

ALAMANCE PHOTOGRAPHY CLUB

2012-2024

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April 2024 Newsletter

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Photo by Sean Leahy

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—April 2024

By Keith O'Leary

Greetings. If you are like me, you really haven't gotten out much this year to take pictures and are looking forward to the warmer temps that should be coming our way soon. Hey, you won't want to miss our April program on the 15th as our own George Bohannon will be presenting an informative and interactive program on camera basics and the various types of camera equipment dating back from the early post WWII era thru today. He will even have an on-site display of some of his restored and repurposed equipment.

Did you know that as a member of APC you can have your own online gallery of

photos? We currently are hosting personal galleries for less than 40% of our membership. I would like to see more of you take advantage of this free service to share your work with others in the club, the community and the world!

Continue reading to find out more details on how to submit those photos, more about what is going on with the club and other helpful information. 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.

April 15th Program

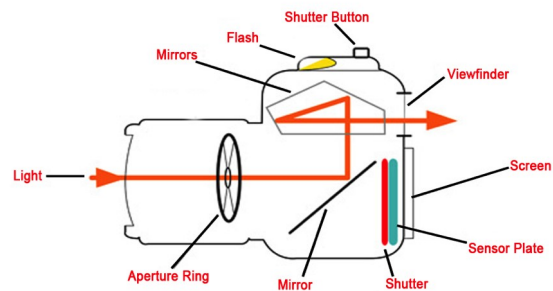
“Camera Basics with a Twist of History”

Presented by George Bohannon

Come join us on April 15th as George presents an interactive overview of the basic functional components common to any camera system, old or new. Learn about the features and functions of various lenses, shutters, sensors and film, image formation and different types of viewfinders.

There will also be a table display of restored and repurposed equipment from early post-WWII era rangefinder cameras and lenses, large format view cameras and medium format film cameras up through the modern mirrorless digital camera. Come see how it is still possible to use those old and often forgotten lenses and equipment with the latest mirrorless digital cameras today.

Bring your questions, and be willing to share your experiences and opinions from your own photography journey!



Check out these videos to learn more about how a camera works!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z3h1F99woDU&list=PLu4zxjfe3eU5qJw0wZ3nXNNAmy5qEX65A&index=18>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W34sLbAsFhM&list=PLu4zxjfe3eU5qJw0wZ3nXNNAmy5qEX65A&index=17&t=361s>

March PhotoShow



Photo by Dick Schenck

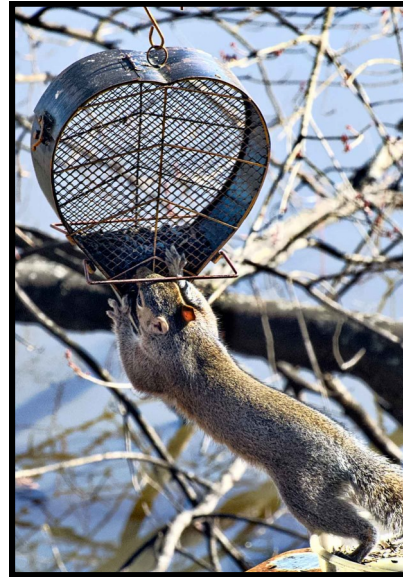


Photo by Herbert House

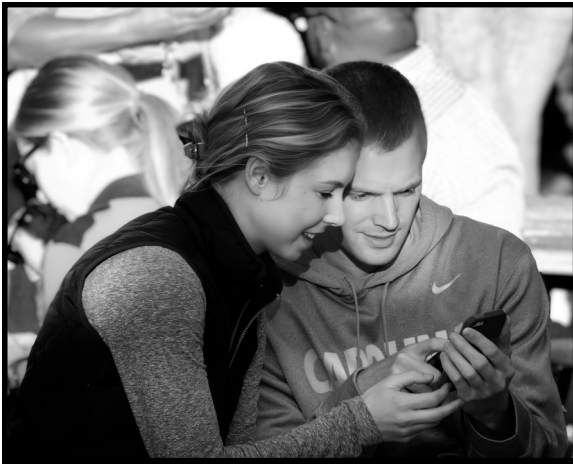


Photo by David Hall



Photo by Ken Sellers

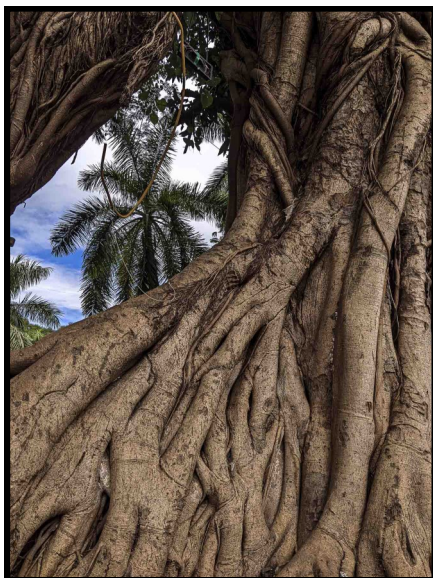


Photo by Karen Cole-Loy



Photo by Keith O'Leary

March PhotoShow . . . continued



Photo by Mio Winkle



Photo by John Reich



Photo by Bob Finley



Photo by Hugh Comfort



Photo by Resi Forest

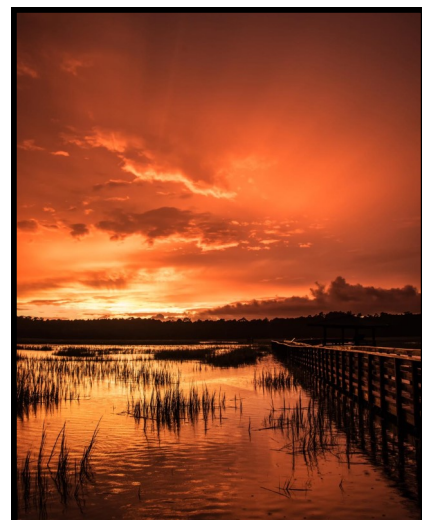


Photo by Ray Munns

Q1 2024 Personal Field Trip:

Burlington Train Station

Information about the field trip is provided in the February and March Newsletters. Below are instructions for submitting five of your best photos. These photos of the Burlington Train Station must have been taken between January 1 and March 31, 2024, and may be submitted any time until and including March 31.

Submission instructions are as in the past:

Please name your images as follows: first name.last name_xx

EX. john.doe_01, john.doe_02, etc.

Instead of emailing us your submissions, we have created an album in Google Photos to which you can directly upload your images.

Click [HERE](#) to access the Burlington Train Station album in Google Photos.

Once in, you can **add photos** from your device, **love photos** you see in the album (by clicking on the heart icon) and view or **add comments** to specific images by clicking on the activity icon (see below).

To find the album directly from the Google Photos app on your device, or on your computer, open Google Photos, click on **Sharing** and then locate the album.

Feel free to reach out to Keith O'Leary or Hugh Comfort if you have any questions or issues.

If, however, you are totally not interested in using Google Photos, you may as last resort, email them to apcfieldtrips@gmail.com and we will ensure your photos are shared with the club (but still follow the instructions above for naming them). Enjoy!

Hugh Comfort

APC Field trip Coordinator



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 APC Fall Exhibit at Alamance Arts – ‘The Beauty of Nature’

Contracts: In April, I will be emailing contracts. Of course, I will have them available at April’s club meeting and at Table Talkers. I am asking that you return the contracts to me so that I can deliver them to Alamance Arts in early May. Looking at the task timeline, the inventory list will not be required at the same time.

The exhibit will be held in the Sister Galleries (the two front rooms) from Sept. 3rd to Oct. 18th.

Keep a watch on your inbox as well as the newsletter for updates and plans of action.

***FYI:** Alamance Arts is in transition of a new exhibit representative. The task timeline is based on information shared with me by the previous exhibit representative. So please be patient with us as we make this transition.

Christie O’Leary

Interim Exhibit Chair

Grand Opening Invitation

You are invited to the Grand Opening of the Cone Health Heart & Vascular Center at Alamance Regional Medical Center (1240 Huffman Mill Rd, Burlington, NC 27215), Wednesday, May 1, 2024, from 5:30 pm to 7:00 pm. There will be remarks, tours, and refreshments provided.

Please RSVP [HERE](#). Or check your inbox for the email from Alamance Photo.

**BTW: Gary Gorby, a club member, had his photo(s) chosen!
Congratulations, Gary!**



Table Talkers



Tuesday, April 9, 6:30 pm

Location: Panera Bread

Huffman Mill Road in Burlington

Mio Winkle

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

Camera Shake

The phenomenon known as camera shake is caused by movement of the camera (hence the name), which becomes noticeable as blur when using a slow shutter speed. The resulting blur is not quite the same as the blur caused by incorrect focusing.

How can we tell the difference between blurred focus and camera shake?



Have a look at the picture on the left. Here we have a mixture of blur caused by the subject moving, blur caused by the camera moving, and the blur of the background which is out of focus. The focus is actually sharp on the main subject, but you'll have to take my word for that. You can see the difference between the two types of blur if you look closely, rather than a general fuzziness,

movement blur looks more like a double exposure or a series of exposures. If you look at the back wall in this first picture, you can see both types of blur. The wall is 'soft' due to being out of focus but also there is a double, or triple, image which is caused by camera movement.

Motion blur, whether it is caused by movement of the subject or movement of the camera, looks the same. Although some of the movement is caused by the guitarist moving, the microphone, which wasn't moving, is blurred too, as is the background. This is due to camera shake.

Take a look at this second photo. The photo is now generally sharp because I have used a flash, and therefore a much faster shutter speed, but the wall is still blurred because it is



out of focus. I think if you look at the green tiles in both pictures, you can see the different types of blur quite clearly.

Whereas blur caused by movement of the subject can be desirable, sometimes, to help create 'atmosphere' in a picture, camera shake should be avoided in all but the most 'arty' type of photos.

Back to Basics—Camera Shake . . . Continued

Why do we get camera shake?

No matter how careful we are, when we press the shutter button, there is always some movement of the camera. At faster shutter speeds there is no noticeable effect on the picture but at slower speeds the blur becomes apparent. The way we stand, the way we hold the camera and how vigorously we press the shutter button all have an effect on the amount of movement we get.

How can we avoid movement blur from camera shake?

To eliminate the blur we can do several things:

1) Faster Shutter Speeds

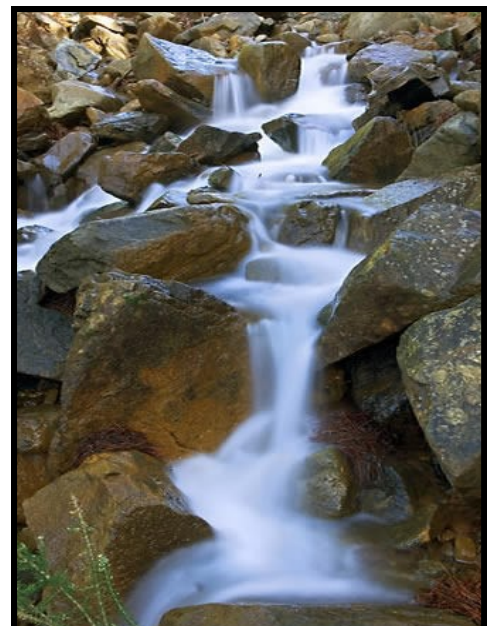
The most obvious way of eliminating shake is to use a faster shutter speed. Either by opening the aperture wider or by introducing more light by using a flash for instance.

The rule of thumb for a sharp picture, free from the effects of camera shake, is to use a shutter speed which is at least as fast as 1 divided by the focal length of the lens. So if you are using your zoom set at 100mm, you should use a shutter speed of at least 1/100 of a second. If you are using a 50mm lens, you will get a sharp picture at 1/50 of a second.

The reason why the focal length of the lens is important is that camera shake becomes more apparent as the angle of view gets narrower. The narrower the angle of view, the more the shake is magnified. You will know this if you have ever tried to hold a telescope or a high powered pair of binoculars still.

2) Sturdy Tripod

Putting the camera on a sturdy tripod is the best way to keep it still. This is the way to go, especially when you want to get some movement blur from the subject like in the waterfall picture here. Even better is to get a remote release for the camera so you don't have to touch it at all.



Back to Basics—Camera Shake . . . Continued

3) Brace Yourself

If, like me, you didn't bring your tripod with you and you still want to take pictures in the dark, you can stretch the rule of thumb by a few stops by bracing yourself and/or the camera against a tree or wall or lamppost. Also, controlling your breathing can help quite a bit too. Here's a picture shot at a slow shutter speed using this technique.



Finally, I just want to say that an inherent problem with a lot of today's smaller cameras, especially phone cameras, is that, because they have no viewfinder, we are obliged to hold them at arm's length to view the screen, often holding them only with our fingertips. This makes them more difficult to hold still and makes them much more prone to show the effects of camera shake. So even more care needs to be taken to get a sharp picture. If you are taking a picture with a phone camera, try to rest it on something, a table or wall, to help keep it still.

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BACK TO BASICS

Exposure

ISO, Aperture, and Shutter Speed Explained

By Attila Kun

In photography, exposure is a critical element that determines what is actually recorded on a camera's image sensor.

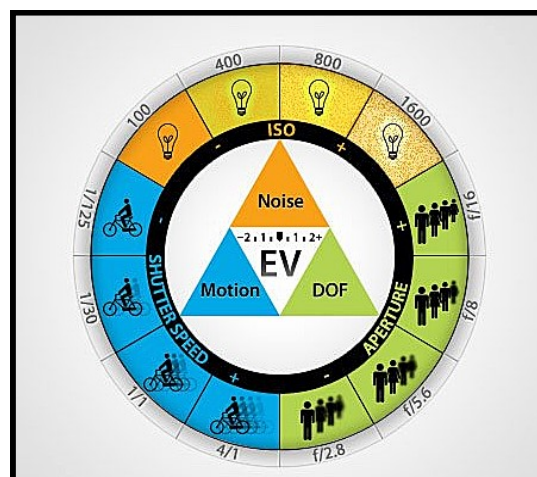
There are three adjustable elements that control the exposure - ISO, Aperture, and Shutter Speed.

The Exposure Triangle

ISO Speed is how sensitive your camera's sensor is to light, each value of the rating represents a "stop" of light, and each incremental ISO number (up or down) represents a doubling or halving of the sensor's sensitivity to light.

Aperture controls the lens' diaphragm, which controls the amount of light traveling through the lens to the sensor. The aperture setting is indicated by the f-number, whereas each f-number represents a "stop" of light.

Shutter Speed indicates the speed in which the curtain opens and then closes. This is essentially how long light is permitted to hit your camera's sensor once you hit the shutter-release button. Each shutter speed value also represents a "stop" of light. The shutter speed is measured in fractions of a second.



Back to Basics—Exposure . . . Continued

When these three elements are combined, they represent a given exposure value (EV).

Any change in any one of the three elements will have a measurable and specific impact on how the remaining two elements react to expose the image sensor and how the image ultimately looks.

For example, if you increase the f-stop, you decrease the size of the lens' diaphragm thus reducing the amount of light hitting the image sensor, but also increasing the DOF (depth of field) in the final image.

Reducing the shutter speed affects how motion is captured, in that this can cause the background or subject to become blurry. However, reducing shutter speed (keeping the shutter open longer) also increases the amount of light hitting the image sensor, so everything is brighter.

Increasing the ISO, allows for shooting in lower light situations, but you increase the amount of digital noise inherent in the photo. It is impossible to make an independent change in one of the elements and not obtain an opposite effect in how the other elements affect the image, and ultimately change the EV.

ISO Speed

ISO is actually an acronym, which stands for International Standards Organization, which is the organization that standardizes sensitivity ratings for camera sensors.

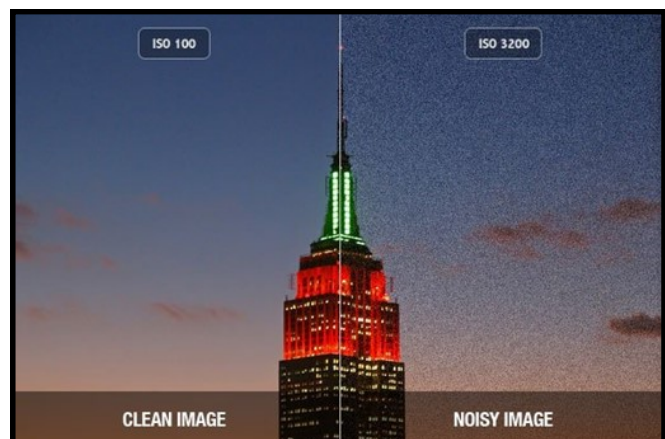
The ISO rating, which ranges in value from 25 to 3200 (and beyond), indicates the specific light sensitivity.

The lower the ISO rating, the less sensitive the image sensor is and therefore the smoother the image, because there is less digital noise in the image.

The higher the ISO rating (more sensitive), the stronger the image sensor has to work to establish an effective image, which thereby produces more digital noise (below).

So what is digital noise? It is any light signal that does not originate from the subject and therefore, creates random color in an image. The digital camera engineers have designed the image sensor to perform best at the lowest ISO.

On most digital cameras this is ISO 100, although some high end DSLRs have a mode that brings the ISO down to 50 or even 25.



Back to Basics—Exposure . . . Continued

Aperture

The lens aperture is the opening in the diaphragm that determines the amount of focused light passing through the lens.

At a small f-stop, say $f/2$, a tremendous amount of light passes through, even at a fraction of a second; but at $f/22$, when the diaphragm is perhaps at its smallest, only a tiny amount of light is let in.



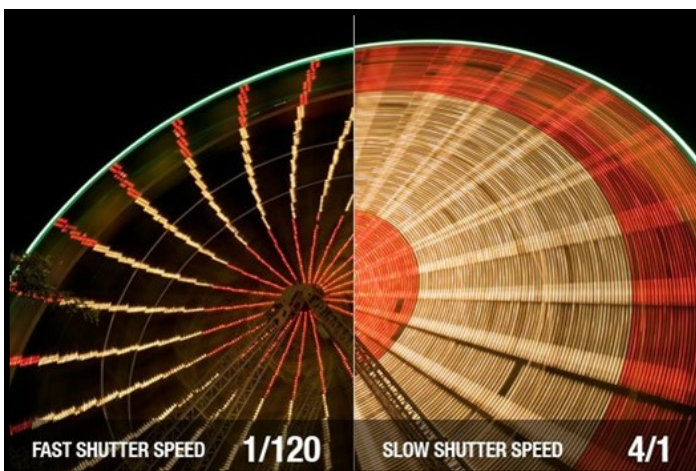
An interesting thing about the aperture and the f-numbers is that it doesn't matter the focal length of the lens as long as the f-number is constant. This is because the arithmetical equation that determines the f-number indicates that the same amount of light passes through the lens on a 35mm lens as on a 100mm lens, with a shutter speed of $1/125$ s.

The size of the diaphragm is unquestionably different, but the amount of light passing through is the same.

Shutter Speed

Shutter speed is measured in fractions of a second, and indicates how fast the curtains at exposing the sensor open and close.

The shutter speed controls how long light enters the lens and hits the image sensor. The



shutter speed enables you to capture the world in split seconds, but it can also absorb the world at speeds upwards of thirty seconds (or remain continually open up until the photographer wants to close the curtain).

Snapping the shutter in a fraction of a second also gives you control on how motion is recorded. If the shutter speed is faster than the object or background, the image

will be tack sharp. If the shutter speed is slower, then you'll get blurred objects.

Think about the rain in a rainstorm, how fast is that water falling? Well, at $1/30$ s the raindrops are streaks of indistinguishable white. But at $1/250$ s the raindrops hover in mid air and you can see the full swell of each water drop.

Back to Basics—Exposure . . . Continued

What is “Auto Bracketing”?

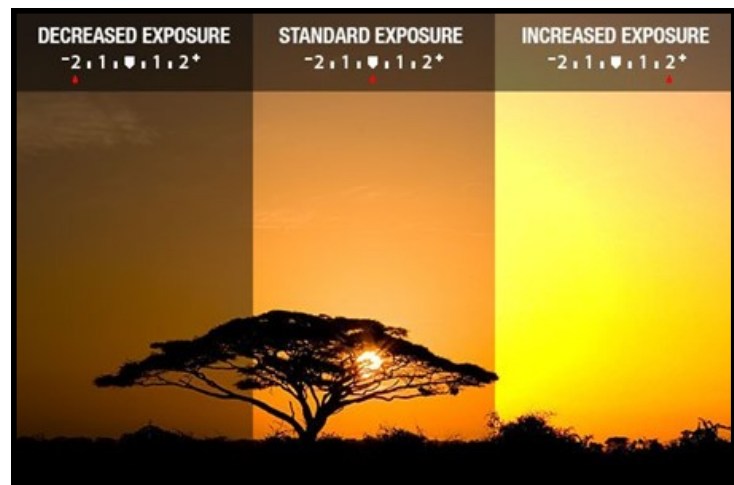
Auto Bracketing is an exposure technique whereby you can ensure that you have the optimal exposure by taking at least three (3) exposures of the exact same composition with one at the metered EV, one at 1/3 of a stop below the metered EV and one at 1/3 of a stop above the metered EV.

So, “Auto Bracketing” is a function in which you set the EV value then release the shutter and the camera automatically makes the necessary up and down adjustments to the EV to give you the bracketed exposures. Then you can review the three (or more) exposures, see the subtle but critical differences in the images, and decide which one is the best image for your purposes.

In these three images you might prefer the overexposed (by 2 stops) image because the setting sun is most brilliant.

Bracketing is a technique that was popularized from shooting slide film, due to the limited ability to correct the image in the darkroom. Many photographers still use the technique today, so they have the exposure that they want.

Having the three bracketed images lowers the amount of post-processing time that they might have to spend.



Back to Basics—Exposure . . . Continued

Overexposure & Underexposure

How do you define overexposure and underexposure, since we said that “correct” exposure is subjective?

Simply put, overexposure is when the information in the highlights is effectively unreadable. When there is this type of excessive loss of image information, there is no way to “retrieve” that missing information in the digital darkroom.



Underexposure is pretty much the same concept; except in this case there is no image information contained within the shadows. This non-existent information cannot be retrieved through post processing either.

In digital photography, once that image information is gone, there’s no way to retrieve it.

AE LOCK (AEL)

Auto Exposure Lock is a camera setting in which the exposure value is locked in (when you’re shooting one of the semi-automatic or fully automatic modes, i.e. Shutter-priority).

In this mode, no matter what changes there are to the lighting in the scene, the camera locks in the ISO, Shutter, and Aperture settings, so you can continually achieve the same EV without having to re-meter the scene.

Conclusion

One highly practical advantage to digital photography is that it costs nothing to experiment with the camera’s controls, so go out there and shoot away.

Exposure Guide

Tips for Better Flower Photography

By Dave Kennard

Flowers are naturally beautiful, and easy to find in the warmer months of the year, and so make a great subject for a photo. This article covers the top tips to get great photos when photographing flowers in their natural surroundings.



Photo by Wade Brooks

CHOOSE INTERESTING ANGLES

If you want your flower photos to stand out from the crowd, try taking photos from unusual angles, such as looking up.

Generally when taking natural flower photos, you will want to take the photo at slightly above eye level with the flower, ensuring that the center of the flower can be seen. This will mean crouching down, or for smaller flowers getting the camera right down at ground level.

When photographing flowers at ground level, you may need to flatten or remove blades of grass or leaves that would otherwise be in the way between the camera and the flower.

Tips for Better Flower Photography . . . Continued

USE NATURAL LIGHT AND A TRIPOD IF NEEDED

For taking photos of flowers in their natural environment, you will be best using natural light, and not flash. Natural light will generally give less harsh shadows, and should also ensure that the background behind the flower is lit well.

The best time of the day for photographing flowers is early morning or late afternoon, where the light will be warmer and less harsh than it gets later in the day. The wind is also generally lower at the start and end of the day, meaning you are less likely to get the flower blowing about while you try and take photos of it.

Depending on how well your flower is lit (e.g. if you're shooting a bluebell in woodland then it's probably relatively dark), then you may need to use a tripod to stabilize the camera. When placing the tripod, try to be careful not to squash other nearby flowers and not to knock the flower you are wanting to photograph. You don't want to find the perfect flower and then knock all its petals off while trying to position your tripod!



Photo by Old Stone Photography

For taking photos of flowers during the daytime, try shooting when there is hazy cloud, as the cloud helps diffuse the sunlight. This makes the shadows less harsh and produces a more pleasing photo.

Tips for Better Flower Photography . . . Continued

USE A DIFFUSER TO DIFFUSE HARSH LIGHT

If you're trying to photograph a flower under bright daylight, you can use a diffuser to soften the light, and reduce harsh shadows/highlights on the flower. A diffuser is just a thin piece of material or paper that spreads harsh direct light out over a larger area.

You can buy commercially produced diffusers, or make your own. You need some white translucent material, like a plastic bag, tissue paper, or an old T-shirt. Stretch the material over a frame (an old coat hanger bent into a diamond shape works well), and attach it securely.

When photographing the flower, hold the diffuser between the sun and the flower. You should immediately see the reduction in harsh shadows and highlights on the flower.

LANDSCAPE STYLE FLOWER PHOTOGRAPHY

When you find a large area covered with flowers, you'll probably want to take a photo of the whole scene. The same rules as standard landscape photography apply here. Try and include some foreground, middle-ground, and background to create a sense of depth and scale. Try and use leading lines and the rule of thirds when composing the photo, too.



Photo by Thi-Thanh-Tâm Nguyen; ISO 100, f/8.0, 1/160-second exposure.

If it is windy, make sure you set the camera to use a fast enough shutter speed to avoid the flowers coming out blurry.

Tips for Better Flower Photography . . . Continued

DEW COVERED PETALS

Flowers covered in early morning dew make an attractive photo, but if you missed the early morning, or there wasn't any dew, you can create your own. If you have a misting bottle or spray bottle, you can use this to create a false dew on the flower.

Flowers are a popular subject for photographs, but how can you take good photos that really show off the beauty of a flower? Here are more tips to help you take amazing flower photos. The tips cover photographing flowers in their natural surroundings, rather than photographing flowers in a vase or a flower arrangement, which is quite a different affair.

USE A REFLECTOR OR FLASH TO FILL IN SHADOWS AND HELP LIGHT THE FLOWER

If you are photographing a flower where the front of the flower isn't directly lit by sunlight, you can use a reflector or a small amount of fill-flash to help light the flower. You can purchase commercially made reflectors, or make your own by sticking a large sheet of kitchen foil to a piece of cardboard.

Place the reflector so that it reflects light back onto the flower. As well as helping to light the flower, since the light will be reflected from a different direction to the main light, it can help fill in harsh shadows on the flower.



Photo by Paul Saad; ISO 100, f/7.1, 1/200-second exposure.

As an alternative to a reflector, or in addition, you may also consider using fill-flash to help light the flower and fill in dark shadows. Make sure you have your flash set at low power, as you only want the flash to contribute a small amount of light to the scene, not become the main light source.

Tips for Better Flower Photography . . . Continued

GET IN CLOSE

If your camera has a macro mode, or you have a DSLR with a macro lens, try getting in close and filling the frame with the flower. And then try getting even closer to isolate just part of the flower. You can find some great abstract compositions when focusing on only a very small part of a flower.

When taking close-ups or macro photographs of flowers, you may need to use flash or long shutter speeds to illuminate the flower. At these very close distances, flash will usually appear relatively soft, and more like natural light.

PREVENT THE WIND FROM RUINING YOUR PHOTO

A big problem when taking photos of flowers is that they blow about in the wind. This can cause problems in composing your photo if the flower is constantly moving about. And it will also result in a blurry photo if your shutter speed is not high enough to freeze the motion of the flower.

One thing you can do is to set up a wind break between the flower and the wind. You don't need to lug a full size wind break around with you though. If you have a tripod and diffuser or reflector with you, you can place the tripod between the flower and the wind, and then rest the diffuser or reflector up against the tripod's legs. So long as you're not photographing a tall flower, this should act as a decent windbreak.

Another thing you can do is to secure the flower using an accessory known as a plamp (short for plant clamp). This is a small bendable arm with clamps on both ends. One end clamps to your tripod leg, and the other end clamps onto the flower. This stops the flower blowing about in the wind.

USE BACKLIGHTING TO YOUR ADVANTAGE

The large majority of flowers have relatively thin petals, and so can make a great photo when backlit. The light shines through the petals, giving them quite a different look when compared to a standard photo.

Tips for Better Flower Photography . . . Continued

LOOK AT THE FLOWER CONDITION AND REMOVE ANY DISTRACTIONS

There are exceptions to everything, but in the large majority of cases, a photo of an undamaged flower will look nicer than that of a damaged one. If you are in an area with lots of the same flowers, take your time to look at a few of the flowers and try to find the one that is in the best condition.



Photo by Valerie

Pay attention also to what is surrounding the flower, and try to avoid including other elements (such as a random blade of grass) that distract from the flower. Sometimes you may be able to change the angle you are photographing at to remove the distracting elements.

Other times you may need to squash down or remove the distracting elements. If you are photographing outside of your garden, be careful what you are removing though.

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