



Photography Beyond Memories

A Guided Approach To Getting Started With Professional Photography

An APN Book

AdvancedPhotography.Net

Copyright

“**PHOTOGRAPHY BEYOND MEMORIES** is Copyright © 2011 Binary Turf Web Technologies Pvt. Ltd.”

Photography Beyond Memories by [AdvancedPhotography.Net](#) is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 3.0 Unported License](#).

All images used in this book are the copyrights of their respective owners and have been used under a creative commons allowing commercial use, adaptation, modification or building upon as of the release date of this book.

You are free:

- to Share — to copy, distribute and transmit the work

Under the following conditions:

- Attribution — You must attribute the work in the manner specified by the author or licensor (but not in any way that suggests that they endorse you or your use of the work).
- Noncommercial — You may not use this work for commercial purposes.
- No Derivative Works — You may not alter, transform, or build upon this work.

With the understanding that:

- Waiver — Any of the above conditions can be waived if you get permission from the copyright holder.
- Public Domain — Where the work or any of its elements is in the public domain under applicable law, that status is in no way affected by the license.
- Other Rights — In no way are any of the following rights affected by the license:
 - Your fair dealing or fair use rights, or other applicable copyright exceptions and limitations;
 - The author’s moral rights;
 - Rights other persons may have either in the work itself or in how the work is used, such as publicity or privacy rights.
- Notice — For any reuse or distribution, you must make clear to others the license terms of this work. The best way to do this is with a link to this web page.

Contents

Preface

Introduction

Equipment

- Choosing And Buying A Camera
- Handling The Camera
- Camera Care
- Setting Up Your Camera
- Getting Familiar With The Camera Controls
- Camera Modes

Photography Concepts

- The Exposure Triangle
- How To Make A Mark With Your Photographs
- Light And It's Features
- White Balance
- Composition
- Exposure Revisited
- Storing And Printing Photographs
- 8 Thumb Rules

Photography Tips

- 10 Essential Tips For Camera Owners
- How To Shoot Portraits
- How To Take Group Photographs
- How To Photograph Children
- 10 Most Common Mistakes

Additional Resources

- References
- Share Your Love
- Keep In Touch

14

15

17

19

21

22

26

30

31

33

34

36

41

44

47

51

52

53

54

Preface

It was our long desire to provide something of high-value and utility to our APN fans. What better way than to compose an eBook which all our subscribers can get, keep handy and refer to as and when required?

PHOTOGRAPHY BEYOND MEMORIES took more than a month to compose. The task essentially was to have relevant content, with examples which could lower the entry level barrier for new hobbyist photographers. The book is about how to make masterpieces of your casual photographs, an attempt to familiarize newbies with the camera and the techniques that the professionals use everyday.

Most of the books happen by chance, at least one's first ones do. While pursuing photography, I never realised that my interest would bring me so far. And then I started my photography blog to document my findings, experience and learnings. As the blog grew in content, so did my intent to summarise it in

a book such that it would form a good introduction & induction to the world of photography and also lower the barrier to entry into this field.

This is not an authoritative and exhaustive book on photography but more of a guide to get started; from a beginner to someone who can take photographs, look at photographs, analyse them critically and learn from experience. All you need is a camera. Almost any camera would do, even the one in your cellphone. However as your understanding of the art develops, so will your requirements for the equipment of your choice. But there's still time for that to happen. For now, let's get started with the art of photography.

With Best Compliments

Shivanand Sharma

(BLOGGER-IN-CHIEF, ADVANCEDPHOTOGRAPHY.NET)

Introduction

People pursue photography with various intents. Some pursue it as a hobby or a means of recreation and some pursue it as a profession. And those who don't pursue photography still do photograph perhaps to freeze moments into timeless memories. In fact a lot of the occasional photographers pick up the camera to preserve memories as photographs — something they can cherish for a lifetime... People who are a part of these memories directly or indirectly can relate to these photographs and can appreciate them. However introducing the dimension of art turns photographs into masterpieces which most people can relate to and appreciate. It's not only the casual viewer but also the artists who can notice even the finer nuances of your artwork and feel spellbound.

This e-book is to welcome you to the world of photography pursued as an art and as a form of expression. The aim of this book is to help you build an artistic perspective into casual photographs so they can stand out and mesmerize the viewers. This book is for beginners and hobbyists

alike. And if you have an inclination to get started with photography or take your photography to the next level, then this book is an essential. This book shall educate and equip you with the information you require to grow as a photographer. You thus will be able to pick and choose your own equipment, find accurate, relevant and reliable information online and in books. This will allow you to experiment and practice photography while self-learning.

This book covers the subjects in four sections:

- I. Equipment**
- II. Concepts**
- III. Photography Tips**
- IV. Additional Resources**

For further reading, references, regular photography tips and updates please subscribe to my blog at AdvancedPhotography.Net.

I. Equipment



Choosing And Buying A Camera

What matters the most when buying a digital camera? Is it the [image quality](#), the brand name or the features offered by the camera? It's not just the brand name or the fancy features provided by the camera that should influence your decision, it should be your preference in the purview

of the following buying guide.

1. How Much Would You Like To Spend

The primary consideration while buying a camera is your budget. Decide on how much you are willing to pay for the possession of the photo-gear. The digital camera market is flooded with a variety of cameras in all ranges; each offering scores of features at competitive prices. All you need to do is to first decide the amount you would like to spend and thereafter search for the photo-gears as per the budget. An inexpensive compact camera is also a good option for starters; after all [your camera doesn't matter](#) in making you a good photographer.

2. Primary Objective

If you know the primary purpose behind buying the camera, you will be in a better position to pick the camera that fulfills your desire. Answer the basic questions for yourself, like:

- Why do you need the camera?
- How frequently you will be using the camera?
- Will you click the photographs for online sharing alone or would like to retain the prints as well.

- Do you already own a camera or this one is going to be the very first possession?

Ascertaining the aforementioned requirements will help you draw a clear picture as to what exactly are you looking for — a simple point and shoot or a compact camera, an entry level digital SLR or a professional photo-gear.

3. Your Level As A Photographer

Assessing your level as a photographer, helps you in determining the level of sophistication of the photo-gear. Being a skilled photographer, you would probably like to own a camera which offers a wide variety of settings to control what your camera sees and captures. Whilst the camera with loads of automatic settings is considerably good for beginners. Thus, opting for a DSLR is a cool option if you like to play with the camera-settings to master your art as a photographer.

4. Features, Bells & Whistles

There is a stiff competition in the digital camera market, with each manufacturer striving for offering the best at the most competitive prices. If you are looking for an equipment loaded with fancy features and bells & whistles,

there is nothing like the compacts. They offer features like face detection, self-portrait mode, smile detection and so on. DSLRs and prosumers on the other hand focus on providing useful features like better image processing engine, bigger image sensor, option to shoot in RAW, etc which ultimately helps in capturing fine and accurate details of the scene or the subject.

5. Lens Zoom Range

Zooming in helps in getting up, close and personal with the subject (without physically moving closer) and fill the



frame with tightly cropped scene. The better the zooming range of the camera's lens, more is the possibility of capturing the distant and far-off objects. The consideration holds good for compacts and prosumer cameras while DSLRs offer a much better opportunity, that of using interchangeable lenses. These [interchangeable lenses](#) come in handy for justifiably photographing the scene or the subject. For example, a high range telephoto lens is probably good for photographing birds whereas a portrait lens helps in [capturing the portraits effectively](#).

6. Consider The Camera Modes

All the cameras provide a certain [modes](#) suitable for specific scene and subject. The camera automatically takes care of all the settings in auto-modes. That is to say that tuning the camera to sports mode automatically boosts the shutter speed of the camera and turning the camera to night scene optimally sets the [shutter speed](#) and [ISO](#) of the camera to make proper [exposure](#) in low-light scene. The [DSLRs have an edge over other cameras](#) in this respect. DSLRs offer semi-auto modes as well, which help in acquiring a better control over the equipment.



7. Ease Of Use

The next big factor while deciding on which camera to buy is the ease of using the equipment. The equipment you are planning to buy should offer you the flexibility of easily sifting through the various modes suitable for specific scenes (or subjects). It should also be able to offer simplified access to various settings so as to quickly tune the camera and get ready for capturing the spontaneous action. The ease of use is also related with the flexibility of accessorizing the equipment with filters, lenses, additional flash units, etc to put forth your creative skills at photographing the scene.



8. Processing Speed

Some digital cameras, especially the compacts and point and shoot types pose a time-barrier in [photographing spontaneous actions and activities](#). These cameras take a long time to process the image and save it to the memory and return back to the shooting mode. And if you are planning to photograph kids, pets or sports action, it is better to consider a DSLR over other cameras.

Pick the camera which best suits your personality and level as a photographer. If you are a casual photographer and love to hang around with a stylized device, multiple color offerings by Nikon Coolpix (and Sony Cybershot) and sleek & slim designs offered by various compact camera manufacturers are worth looking at. Check out weatherproof and waterproof photo-gear, if you hate to be too possessive about your belongings or simply plan to buy a DSLR to justify your passion for photography.

9. Suits Your Style



10. Comparisons And Reviews

Shortlist the cameras on the basis of features, price, specs., storage capacity, battery types and so on. Compare the specs and read the reviews online to arrive at the final conclusion.



Handling The Camera

Once you have bought the camera, the next thing is to get started with the adventure of looking at the world around you through the camera lens and record the amazing world of reality.

Get ready to capture the beauty of nature, record the happiness of friends & family and grab the opportunities for nourishing the photographer in you.

Before getting started on the adventure of photography, it's time to learn the fundamentals of photography. Start with the basics; the basics of properly handling the camera.

Hold The Camera Right

Holding the camera right means many things. It aids you in the [composition](#) and a firm foot helps you keep the motion artifacts down. Use your left hand as a base to hold and support the camera while the thumb and forefinger controls the lens rings. With the right hand you

grip the camera and use its forefinger to fire the shutter. Keep the horizons straight. Stand firm and if required lean or take support for your camera against the walls and the trees in absence of a tripod.

While this is good for most of the cases, you probably need a sturdy surface, perhaps a tripod or a monopod when photographing at slower shutter speeds.



Plan Your Photo

Planning your photos goes a long way in getting you photographs that leave a lasting impression. [Visualize what the camera will see](#) and how you'd want to capture it. Compose the scene by looking through the viewfinder, press the shutter release half-way to focus and smoothly press the shutter release the rest of the way down to release the shutter and record a photograph.

Accessorize the camera

Consider investing in various accessories like [filters](#) (the glass fittings used in combination with the camera lens to alter the image being captured), [lenses](#) (select the lens depending on what you love to photograph), battery chargers, etc. Using the accessories, especially the lenses, filters, external flash units and light-meter help you in extending your capabilities as a photographer.

This was just a simple guide for those of you starting with photography. Have fun experimenting with your camera.



Camera Care

Camera care is one of the underlying virtues of valuing your prized possession. You'd probably love to exhibit your piece of art to the world, then why step back in taking care of the photo-gear which helps you in crafting your imaginations.

Here are some simple practices which will help you keep your camera (and accessories) safe and sound.

- Always put the camera and accessories back in the camera-bag after use.
- Wear the camera strap round the neck to ensure camera-safety while shooting.
- Keep the camera cleaning kit handy, preferably in the camera bag itself.
- Replace the lens cap when you are not shooting.
- Save your camera lens against dust and fingerprints by using clear filter or UV filter.
- Clean the camera lens with cotton swab or a lens pen.
- Consider buying an invisible sheet or screen cover to save the LCD from any damages.
- Protect the camera from water. Use waterproof camera bag when going out for shooting in bad weather or consider investing in a camera sleeve, if you love to photograph in rains.
- Immediately call the customer care or ask for manufacturer's help in case of fault in device.
- Insure the camera against possible damages.

Take care of your new camera as you'd valued your newly-wedded bride.





Setting Up Your Camera

Read the user manual and change the default camera-settings set by the manufacturer and tune the camera to your preferences. The user manual provides an insight into the camera-settings and its effects on the photographs. Depending on the features provided by your camera, you can set the camera to desired [modes for white-balance](#), [on-camera flash](#), auto-focus points, [camera-metering](#), etc or enable [histograms](#) and the select the shooting-format.

I always prefer setting the camera to [shoot in RAW](#), while leaving the other settings untouched. Shooting in RAW allows me to preserve the fine details and offers me greater flexibility in making [post-processing adjustments](#). While shooting in JPEG has its own advantages, most of the time it requires you to manually set the saturation levels and white balance settings for each shot to [get well saturated vivid colors in your photographs](#).

Tune the camera to the required settings, depending on the [type of photography](#) and quality of results expected



by you. Setting up the camera before-hand frees you from making precise settings each time you pick the camera.



Getting Familiar With The Camera Controls

The camera controls are an indicator of camera's ability to simplify the task of the photographer. Getting familiar with camera controls and dials come in handy for making photography your secondary nature. So, take out some time and set a date with your camera to better understand the features and settings offered by your camera.

Read the user manual for an in-depth insight into various controls provided by the camera. The user guide walks you through the camera-interface, briefing you about the camera controls and dials for tuning the [camera modes](#), selecting the [flash modes](#), setting intensity levels of flash units, [white-balance presets](#) and other settings (like setting date-time, etc).

Familiarity with the camera controls not only lets you command your camera effectively, it also helps in determining the edge of your camera over other cameras.



Camera Modes

Cameras come with various shooting modes which have application in specific conditions. Let's have a look at the common shooting modes on a digital camera and what they mean.

Auto Mode

The camera in this mode takes care of all the settings automatically. Depending on the subject and the available light, camera automatically sets the aperture and shutter speed to make proper exposure.

Portrait Mode

Setting your camera to the portrait mode automatically sets the contrast curves to low contrast which are appropriate for portraits. The portrait mode is pretty intelligent and reliable for [photographing portraits](#) as a beginner.

Landscape Mode

In this mode, the camera tries to capture the colors of nature by boosting in-camera saturation levels. The



camera also sets the aperture to larger f-numbers, so as to portray a high DOF to put everything in sharp focus.

Macro Mode

The macro mode is designed to give you the [best results for macro shots](#). It automatically tunes the camera to take close-up shots of small objects, flowers and insects.

Sports Mode

Meant for dynamic motion shots, the camera's sports mode renders sharp images of the subject in action. The



camera attempts to freeze the motion probably by raising the shutter speed.

Night Scene Mode

The night scene mode sets the camera to slow shutter speed, which helps in making [long exposures](#) to compensate for low light at night.

Programmed-Auto Mode

The camera in this mode enables you to change a certain settings, like flash, white-balance, etc while the camera



sets the exposure by itself.

Shutter-Priority Mode

This is a semi-auto mode, where you can control the [shutter speed](#) of the camera and tune it to the f-stops demanded by the scene, while the camera takes care of rest of the settings.

Aperture-Priority Mode

This is also a semi-auto mode. In aperture-priority mode you can fine-tune the [aperture](#) settings for [portraying](#)



[required depth of field](#), while the shutter speed is taken care of by the camera automatically.

Manual Mode

The manual mode offers you the flexibility of having a complete control over the settings (by delegating you the task of fine-tuning the camera).

Start with camera auto-modes, play around with the semi-auto modes and forget about the manual mode unless you know what you are doing.

II. Photography Concepts



Exposure Triangle

The exposure in the photographic sense means exposure of the film or the image sensor to the light. [Exposure](#) is a critical and single most important fundamental of photography. Exposure rests on the three pillars; the [aperture](#) (lens opening), [shutter speed](#) – the time the aperture remains open during the shot and the [ISO](#) which is the sensitivity of the film or image sensor. The correct grasp of these concepts enables you to get the right exposure in challenging circumstances. Let's get to it.

1. The Aperture

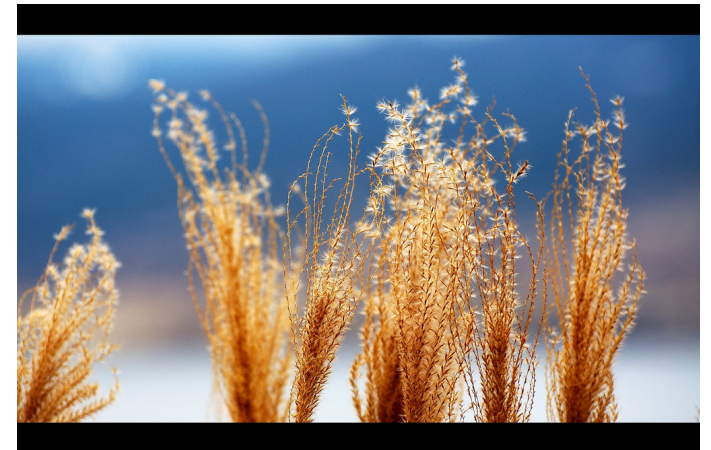
The aperture is the small opening inside the lens that controls the amount of light falling on the film or the digital sensor. Its diameter is denoted in f-numbers or f-stop. Every professional camera equipment has an aperture scale and may have f-stops like f/3.5, f/4, f/4.8, f/5.6.... f/19, f/22. The smaller the number, the wider is the aperture the greater is the amount of light that comes in.

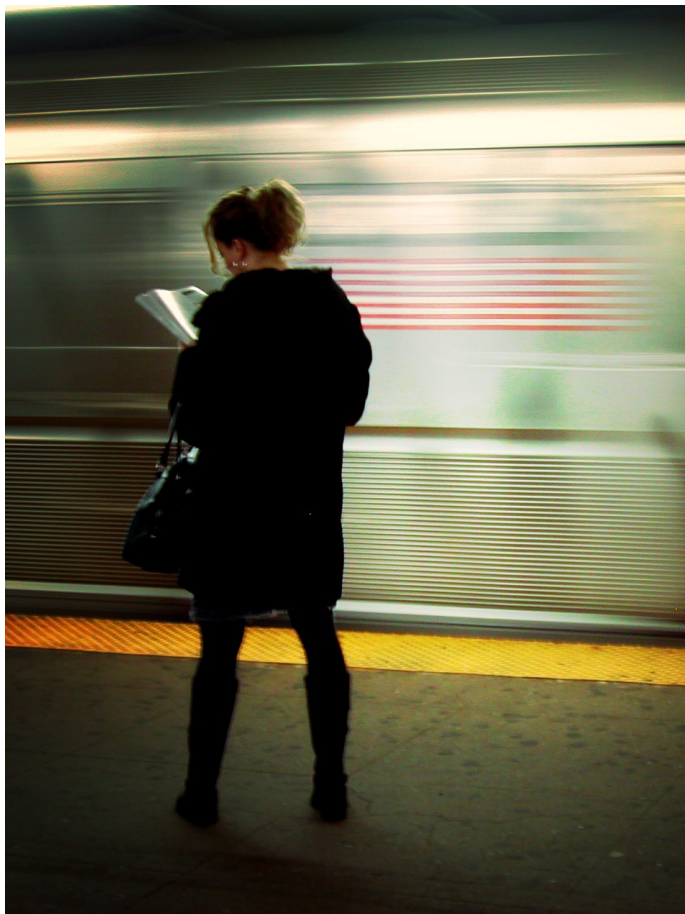
While the greater the amount of light you have, the larger your playground becomes. On a bright and sunny day you can even shoot at f/22 whereas in a dim light (like indoors) you may need to open up your aperture at the way to maximum so that the camera can make use of whatever light is available.

The aperture works in tandem with other controls like shutter speed to produce beautiful effects (known as the [aperture effects](#)), like the [bokeh effect](#), the starlight effect and also for attaining a shallow [depth of field](#).

2. The Shutter Speed

The shutter speed determines the length of time the





aperture remains open to allow light into the camera. This adds another dimension to the process, the aperture opens to a certain f-stop and the shutter speed determines how long it remains open before closing the aperture.

Depending on the amount of light in the scene, the camera (or you) may choose to use fast or slow shutter-speed. The lesser the light in the scene the slower the shutter speed to allow more light to make way for proper exposure.

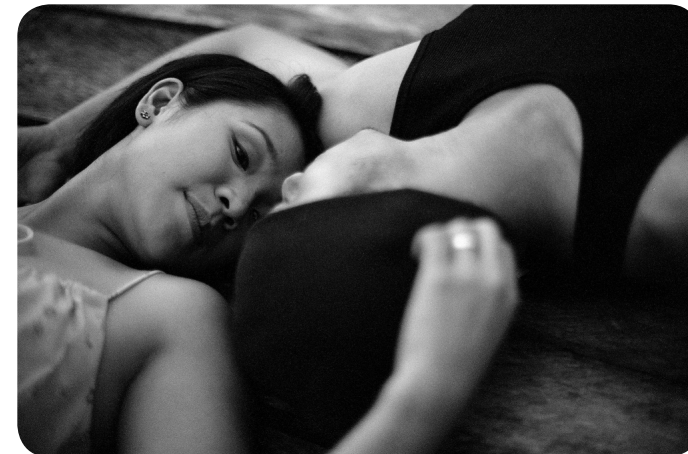
Besides exposure, the shutter speed also has a profound impact on the pictures. The slow shutter speed helps you in making [long exposures](#) for capturing the waterfalls, [fireworks](#), traffic trails, etc and a high shutter speed on the other hand freezes the motion the instance shutter release.

Controlling the shutter speed gives you an opportunity to capture fantastic, outstanding and pleasing [photographs portraying motion effects](#).

3. The ISO

ISO represents the sensitivity of the image sensor of

camera to light. In film cameras this is the sensitivity of the film. However since digital cameras do not use films, they simulate this effect by boosting the light amplification with digital circuits. Higher ISOs means greater film (or sensor) sensitivity and thus the lower amount of light required to get the right exposure. Thus the ISO settings of your digital camera enables you to shoot in low light; without altering the aperture or shutter speed (but with [grainy effect](#)).



How To Make A Mark With Your Photographs

Photography is an art. And just like any form of art, photography is the medium for expression. How well your photographs make an impression depends on how well the expression is communicated. And this is what differentiates a masterpiece from the rest. Here are a few tips on refining the artist in you.

1. Understand How Photographs Are Interpreted

At an abstract level, photographs and images are symbolic – an open door, the horizon, a tree all convey something. It is therefore important to know what the scene conveys and how to get the best shot.

2. It's All About Reaction

People react in various ways when they look at a picture. It depends on how they interpret the message, their background, the culture they belong to. Thus different people will have different reaction and understanding of



your work. Believe in yourself and be open to feedback. Understand that not everyone has the ability to critically analyze a photograph.

3. Personal Expressions

Once you know how photographs are interpreted it's time to develop your own expression and practice the art. Like every painter's or musician's work has their signature your photography will bear the hallmark of your personality. Groom your expression and individuality.

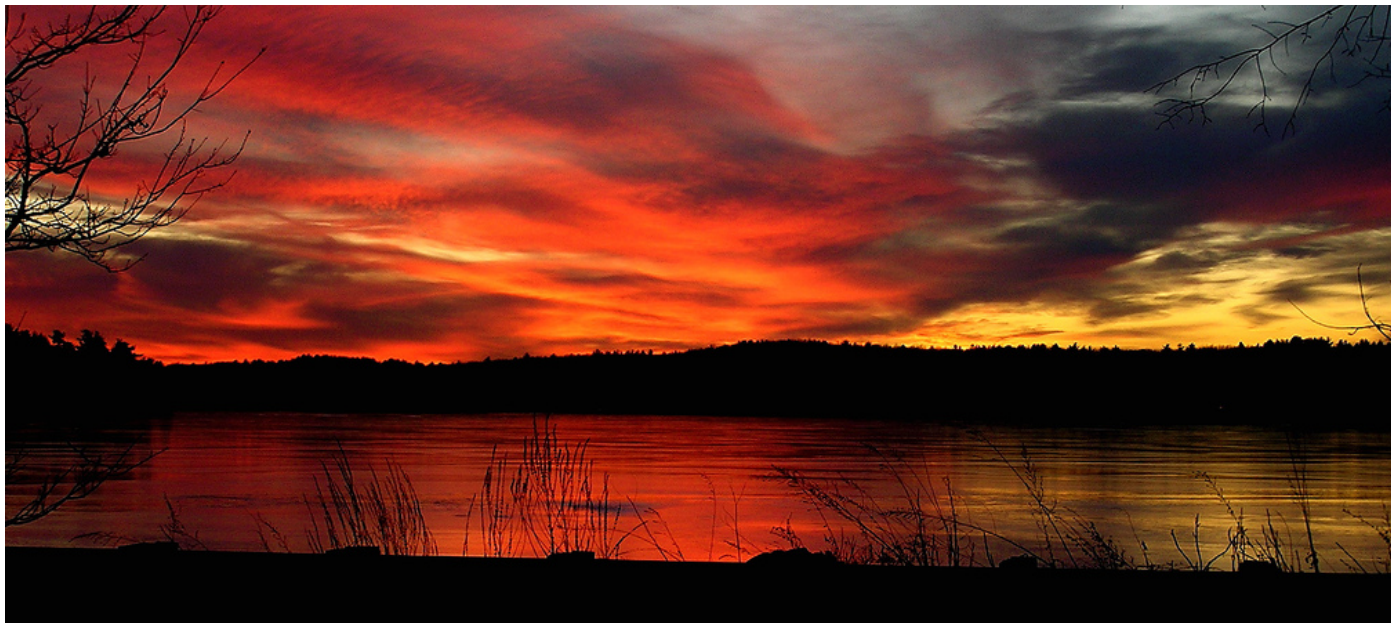
4. Draw Inspiration

Study the work of great photographers and see what their work speaks. This will inspire the creativity and an artist in you.

5. Don't Lose Heart

Every professional shoots thousands of photographs only a few of which are really usable. It's just a matter of time and even professionals aren't perfect. Don't lose heart and keep practising the art of photography to come out with great photographs.





Light And Its Features

Photography is all about light. Photography means capturing light. Lighting is one of the most important aspects of the art and a good understanding of light and its nature is essential for getting the pictures that you

want. The lights affect the way the camera interprets and portrays the subject or the scene. A sound interpretation of light in terms of its features and nature comes in handy for creating interesting photographs; the photographs that create mood by using the properties of light effectively.

Temperature

Most people just wonder why their pictures show the white color as with a yellow, orange, or blue shade. That's because the white color that looks white to the eyes does have a color tinge. The reason that pictures turn out with a yellow/orange cast in incandescent (tungsten) lighting and bluish in fluorescent lighting is because light has a Color Temperature.

Different light sources emit light at different color temperatures, and thus the color cast. While our eyes are good at adjusting to the neutral color and neglect any color cast in the light (and see it as white), the color temperature of light affects the way camera captures the light. A low color temperature shifts light towards the red while a high color temperature shifts light towards the blue; and thus result in bringing an overall reddish tinge to the picture and greenish or bluish at other times.

Quality

There's nothing as good and bad. It's the nature of the light that you employ to get a desired effect. We have this in two flavors hard-light and soft-light.



Hard light is more focused and harsh in nature wherein the shadows come out with defined and sharp edges. A soft light is a diffused or more evenly spread light that renders shadows as soft shades bringing a glow to the subject.

Depending on the requirement and the mood you want to bring to the picture you can use hard or soft light. Portraits especially fashion and glamor photos call for soft lighting wherein the models are bathed in a soft glow. At other times you may want to bring a special mood to the subject by intelligent use of hard light for a particular purpose. The



resulting image will have defined shadows depending on the direction of the light.

Quantity

Light is just the playground for the camera and your imaginations. The more you have (and depending on your equipment), the more you can control to bring in the desired effect. More light is mandatory for shooting sports because you want to have enough of it to allow high shutter speed and freeze the action. Less of it shows very well and comes out beautiful when you have a tripod and you are [shooting city streets](#) at night.

Direction

The direction of the light plays a major role in depicting the desired effects. While direct light is desirable for capturing the fine details, lighting the subject from the back helps in creating edge-lighting effect and throwing the light from down under the chin results in a horror effect.

Type

This pertains to the equipment you employ to get the type of light you want. The ambient light or flash or a studio



set-up with soft-boxes, reflectors, diffusers, etc is used to get a desired effect.

And now it's time to summarize the information that you take back from this article. Temperature induces the color, [white-balance corrects it](#); quality is hard and soft, quantity is the playground of the camera, direction gives the mood and type pertains to the equipment you employ to get the light.



White-Balance

White Balance is one of the most neglected controls on a digital camera. You can tweak settings like contrast and sharpness etc. but most of us still choose to set the white-balance to auto. While white-balance is used to correct the color temperature of the pictures and is a very powerful tool to manipulate your photographs for some extraordinary effects or even more original for that matter. In digital photography, we can simply tell the image sensor to correct the color temperature for us and thus eliminate unwanted color-cast in the final result by selecting the white-balance mode suitable for the scene.

Auto White Balance

The DSLRs now come with an Auto White Balance (AWB) function. AWB works very well in sunny and cloudy outdoors, and fine for most indoors situations. You will experience a light color effect in some of the indoor pictures while using this mode. Try for your self. Set your digital camera to AWB and take pictures under tungsten, fluorescent, and mixed lighting (i.e. tungsten or fluorescent,

plus natural light coming through the window), and see if the results are OK. If they are, you can just use AWB.

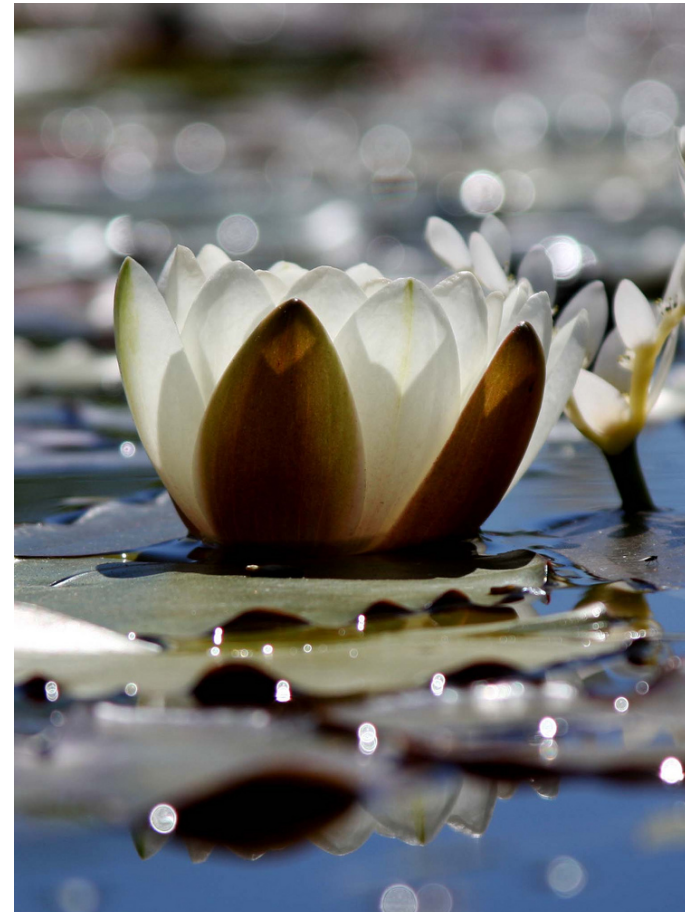
Preset White Balance

To help us from complete automatic white balance problems some cameras do come with different preset variations such as Tungsten, Fluorescent, Cloudy, Sunny, etc. Using preset WB can improve on a picture, especially under indoors lighting. Usually just selecting a preset WB setting appropriate for the lighting situation is enough.

Manual White Balance

Most advanced digital cameras provide the feature to manually set the white balance. To manually set the white-balance, point the camera at a white light source as a neutral reference and fill the screen completely with it. Then press the White Balance button (or set it in the menu), to let the camera do its WB calculation.

The main idea is to know the effects of the light you are shooting in and accordingly set the WB mode of the camera. This will enable the camera to shift the color temperature appropriately for each picture that you take.



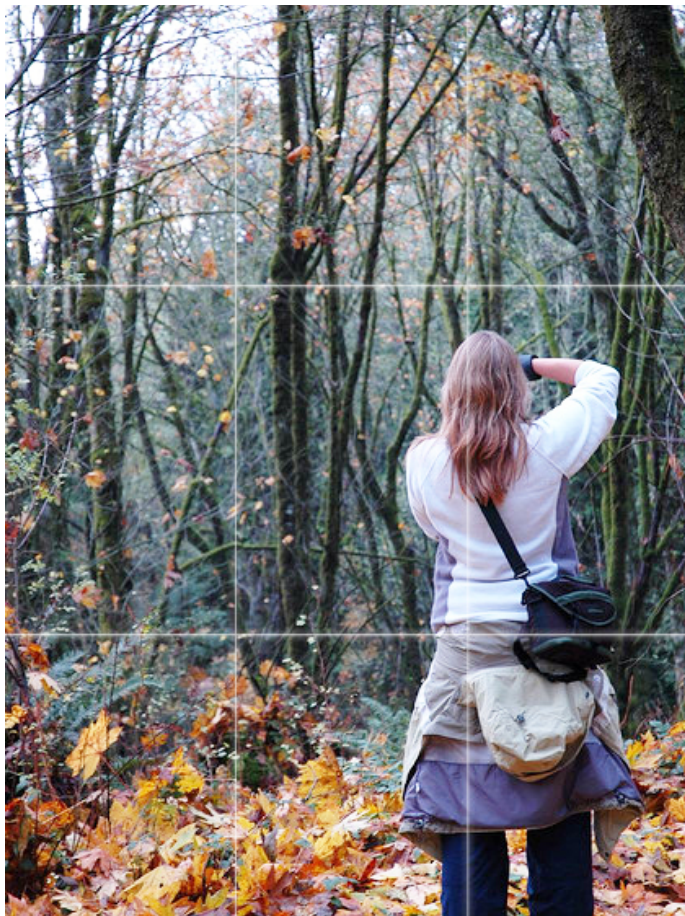


Composition

Photography is all about what you capture in the shot, what you choose to highlight and what you choose to leave out. The way you frame the subject helps in making the photograph impressive. Your viewpoint and what you frame – all is a part of composition.

Composition is at the heart of any art. Composition is the effective placement of the visual elements in the photographic frame such that the results draw emotional reaction. Barring all the other factors, a good composition alone can make your photographs worthy of appreciation. While today's digital cameras can focus and expose effectively, it is only the human eye which can visualize the results and perceive the effect or the final result.

There are various elements that contribute to a good composition like the [color](#), texture, lines, shapes, the light and more. Also there are various rules which works more as guidelines to help you use these elements for maximum effect.



Rule Of Thirds

The rule of thirds in photographic composition is one of the very basic rules taught to the budding photographers and the entry level aspirants in the stream. It is a fundamental rule in photographic composition.

The rule of thirds in the photographic composition speaks about the placement of the subject in the third part of the frame (or along one of the nine points of intersection)—where the photographic plane is divided into three equal parts vertically as well as horizontally.

The rule of thirds basically states that aligning the areas of interest in the composition with the power points (the points of intersection) or along the lines that divide the plane in three equal parts results in an image that draws higher level of interest, energy in the image and viewer reaction. The resulting image is thus aesthetically pleasing and looks professional. This works best when shooting images having horizons or other surfaces, as in the adjacent photograph. The subject is placed in the third part of the frame, aligned with one of the power points

Golden Ratio

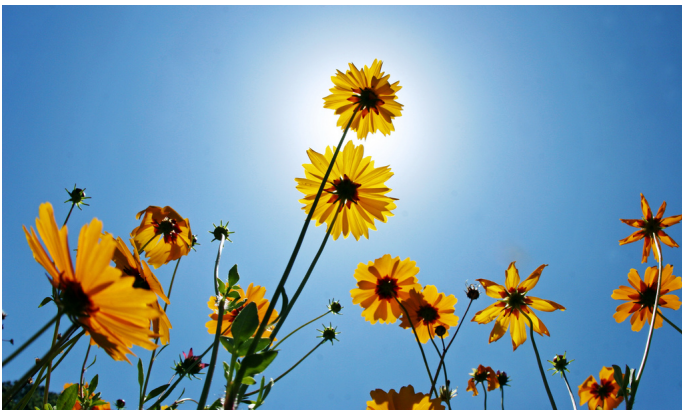
The “Golden Ratio” is a naturally and aesthetically pleasing proportion which works wonders in drawing the human eye into the composition. It is the ratio of placement of various elements in the photograph. The golden ratio is a mathematical constant with its value equivalent to 1.61803... denoted by the greek letter “phi”.

Golden ratio is 1:1.61803399.



The golden ratio has been practiced by artists over time and has served their work of arts with appreciation — be it Mona Lisa by Leonardo da Vinci or the Egyptian pyramids. You can witness the implementation of golden ratio around you provided you consciously make an observation.

Most of the newbie photographers or end-users like to place the subject in the center of the frame. This results in a boring flat image. Instead think of placing the subject slightly off-center in the golden ratio for aesthetically pleasing composition which naturally draws the human eye towards your center of interest.



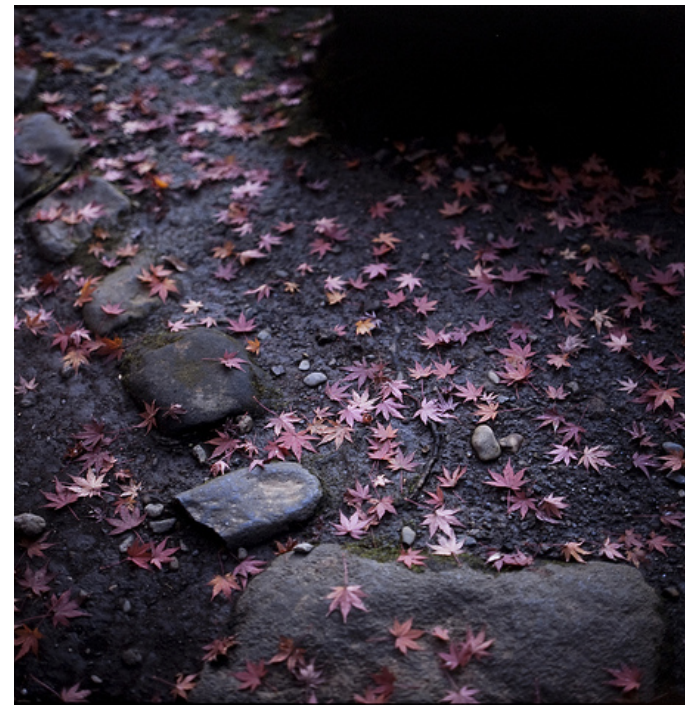
Lines Draw Viewer's Eye Into The Composition

Lines are visual elements of a photograph which captivates the viewers interest. Lines portray movement and a sense of orientation towards the area of interest; and implicitly express vivacity. They draws the viewer's eyes into the frame (when portrayed as the subject itself), to the center of interest (when complimenting the subject) and also adds an element of direction.

Different lines have different characteristics. While the vertical lines heighten power, courage and authority, horizontal lines guide the eyes to a certain direction and add resilience to the calm serenity of landscapes. Diagonal lines on the other hand heighten the activity and movement and curved lines add elegance and style to the photograph.

Patterns Make The Composition Interesting

Patterns engage the user in the myth of voluminous repetitions. They help in creating illusionary effects and heighten the sense of involvement into the dynamics of the subject.



Perspective Boosts Depth In Composition

Perspective portrays your unique viewpoint in the photograph. It enables you to convey your creative outlook; by portraying things around you with a difference.



Perspective makes a difference to the composition by adding the missing third-dimension. Adding your perspective to the composition elaborates your unique style of observing and photographing.

Natural Framing Gives Context To Composition

Natural frames compliment the subject by drawing the viewer's eye to your center of interest. You can weave the story around your composition by complimenting the subject with natural frames.

Good composition is the difference between a perfectly sharp and well exposed yet uninteresting photograph and an underexposed photo with effective highlight on specific area(s) of the frame that make it interesting even to the layman.



Exposure Revisited

Exposure is an often misused and allusive word in the world of photography. The effect of shutter-speed, aperture and ISO only adds to the complexity and confusion. In the age of the film getting the optimal exposure was trickier than in the digital age. Now you can take the shot, look at the result, keep it or delete it. Here I revisit “exposure” to delve and explore some myths and facts about exposure. Exposure is one of the very basic concepts of photography and it is crucial that as a beginner photographer, it’s understood correctly.

Is There Something Called Correct/Right Exposure And Incorrect/Wrong Exposure

Actually my answer is a “no”. And here’s the reason: There’s something called underexposure and overexposure and there’s something generally agreed to as “optimal” exposure. While overexposure and underexposure are vastly undesirable, optimal exposure ensures that maximum details of the subject or scene have been captured. The choice of optimal exposure varies from



photographer to photographer. What one may consider to be a perfectly exposed image may be contested by another photographer. Depending upon your personal style, preference and the requirements of the shot you are free to tweak and fine-tune the exposure. At the end of the day, your fine-tuning the exposure should have a positive effect on the final result.

Is Getting The Optimal Exposure Challenging And Requires A Lot Of Practice

No. Almost all film and digital cameras try to achieve an optimal exposure as long as they are on auto-modes. They have built-in [metering](#) to measure the amount of light in the scene and the camera makes the required adjustments automatically. But it's another matter that the camera metering gets tricked in mixed or challenging light conditions and requires some adjustments. An example is when [shooting sunrise and sunset](#), the optimal exposure is not the one that exposes for the shadows. In such a case you can tune the exposure by using the [exposure-compensation](#) button. That's the real secret to tweak the exposure to your liking.

The Right Camera That Will Help Me Get The Optimal Exposure Costs \$5000

Cheap digital cameras start at about \$50 and don't require any manual intervention to get the optimal exposure. Depending on how refined and evolved your choices are as a photographer, you may want to fine-tune and retouch during post-processing. Costlier cameras and equipment are there to allow you more and a wider range of control over the shot.

I Can't Become A Good Photographer If I Don't Know How To Get The Right Exposure

Exposure is for dummies, and in this case it's your camera's job to take care of it. You as a photographer should actually focus on composition, perspective, the subject and beyond. These are the elements of photography that help you evolve as an artist. So long as the camera controls the exposure and as long as the scene is not grossly overexposed (or underexposed), you can always fine-tune the exposure during post-processing (especially when shooting in RAW you have the ability to fine-tune the digital negative of the image to finest levels); and that's only required in a minority of cases.





Shooting (Or Being Able To Shoot In) “Manual Mode” Makes Me A Professional Photographer

Shooting in manual mode only means you are trying to do simple or unwanted things and wasting your time and energy which could be used to evolve yourself as a photographer. However, as a photographer you must understand the mechanics of the equipment which comes in handy for overriding the camera settings to get the results you want.

I Don't Ever Need To Worry About The Exposure

Trusting your camera for optimal exposure in “all conditions” isn't a good idea. Camera is just like any other unintelligent machine and its metering gets tricked under certain challenging light conditions. So (as a basic guideline) whenever you want to capture a bright scene as bright or dark scene as dark, you'll need to over or underexpose respectively. But in the days of the digital this is really easy. Just check the final result and if required take another shot with the corrected settings (engage the exposure-compensation setting). In the vast majority of the cases the camera will take care of these things.

The Shutter-Speed, Aperture, ISO All Control Exposure

Yes. But that's not their intended use. Shutter-speed, aperture and ISO have an additional effect on the photograph and they are used to achieve this creative effect. Aperture has an effect on the depth-of-field, the shutter-speed has an effect on the motion/blur and ISO affects the noise or grain in a photograph. Depending on the effect you want to control or make the best use of, you



set your camera to one of the semi-auto modes which allows you control over a particular setting (and the camera automatically takes care of the rest). Aperture priority allows you to override aperture to your requirement and shutter-priority allows you to override the shutter-speed to induce or freeze the motion in a dynamic scene. This way the camera still controls the exposure while you engage as an artist to get the required creative effect. If you find that the exposure is not optimal, you can always use the exposure compensation button.

Photography Is All About Getting The Optimal Exposure

It's about portraying your creative impression and expression of a scene or subject as an artist. Amount of light or exposure is only an element in the vast photographic world dominated by tones, shapes, patterns, form, composition, color and more. A good photograph is a blend of all these elements and exposure is an introductory element in the world of photography, mostly used to help new photographers understand how light is captured inside the camera and its effects on the photograph.

The Amount Of Light Or Exposure Ensures Better Photographs

If it's a quantity vs. quality debate, quality wins. It's the quality of light, its temperature and direction which are more important. Learn about the features of light to get beautiful photographs.

HDR Is The Answer To All Exposure Woes

HDR or [High Dynamic Range](#) photography is an illusion created during the post-processing phase. It tricks the

human eye into perceiving the image as more real and lively. However most of the time HDRs look ugly and exaggerated. The purists have a strong disliking for HDRs. HDR's take a lot of practice to achieve a finished

and pleasing result while refraining from making the photograph look unreal. Therefore, instead of resorting to HDR, learn how to control lighting to enhance the dynamic range of a photograph.





Storing And Printing Photographs

Learning the photography basics and taking photographs is just the beginning of photography workflow. Once you have taken the photographs, you would probably engage yourself in organizing, finishing, storing and printing the selected images. All these are a part of the general usage scenarios of the photographs and more strictly essential

activities of building a photography portfolio. Likewise, after taking the photographs you'd probably like to save, share and print the photographs.

The digital camera has simplified the entire workflow of photography. After taking the photographs, you can easily transfer the images to the computer, where you can organize, categorize, process, back-up and share the photographs. There are various photography tools, online editors, image hosting services and desktop applications like Adobe Lightroom, etc which makes it easy to store the photographs. These applications allow you to organize, re-touch, fine-tune and store the images for online sharing as well.

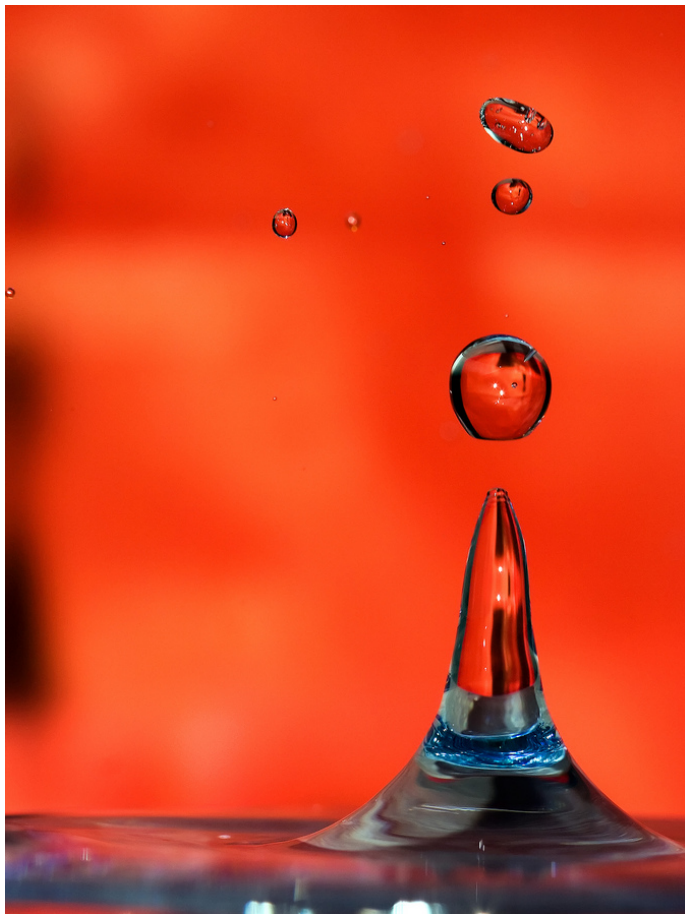
The purpose of photography varies from person to person. While some people just like to take the photographs for sharing them online, some serious photographers like to maintain the physical portfolio of photographs and eventually print the photographs taken by them.

When fine-tuning the photographs for printing you have to look at various factors which affect the image

print, especially the [color management](#). While editing the images, ensure that you are using a color-managed application. The color-managed application will allow you to embed and save the color-profile of the image, so that the image looks consistent across the calibrated devices and renders accurate colors in the final prints.

You can either give finishing touches to the images yourself or you can rely on digital photo printing services for well-processed photographic prints.





8 Thumb Rules

Here are some lesser known rules which come in handy when taking tricky shots. Most of these were found in the days of the film. But they are as relevant now as they were then.

1. Sunny 16

On a bright sunny day, you can get a correct exposure value by setting the aperture to F/16 and shutter speed to 1/ISO. Keeping this law in mind, you can freely wander around with your camera and capture daylight exposures without the hassles of carrying a light meter.

2. Inverse Square Law

This law states that if you move the subject away from light source (e.g. from 1mtr to 2mtr) i.e., twice the distance, its brightness/illumination reduces to 1/4 of earlier observation. And in order to maintain same exposure, when you move your subject away from the light source, you will need to increase the amount of light by four times. In other words, if you had previously set aperture to F/16,

now you will need to dial it down by 2 f-stops to f/5.6 to allow same amount of light to enter your camera.

3. Shutter Speed Rule

Commonly referred to as camera shake rule this rule simply says that to avoid motion blur while hand-held shooting, set the shutter speed of your camera equivalent to the inverse of focal length/distance. Don't bother about it if you have IS/VR (image-stabilization/vibration reduction) in your camera.

4. Rule Of DOF

Narrow depth of field adds an element of contrasting beauty to your photographs and helps in improving your composition. Therefore, sometimes it becomes desirable to achieve narrow DOF. When you are confronted with such circumstances, just follow this simple rule: Focus 1/3 of the view to maximize the depth of field.

5. The Moony Law

This law advises you to set the aperture to F/11 for full moon, F/8 for half moon and F/5.6 for new moon while keeping the shutter speed = 1/ISO.



6. Sunset Capture

Here's a trick to always be perfect at your [sunset shots](#): Meter the area directly above the sun (without sun in frame) and reduce the shutter speed by 1 f-stop so as to give an impression of delay of 1/2-hour.

7. Fill Flash

Set flash's ISO to double the ISO on the camera, meter the scene and select f-stop; now set autoflash to the same f-stop. This will result in a 2:1 flash-fill ratio and will produce filled shadows 1 stop darker than the subject.

8. Freezing Motion

For an action moving towards or away from you, use a shutter speed of 2-stops faster (if perpendicular to the lens). For action moving at 45 degrees to the lens boost the shutter speed by 1 stop.

The rules are there just to save your time. You can always toss the rules away when you know what you are doing. Till then be a good student and follow the rules.



III. Photography Tips



10 Essential Tips For Camera Owners

As much the camera is about taking the photographs, more it requires the mastery. Here are 10 essential tips for the camera owners to make the most of their valuable asset.

1. Familiarize Yourself With The Buttons And Controls

Knowing your camera in and out helps you in efficiently using the photo-gear (or any other equipment for that matter). The familiarity with the camera-interface enables you to act spontaneously for realizing the importance of timing in photography.

2. Experiment With Various Modes

The camera modes vary with each camera. The camera modes depend on the make and model of the photo-gear. While most of the cameras offer several auto-modes, the cameras which offer the semi-auto modes and the manual

mode enables you to control the camera for achieving the desired results like [freezing the motion](#) (by tuning the camera to shutter priority mode), [attaining the depth of field](#) (by setting the camera on aperture priority mode), etc.

3. Composition

Composition is the key to appreciation in any art form. Composing the frames by looking at the viewfinder is not an easy task. It takes time and require you to pay attention to visualization offered by the viewfinder to place the subject according to the [rule of thirds](#) or in the [golden ratio](#).

4. Know The Camera Specific Features

Each camera manufacturer aims at providing some specific features for a specific model. Knowing the camera specific features generates new ideas for experimenting the feasibility of the features provided by the camera.

5. Zoom-in

Zooming in and getting close to the subject enables you to get tight crops and fill the frame with the details which



take you by surprise. It enables the photographer to move closer to the subject (without physically shifting the position and stance).

6. Wait For Camera To Process Data

The camera takes some time to process, store and save the details captured by the camera sensor. Leave the camera stable while the camera processes the data.

7. Control The Settings

Knowing the camera features and experimenting with the various settings offered by your camera enables you to have a better control over your photo-gear. This translates to being more comfortable with the camera for creating marvellous piece of art.

8. Take Care Of The Lens

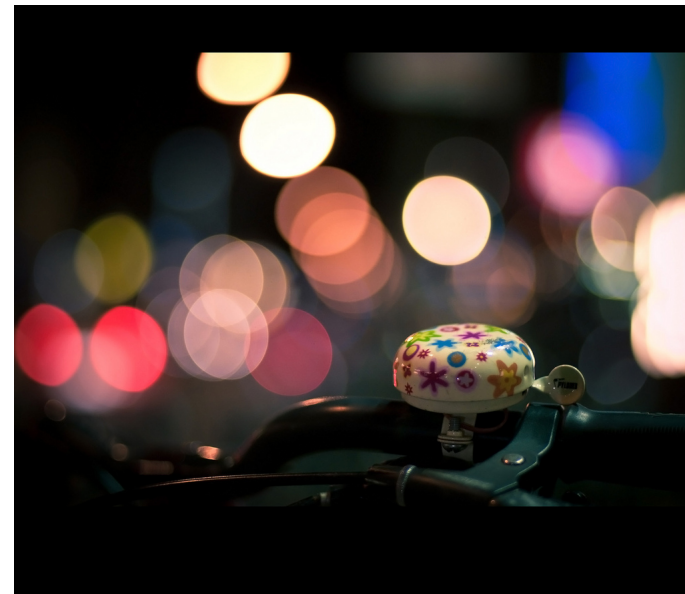
Maintaining the lens should be a priority. To get good images, you have to keep the lens safe and sound. Clean the lens on a regular basis to maintain the picture quality of the camera.

9. Use Lights To Your Advantage

Light is an essential element in photography. It helps in getting proper exposure, saturated colors and some special effects as well. Learn the properties of light and use the quality light to make a mark with your photographs.

10. Handle The Camera (And Accessories) Carefully

To get the returns from the investment in the camera, you have to be particular about maintaining the camera and keeping it safe and sound. Follow the simple practices as mentioned under the heading camera care to make the most from your investment.



How To Shoot Portraits

Portrait photography is perhaps the most common form of photography practiced. Portraits are about people and representing their personality in the photographs. Portraits form one of the most prominent subject in any field of arts; it serves the purpose of communicating cultures, traditions, events and celebrations. Learning to photograph people is a great experience and here are 10 tips to help you portray the character of people of the photographic frame.

1. Types of Portraits

Portrait photography can be classified under various categories depending on what is to be portrayed, conveyed and the personal expression and creativity of a photographer. Head-shots are perfect for capturing expressions and you can opt for head and shoulders shot when you want to portray the personality traits of people. Portrait photography is all about posing people to reflect their social status, authority, physical attractiveness or personality on the photographic frame



which can be portrayed either by [taking candid shots](#) or by photographing environmental portraits.

2. What To Shoot (When Shooting Portraits)

Portrait photography offers ample of opportunities and poses. You can opt for either directing the poses or going in for unposed and candid shots. The professional portrait photographers have to go by the words of their subject. They have to portray the subject as requested by the client; the opportunities in this case are very few. For a freelancer portrait photographer, imagination is the limit. Considering portraits as the subject, you can choose to portray the people in variety of poses, each conveying a distinct mood. Focus on the eyes to [highlight the expressions](#), zoom-in and get close-ups to portray the physical attractiveness, go for unposed and candid shots for naturally aesthetic images or experiment with high shutter speed and [capture the movement and activity](#) of people around you.

3. Establish Rapport With Your Subject

One of the most critical issue with portrait photography is

to get hold of natural looking poses that represent what a person or subject is. The essence of great portraits lies in capturing the shots which represent the individual character of the subject accurately yet creatively. As such there's a lot of scope for the talent of the photographer to fill this gap. Just make your subject feel at ease with you and your instructions. Be friendly and informal with your subject and start the session with some practice shots.

4. Lights — To Portray The Character Of Portrait

The lights play an important role in getting the right mood and setting up the tone of the shot (as in expression). Use soft and diffused light to get a ... look. When portraying personality attributes hard light may be used creatively to highlight these characteristics. Light falling from a steep angle will tend to bring out the texture in the facial features like old-age wrinkles etc. While soft light tones down the facial details thereby presenting a more pleasing visual. Portrait photography shows up the best results with [studio set-up](#) of lights — studios allow you an excellent level of control over light and its characteristics. On the other hand consider shooting in shade when shooting outdoors.





5. Camera Settings For Portrait Photography

The most important of all, it's time to set your equipment to appropriate settings to get the optimum output. While putting your camera to auto-mode is a good start for beginners, consider tuning the camera settings for a better control over equipment to get much better result in the final shot.

Setting your camera to the portrait mode automatically sets the contrast curves to low contrast which are appropriate for portraits. The portrait mode thus is pretty intelligent and reliable to begin with. If you are looking for a greater control and want to tune up for the finer nuances in the shot, you may want to use the aperture priority mode. This allows you to override on-camera flash settings and let's you control the depth-of-field in the scene.

6. Portrait Lens

Portrait lens is a prime lens (fixed focus-length lens), which trades off between the geometrical distortions caused by wide angle and vignetting effect of telephoto lenses. Portrait lenses are normal lenses having a focal-length

between 85mm to 105mm, appropriate for portraits. This focal-length allows the flexibility of maintaining distance from the subject and keeping the geometrical errors out of the scene when zooming. Portrait lenses generally have a wide aperture which helps in [blurring the background](#) and creating [the bokeh effect](#) to the advantage of portraits. Along with the portrait lens you must also consider investing in soft focus [filters](#) which reduces and softens the facial details like the unflattering textures and blemishes.

7. Composition — Framing Portraits Appropriately

Composition is the key to interesting and unique photographs. Framing the portrait right in the center of the photograph often makes the image dull and flat. Placing the subject in golden ratio or according to the rule of thirds compliments the frame aesthetically. It naturally draws the human eye to the subject. When shooting portraits, filling the frame with facial expressions works wonders. Apart from this the backgrounds and surroundings also play an important role in aesthetically complimenting the frames. They add a context to the visual story of the character. The clear and focused backgrounds add a context to the

portrait (and at times compliment the personality) and the blurred background induces the dreamy bokeh effect. Photography is a lot about experimenting with unusual and creative compositions. Framing the same concept by varying the angle of shooting helps in portraying a unique dimension of the portrait's personality and character onto the photographic plane.

8. An Element Of Interest Makes Portraits Visually Appealing

Portraits can effectively benefit from interesting elements like some action, movement or interesting formation. The smoke out of a cigarette held by the subject, or the movement of the hand or perhaps the subject captured amid a phone conversation not only affect and create a mood, they also add a dynamic element of activity and interest. This is the edge some portraits have which makes them professional and outstanding.

9. Create A Mood In Portraits

Creating moods in the photograph depends on the overall lighting and the ambiance of the scene. The inclusion of elements like fog, snow, clouds, fire, etc also help



in creating mood which goes a long way in making the photograph that draw the viewers attention. The context and the surroundings also add to it, for example, including

dark backgrounds in context of a portrait heightens the seriousness of character in the composition and highlighting the eyes induce the emotion.



10. Digital Re-touching — The Final Step In Portrait Photography

To add the final professional touches to the work some amount of post-processing is required. Make subtle changes, like enhancing the complexion, eliminating dark circles or blemishes, correcting the red-eye and so on. Try to avoid manipulating the image and making too many changes. Work on giving it a professional finish.

Remember, portraits portray a person, their personality, character, style, surrounding, culture, mood and tradition. Some of the best portraits are shot with the subjects in the context of their natural surroundings. A good portrait does not only reflect and represent the actual person but also portrays your art and creativity as a photographer.

How To Take Group Photographs

Picnics, family outings, get together with friends and colleagues, official trips, tours and parties — call for making great group photographs. The moment when the entire group of family members, friends or colleagues is together, is the best time to capture the incidents and events to cherish them for time to come. Group photography has its own intricacies and mastering over them is fairly simple. Familiarity with your equipment ([preferably DSLR](#)) and some basic group photography tips alone can help you excel; and help you capture some great group photographs.

1. Make The Group Comfortable

The first and foremost thing to adhere to is making the group comfortable. Do not act strict and professional. Be patient and neutral. Make the environment light; crack a joke, involve yourself in the group and welcome their suggestions. It will not only help in taking good shots, but



will also help you in photographing neutral and natural looking poses.

2. Direct And Arrange The Group

Opportunities in group photography are many, but getting the hold of perfectly posed photographs are rare. You will

notice it in the final results that the group in the group photography looks disintegrated; with each member busy posing in their own style. Try to strike rhythm with the group by directing and arranging the members in an organized manner. At times you can pose them casually and at other times you may instruct them in such a way

that it heightens the sense of unity and collaboration.

3. Avoid Direct Light

As is the case with portraits, avoid using direct light. The direct light from the light source tends to be hard-light and casts harsh shadows. Try placing the group in shade when shooting outdoors and use reflected lights while shooting indoors. The reflected light is soft and keeps shadows on the facial features to a minimum. If you have to shoot under the sun, use a fill-flash to fill the dark areas and shadows introduced by hardlight.

4. Aperture Priority Mode

Setting your camera to aperture-priority mode and dialing it down to smaller f-numbers ensures a shallow depth-of-field, appropriate for group photographs. This helps you bring the entire group in focus and render sharp images while blurring the background.

5. Use Backgrounds To Your Advantage

Background play an important role in adding perspective and context to group photographs. For example the water body in the background give an impression of sea-



shore and portraiture of huge industrial building signifies the industrial visit. Including backgrounds with a lot of patterns or activity on the other hand results in distraction and clutter in the photograph. In such a case it is better to eliminate the background clutter perhaps by [blurring the background](#).

6. Creativity And Un-Posed Shots For Natural Looking Group Photographs

Make your group look natural and comfortable. Try out some creative poses or let the group engage in some interesting conversation and thereafter, capture their reactions. Involve the group in some interesting games and group activities and welcome their suggestions for funny poses.

7. Use A Tripod

As a group photographer you need to involve yourself in direction, arrangement and instructions. Tripod comes in handy for getting down to the group, arranging them physically and then instantaneously releasing the shutter as the group settles.



8. Prefer Wide-Angle Lens

Including the entire group in the final shot is of utmost importance in group photography, with appropriate composition and organized look and feel (without cropping the faces and hands). It would be disappointing for someone to find out that they didn't show up in the final result. Using wide angle lenses provide the appropriate coverage to the event; the group pose.

9. Multiple Shots

Blinking eyes, disturbed arrangement and improper synchronization is what makes the group photographs tricky. Taking multiple shots can help you get good photographs since there's quite a scope for trial & error and timing.

10. Composition Tips

Compose the frames intuitively, and present the group in an elegant and organized manner. Follow some simple yet useful composition tips to draw the viewer's eye into the photograph. Consider to fill the frame, try out various shooting angles and follow the rules of odds to portray interesting group shots.



How To Photograph Children

Photographing children can be fun. They have entirely different reactions to the camera, are very unpredictable yet lovely in their own ways. Here are a few tips to help you make the most of it.

1. Be Patient

In photography patience can be ultimately rewarding (or frustrating on a bad day). Children are unpredictable so it may take quite some time to get the shots you want. Things are mostly out of control and waiting it out is the key to success. So, don't be irritated, try to be cool and get familiar with child.

2. Be Ready

Don't let your patience get the better of you. Be alert and prepared. Keep your eye on the viewfinder and don't hesitate to shoot. In the days of the digital you can always delete the unwanted shots. Set your camera

to continuous-auto-focus (or the sports mode) so that activity and movement doesn't throw the subject out of focus. This setting is present on almost all consumer and DSLRs nowadays.

3. Maintain Distance

If you are not family and not a friend it's advisable to maintain a distance to avoid distracting your subject. Also there's a technical angle to this reasoning. Shooting pictures from too close may induce unwanted geometrical

artifacts and distortions. Thus rely on a zoom lens.

4. Come Close

Against the exact opposite of the above, sometimes you may intentionally want to get close to get some geometrical distortion to get a funny look to the shots.

5. Capture Natural Poses

While kids can be directed to pose, try to freeze some natural moments to eternity. You'll cherish these for the times to come.

6. Keep Friends And Family Close

When shooting kids it's good to have one of theirs close ones to assist you. When you are holding the camera it can become quite difficult to make the child smile or pose. This also can induce reassurance to kids who are not comfortable with a stranger following them around with an scary something.

7. Use Props

Children either love to pose or hate it. In such a situation you can use props and toys to engage them.



8. Expression

Most important feature of the photograph, keep [the expression](#) natural and original.

9. Multiple Shots

Children and pets are always moody, unpredictable and very active. Thus it becomes quite a task to get it in a single shot. Always shoot in continuous mode and if your camera doesn't come with this feature, be prepared to hit





the shutter-release every few seconds. Later when you sort them on your computer you can pick and choose to keep the best.

10. Color

Lively and energetic as children are peppy, vibrant or soft colors compliment them and the entire scene. Try to avoid dark and dull colors unless you know what you are doing.

11. Angle and Perspective

It's important to get your camera to the level of your subject for a vast majority of the shots and normally means being on your knees at the very least. But feel free to [break the rules](#) and try some crazy angles to portray the madness in the scene.





10 Most Common Mistakes

A good way of learning is to learn from the mistakes. The intelligent way of learning is to learn from the mistakes of others. Everyone makes mistakes while picking up things for the first time, which later showers experience and growth. The same fact holds true for photography as well. Learning, knowing and starting of with [exposure basics](#), [composition techniques](#), [camera modes](#) and settings provide you a platform for practically experimenting the concepts; which ultimately makes way for grasping things through mistakes you make in the course of learning things. Here are 10 common mistakes and ways how you can improvise over the mistakes frequently made by the photographers.

1. Not Knowing The Camera In And Out

The excitement of owning the camera makes you overconfident. Step back, its time to know your camera — read the user manual, familiarize yourself with the dials,

controls & modes of the camera and get ready for the test shots. After doing well at warm-up, now you are in a good position to explore the possibilities and the opportunities for photographs that makes sense.

The essence of the photography lies in framing the imaginations to your expectations, which requires you to be thorough with the camera's features, settings and limitations (as to what you can do with the camera you



own). If the camera you own does not provide the aperture priority mode, [photographing the depth of field](#) is out of question.

2. Overlooking The Camera Settings

This mistake counts from my personal experience. As soon as I spot a beautiful scene / subject, I just pick my camera, zoom-into the scene and click. And in one instance, after looking at the result on the LCD, I realized something had gone wrong. The camera was set up



for [bracketing](#) instead of the normal exposure. Having learned from my own mistakes, here is a quick piece of advice. Always check out the camera settings prior to going out for a shoot. Even though mistakes result in great results (sometimes), but overlooking the camera settings often result in missing the perfect shot and attributed as carelessness.

3. Not Having The Camera Handy

You own the best of the cameras and the time you spot an interesting subject, perhaps a playful kid or a pet pass by, how would you feel when you miss that perfect shot. It hurts to miss the shot more than not [finding an interesting subject](#) when ready with the camera in hand. So keep your camera handy for shooting surprise shots nature has planned for you.

4. Overlooking A Strong Point Of Interest

Yousuf Karsh says “Look and think before opening the shutter. The heart and mind are the true lens of the camera”. Look around to spot something that interests you, attracts you & lures you and then freeze that moment to make an outstanding photograph.



5. Including Conflicting Subjects

When photographing, it is really difficult to draw a line as to what should be included and what be excluded of the frame. Be very thorough and particular about the composition of the frame. The composition techniques teach a lot about how & where to place the subject, how including [lines](#), [patterns](#), textures, [perspective](#) add in making a good photograph. But one thing which I have learned by observing the photographs is that you should never portray the competing subjects onto the same frame. It would be something like offering apples and



oranges; and the interest of the viewer remains divided of the ambiguity.

6. Using Flash Inefficiently

The in-built camera flash is a good source of light not only for low-ambient light, but also when [shooting against other sources of light](#). The trick lies in using the flash efficiently. Experiment with bouncing the flash off the wall or try using it as the complimentary source of light or learn to use

rear sync flash mode; all these activities will contribute in realizing the importance of flash in photography. So, [learn to use flash effectively](#).

7. Misinterpretation Of Lights

Light is the second most important element in photography (next to right time). It can either make the photograph or break the photograph. Lights play an important role not only in illuminating the subject, it affects the overall presentation of the photograph. For some subjects / scenes the direct sunlight acts as the perfect source of illumination (for textures), while sometimes angular light helps in portraying the depth in the scene. Consider to soften & diffuse the light when photographing the portraits. Learning to interpret the lights and its properties comes in handy for [making the most from the available lights](#).

8. “Photo-shopping”: The Digital Attitude

With digital camera in the hand comes the digital attitude. The attitude of correcting the images during [post processing](#). At the beginning you may just love to release the shutter without actually taking care of the basic elements of a good photograph. Photography is not



the art of correcting the things off-camera. Photography is not about “photoshopping”. While post-processing is required for making some [crucial adjustments](#), you can never get the natural colors, lights and expression with any amount of editing. It is a huge waste of time if you rely on photo-editors to [get great colors](#) and [proper exposure](#).



9. Always Shooting At Same Level

Always shooting at the same angle and same level makes the photographs portray the subject as it normally appears to the human eye. It lacks expression and fails to convey the dynamics of the subject or the scene. Put an extra thought into building a perspective which will help you present the scene creatively.

10. No Concern For Zooming-In

The professional photographers use the camera zoom to get tight crops and to fill the frame with only the desired elements in the scene. Zooming in the subject and scene clearly helps in expressing the interest and delivering a strong focus on the subject or the scene. It adds a new meaning to the [perspective](#). Zooming out to include unwanted objects results in clutter and induces distracting elements thereby killing the interest in a photograph.



IV. Additional Resources



Apart from the basic knowledge of photography concepts of exposure, aperture, shutter speed, ISO, there is a world beyond the basics and a lot more to master this art. Here's a list of articles to help move to an advanced and professional level.

1. [Photography Basics — Even Before You Pick Up The Camera](#)
2. [How To Take Great Photographs](#)
3. [11 Tips — How To Get Razor-Sharp Photographs](#)
4. [6 Photography Secrets — The Lesser Known Facts In Photography](#)
5. [The Secrets Of Shooting During The Golden Magic Hours](#)
6. [Flash Photography — Secrets Of The On-Camera Flash And Flash Modes](#)
7. [Professional Photography Tips — 10 Tips To Help You Become A Professional Photographer](#)
8. [Demystifying HDR — High Dynamic Range Myths And Truths](#)
9. [Advanced Photography Tips — 31 Advanced Photography Tips To Help You Advance In Photography](#)
10. [Breaking The Rules Of Photography — Before You Break The Rules](#)

Final Words

“Photography, as a powerful medium of expression and communications, offers an infinite variety of perception, interpretation and execution.”

— Ansel Adams

To keep up with the artistic instincts and to generate mesmerizing results, pick up the camera and get started with the practical implementation of tips and tricks disclosed herein. Be ready to experiment with your camera and to experience the world through the eyes of the camera. And don't forget to share your results with us at [AdvancedPhotography.Net](https://www.advancedphotography.net).

Share Your Love

I hope that this resource has helped you in realizing your instincts as a photographer. And now it's time to spread a word to help us grow the APN community, the community to help the photographers groom themselves as they advance to learn more. Feel free to share this links with all your friends who aspire to become a professional photographer, the one who loves to break the rules and passionately creates the marvels of arts. We encourage you to ask your friends to download this eBook from:

www.AdvancedPhotography.Net/Apn-E-Books

Keep In Touch

Groom your photographing skills by remaining in constant touch with AdvancedPhotography.Net. Keep in touch with Advanced Photography; with all the latest stuff — photography tips, how tos and beautiful photo-galleries. I would now like to invite you to get involved in the photography excursion of discovering new ideas @APN.

Email Subscription

The simple, easy and familiar way to stay in touch with all the updates is to get them delivered to your mail-box. Just provide your e-mail address and get the latest article delivered to your inbox everyday.

[Proceed for Email Subscription](#)

Follow Us On Twitter And Facebook

Interact with us on social media sites Twitter and Facebook and become our friend to get instant updates.

www.twitter.com/ApnPhotography

www.facebook.com/apnphotography

Join APN Flickr Group

Become a part of APN group pool to expand your horizon. Contribute your photographs to be featured on AdvancedPhotography.Net and participate in the discussions for a better exposure as a budding photographer.

[APN Flickr Group Pool](#)

And don't forget to visit the blog, the ultimate destination for grooming your photographing skills and to reflect a professional photographer in you.

[AdvancedPhotograhpy.Net](#)