deletes all notes already marked as exported.
- Requests confirmation.
- Redundant sync time points are then cleaned up.

Privacy and data usage

- Internet is used only to download the transcription engine or to use the Google transcription service. No other external communication takes place.
- The exported file is saved locally or shared with an app chosen by the user; that app is responsible for transmitting it.
- The only information stored relates to notes, location, keywords, and sync time points, and it is only exported or shared at the user's explicit request.
- Location is queried only when creating a new note and is used exclusively to associate GPS coordinates with photos.