

UNDERSTANDING ISO



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ISO is the level of sensitivity of your camera to light. The lower the ISO number, the less sensitive it is to the light, and the higher the ISO number, the more sensitive it is to the light.

Perfect to print A5 size
14cm x 21cm / 5.83" x 8.27"

CALCULATING ISO BY THE INTENSITY OF THE LIGHT SOURCE



ISO 100

Full sun and no shade



ISO 200

Shade, overcast day, or inside near a window



ISO 400

Deep shade or heavily overcast day



ISO 640-800

Early, or late, hours of the day: sunrise or sunset



ISO 800

Bright interiors



ISO 1000

Mid-level lighting condition, indoors or outdoors



ISO 1250

Low-light level interiors, or post-sunset



ISO 1600

Extremely low light

This cheat-sheet is for natural light, not electronic flash.

The noise factor of the ISO settings can vary widely depending on the camera model.

GRAIN / NOISE FACTOR



ISO 200



ISO 640



ISO 1000



ISO 1250



ISO 1600

METERING MODES



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These options tell the camera how to set camera meter, to evaluate the image area, for tone value and exposure.

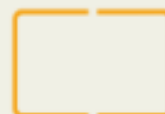
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Evaluative / Matrix metering

The default mode in most DSLRs. It measures light across the whole frame, but places strong emphasis on the area around the auto-focus point in use at the moment. The camera applies its own exposure compensation, making a good option when you need to grab a shot quickly

Great for evenly lit scenes, with not a lot of variation in lighting.



Center-weighted average metering

This mode meters the light across the whole picture, like an old-fashioned evaluative mode. Yet, it places greater emphasis on the center of the image. It doesn't take focus into account. It applies the same averaging pattern on every shot.

Great for portraits, since it leaves any highlights, or shadows, in the corners of the image out of the equation.



Spot metering

This is the most accurate- yet hardest mode to master. It reads the intensity of the light over a small circular area in the center of the image. It offers pin-point precision.

Great for scenes with varied lighting and when utilizing Manual Mode.



Partial metering

Measures the intensity of the light over a slightly larger circular area than in spot mode, making it easier to use.

SHOOTING MODES



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These options may tell the camera how to set the shutter speed and aperture, adjust ISO, set your white balance, pop the built-in flash, or change other picture settings internal to the camera.

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CAMERA MODES

AUTO

Full automatic mode

The camera sets all of the settings automatically for a properly exposed and sharp image.

M

Manual mode

The photographer sets the Shutter Speed, Aperture and ISO. The camera provides a meter reading.

S / Tv

Shutter priority mode

The photographer sets the Shutter Speed and the camera sets the proper Aperture. The ISO is set separately. Exposure is adjusted through the exposure compensation setting.

A / Av

Aperture priority mode

The photographer sets the Aperture and the camera sets the proper Shutter Speed. The ISO is set separately. Exposure is adjusted through the exposure compensation setting.

P

Program mode

The camera pairs up an Aperture and Shutter Speed combination. The ISO is set separately. Exposure is adjusted through the exposure compensation setting.



Macro / close-up mode

The camera sets the ISO, shutter speed, and aperture to assist in macro photography.



Landscape mode

The camera sets the ISO, shutter speed, and aperture to assist in landscape photography. The built-in flash is turned off.



Night portrait mode

The camera combines the built-in flash and a slow shutter speed.



Portrait mode

The camera sets a wide / large Aperture to blur the background. Overrides other settings.



Sports mode

The camera sets a fast Shutter Speed to freeze action.

SHUTTER SPEED



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Shutter speed is the length of time that the camera shutter is open to expose light into the camera sensor.

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HOW TO SET THE RIGHT SHUTTER SPEED TO GET SHARP IMAGES



1/4000-1/1000

Freezing fast moving objects



1/250 - 1/60

Everyday photos. Objects still or barely moving



1/30 - 10"

Capturing motion with blur

SITUATIONS



1/4000

Very fast moving objects



1/1000

Fast movement, sports



1/500

People running or slow moving sports



1/250 - 1/60

Slow moving people, children



1/60

Slowest handheld setting for sharp images



1/30 - 1/2

Motion blur on consistently moving objects: waterfalls, rivers, cities



2"

Long exposure; fireworks



5" - 10"

Long exposure: painting with light, stars, milky effect on moving water

LONG EXPOSURE / CREATIVE EFFECTS

BLUR FACTOR



1/2000



1/250



1/20



1/2

EXPOSURE COMPENSATION



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Exposure compensation tells the camera that a photograph needs to be lighter or darker than the calculated exposure.

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HOW IT WORKS

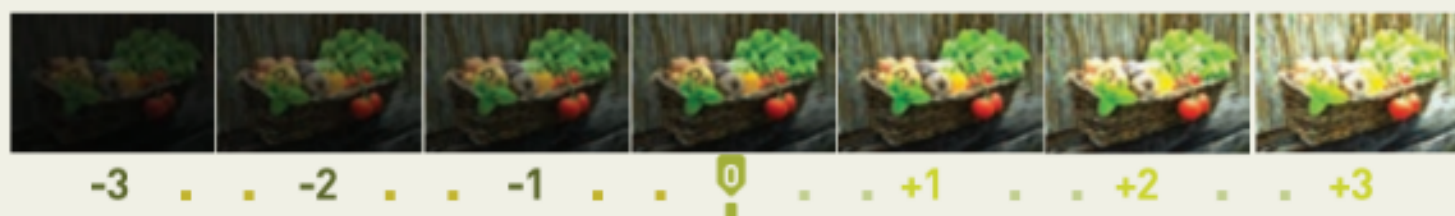


Most cameras have a button with this symbol on it.



Other cameras have a dial that you turn to change exposure.

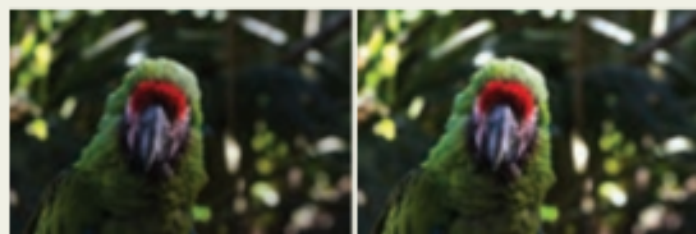
These values are measured in stops, which can be half or double the amount of light recorded by the camera. So, a photograph shot at +1 exposure compensation will have recorded twice as much light as a photograph shot at 0.



EXPOSURE COMPENSATION IN DIFFERENT CAMERA MODES

A / Av APERTURE PRIORITY MODE

By default, in this mode, if you change the Aperture, the camera sets another proper shutter speed, and there is no change in the exposure level. Exposure compensation lets you change the shutter speed (and the overall exposure value) while staying at the same aperture.



This is helpful when you want to keep the depth of field, and can afford to have a small change in shutter speed.

P PROGRAM MODE

In this mode, exposure compensation will change the Aperture and Shutter Speed equally, to meet the desired exposure compensation.

S / Tv SHUTTER PRIORITY MODE

In this mode, exposure compensation changes the size of your aperture. You set a shutter speed, and the camera sets a proper aperture. Exposure compensation therefore changes the exposure by allowing you to change that aperture size.



To make sure that the subject movement is frozen, or blurred, the shutter speed was a priority, and a change in depth of field would not affect the result.

WHEN IT WON'T WORK

MANUAL

Since the photographer can change all the settings.

AUTO

Since the camera has full control on the settings.

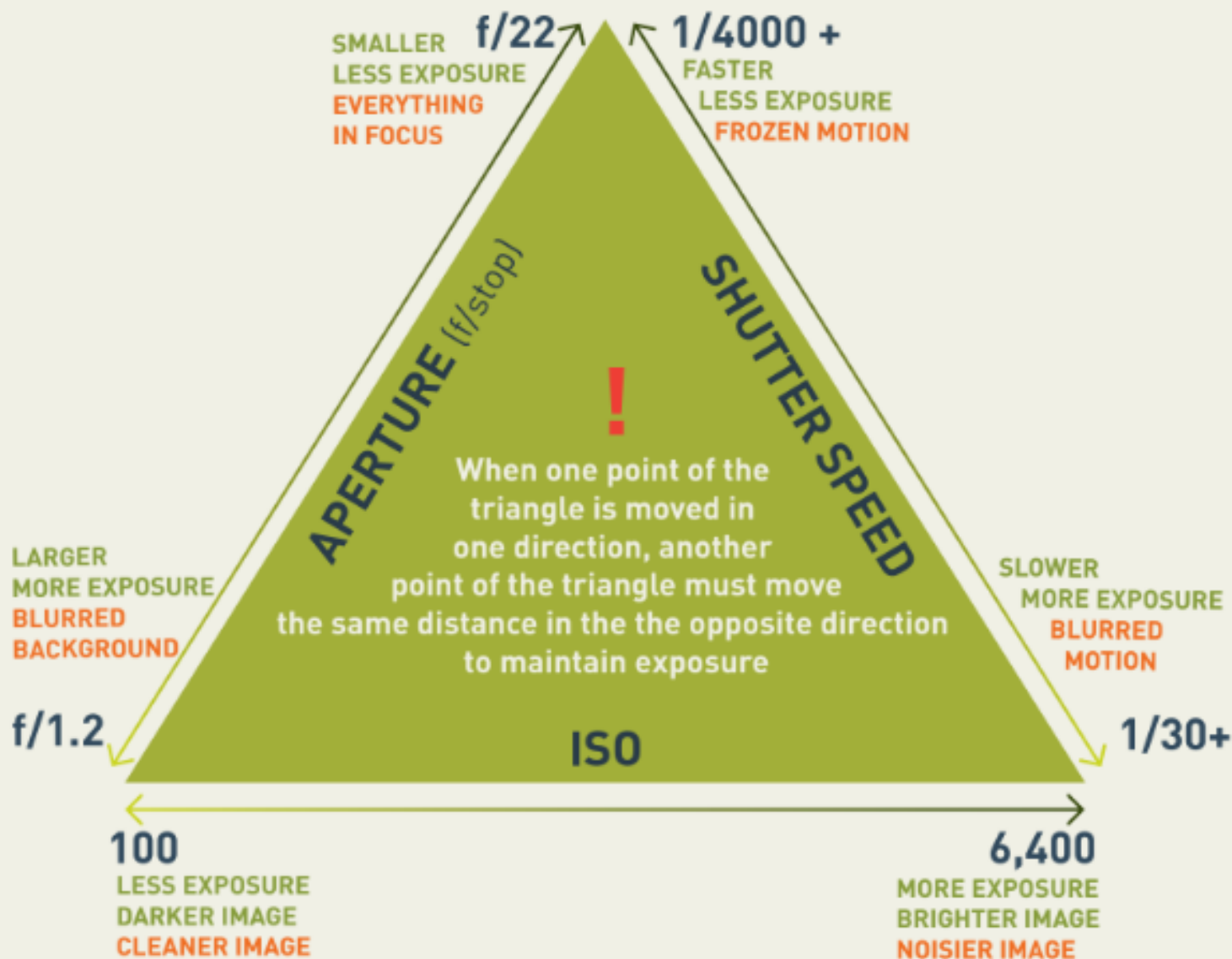
EXPOSURE TRIANGLE

Proper exposure is achieved by 3 camera functions coming into balance: ISO, f/stop and shutter speed. This is called the "Exposure Triangle".



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PRACTICAL EXAMPLE



FULL SUN - OUTSIDE

Initial camera setting:

ISO: 100

Shutter Speed: 1/125

f/stop: f/16

Situation:

Subject is fast moving, you need to increase the shutter speed to get a sharp image.

Improved camera setting, as per the exposure triangle:

ISO: 100 | No change

Shutter Speed: 1/500 Move two stops up

f/stop: f/8 Move two stops down

UNDERSTANDING THE HISTOGRAM

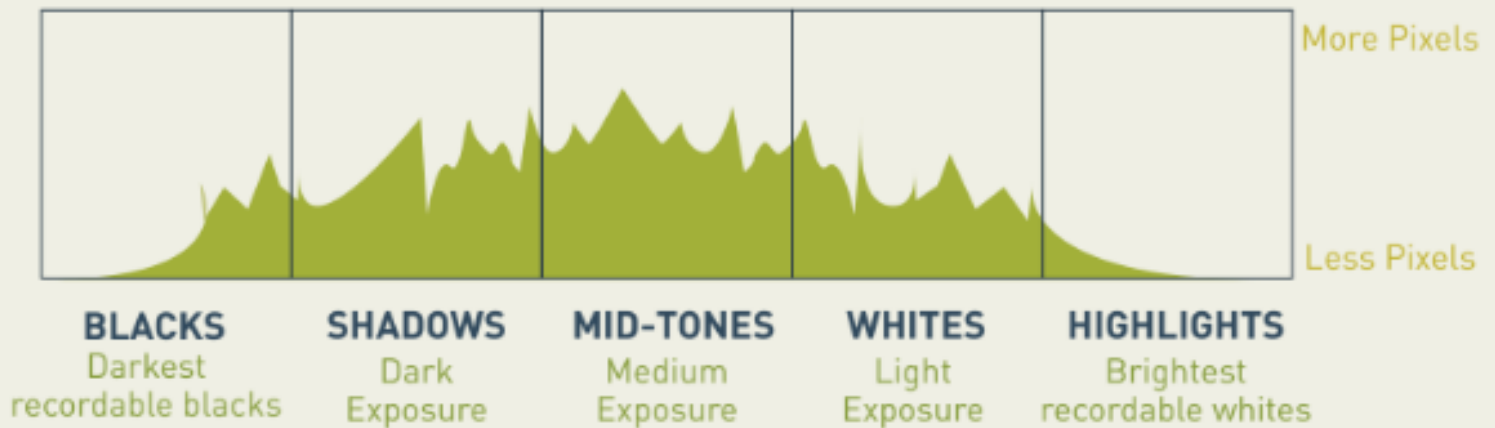


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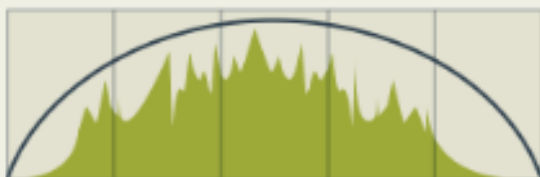
This tool will give you a tonal analysis of your image, and thus allows you to get the best exposures on your photographs.

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HOW TO READ THE HISTOGRAM

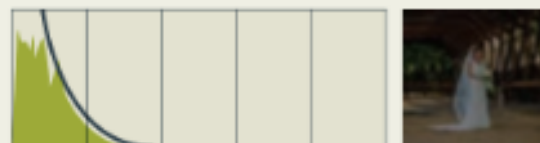


WHAT THE HISTOGRAM TELLS ABOUT EXPOSURE



NEUTRAL EXPOSURE

This reading produces the **safest exposure**. Even when the tones look slightly brighter in camera, this can be easily post-processed.



UNDEREXPOSURE

Try to avoid this reading. Use a wider aperture or a longer shutter speed. Underexposed photos are very hard to recover in post-processing.



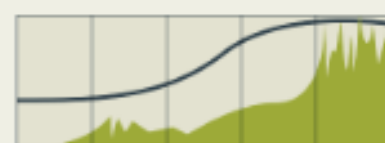
TO THE LEFT

This reading can produce an acceptable photo. Can be fixed in post processing, although it might induce noise into the photo.



OVEREXPOSURE

This setting eliminates many details in the image, by over-exposing the highlights. Use a lower ISO number to avoid it. Overexposed photos are very hard to recover in post.



TO THE RIGHT

This reading can be fixed in post-processing fairly easily. The images will be less noisy, but it can be easy to slide into overexposure

LANDSCAPE EXPOSURE



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Proper exposure for landscapes is difficult to master. There are several reasons for this. A landscape is generally far from the camera making it difficult to meter. The contrast range is likely to exceed the camera's ability to record all tones. Finally, the tonal value isn't likely an average setting.



WINTER SCENE / HIGH-KEY

 **EVALUATIVE METERING**

 **+3 STOPS** -in any shooting mode-

ISO LOW



Blacks Mid Tones Highlights

When first metered, the scene will be **underexposed**, making the whites look gray. This is why exposure compensation is necessary.

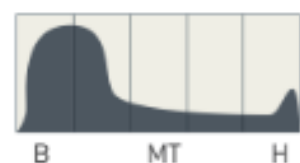


DARK SCENE / LOW-KEY

 **EVALUATIVE METERING**

 **-1/-2 STOPS** -in any shooting mode-

ISO LOW - MEDIUM



B MT H

When first metered, the scene will be **overexposed**, making the shadows look gray. This is why exposure compensation is necessary.

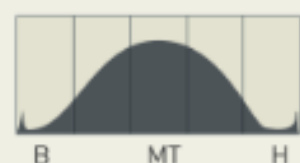


BRIGHT SCENE / FULL TONAL RANGE

 **EVALUATIVE METERING**

 **ADJUST ONLY IF NEEDED**

ISO LOW



B MT H

When first metered, the scene will be exposed with an **averaged** setting. Adjust the exposure compensation if needed.

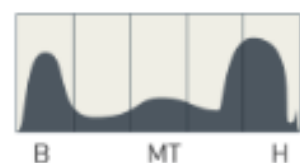


DARK & BRIGHT SCENE / HIGH-CONTRAST

 **SPOT METERING**

 **EVALUATE ON SCENE**

ISO LOW



B MT H

When first metered, the meter will either **overexpose the highlights** or **underexpose the shadows**. Place the spot meter on a mid-tone area and use exposure compensation based on the area you wish to stand out.

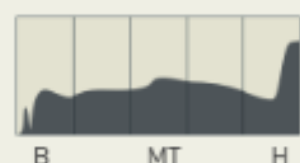


BACKLIT SCENE / LOW TONAL RANGE

 **SPOT METERING**

 **EVALUATE ON SCENE**

ISO LOW



B MT H

Place the spot meter on an area away from bright light sources or shadows. Adjust the exposure compensation if needed.

PHOTOS IN LOW LIGHT



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In low light, your options are the use of a wide aperture, higher ISO, slower shutter speed, use of an electronic flash, and possibly the use of a tripod or other camera stabilization.

ELEMENTS



CAMERA

When possible, the best option is a lens that offers an aperture of f/2.8 or wider. Image stabilization capability is a huge plus.



EXTERNAL FLASH

Important for photos of people or objects where deep shadows are a concern.



TRIPOD

In low light, it may be necessary to use a slower shutter speed, and using a tripod, or a monopod, will help steady the camera.



REMOTE SHUTTER RELEASE

With long shutter speeds, even pressing the shutter release button can cause blur. With a remote release, there's no need to touch the camera.

SETTING ESSENTIALS

A / Av APERTURE PRIORITY MODE

Using a large aperture allows more light in. Set the camera on Av mode and choose the largest aperture (f/stop) possible- or use Manual Mode.



EXPOSURE COMPENSATION

When in an auto exposure mode (Av, Tv, or P) Turning the dial to the positive numbers will help increase exposure.

SLOW SHUTTER SPEED

The longer the shutter is open, the more light that comes in. Yet, the more likely to get camera shake blur. To avoid this, a tripod and a remote shutter release are needed.

HIGH ISO + RAW

Increasing the ISO is another way to boost the exposure. The increased noise can be fixed in post-processing- especially if shooting RAW.

SETTINGS GUIDE



INDOORS

Tripod: Generally not needed
Ext. Flash: Possibly
ISO: Mid to High
Aperture: Wide
Shutter Speed: Min 1/60th



HAND-HELD OUTDOORS

Tripod: Not needed
Ext. Flash: Possibly
ISO: Mid to High
Aperture: Wide to Mid
Shutter Speed: Min 1/125th



CITY LIGHTS

Tripod: Yes
Ext. Flash: Not needed
ISO: Low to Mid
Aperture: Wide to Med
Shutter Speed: Slow



STARS

Tripod: Yes
Ext. Flash: Not needed
ISO: Mid to High
Aperture: Wide to Med
Shutter Speed: Slow to Very Slow

MANUAL MODE

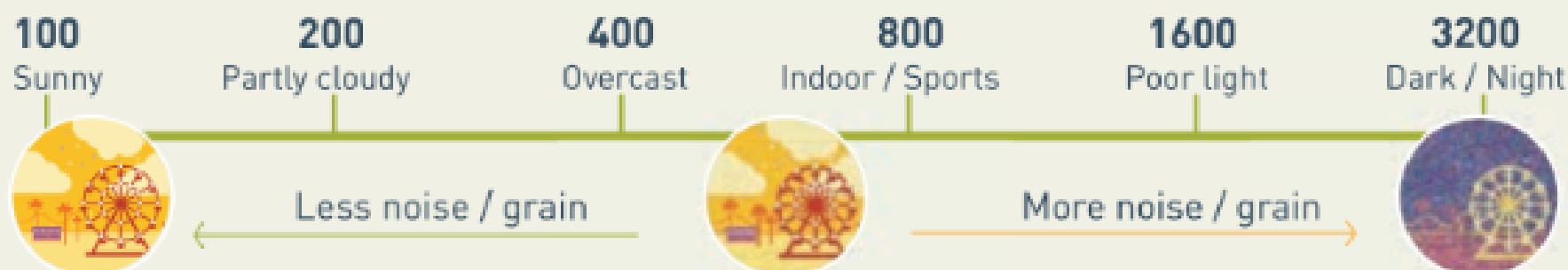
Manual mode requires the photographer to physically set 3 camera functions: ISO, f/stop and shutter speed.



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14cm x 21cm / 5.83" x 8.27"

1 SET THE ISO



2 SET THE APERTURE



3 CHECK CAMERA METER FOR PROPER EXPOSURE:



4 ADJUST SHUTTER SPEED OR APERTURE UNTIL PROPER EXPOSURE

Fast shutter speed: freeze action

Slow shutter speed: blur motion

Underexposed reading

Proper reading

Overexposed reading

-2 | -1 | 0 | +1 | +2

-2 | -1 | 0 | +1 | +2

-2 | -1 | 0 | +1 | +2

Adjust the shutter speed or the aperture until the meter reads 0

Adjust the shutter speed or the aperture until the meter reads 0

MANUAL MODE

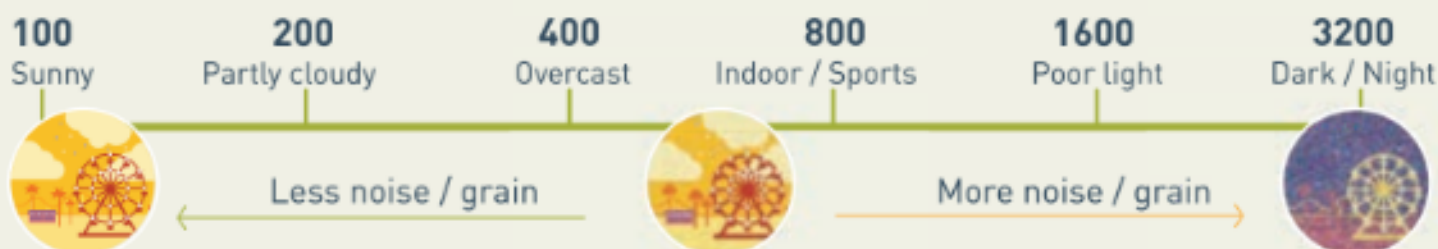


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Manual mode requires the photographer to physically set 3 camera functions: ISO, f/stop and shutter speed.

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1 SET THE ISO



2 SET THE APERTURE



3 CHECK CAMERA METER FOR PROPER EXPOSURE: -2 | -1 | 0 | +1 | +2

Under Over

4 ADJUST SHUTTER SPEED OR APERTURE UNTIL PROPER EXPOSURE

Fast shutter speed: freeze action

Slow shutter speed: blur motion

Underexposed reading

-2 | -1 | 0 | +1 | +2

Adjust the shutter speed or the aperture until the meter reads 0.

Proper reading

-2 | -1 | 0 | +1 | +2

Overexposed reading

-2 | -1 | 0 | +1 | +2

Adjust the shutter speed or the aperture until the meter reads 0.

5 FINAL CHECK

- Adjust exposure based on the subject:
Do you need to freeze action or increase the depth of field?
- Keep the camera meter indicating proper exposure:
Is the image too light? Move the camera meter towards underexposure (under 0)
Is the image too dark? Move the camera meter towards overexposure (over 0)

MASTERING BACKLIGHT



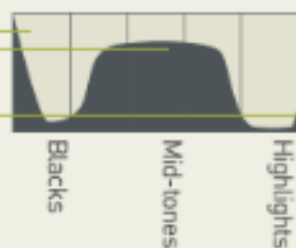
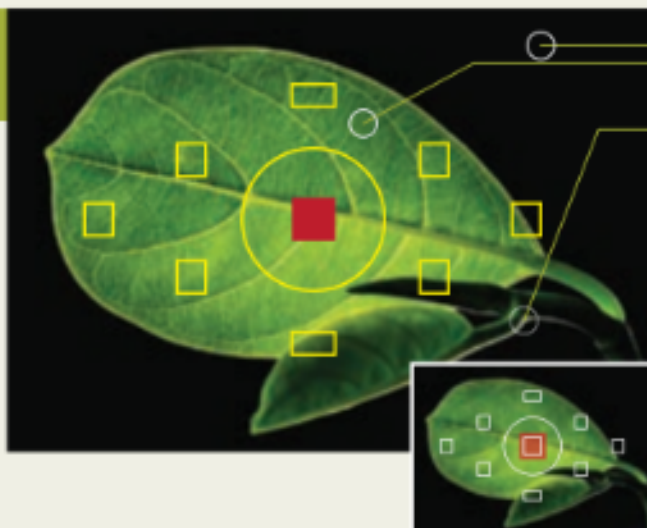
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Backlighting a subject is one of the most dramatic lighting schemes that you can employ. However, it can be challenging to find the correct subject and then meter the lighting appropriately.

LIGHT THROUGH THE SUBJECT

- The backlight source must be placed behind the subject, it generally works best when there's little to no light hitting the background.
- This technique works with subjects that are translucent such as foliage, fabric, and windows.
- It creates a dramatic mood, especially in macro photography.

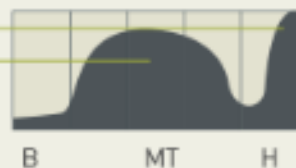
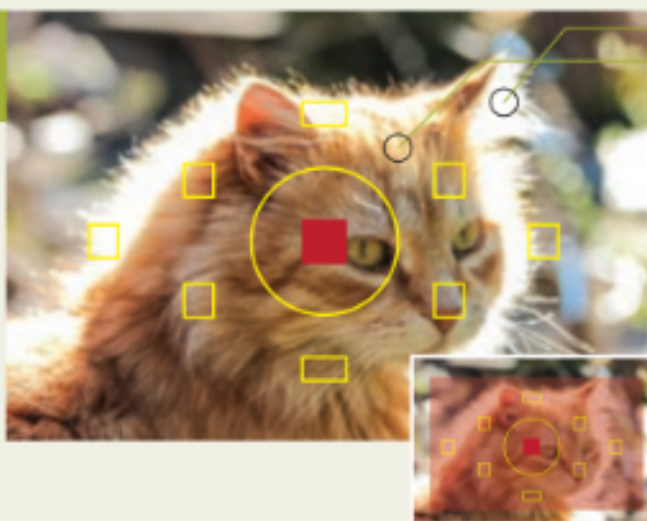


SPOT METERING

Meter just the subject, not the background.

BACKGROUND & SUBJECT

- The backlight source is behind the subject, and generally illuminating the background as well.
- In most cases, an additional light source from the front will be needed, such as an electronic flash or a white bounce card.
- Good for portraits, or making a subject stand out from the background in midday light.

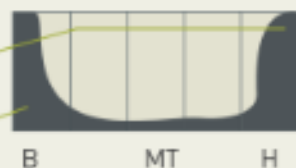
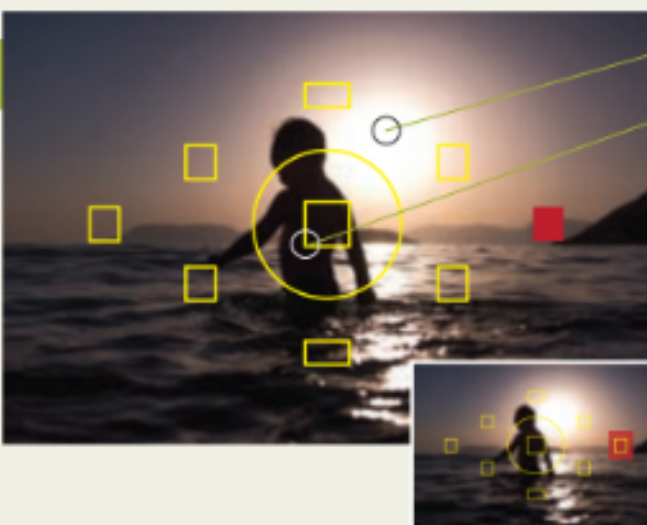


EVALUATIVE METERING

place the center of the meter frame on the most important feature of the subject.

SILHOUETTE

- The backlight source must be behind the subject.
- Manual mode is recommended.
- Excellent for high-drama effect.
- Avoid front light sources.
- Simple compositions work best.



SPOT METERING

Place the spot meter on a mid-tone area of the background, making sure that the brightest part of the backlight source is outside of the metering frame.

COMPOSITION BEGINNER TOOLS – PART 1



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Understanding composition, and how to apply it to the creation of a photograph, is without a doubt one of the most important skills for a photographer to master.

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STRAIGHT HORIZON LINE

A crooked horizon line, (or any horizontal main line), can feel unnatural and cause a viewer to sub-consciously feel an imbalance. In general, horizon lines work best when they're straight.

Straight
Line



Crooked
Lines

MOVING OBJECTS

Moving objects should enter, not exit the frame. The human eye will try to follow the supposed path of a moving subject. If the subject is moving out of the frame, it feels as if the photograph is incomplete.



Entering the Frame



Leaving the Frame

In this example, the athlete is about to jump, or just finished. Either way, the main action -the obstacle jumping- is not happening inside the frame.

RULE OF THIRDS

Divide the frame into nine equal sections by using 2 horizontal and 2 vertical lines. Place the main element of the scene at one of the intersection points. Placing the subject off-center often creates a more appealing composition.



LEADING LINES

Leading lines help drive a viewer's eyes toward important elements, thus helping them to focus on the main subject. They can sometimes also add motion and depth.



COMPOSITION BEGINNER TOOLS – PART 2



Understanding composition, and how to apply it to the creation of a photograph, is without a doubt one of the most important skills for a photographer to master.

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USING FRAMES

Create a frame within a frame. Place elements around the edge of the composition, so that they create a natural frame to the subject. This helps to isolate the subject and emphasize it as the main point of interest.



FOREGROUND INTEREST

By adding a foreground element, it helps to create a point of interest. With this technique, you can add a subtle path into the entire composition. Plus, it helps give a sense of depth to a scene.



PATTERNS AND REPETITION

Patterns are visually appealing and suggest balance and harmony. Repetition of elements can have the same effect. Adding textures can also create an attractive composition. You will score a great shot when you combine all 3: pattern, repetition, and texture.



FILL THE FRAME - SIMPLIFICATION

Doing this, helps the viewer focus on the smaller details of the subject, and by leaving little or no space around it can be a very effective way to convey a message -such as expression, markings, architectural details, etc-.



COMPOSITION INTERMEDIATE TOOLS – PART 1



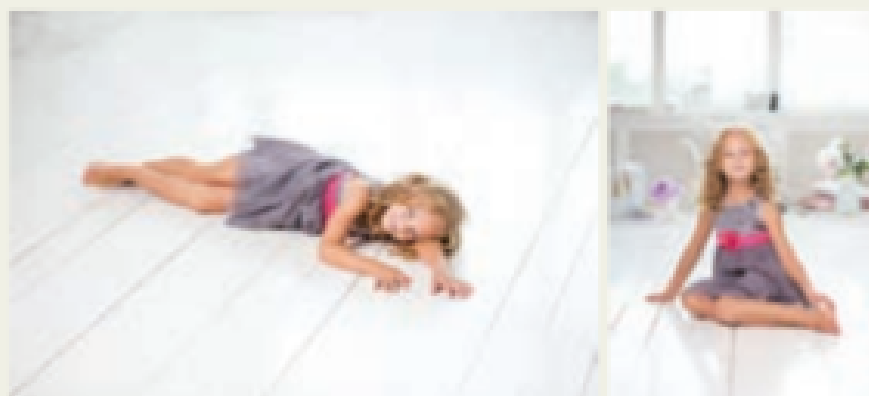
PHO

Perfect
14cm x 2

Once you've developed an eye for some of the basics of composition, it's time to move on to intermediate level techniques. These techniques require a slightly higher level of competence.

ORIENTATION

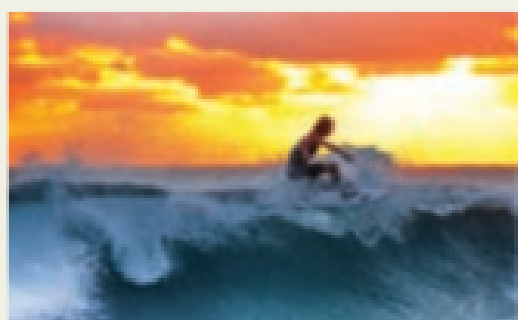
Orientation is also referred to as image flow. Every scene has a natural flow- vertical or horizontal. Train your eye to recognize strong lines that push the eyes in one way or the other. Using the wrong orientation is common mistake with new photographers.



COLOR SCHEMES

Complementary colors

Taking the color wheel as a base, complimentary colors are those that sit on opposite sides of the spectrum. They are highly contrasting, and create striking photos when combined.



Spot color

Sometimes a color -usually a saturated warm color- will naturally stand out from its surroundings thanks

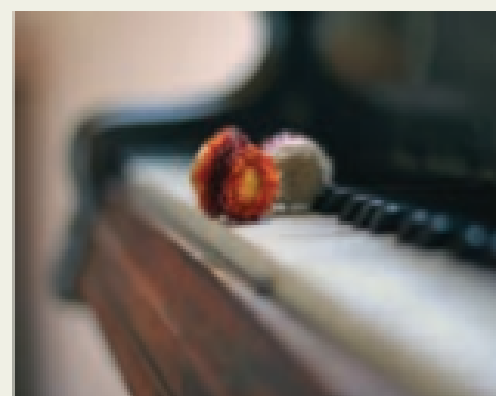
BALANCE

Placing the main subject off-center, creates a more attractive composition. But, it can lead to imbalance. To balance the composition, place another element, of less weight, in the opposite space -smaller, out of



DEPTH OF FIELD

One of the simplest ways to drive attention to the main subject is to place it in sharp focus, while letting the background, and other objects, be out of focus. For instance, in a portrait, if the subject's face is the most important feature, they should be in sharp focus, and then details, like hair, can be left out of focus.



COMPOSITION INTERMEDIATE TOOLS – PART 1



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COLOR SCHEMES

Complementary colors

Taking the color wheel as a base, complimentary colors are those that sit on opposite sides of the spectrum. They are highly contrasting, and create striking photos when combined.



Spot color

Sometimes a color -usually a saturated warm color- will naturally stand out from its surroundings thanks to the lighting, composition, surrounding colors, etc.



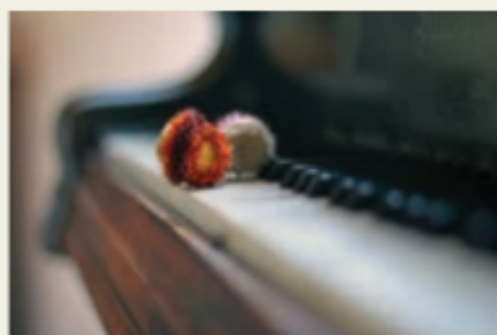
BALANCE

Placing the main subject off-center, creates a more attractive composition. But, it can leave a void on the other side of the image. To balance the visual weight, place another element, of lesser importance, in the opposite space -smaller, out of focus, etc.-



DEPTH OF FIELD

One of the simplest ways to drive interest toward the main subject is to place it in sharp focus, while letting the background, and other objects, fall out of focus. For instance, in a portrait, if the eyes are the most important feature, they should be kept sharp. and then details, like hair, can be left slightly out of focus.



COMPOSITION INTERMEDIATE TOOLS – PART 2



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Perfect to print A5 size
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Once you've developed an eye for some of the basics of composition, it's time to move on to intermediate level techniques. These techniques require a slightly higher level of competence.

CENTER & SYMMETRY

By their natural lines, symmetrical scenes work perfectly in centered compositions. Not only vertically, but also horizontally, (especially when using reflections).



TRIANGLES

While horizontal lines, and vertical lines, suggest stability... triangles, and diagonals, create the opposite effect: dynamic tension. A scene with triangular subjects, or implied triangular shapes, will often appear more dynamic and energetic.



RULE OF ODDS

Objects, in even numbers, especially when evenly spaced, create a feeling of structure. Another way to create an attractive composition is to break this pattern. You can accomplish this by including an odd number of primary elements within your photograph.



NEGATIVE SPACE

Balancing the visual weight within an image (see part 1) creates a harmonious composition, but breaking this rule can also lead to very interesting, eye-catching images. Leaving an empty, or "negative", space around the main subject can make it stand out. Make sure the empty space is part of the composition.



COMPOSITION PSYCHOLOGY



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Composition is important to your photographs for several reasons. First, and foremost, it establishes a "path" through your image. However, it also can add mood or help tell a story. All three factors are key to great photographs.

SYMMETRY



One half (top/bottom, left/right) of an image is identical, or almost, to the other. Naturally, the human eye aims for patterns and balance, and symmetrical images create a sense of harmony, control and proportion. The best way to get these shots is to place your camera as close to the center of your subject as possible (directly below a dome, or right in front of a model, or building, for example).

MOOD IN COLOR

Even though the perception of color is subjective to each individual, there are certain general guidelines that can help you achieve a certain message or mood, through the use of color.

WARM COLORS



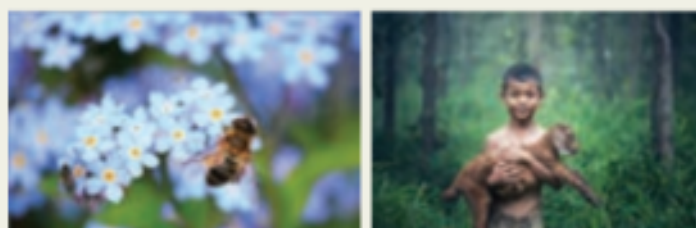
Red is the color that grabs the most attention. If it occupies most of the frame, it can create feelings of anger, passion, or speed. If used as a detail, it will make that detail stand out. Yellow and orange, create a youthful, energetic vibe.



COOL COLORS



Cooler colors, (especially blue), bring a sense of calmness and peace. Green, because it's found in nature, creates a feeling of growth, and relaxation.



SHAPES

Every element in a photograph will have a shape. Some organic (curved, irregular) and some geometric (symmetrical, usually clean and straight). In the overall composition, we tend to look for balance in one of 3 basic shapes: **Oval, square and triangle.**



PLANNING A FAMILY PORTRAIT SESSION



PHOTZY.COM

Family portraits require the photographer to be prepared. Groups, and especially large groups, will find it difficult to be patient if the photographer is not prepared.

Perfect to print A5 size
14cm x 21cm / 5.83" x 8.27"

SUBJECT APPEARANCE

CLOTHING

- Ask the members of the family to plan their outfits, even bring a change of clothes. As a general rule, it's visually more appealing if all the subjects dress in similar color tones.
- Avoid having extremely bright clothing -or- only one member wearing bright colored clothes- unless- aiming for a specific style requested by the subjects. Avoid patterned clothing.
- Remind them to wear clothes they feel comfortable in (not too tight, short, warm, etc).

MAKE UP AND ACCESSORIES

- Keep it simple. Stay away from trendy makeup or accessories. They will make the picture look very outdated once the fashion trend goes away.

EQUIPMENT

PROPS

- Bring -or ask the family to bring- toys and games that will entertain young children. This can help keep them engaged and cause smiles and/or laughs from the entire group.
- If shooting outdoors, bring a towel, or paper towels, in case someone gets sweaty or dirty. A blanket is also helpful, if there are going to be any pictures taken while sitting on the ground.
- Bring hair accessories for people with longer hair. A hair tie, and a brush, are helpful for windy conditions.
- Bugspray, a small portable mirror, and a duffle bag to store purses, shoes, etc. (so they don't get lost - especially if shooting outdoors) are helpful touches.

GEAR

- Using a tripod helps you frame the photo first, then take your eyes off of the viewfinder, and engage the family members eye to eye. Creating a connection with the family is important.
- Unless shooting a large group, stay away from wide-angle lenses. A safe focal length is in the 50-135mm range.

! There is an ideal time for outdoor family portraits: 45 minutes before sunset until 30 minutes after sunset. Sunrise is trickier- allowing only about a 20 minutes window after the Sun breaks the horizon.

INDOOR NATURAL LIGHT



PHOTZY.COM

When you first begin to point your camera at people- taking their photograph, while utilizing indoor natural lighting, is one of the easier ways to get started. Always be mindful of your shutter speed and your ISO.

Perfect to print A5 size
14cm x 21cm / 5.83" x 8.27"

ELEMENTS



CAMERA

When possible, use a lens that offers a large maximum aperture.



NATURAL LIGHT SOURCE

Nearby windows, doorways, sliding glass doors, picture windows, window bays, or open garage doors.

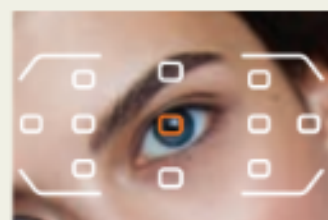


WHITE CARD / REFLECTOR

If the light source is too direct, it can create hard shadows. Bounce light back into the shadows.

SET THE CAMERA

IT'S ALL IN THE EYES



Focus on the subject's nearest eye to the camera. Lock the focus, and then compose your shot.

USE APERTURE PRIORITY



Set the camera to Aperture Priority mode or Manual mode. Use a wide aperture (f1.8 - f5.6 for 1 or 2 people) (f5.6 - f11 for groups) Make sure your shutter speed isn't too slow.

MIND THE ISO

ISO = LOW is BEST

Once you've set your aperture, set the ISO to 100, and check the light meter. If the shutter speed is 1/125 or slower, then increase the ISO or use a tripod.

SHOOTING THE PORTRAIT



Placing the subject facing the light source, will give you an even light that softens the features.



Posing the subject at an angle to the light, will create a model-like mood and make their features stand out. For this angle, you may need a reflector to soften hard shadows.