

ALAMANCE PHOTOGRAPHY CLUB

2012–2024

©

March 2024 Newsletter

www.alamancephoto.com

www.facebook.com/alamancephotoclub



Photo by Tom Dierolf

APC ACTIVITIES

Our club will be taking a different approach in 2024. While our Programs, PhotoShows and Field Trips will continue, all will be geared towards an overall theme of learning and practicing basic photography.

We will also be adding some workshops to the mix. We feel our planned activities will appeal to both novice and advanced photographers alike and provide an opportunity for us to learn more from each other.

See more about what we have planned for 2024 on pages 3 & 4. We hope this will be a fun and educational experience for all. – Your editor

President's Comments—March 2024

By Keith O'Leary

Greetings. Thanks to all who attended our February meeting as we kicked off our 2024 *Back to Basics* program. Looking forward to the months ahead as we continue this fun journey of learning more about photography from each other.

A word of caution though for those of you just starting out. There are so many *angles* (no pun intended) to learning about photography, from learning all about your camera settings, to taking different types of shots, etc., etc. As you embark on

becoming a better photographer, it is easy to become overwhelmed by ingesting too much information too quickly. It is best to *focus* (OK...maybe pun intended that time) on just one thing at a time that will allow you to practice and *sharpen* your skills as you progress towards your goal. A little more about this [HERE](#). Stay well and happy shooting!

Keith O'Leary

APC BOARD

| | | | |
|----------------------------|----------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| President | Keith O'Leary | Interim Exhibit Chair | Christie O'Leary |
| Vice President | John Reich | Outings/Field Trips | Hugh Comfort |
| Secretary | George Siple | Membership | Ken Sellers |
| Treasurer | Dianne Sellers | Web Master | Christie O'Leary |
| Interim PhotoShow Chair | Keith O'Leary | Editor | Ray Munns |

2024 Alamance Photography Club Activities

- Jan. 15th** Program: Sean Leahy – Birds from Colombia
- Feb. 19th** PhotoShow: The Rule of Thirds (and ‘Back to Basics’ Ice Cream Social)
- Mar. 18th** PhotoShow: Photograph **three (3)** of the following:
Close-up of a person
2 to 3 people interacting
Action shot
Animal shot
Nature shot
- Apr. 15th** Program: George Bohannon – Camera Basics with a Twist of History
- May 4th** Field Trip/Workshop:
Place: Burlington Arboretum
Objective: Understanding Light & Exposure
Exercise: Experiment with different light sources and exposure settings.
- May 20th** PhotoShow: One subject using 2 different light sources
- June 1st** Field Trip/Workshop:
Place: Burlington Arboretum
Objective: Understanding Depth of Field, Composition, Angle of View
Exercise: Experiment taking same compositions with shallow (wide aperture) and deep (narrow aperture) depths of field and from different angles.
- June 17th** PhotoShow: One Subject with 2 Different depths of field
- June 29th** Field Trip/Workshop:
Place: Burlington City Park
Objective: Understanding Stop Action vs Motion Blur
Exercise: Experiment taking stop action & capturing motion blur from same or similar subjects.
- July 15th** PhotoShow: Stop Action & Motion Blur of Same (or Similar) Subject
- Aug. 19th** PhotoShow: One subject from 2 different angles/perspectives
- Sep. 16th** Program: Photo Editing Demonstration/Workshop (Dan Walker)
- Oct. 21st** Program: Dr. Jim Herrington – Drone Photography
- Nov. 18th** PhotoShow: 5-to-8 Picture Photo Story by Youth/Student Participants
- Dec. 16th** Christmas Party, Slideshow, Buy/Sell/Swap

2024 Programs

JAN: Sean Leahy – Birds from Colombia

APR: George Bohannon – Camera Basics with a Twist of History

SEP: Photo Editing Workshop/Presentation (Dan Walker)

OCT: Jim Harrington – Drone Photography

2024 PhotoShows

FEB: The Rule of Thirds (and 'Back to Basics' Ice Cream Social!)

MAR: Photograph **three (3)** of the following:

Close-up of a person

2 to 3 people interacting

Action shot

Animal shot

Nature shot

MAY: One subject with 2 Different light sources

JUN: One Subject with 2 Different depths of field

JUL: Stop Action & Blur Motion of Same (or Similar) Subject

AUG: One subject from 2 different angles/perspectives

NOV: 5-to-8 Picture Photo Story by Youth Participants

(Tentative) Field Trip/Work Shops

5/4: Place: Burlington Arboretum
Objective: Understanding Light & Exposure
Exercise: Experiment with different light sources and exposure settings.

6/1: Place: Burlington Arboretum
Objective: Understanding Depth of Field, Composition, Angle of View
Exercise: Experiment taking same compositions with shallow (wide aperture) and deep (narrow aperture) depths of field and from different angles.

6/29: Place: Burlington City Park
Objective: Understanding Stop Action vs Blur Motion
Exercise: Experiment taking stop action and capturing blur motion from same or similar subjects.

March 18th PhotoShow - "Pick 3"

Keith O'Leary, Interim PhotoShow Chair

This month's photo show theme is a little different. Instead of a single theme, we ask that you submit one (1) photograph from **three (3)** of the following *subjects*:

- Close-up of a person
- 2 to 3 people interacting
- Action
- Animal(s)
- Nature

Video link for common composition mistakes:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NAexy836ff8&list=PLu4zxife3eU52EscXgc0kBu50Spw9Ts5p&index=2>

Submission Guidelines:

Number of Entries: Max of three (3) entries per member.

Format: .jpg

File Naming: Please rename your photos using the following format:
Firstname.lastname_01, _02 or _03 (*per preference*)
Example: john.doe_01.jpg john.doe_02.jpg john.doe_03.jpg

Size: Between 1 and 25 MB

Email: Send all images to apcphotoshow@gmail.com
Email Subject Line: include the month of the PhotoShow and your name
Example: Photos for March PhotoShow – John Doe

Entry Deadline: **Wednesday**, March 13, 2024

Please Note:

Submissions that do not adhere to the guidelines above may be returned.

If you have any issues with formatting or submitting, please let us know at apcphotoshow@gmail.com and we will be happy to assist. Also let us know if your submitted photo is not acknowledged within a few days and/or by the deadline.

February PhotoShow



Photo by Gary Gorby



Photo by George Siple



Photo by Christie O'Leary



Photo by David Hall



Photo by Keith O'Leary



Photo by Sam Lynch

February PhotoShow . . . continued



Photo by Herbert House

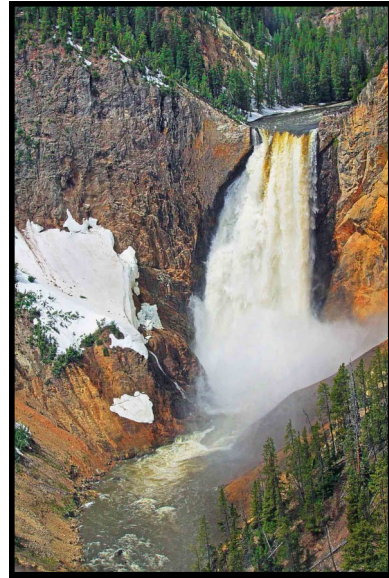


Photo by Joanne Lentz



Photo by Mio Winkle



Photo by Resi Forest



Photo by Gene Lentz



Photo by Karen Cole

February PhotoShow . . . continued



Photo by Hugh Comfort



Photo by John Reich



Photo by Bob Finley



Photo by Tom Jamison



Photo by Greg Harkins

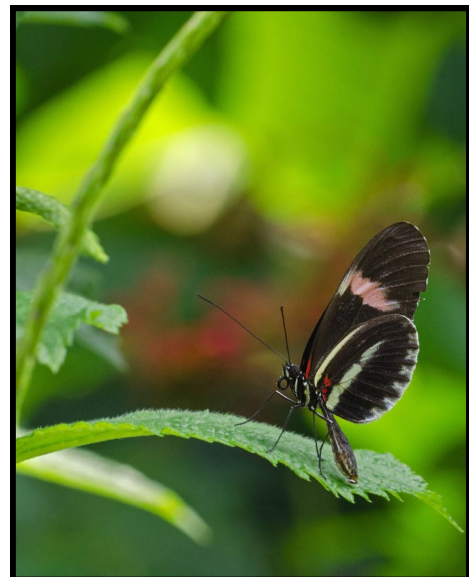


Photo by Ray Munns

ART MARKET

Alamance Arts will hold its 2nd annual **Art Market** on Saturday, March 23, from 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., at the Captain White House, 213 S. Main St., Graham, NC.

The purpose of the sale is to assist artisans with “cleaning out” older items you did not know what to do with, but most importantly, to provide Alamance Arts with funds for the on-going activities provided in Alamance County and beyond. The sale is for the public and allows visitors to purchase items at reduced cost, which they may not be able to afford otherwise.



Since Alamance Photography Club is an affiliate of Alamance Arts, we are encouraged to donate any photography, arts and crafts, and/or handmade items. Donated items are being accepted now until a week before the sale at the Captain White House.

If you have questions, contact Dianne Sellers, taikijorsel@gmail.com, or 336-253-5867.



WEBMASTER NOTES

The APC Website Gallery is open for new photos!

Members can begin sending photos to alamancephoto@gmail.com for the gallery. Each member who submits photographs will have a personal slideshow on the website.

If you have photos in the gallery now, you are welcome to submit new images to replace the existing ones.

After submission, I will send a confirmation email. If you have NOT received a confirmation email within a WEEK, please let us know at alamancephoto@gmail.com.

We encourage ALL members to submit photographs for the club's website gallery and would like to see EVERYONE represented!

Submission Details

Number of photos: no more than 20

Size of each photo: 1 to 2 MB preferred. Max. size 10 MB

Format: .jpg

File naming:

Please rename your photo submissions in the following format:

Firstname.lastname_01 or _02 (*per order you want them to be shown in your slideshow*)

For example: john.doe_01.jpg john.doe_02.jpg

Your '01' photo will be used as the thumbnail on the Gallery Page.

Email:

Email Address: Send all photos to alamancephoto@gmail.com

Email Subject Line: Please include gallery photos and your name

For example: Gallery photos - John Doe

Entry Deadline: April 30, 2024

Please Note:

Any submissions that do not adhere to the guidelines above may be returned.

Looking forward to the 2024 gallery,

Christie O'Leary—Webmaster

Exhibit Notes

Upcoming Fall Exhibit at Alamance Arts! Alamance Arts has invited the club to exhibit in the Sister Galleries (the two front rooms) in September of 2024. The exhibit will be open from Sept. 3rd to Oct. 18th.

Keep watch on your inbox as well as the newsletter for updates and plans of action. At this time, the board is discussing a title for this exhibit. We are considering a theme this year and tossing around 'Nature'. If you have any suggestions or names for the exhibit, please feel free to email us at alamancephoto@gmail.com. Start looking through your photographs so you will be ready when it is submission time! More details to follow.

Christie O'Leary
Interim Exhibit Chair

APC Membership Corner

March 2024

A sincere "thank you" to everyone who has renewed during the membership drive which ends on February 29. We had a good number of visitors and student/scouts and scout leaders attending the ice cream social and the kick-off of our series, "Back to Basics". If you would still like to join us every month on the third Monday at 7pm in the Fellowship Hall of First Baptist Church Burlington, you can reactivate your membership by joining on the web site (alamancephoto@gmail.com) or at the next meeting. If you are interested in "checking us out", you can attend up to 2 meetings before joining. Don't miss this opportunity to continue receiving the monthly newsletter, learning more about camera basics, participating in the on-line sale or swapping of cameras and accessories, photo shows, field trips and much, much more. And, by the way, you might be able to make some new friends and have fun! See you at the March meeting!

Ken Sellers
Membership Chair



Table Talkers



Wednesday, March 13, 6:00 pm

Location: Panera Bread

Huffman Mill Road in Burlington

Mio Winkle

Q1 2024 Personal Field Trip:

Burlington Train Station

The field trip for this quarter to the Burlington Train Station is a personal field trip to be done on your own schedule. The location in the heart of downtown Burlington is probably familiar to most of us; the address is 101 N Main St, Burlington, NC 27217. It is served by Amtrak, the United States' passenger rail system, and hosts two Amtrak trains, the Carolinian and Piedmont. Photos may be taken either inside or outside the station. Unlike many of our field trips, this is a relatively limited location. Here is your chance to show how many different aspects of this station you, as a group, can capture with your creative eyes and your camera. Good shooting!

This personal field trip runs from January 1 – March 31. Information on submitting photos will be provided by email at a later date.

Hugh

APC Trading Post

Submit brief descriptions of photography items you would like to sell, swap or purchase to Ray Munns (raymunns@bellsouth.net) no later than the 20th of each month. Please include your name, contact info (phone and/or email) and if each item is for sale or something you are looking to purchase. Also notify Ray when items should be removed from the newsletter.

All Free

I have three books for the Trading Post.

- Layers by Matt Kloskowski—A Complete Guide to Photoshop's Most Powerful Feature
- creative photoshop landscape techniques by Les Meehan
- Neat Lightroom Tricks by Dave Kelly



Contact David Hall
@ dlhallofnc@gmail.com

BACK TO BASICS

Holding the Camera Properly

geofflawrence.com

Holding the camera properly is the best way to avoid or minimize the effects of **camera shake**. A good firm grip with the right hand and support from underneath means that, when you press the shutter release, movement of the camera will be minimized. This will enable you to shoot sharper pictures at slower **shutter speeds**.

The picture on the right shows a good grip, the heel of the left hand supports the camera from underneath. When the shutter is pressed with the right hand, the camera tends to move downward, the left hand in this position will minimize the effect of this.



Some older cameras had shutter buttons that pushed in towards the body instead of downwards, but they seem to have largely disappeared nowadays, presumably because the position did not feel as comfortable as the downward movement.

Use Left Eye to See Outside Field of View

Cameras were designed to be used with the right eye, although it is possible to use them with the left. The advantage of using the right eye (which feels more comfortable to most of us anyway), is that the left eye is not blocked by the camera body and you can, if you want, keep it open to see what is going on outside of your field of view. The natural tendency is to shut your left eye, the better to concentrate on your picture, but with a little practice, you can get used to keeping it open. Having the left eye open enables you to see what is about to move into your frame, a useful thing when taking action shots. Also you can see what happens at the time when the **exposure** is being made and the mirror is blocking your view in the viewfinder. Did the person you are photographing blink? Better check and take another shot.

Back to Basics—Holding the Camera Properly . . . Continued

Here are some examples of how to (and how not to) hold the camera.

This is the way a lot of people hold their camera. But, as you can see, there is no real support under the camera, so camera shake is more likely. Also, when you want to adjust the zoom, you have to reposition your hand.



Recently there have been a flood of cameras with no viewfinder, you have to look at the screen to compose your picture. As a result some people find it more 'natural' to view in this way. But now you are holding the camera in a very unstable way.



Back to Basics—Holding the Camera Properly . . . Continued

Ultra compacts and camera phones have made matters even worse. Now you have to hold the camera with your finger tips, away from your face. Even I find it extremely difficult to hold such a camera still. The only way is to find some support for your elbows.



When you use a telephoto lens, the need for support from underneath becomes more urgent. Not only because the weight distribution is now tipping the camera forward but also because the narrower angle of view will accentuate any **camera shake**.



Back to Basics—Holding the Camera Properly . . . Continued

The 'good' way of holding the camera recommended in this article translates very well to the portrait view as well. A lot of people take all their pictures in landscape format simply because it feels uncomfortable to hold the camera in the upright position. Holding it this way feels very comfortable.



Wherever possible I would recommend using any extra support available, especially when shooting in low light or with a dreaded camera phone.



Back to Basics—Holding the Camera Properly . . . Continued



Holding the camera by the body only (left photo above) means that when you move your hand to adjust the zoom, the tendency is to do it 'over arm' with your finger tips, as in the picture on the right. This gives no extra support to the camera at all. She is, in effect, holding the camera with one hand. Whereas an under arm grip cradles the camera in the palm of your hand, taking all the weight.

Holding the camera in the right way might seem a little uncomfortable at first but in a very short time it will seem the most natural thing in the world.

Camera Straps

You will notice that there are no camera straps evident in any of these pictures. I personally am not a fan of the camera strap and prefer not to use them. I find they get in the way especially when I turn the camera on its side. A large percentage of my pictures are shot in upright format and the strap can often fall in front of the lens. That said, I am an extremely careful person and I never, ever drop things. If there is even the slightest chance that you might drop your camera, use a strap. Modern cameras do not bounce.

A Well Held Camera Makes a Big Difference

Even when there is plenty of light and the shutter speed is quite fast, you can see the difference between a well held camera and an unstable 'grab shot'. The difference may be subtle but it will be there to see. People often think that the sharper results from a well held camera are due to a more expensive camera or lens. Better equipment does give you better results but only when you know how to use it properly.

10 Mind-Blowing Photography Tips

By Lara Solomon

If you want to take better photos but aren't sure where to start, this list of 10 basic tips is for you.



Photo by Lenny K Photography

1. Pick a subject that speaks to you.

Pay attention to the recurring themes in your work. Think of what draws you to these things so you can find new ways to capture and express what you like!

2. Practice!

Don't be afraid to make mistakes! Sometimes those mistakes turn out to be something unique and innovative that you can build on.

10 Mind-Blowing Photography Tips . . . Continued

3. Work the subject.

Try shooting the same thing in as many ways as you can that capture different aspects about it.

Photo by Yu Morita



After your shoot, look through your shots and critique your work. Be mindful of what worked and what didn't and why. Editing your shoot is an important part of the learning process.

4. Study the work of other photographers.

Find something that inspires you and pay attention to what you like and try to mimic it. Then try to make it your own by bringing in something new and different.



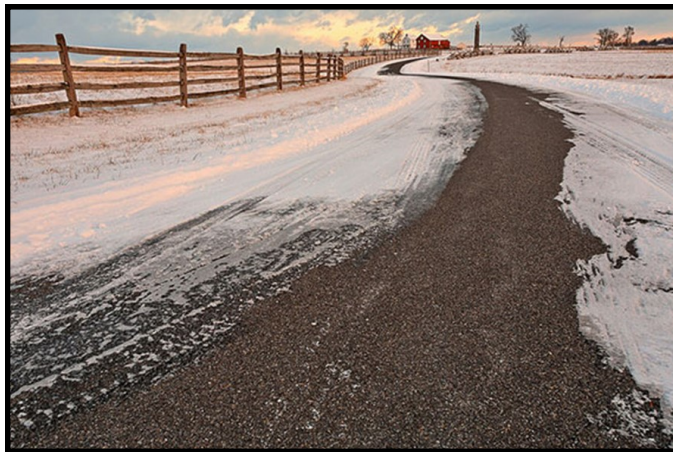
Photo by Street Photography Addict

10 Mind-Blowing Photography Tips . . . Continued

5. Composition.

If you pay attention, you'll see that most great photographs contain at least one of these guidelines:

- *Rule of Thirds.* Imagine the image is divided into thirds both horizontally and vertically. The interesting aspects of the image are placed on those lines. This rule is often used in landscapes, with the horizon being placed in the top, or bottom third of the composition. Some cameras even have a grid option that will display through your viewfinder, to help you make your composition precise.
- *Balancing Elements.* If you're framing your main subject off center, try having a less important object in the background of the image to balance the weight of the dominant object. The secondary object will add depth to the subject and make it more interesting by filling the void of space in the image.
- *Leading Lines.* Use the subject's lines or contours to your advantage. These lines lead the viewer's eyes across the image, so become aware of them and how to use them to your advantage. The more they lead the eye around, the longer the viewer looks at



your image. Examples of leading lines could be a winding road on a hilly landscape or the contours of your model's body. Notice how models pose in ways that create leading lines by using their limbs in interesting ways.

Photo by Nicolas Raymond

- *Symmetry and Patterns.* These are often used in architecture and nature, even in artistic portraits. The subject is center balanced, unlike in the rule of thirds.
- *Viewpoint.* The angle from which the photographer shoots in relation to the subject. Showing us a subject from an angle that we don't usually see it is a great way to make it more interesting. In working the subject, pay attention to the message the shot conveys. Try eye-level, from above, below, side, behind, from a distance, in close, etc.

10 Mind-Blowing Photography Tips . . . Continued

- *Background.* Pay attention to your background! If your background doesn't add to the subject, use a plain backdrop or use a shallow depth of field to blur the background out. Think about how it affects the tone of the subject.
- *Depth.* Mostly in landscapes, depth helps convey a three-dimensional subject in a photograph, which is two-dimensional.
- *Framing.* Objects in your environment can be used to add to your shot! Some useful examples are archways from a building, branches from a tree, or holes in cliffs. These frames can help show off the setting.



Photo by Arches National Park

- *Cropping.* Cropping in tight on a subject is a great way to remove distracting elements around it. Everything in the photograph should hold value to your image. If it doesn't, try cropping it out.

The more you practice these composition guides, the more they will become instinctual. Even in your editing & selection process, pay attention to which images pop out at you, and see if they hold one of these elements.

6. Familiarize yourself with your tools.

Photography is so versatile! You can even take amazing photos with a coffee can, but you must understand the limitations of your gear.

10 Mind-Blowing Photography Tips . . . Continued

7. Learn to use photography software.

Digital software is today's darkroom, and developing an image is just as important as how you shoot it. My favorite way to digitally polish my images is through Lightroom. It's amazing what it allows you to do to an image without exposing yourself to chemicals or wasting photo paper and developer. The preset filters are a great way to intensify the tone of the image, but you must know how to fine-tune them to make the image just so. Photoshop is also an important tool.

8. Learn lighting.

I suggest photographing a subject at different times of day and compare them. If you have access to professional lighting equipment, try shooting your subject lit from different angles, diffusion versus hard lighting, etc. There are jobs just dedicated to lighting on high-end shoots, so there are no limits there if you have the budget. Really think about how the light conveys your message to the viewer.



Photo by Matt Biddulph

9. Go with your instincts.

Make sure what you are shooting is fulfilling something for you. There is no point in shooting something you aren't enjoying. It will show in your work! The more you are passionate about it, the more creatively you can capture it! I've worked with so many photographers that have talent, but take on shoots they don't enjoy and it showed in the quality of the images.

10 Mind-Blowing Photography Tips . . . Continued



For example, I could never understand why somebody would hire a nature photographer to shoot their portraits. Somebody who isn't a people person doesn't take flattering photos of people no matter how much technical knowledge they have. On the other hand, if you see all people as beautiful and you have a natural talent for making a person feel

good about him/herself, then portrait photography is a great niche!

10. Communicate with your subject.

If you're shooting any type of portrait, make sure it is prepared beforehand. There's nothing worse than having your model show up with chipped blue nail polish! Learn to guide your subject with clear direction in a way that makes them feel comfortable! Even models feel vulnerable with a lens in their face, so learn to give suggestions in a flattering way. Nobody feels confident after hearing "suck in your gut," but if that's what you want, try something like "intensify your rib cage." Compliments go a long way! When you ask for a smile, it will look forced. If you compliment the person they will naturally smile.

PICTURECORRECT.com

7 Tips to Become a Better Photographer in 2024

By Christian Hoiberg

Have you recently acquired a new camera? Or have you had one for a while but don't yet feel comfortable using it? Perhaps you've done photography for a while but lack inspiration and don't produce the images you want to. Whatever your goals and ambitions are, it's never a bad idea to delve into something new. Perhaps now is the perfect time to put a little extra effort into becoming a better photographer.

The following tips will give you the initial push you need to get out there and capture the best images. The article will provide you with more specific techniques as well as crucial approaches to inspire you.

#1 Invest time, not money

It's easy to get carried away with camera gear and gadgets, but the truth is that a camera won't make you a better photographer. Beautiful images can be created with any type of camera, be it a smartphone, entry-level DSLR, or a point-and-shoot.



Sure, professional cameras are superior when it comes to file quality, but that shouldn't matter until you're at a level where you've got ambitions to either make money from your photography or create large prints.

The camera has very little to say if your main outlet is your social media channels or perhaps your photography website.

Rather than investing money in advanced camera gear, I urge you to invest more time in your photography. Dedicate as much time as possible to go outside with your camera. It doesn't matter if it's raining, snowing, or harsh sunlight; grab your camera and play with it.

7 Tips to Become a Better Photographer in 2024 . . . Continued

You won't come home with amazing images each time. Heck, I'm thrilled if 1% of the images I take throughout the year make it into my portfolio!

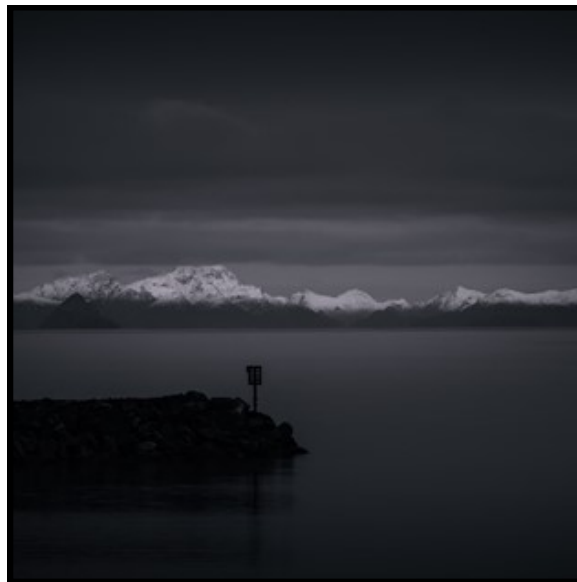
The purpose of this exercise isn't to create only stunning images. That's not realistic. The purpose is to **get comfortable behind the camera**; learn how to adapt to any light or scenario, learn to recognize patterns in the weather, and learn to understand how different settings give different results.

It's all about having fun and getting experience.

#2 Study the art of compositions

It doesn't matter how great the light is or how good your Lightroom skills are; an image that lacks a solid composition won't have the same impact. Sure, it might make someone stop for a moment or two, but it's not going to be a photo that's remembered.

Therefore, one of the steps to becoming a better photographer in 2024 is to study the art of composition.



Pick up a book, eBook, or video course that delves into the topic, or study the images from your favorite photographers. How can you implement the techniques they use in your own images?

Don't get me wrong; you shouldn't use every single compositional guideline at once, but you should learn what they are and when they are beneficial to use.

Sometimes the best rule is to break the rules.

7 Tips to Become a Better Photographer in 2024 . . . Continued

#3 Ask for critique

We rarely receive honest and valuable feedback in this day and age. Most of the comments you get online go along the line of “awesome shot”.



While this is a nice ego boost, it has zero value for your creative growth. In fact, many of these comments are given only because the commenter wants you to check out their work too.

Try to find a photographer or group of photographers to share your work with instead of only listening to generic comments. A group that gives honest feedback is among the most valuable things you can have as a photographer.

You might not like everything they say but learn to listen. Constructive criticism is worth more than a million generic comments.

Make sure that you get feedback from someone you consider a better photographer than yourself. Someone you can learn from. If you don't know anyone personally, it never hurts to send an email to some of your favorite photographers.

#4 Invest in learning

If you're planning to invest money into your photography in 2024, it should be toward something educational. There are loads of useful articles, books, courses, webinars, and other resources for photographers.

Purchasing an online course or attending a photography workshop won't only teach you how to become a better photographer, it might also give you that extra motivational boost you need to grab the camera and head outside.

Try to learn something new even if you've been doing photography for a while; study a new technique, dig deeper into the world of compositions, improve your post-processing, or attend a seminar with a photographer whose work you admire.

7 Tips to Become a Better Photographer in 2024 . . . Continued

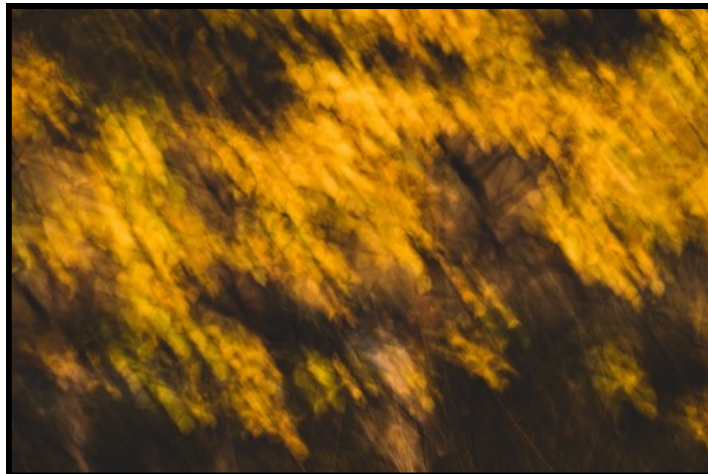
#5 Take time to understand the fundamental settings

There are few things more important to learn than the fundamental photography settings. Understanding what the shutter speed, ISO, and aperture are and how they work together (known as the Exposure Triangle) is essential to becoming a better photographer. In fact, having this understanding can be the difference between getting a shot and not.

Light changes quickly, and you don't always have much time to sit down and go through your settings. That's why you want to be able to change them all without even looking at the camera. When you understand how the settings work, you will need to practice changing them until you are efficient at it.

#6 Get away from your comfort zone

A comfort zone can be a dangerous place to stay in for too long. It doesn't matter if you're just getting started with photography or if you've been doing it for decades; we all have a comfort zone.



Using an ultra-wide-angle lens and a 6-Stop ND Filter was my comfort zone for a long time. I knew exactly what I needed to do in order to create a good image, and that's exactly what I did. It all became a routine that ultimately led to me forgetting to be creative. That's when I challenged myself to leave the wide-angle behind and instead spend months focusing on intimate shots captured with a longer focal length.

Stepping out of my comfort zone and spending time focusing on something new was the best creative decision I'd made in a long time, and it made photography so much more fun again.

7 Tips to Become a Better Photographer in 2024 . . . Continued

What is your comfort zone? What aspect of photography are you scared of trying? Those are the fields in which you should challenge yourself in 2024.

Maybe it means placing filters in front of your lens, heading out without a tripod, using a different focal length, or perhaps photographing during the night.

Whatever it is, push yourself and step away from your comfort zone.

#7 Find inspiration outside photography

Inspiration comes in a variety of ways. Sometimes it can be found in unexpected places. I love browsing through the galleries of my favorite photographers (ideally on their websites), but I find that my biggest inspirational boosts are given to me when I'm looking at other types of art.

My painting skills are on the level of an infant, but certain paintings capture my attention and have me staring for a long time. When looking at such images, I look at how the artist uses light, colors, and shadows, how the composition guides the viewer through the image, and how the overall atmosphere contributes to the story.



Look at the painting "Dresden Moonlight" by Norwegian artist Johan Christian Dahl and think of how you can use his compositional skills in your photography. What else can you learn from this?

While a painter has the advantage of starting with a blank canvas and the freedom to control all the elements within the frame, you have to ask yourself how these elements can be adapted to your photography.

How can we use the light or elements in front of us to capture the attention of viewers? How can we use colors? How can we take advantage of post-processing to emphasize a specific part of the image?