

June PhotoShow Winners "Member's Choice"

1st Place — Ray Munns



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President's Comments—July 2025

By Keith O'Leary

Thanks to Melissa Southern who presented our Member's Choice PhotoShow last month and provided some excellent feedback on the 50 photos you submitted. Congratulations to the winners and thank you for submitting your photos!

When I think of July, I think of heat and the 4th of July. As we celebrate Independence Day on July 4th, take your cameras out and look for some good photo opportunities for our Patriotism Photo Share that will be open soon and go through August 15th. Those uploaded to our Google Photos album by 8/15 will be shown in a slideshow before our August meeting. See below in the newsletter for more info.

Join us on July 21st as our own Mio Winkle presents a program entitled "Birding in Costa Rica Through My Lens". I'm looking forward to seeing some extraordinary photos of some extraordinary birds!

Thanks to those of you who joined us via Zoom last month. While we were not without some minor technical issues, I think it went well for all and we will continue to learn and fine tune the experience for you. Stay well. Stay cool. And happy shooting!

Your President,
Keith O'Leary

APC ACTIVITIES - July 2025

- **Club Meeting** **July 21, 2025**
 Mio Winkle: "Birding in Costa Rica through my lens"

APC Board with Contact Info



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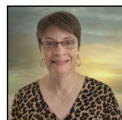
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August, October & November PhotoShows – David Hall

We have three remaining PhotoShows in August, October and November. The 2025 theme has been using more creativity in your photography. These three shows give you an increased opportunity to exhibit that creativity or getting out of our comfort zone(s). That creativity could either be behind the lens, in the editing/post processing --- OR both. If you prefer, neither --- it is all up to you.

The subject or theme for each PhotoShow is:

August – The Same Subject

- Any subject, but all submissions must be of that same subject
- Photos will be judged by the club members

October – One Season

- All photographs representative of one season
- Dean White will be our judge

November – Color and Creativity

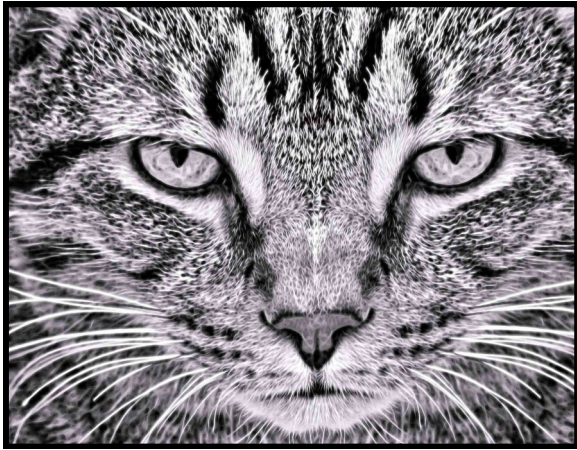
- Pick a single color and shoot anything of that color and/or photos of a subject framed in some fashion by that color AND/OR
- Select a photo that has been edited in post and submit both the before and after versions
 - At the meeting each member will explain the edits or techniques used to create their final edited version
 - The object is not only to be a teaching moment but to spark some interest in editing or give members some new ideas to try

The subjects for this year are ones that may present opportunities throughout the year, not necessarily during any set time period. Of course, deciding on a season to photograph would be the obvious exception.

Here is a preview of the 2025 Alamance Photography Club Programs—John Reich

- July
 - Mio Winkle: "Birding in Costa Rica through my lens"
- September
 - Dan Walker: "Trip down Route 66"

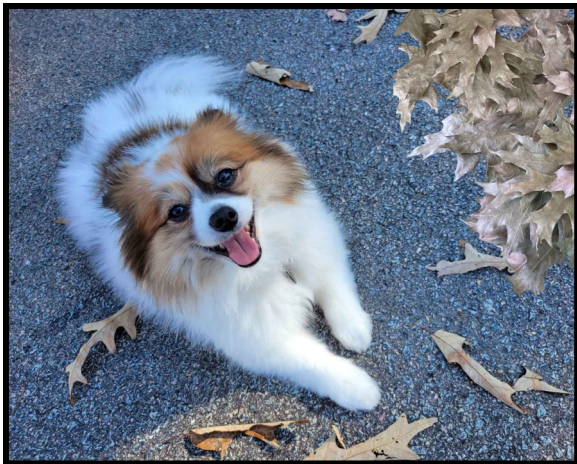
June 2025 PhotoShow



2nd Place — Lyle Johnson



3rd Place — John Reich



HM 1 — Julie Johnson



HM 2 — Ray Munns



HM 3 — Lyle Johnson

Thanks to Melissa Southern for her time and effort in judging our PhotoShow! We appreciate her informative comments. Job well done!!



WEBMASTER NOTES

Our website: <https://www.alamancephoto.com/> is a great way:

- To introduce potential members to the club.
- To stay up to date on the club events.

Christie O'Leary—Webmaster

2025 Summer Field Trip: Saxapahaw, NC

This field trip to Saxapahaw is a personal field trip which may be taken anytime between July 1 and September 30 on your own schedule.

SAXAPAHAW is a former mill-town set on the banks of the idyllic Haw River in the rural piedmont region of North Carolina. Originally settled by the Sissapahaw Native American tribe, Saxapahaw is now home to nearly 2,000 residents. Since the closure of the old mill at the end of the 20th century, Saxapahaw has enjoyed an economic and cultural rebirth, connecting its rich southern heritage with dynamic new initiatives in food, sustainable agriculture, art, entertainment, environmental stewardship and education. More information can be found online at: <https://www.saxapahawnc.com/be-here>

This will also be an opportunity to create photos for submission to the APC September exhibit *A Detailed Look at the World Around Us*, described elsewhere in this newsletter.

Instructions for submitting up to 5 field trip photos for sharing with APC members at the end of the summer will be emailed at a later date.

Hugh Comfort – Outings/Field Trips

Exhibit

“Exploring the Extraordinary Details of the World Around Us”

The Alamance Photography Club (APC) is delighted to announce an exciting new opportunity for its members—a unique photo show that invites photographers to hone their vision and celebrate the overlooked wonders embedded in everyday life. This exclusive exhibition, open solely to APC, BAL members, is set to bring together fresh perspectives and hidden gems, as each submitted photograph must be previously unshown in any prior APC exhibition.

Eligibility and Submission Guidelines

All active members of the Alamance Photography Club are warmly invited to participate in this members-only event. In the spirit of showcasing new work and encouraging creative exploration, submissions must not have been displayed in any previous APC shows. This is your chance to present a new vision and share your latest discoveries with fellow enthusiasts.

Each participating photographer may submit up to three framed photos. To ensure a cohesive and professional presentation, all prints must conform to the following specifications:

- Each photo must be either 8x10 inches or 8.5x11 inches in size.
- A mat is not required for each photo.
- All entries must be properly framed and ready for installation.

The Theme: A Detailed Look at the World Around Us

At the heart of this exhibition lies the theme: A Detailed Look at the World Around Us. Participants are encouraged to turn their lenses toward the intricate, the subtle, and the easily overlooked aspects of their environments. Whether it's the shimmering wings of a dragonfly, the textured bark of an old oak, the pattern of city lights at dusk, or the everyday objects that form the backdrop of our routines, this show calls for photographers to reveal the extraordinary in the ordinary. *(continued on next page)*

"Exploring the Extraordinary Details of the World Around Us":

Think about the details that catch your eye as you move through the world—the play of light on water, the geometry of a leaf's veins, the weathered hands of a craftsman, or the vibrant colors of a city street mural. Each image should invite viewers to pause, reflect, and perhaps see their surroundings through a freshly inspired perspective.

Why Details Matter in Photography

Photography has a unique way of inviting us to slow down and really see. By focusing on details, photographers can draw attention to the quiet stories woven into the fabric of everyday life. This show is not just an artistic exercise; it is an invitation to mindfulness and curiosity, encouraging both creators and viewers to become more aware of the world's subtle artistry.

Submission Deadlines and Next Steps

All images must be submitted August 26-29 from 12 to 6 at the Burlington Artists League Fine Art Gallery, Holly Hill Mall, Suite 330. The Reception is September 13, from 1-4. Each photographer will be asked to bring a food item for the reception. Photos can be picked up after October 6th.

Join Us in Celebrating the Art of Attention

The Alamance Photography Club's latest show promises to be a thoughtful and inspiring exploration of the world's details, brought to life through the talent and vision of our membership. We invite all eligible members to participate, and the wider community to join us for the exhibition opening. Let's come together to celebrate the art of noticing and the power of photography to transform the way we see.



July Program

Mio Winkle: "Birding in Costa Rica through my lens"



My name is Luz Winkle, my friends know me as Mio. I became an APC member in 2023.

I grew up in Puerto Rico and came to NC after meeting my husband in Cozumel, Mexico on a scuba diving adventure.

N.C. has been my home for 7 years, which has inspired me in my artistic side.

I started this photography journey 16 years ago in Puerto Rico. I am passionate about landscape, wildlife and underwater photography. Nature inspires me!

As an adventurous person, I have opportunities to visit wonderful places, having my camera available all the time to witness beautiful landscapes or wildlife.

I love being creative. I complement both creativity and photography!

Mio



Patriotic Photo Share!



APC Membership Corner

July, 2025

Alamance Photography Club (APC) welcomes all photographers and people interested in photography; we provide several opportunities for members to find something of interest that relates to their style of photography. Please continue to invite family, friends and community members to meetings.

Asking all members to complete the member bio questionnaire so you can also be featured in one of the Newsletters. This is a fun way to learn about our shared interests. This month our member bio will feature **Randy Grosch**.

****** See the monthly Newsletter calendar for meetings and upcoming events. ******

Resi Forrest – Membership Chair

apcmembers2@gmail.com

Member Bio



Randy Grosch

Interest in photography: From my first Polaroid camera in the 60's, to today, I have always enjoyed taking pictures.

Member of Alamance Photography Club: New member, February 2025

Favorite things to photograph: Trains and planes! Looking for the perfect angle and lighting is a fun challenge.

Camera Equipment: I always make sure that my camera's abilities exceed my own. Fuji 100S.

Favorite post-processing software: Silkipix and Topaz AI.

Personal Interest: I bike, write music, design instrument panels for Microsoft Flight Simulator, bird watch, and like to visit Civil War battlefields.

Family: Just me and the missus.

City where I live: Burlington - Moved here in November 2024.

Current/Previous occupation: I was a radio DJ.

"Fun fact" about self: I still have a high school track record. But only because they don't run the event anymore!



Table Talkers



**We do not plan to have a Table Talkers
Get-together for July**

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.



DJI Mavic Air 2 Drone

Includes drone, controller, 3 batteries, ND filters and charging cables. Price \$550.

Contact Sam Lynch 336-263-9134.

The following two items are for sale:

- (1) Impact Heavy-Duty Air Cushioned Light Stand
- (2) Impact Telescopic Collapsible Reflector Holder

Never used, like new. Both items offered together for \$50 or best offer.

Contact George Siple at: georgesiple4775@gmail.com

The Black Card Technique

Your Secret Weapon for Stunning Fireworks Photography

By Richard Schneider

The black card technique is used in long exposure photography and can be particularly effective for shooting fireworks. The goal is to prevent overexposure and to capture multiple bursts of fireworks in a single frame.



Photo captured by Mio It

Here is how you can use this technique:

Equipment Needed:

1. A Camera that allows for manual control of aperture, shutter speed, and ISO
2. A Tripod
3. Remote Shutter Release (to avoid camera shake)
4. A Black Card – It should be large enough to cover your camera lens.

Procedure:

Setting up: First, set up your camera on a tripod. The location should be in a spot where you have a good view of the sky where the fireworks will explode.

Focus: Before the fireworks start, set the focus. If you're mainly interested in the fireworks, you can manually focus your camera at a distance where you expect the fireworks to burst. Switch off auto-focus to ensure your camera doesn't try to refocus every time you take a picture.

Camera Settings: Set your camera to a low ISO (like ISO 100 or 200) to reduce noise. Set your aperture to a mid-range value (like f/8 or f/11) for optimal sharpness. Since fireworks are bright, these settings should provide enough light for the shot.

The Black Card Technique. . . Continued

Shutter Speed: Since we are aiming for long exposure to capture multiple bursts, you need to set your camera in Bulb mode. This mode allows you to keep the shutter open for as long as you press the shutter release button.

The Black Card: Hold the black card in front of your camera lens. You'll want it close enough to cover the lens but not so close that you risk bumping the camera.

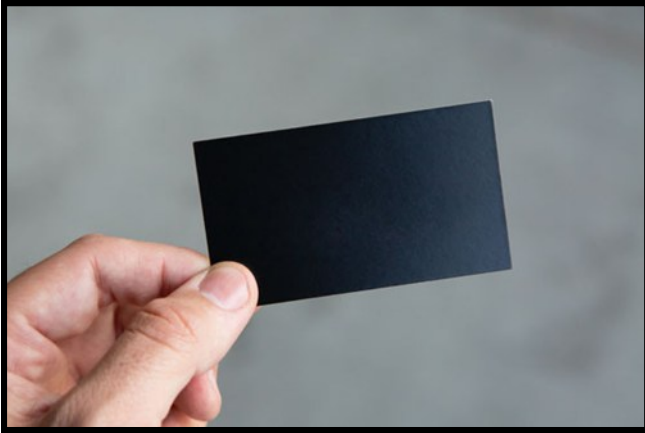


Photo captured by Giorgio Trovato

Shooting the Fireworks: As the fireworks show starts, press and hold the shutter release button to open the shutter. Keep the black card in front of the lens. When a firework burst that you want to capture happens, remove the black card from in front of the lens, exposing it to the light from the firework. Once the burst fades, replace the card. Repeat this each time there is a burst you want to capture. When you're done capturing all the bursts you want in a single frame, release the shutter button to close the shutter and complete the exposure.

Experiment: This technique requires a bit of practice and experimentation. Don't be discouraged if your initial shots are not what you expected. Play around with the timing of when you remove and replace the card, as well as the settings on your camera, until you get results that you are happy with.

Remember to review your shots and adjust your settings as needed. Factors such as the brightness of the fireworks, ambient light, and the desired effect may necessitate adjustment of your aperture, ISO, or how long you keep the shutter open.

13 Amazing Night Photography Ideas

By Jim Hamel



Night photography is an *incredible* genre, one that offers a near-constant supply of outstanding photo opportunities. However, if you're a night photography beginner or you're looking to expand your night photoshoot horizons, then you might benefit from some inspiration.

I've created a full course on night photography but in this article I share 13 of my favorite night photography ideas, and I also offer plenty of tips, tricks, and examples along the way. (Of course, don't limit yourself to the subjects I suggest; instead, use them as a jumping-off point for non-stop nighttime fun.)

By the time you're finished reading, you'll be feeling inspired – and you'll have plenty of night photoshoot ideas for gorgeous images!

Let's dive right in.

1. Reflections

If you're looking for an easy night photography idea – one that you can use in practically *every* city, big or small – then keep an eye out for reflections.

After all, most cities have plenty of modern office buildings made of glass and steel, and while these aren't often photogenic subjects on their own, the glass and steel provide great opportunities for capturing reflections of nearby features.

Plus, at night, glass can appear particularly reflective.

13 Amazing Night Photography Ideas . . . Continued

The bright lights of the city will show up clearly in the facades of buildings, and the resulting photos can look cinematic and even surreal.

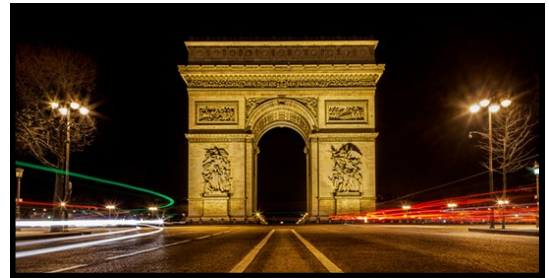
Of course, water presents a great opportunity for capturing reflections, as well. Ponds, lakes, and even fountains can work great for this, but I do recommend you use a slow shutter speed to remove water ripples; that way, the reflection will show up more clearly.



2. Streaking lights

Streaking headlights and taillights look amazing, they add a sense of movement to the scene, and they're a great way to deal with the problem of traffic in your photos.

Here's how you can capture stunning light-trail shots.



Start by dialing in a slow shutter speed. (You will typically need to shoot at 15 seconds or longer to allow enough time for the vehicles to move through your frame.) Then set a mid-range aperture (around f/8) and a low ISO (100) to prevent overexposure, then adjust depending on conditions.

Once you have your camera set up, mount it on a tripod, then wait until traffic is about to enter your frame. Trip the shutter!

If you follow these instructions, the shutter will stay open while the traffic moves through the frame, and only the headlights and taillights of the passing vehicles will show up in your picture.

Where should you go to find good places for streaking lights? That depends. If you just want the streaking lights to accentuate the scene, then you can go practically anywhere: city centers, suburbs, parking lots, even rural roads.

If you want the streaking lights to be the *centerpiece* of your photo, however, you will need to find a vantage point overlooking a highway or a major street. Bridges and overpasses work great for this. Parking garages that are next to a highway can work great, as well.

13 Amazing Night Photography Ideas . . . Continued

3. Skylines



Skylines nearly *always* look great at night. The buildings will be lit, and they'll contrast against the black sky.

Plus, you won't have to worry about a lot of things that cause problems during the day; there will be no glare from front-lit buildings, nor will there be shadows from backlit buildings. For the most part, cloud

conditions don't matter, either.

The key is to find a good vantage point. If your city has a river or bay you can shoot across, scout out potential locations in advance, and then head over when the sun sets. Another good choice is an elevated point overlooking the skyline (look for bridges and overpasses). When searching for overlooks, Google Maps Street View is your friend!

4. Monuments

The best part about photographing monuments at night is that they're usually well lit – and the inky background plus the artificial lamps create an effect that viewers aren't used to seeing.

The worst part about monuments is that, even at night, they can attract a lot of people. Fortunately, long exposures can help you out; by dialing in a lengthy shutter



speed (over 30 seconds, so you will need to use Bulb mode), people that happen to walk through your scene will not show up in the final picture. Of course, if the people happen to stop walking and stand around in your frame, they will show up, and you'll need to use the Clone Stamp tool in Photoshop to get rid of them down the line.

One tip: Monument lights aren't kept on all night. In my experience, they go out around midnight, so make sure you arrive at least an hour or two in advance to get your shot.

13 Amazing Night Photography Ideas . . . Continued

5. Fireworks

Fireworks are a classic night photoshoot idea, and for good reason:

They look amazing, and cameras are uniquely capable of capturing their splendor.

Note that you don't need to wait until the 4th of July to find a fireworks display; many cities and towns now have fireworks on a regular basis as a means to draw people to local businesses. For example, the picture above – of fireworks over St. Louis – was taken on a random weekend. And I live near a lake in Texas that has fireworks every weekend during the summer. So head on over to Google and see if you can find a fireworks display near you.



The key to capturing fireworks is to use the right shutter speed and to time the explosions. In my experience, a 10-15 second shutter speed works well – it provides enough time for the fireworks to fully explode, but it isn't so long that the fireworks have time to fade.

Trigger the shutter when you see the dot of the firework going up. That way, your picture will capture the explosion from beginning to end.

6. Individual buildings

I know, it sounds boring, but don't overlook shots of individual buildings.

Yes, if you photograph an individual building during the day, you'll often end up with a bland image. But you'd be surprised by how some buildings look at night! So go on a city walk, take your camera, and look for architecture with interesting lights!



Don't look just for brightly lit buildings, though. Industrial buildings and scenes feature great shapes and textures; they often look better than modern facades. While you might not want to be wandering around an abandoned factory (especially at night!), there are plenty of historical public structures and working factories you can photograph from the street.

13 Amazing Night Photography Ideas . . . Continued

7. Streetlights

This night photoshoot idea is quick, easy, and tons of fun.

Wherever you go, keep an eye out for streetlights. And do your best to capture them!

One streetlight is nice, especially when you can combine it with lots of negative space for a minimalist effect. Rows of streetlights are even better!

Since you'll be photographing lights, you'll need to be careful not to create spots of overexposure (unless that's the effect you're going for, of course!). If you're after a cool effect, narrow your aperture to f/16 or so; that way, the lights will turn into a twinkling starburst!



8. Carnivals

Carnivals are all about bright lights, vibrant colors, and movement – which means they're great places for the (well-prepared) night photographer.

Of course, carnivals don't happen every day, so you'll need to plan ahead. Most metropolitan areas have publications listing all upcoming events, and if you can't find one of those, you can check a guidebook for your city.



Once you're at the carnival, set your exposure so your shutter speed is in the 8-15 second range. That way, you can capture the movement of rollercoasters, Ferris wheels, and other spinning rides in your shot. You can usually set a low ISO to keep noise under control, and you can select a moderate aperture for sufficient depth of field.

13 Amazing Night Photography Ideas . . . Continued

9. Museums



Museums are designed to be shown off. As a result, most museums present dramatic facades, are accessible to the public, and are beautifully lit at night.

In other words, they're a great night photoshoot subject.

Plus, you don't have to search hard for museums. Pretty much every museum will be

listed in guidebooks, on tourism websites, and on Google Maps. (There are often several museums to choose from!) Just find the most attractive one – try searching Google Images – and check it out.

Once you find a good museum, the key to success is composition. Start with the obvious frontal shot, but then work the scene from there, trying out different angles and perspectives. See if you can find interesting foreground subjects to add depth, and don't forget to shoot the little details.

10. Neon signs

This isn't a night photography idea you can use in every location, but many cities – especially the big ones, like New York and London, are full of beautiful neon signs.

Signs are easy to overlook, but once you know to keep an eye out, you'll likely see them popping up all over the place.

Note that you don't need to fill the frame with the neon sign. You can use the sign edges to frame another subject, or you can use the sign to provide foreground interest...the opportunities go on and on. This image required a wide-angle lens to encompass all (or most) of the neon signs in a New York City square.



Make sure to expose carefully, though. Neon signs, like streetlights (discussed above) are bright, and it's easy to end up with clipped highlights. Check your LCD often, and if you're not getting the results you like, try using an HDR technique to keep detail in the highlights and the shadows.

13 Amazing Night Photography Ideas . . . Continued

11. Overlooks and views

A good view can make for amazing pictures at any time of the day, and nighttime is a special time when cities come alive with lights.

Finding a great view can be difficult, however. Parks and towers are often closed at night, while parking garages offer spotty access. My favorite way to find views is to search city guidebooks; sometimes, there might even be a section on the best views. If that doesn't work, check out tourist blogs and websites, many of which offer lists of look-out spots.

One warning: A great view does not necessarily make a great picture. The key to success often lies in the foreground. Make sure to include a close element of interest that draws or leads the viewer to the stunning background.



12. Bridges



Struggling to find a night photo subject? Find a bridge!

Your city may not have the Brooklyn Bridge or the Golden Gate Bridge, but I can almost guarantee you that it will have a bridge of some type and that it will be well lit at night. Almost every major city is built on a river or a bay, meaning there will be bridges. And the

bridges *are always* lit.

13 Amazing Night Photography Ideas . . . Continued

For the most compelling photos, you'll want to find a good vantage point. Google Maps Street View is helpful; you can find the main bridges in your city, then just (virtually) walk around. Be sure you find a place to park, as this can often be tricky around bridges.

When out shooting, take special notice of the water under the bridge. For one, fast-moving water looks great when shot with a long exposure; the long exposure time will smooth out the water, creating a beautiful effect. Additionally, the lights from the bridge will often create reflections in the water – so if you can position your camera so the water constitutes your foreground, the results will be amazing.

One more thing: When photographing a bridge, don't overlook the passing traffic. You might be able to incorporate streaking lights from the cars into your shots. As with any light-trail photography, make sure you fire the shutter right as traffic is about to enter the frame.

13. Fountains

Many central plazas and squares surround a fountain, and these are (usually) brightly lit at night. What's more, photographing at night works to your advantage: the slow shutter speeds required by the lack of light allow the water to flow while your shutter is open, making the water appear beautiful and smooth.



Start with a low to midrange ISO (100-400) and a moderate aperture (around f/8). Then adjust your shutter speed to get the correct exposure; this will generally result in a sufficiently slow shutter speed to create smooth, flowing water.

Night photography ideas: final words

Now that you've finished this article, you should have plenty of night photoshoot ideas – and you're hopefully ready to head out and take some beautiful long exposures.

So pick a few of these night ideas, do a bit of research, then grab your camera and have fun!



Digital
Photography
School

Lightning Photography

8 Important Tips to Consider

By Swee Shiong Chong

Lightning photography is self-explanatory: photographing lightning. Because lightning is a very unpredictable force of nature, the actual process of photographing lightning presents unique challenges to photographers. It is, however, possible to be an outstanding lightning photographer if you are equipped with the necessary skills. Below are 8 useful tips that will help you capture stunning lightning shots:



Photo by Nick Olejniczak; ISO 200, f/14, 2-second exposure

1. Use a tripod or steady surface.

This is one of the most important tips to consider. Although a tripod works best, any steady surface will do the trick. Because lightning is accompanied by storms, it is obvious why a tripod or steady surface is important.

2. Consider long shutter times.

Lightning is unpredictable; it is very hard to make decent captures tripping the shutter every time you see a flash. For this reason, you should consider investing in a good camera with slow shutter speeds, preferably 30 seconds.

Lightning Photography: 8 Important Tips to Consider . . . Continued

3. Set the horizon.

Most lightning action takes place in the sky. For this reason, the field of view must be set from the horizon up or skewed to the sky. Depending on how close lightning strikes, you will be including more blank sky than normal. You shouldn't worry about this, because the sky will be more exciting when lightning strikes.



Photo by Jeff Wallace; ISO 250, f/10, 6-second exposure

4. Include something interesting.

Although the main focus should be on the sky, you shouldn't forget to include something interesting in the frame to give your photo relevance and/or perspective. For instance, you can choose to include buildings or vegetation or other things that show how big a storm is.

5. Use manual focus.

It is better to use manual focus when taking lightning photos, because lightning is best seen at night when there is enough darkness. Instead of letting your camera hunt for focus automatically when taking every new shot, get a suitable manual focus and leave your camera there.

6. Set shutter speed and aperture manually.

If you are using a camera with the ability to set shutter speed, pick a suitable shutter time like mentioned above and choose a fairly wide aperture. The depth of field should be shallow unless you have nearby objects you would like to include.

Lightning Photography: 8 Important Tips to Consider . . . Continued

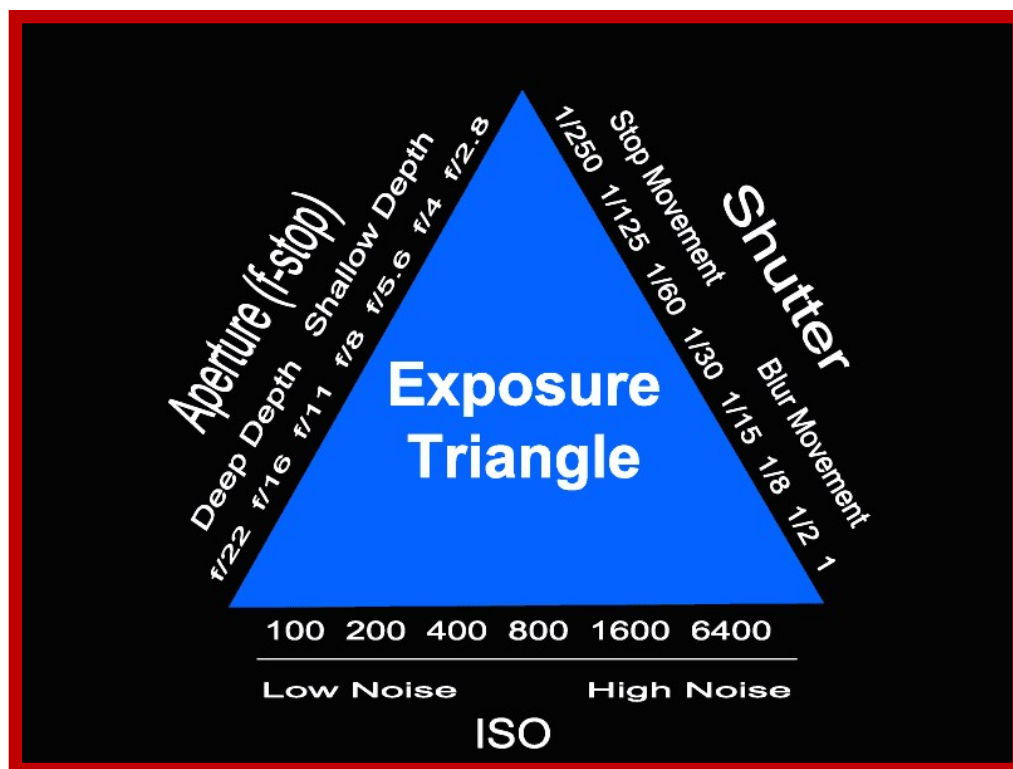
7. Consider using stacking software.

This tip is useful if you succeed in capturing steady shots one after the other. You can use stacking software to combine multiple images into one. Most spectacular lightning photos are a result of stacking, because a single strike usually captures faint cloud action or a single lightning strike.

8. Exercise patience.

This is the last most important tip to consider about lightning photography in this list. Because lightning is unpredictable, you have to be patient. You also need to prepare yourself for multiple camera adjustments in an effort to capture the best shot.

PICTURECORRECT.com



The 7 Most Fundamental Photo Editing Skills to Master

Whether you're shooting on a DSLR, mirrorless camera, or even your smartphone, photo editing is a key part of crafting a polished final image. Great editing can turn a decent photo into a stunning one—and the best part is, you don't need to master every tool at once. By focusing on a few fundamental skills, you'll build a strong foundation to take your photography to the next level.

Here are the most essential photo editing skills every photographer should learn:



Photo captured by Joseph Pearson

1. Cropping and Straightening

Sometimes a great photo just needs a little compositional adjustment. Learning to crop thoughtfully helps remove distractions and guide the viewer's eye toward the subject. Similarly, straightening horizons or vertical lines can make an image feel much more balanced and professional.

Tip: Use the rule of thirds grid when cropping to enhance composition.

2. Exposure and Contrast Adjustment

Exposure correction helps fix images that are too dark or overly bright. Tweaking contrast brings depth and definition, especially in flat or hazy photos. These basic adjustments can immediately make your photos more dynamic and true to life.

3. White Balance and Color Correction

Colors can shift depending on the lighting when you shoot. Learning to adjust white balance ensures that whites look neutral and skin tones appear natural. Mastering this gives your photos a clean, polished look—free from weird color casts.

4. Sharpening and Noise Reduction

A little sharpening can help details pop, especially when resizing for web or print. On the flip side, reducing noise (especially in low-light shots) helps smooth out grainy or pixelated areas while keeping important texture.

The 7 Most Fundamental Photo Editing Skills to Master. . . Continued

5. Cloning and Spot Removal

Dust spots, blemishes, and small distractions can sneak into even the best shots. Learning how to use the clone tool or healing brush helps you clean up these imperfections without altering the overall look of the image.

6. Dodge and Burn (Lighten and Darken Selectively)

This classic technique goes back to darkroom days. Use dodge and burn tools to subtly brighten or darken areas of your photo to enhance mood, draw focus, or add dimension. It's a powerful way to guide the viewer's eye.

7. Using Layers and Masks (for Advanced Editing)

If you're diving into Photoshop or similar advanced editors, layers and masks are your best friends. They let you make changes non-destructively and apply adjustments with precision. Learning how to control what parts of the image an effect applies to opens up a new world of creative flexibility.

Final Thoughts

You don't need to master every editing tool overnight. Start small—learn the basics, experiment, and build from there. Even subtle tweaks can have a big impact. As you gain experience, your editing will become an extension of your creative vision.

Master the fundamentals, and the rest will follow.

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