

Senior's Edition™ Digital Photography

Step-by-step guides to help you
get started with your new camera



- ✓ Easy-to-read guides
- ✓ Learn all about your camera
- ✓ Capture special moments
- ✓ Share with family and friends
- ✓ Turn taking photos into a pastime

Welcome to

Senior's Edition

Digital Photography

Most of us are familiar with the concept and practice of taking photographs – whether on a film camera, digital camera or smartphone. However, knowing how to take a good photo requires knowledge, patience and skill. Senior's Edition Digital Photography makes it incredibly simple for you to master your camera and start taking better photos. From guides to get you started in the basic principles to step-by-step tutorials on using your camera's modes and settings, this bookazine is an essential handbook for budding photographers. Once you've grasped the basics, we give you detailed insight into how to take excellent photos in major genres, from landscapes to black and white. This book includes starter projects for you to get your teeth into that will help you get creative with your camera, and on top of all this we show you top image-editing tweaks and the best ways to share your photos with others. Check out the free disc, too, which is packed full of useful resources. This ultimate guide to photography will get you taking great-looking shots in no time at all. Enjoy the book.



Senior's Edition

Digital Photography

Imagine Publishing Ltd
Richmond House
33 Richmond Hill
Bournemouth
Dorset BH2 6EZ
☎ +44 (0) 1202 586200

Website: www.imagine-publishing.co.uk

Twitter: @Books_Imagine

Facebook: www.facebook.com/ImagineBookazines

Publishing Director

Aaron Asadi

Head of Design

Ross Andrews

Production Editor

Sarah Harrison

Senior Art Editor

Greg Whitaker

Photographer

James Sheppard

Printed by

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Photography for beginners

bookazine series



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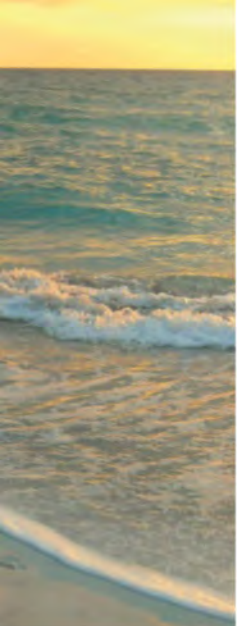
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The first steps

"Digital photography need not be daunting any longer, with these straightforward guides"



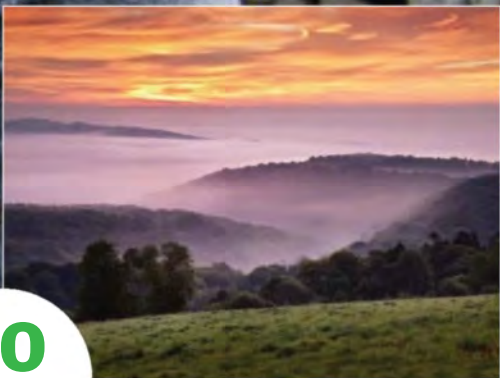
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Choose the camera

Getting started

Correct exposure

✓ This shot shows a vast colour range with all of the details clearly visible, including the highlights and shadows of the scene

Leading line

✓ The leading line going through this photo draws the eyes across the entire scene and to the main feature, which is the different colours in the sky

Getting started with photography

In this ultimate guide, we take you through the essential skills and techniques needed to take the perfect photo

Taking your first steps in photography need not be a daunting venture. By following a simple set of guidelines you can be on your way to taking fantastic shots in no time at all.

Photography is a very broad subject, which can encompass everything the world has to offer. It is therefore difficult to give definitive steps as to what will make a good photo. However, despite this, it is important to consider how you are photographing your subject or scene, and the different aspects of what is being shot that will make it a good photo.

Composition is important in every area of photography, and generally refers to how the subject is framed in order to make

a compelling photo. Along with many aspects of composition, leading lines can draw the eye through a photo, and encourage the viewer to take in the whole scene. Having an interesting focal point is key.

Lighting is a very important part of photography, and exposing the light correctly is a fundamental step to achieving a good photograph. Therefore something as simple as shooting at the right time of day can have a huge effect on how the scene looks.

These are the core things to consider when taking your shot and when you get these things right you will create some great imagery. We show you how...

Getting started with photography

Lighting

✓ Using only harsh natural light, this scene has been evenly lit across the entire range

Composition

✓ Simple composition has placed an even amount of sky and foreground in this shot, using a leading line to force the eye across the scene

Focus point

✓ Having a main point of focus is important as it gives the eyes something to focus on when first looking at the image

“Exposing the light correctly is a fundamental step to achieving a good photo”

Getting started

Lighting

Make sure the light is right

Adding artificial light, such as a camera flash, can help brighten up a scene where natural light is not available. When using natural light, consider the ideal times for the best results. Harsh sunlight can make a photo look flat and unattractive, which makes shooting in the middle of the day very undesirable.



Natural light

This is often the most flattering form of light to use, as it gives an even

spread across the scene, without over or under exposing any part of it.



Bounce the light

Bouncing the light is great for directing it where it is needed, and can be

done with a dedicated reflector or any light surface, such as white card.



Artificial light

Often used when shooting indoors or when there is no natural light. It can

be used effectively to light the subject, but it can be difficult to get even results.



Low light

Low light can create dramatic images, but they're hard to master. Try a night-

time setting or use a higher ISO to let more light onto the camera's sensor.



Harsh lighting - natural light

Natural light can often have a harsh effect on the photo.

This is common when shooting in the middle of the day, and when the position of the sun hasn't been considered.

Essential photography tips & tricks

Get started with these fundamental hints and techniques

Composition

A good composition is the first step to a great photo

Always consider the composition, how the photo will look, and what you are trying to show. The position of the main subject in the frame is key, and correct placement can enhance the overall

look of the photo. It is important to make the shot visually interesting, while encouraging the viewer to scan the entire image. Using leading lines and the correct lighting will do this.

Top tips for great shots



Distracting backgrounds

Ensure you have a good backdrop to your photo, regardless of the subject.

Correct lighting

A badly lit or under exposed image will not be pleasing to look at, and will not present the subject very well.



Rule of thirds

For a balanced image, place your main point of interest a third of the way up and preferably off-centre.



Focus point

Have a main point of interest, and place the camera's focus upon this point.



Leading lines

Consider your subject and how you want to portray it in the photo before firing away. When framing the shot, use leading lines to draw the viewer towards the subject.



Getting started with photography

Main focus point

✓ Having a main point of interest gives the viewer something to focus on, allowing the rest of the shot to complement and frame it

Leading line

✓ A leading line in the image draws the viewer's eyes through the entire frame, encouraging them to take in the whole photo

Use the whole frame

✓ Make sure you use all of the space available to frame the image, ensuring there is no empty space which does not add interest to the shot

Exposure

The exposure of an image dictates light levels

Your camera's exposure tells it how much light to let in when taking the photo. The amount of light let in determines how bright or dark the image will appear once it has been taken.

Exposure is one of the key parts of photography; learning how to master it will go a long way to ensure you get the very best photo each time you press that shutter.

There are several settings primarily formed around correctly exposing the photograph, and these settings can be manually or automatically controlled.

Ultimately, an image which comes out too dark is commonly referred to as being underexposed, while an image which is too bright is referred to as being overexposed.

Aperture

Aperture determines how 'open' the lens is, so how much light is 'seen' by the sensor. Set using 'f-numbers', the lower the f-number, the wider the aperture. Aperture can also be used to create different depths of field, so how much of the scene is in focus.

Shutter speed

Determining for how long the shutter is open. A fast speed means the photo is taken quickly. Slower speeds mean more light gets on to the sensor. Leave a shutter open for longer for movement blur.

ISO

The ISO value determines what the camera's sensor does with light. A higher ISO value will make the camera more sensitive to it, allowing for a brighter image. A lower ISO makes the sensor less sensitive to it, but will also produce a more crisp image.

Histogram

A graph displaying light levels across the photo, from black on the left to white on the right. The heights display how many pixels sit at that light level. View a histogram to get an even exposure across the range.



White balance

Getting colours accurate

Your camera's white balance can affect the overall tone of your photo. It is a function that removes the different colour casts created by the lighting in the scene. In simple terms, it is used to ensure the colours in the scene are as accurate as possible. It does this by measuring the colour temperature of the photo and adjusting the colours accordingly.



Cloudy

The Cloudy setting will compensate for the lack of sunlight and harsh cloud coverage,

generally enhancing the photo with a warmer tone.



Tungsten

This white balance setting is used when shooting indoors, under harsh and direct

fluorescent lighting. It cools down the photo and removes unwanted colour casts.



Flash

When using a camera's flash, the shot can be quite washed out and cool. This white balance

setting therefore compensates for the flash by warming the photo slightly.



Shade

A scene which is covered by lots of shade has a cooler look, with a flat tonal range.

The Shade white balance setting warms up the shot and gives it a more natural look.

Photography FAQ

We answer the most common questions of beginner photographers

1 How can I ensure my horizon is kept straight?

A wonky horizon can be distracting, so ensuring it is straight is very important. Many cameras come with a grid overlay function, or a spirit level that will ensure your photo is perfectly straight.



2 How can I freeze the action at a sport event?

Freezing action can be very important for moving subjects, as well as combating any camera shake. Set your camera to shutter priority and select a fast shutter speed, or alternatively use the sport scene mode.



3 What is the best time of day to take an outdoor portrait?

Natural light can be very difficult to use effectively, because you are unable to control its effect on your subject. For the most flattering light, you should shoot shortly after sunrise or just before sunset.

4 When taking a portrait, where is best to focus?

Rather than simply leaving it up to the camera to choose focus, take control and set it yourself. Place the focus point over the eyes of the subject, because this is where we naturally look when viewing the photo.



5 Is it best to zoom in or crop the shot afterwards?

Zooming in can allow you to retain the full image resolution of the photo, however it is much harder to capture the shot effectively this way. If you have a lot of megapixels to play with, you may find that shooting further out is slightly more beneficial.



6 Is there a way of using the flash for more even results?

Using a camera's flash can sometimes give harsh results. However, coupling the flash with natural light can allow you to fill in the darker shadows, and ultimately achieve an evenly lit photo.

7 How can I isolate my subject from the background?

Isolating your subject from the background can sometimes be extremely beneficial and is, in fact, quite simple to do. Select the aperture priority setting and choose a low f-number. This will consequently throw the background out of focus while keeping the subject nice and sharp.



8 What can I do to avoid blurry images?

Blurry images can be the result of many things. Commonly it is down to camera shake, so try using a faster shutter speed, a lower f-number, or a higher ISO, all of which will speed up the camera, eliminating camera shake.



9 How can I take better indoor shots?

Indoor photography can be very difficult, due to the light available. Try using a tripod or resting the camera on a surface which will hold the camera still, allowing it to soak up the available light for an evenly exposed photo.

10 How do I make the most of my camera and get better all-round photos?

Learning the different functions and features of your camera will help you make the most of what it has to offer. Experiment with the manual modes, as well as the many automatic scene modes that are available.



Lenses

If your camera can change lenses, you will likely use a combination rather than a single lens, such as this Nikon 18-55mm f3.5-5.6G (www.europe-nikon.com). Ensure you have lenses that cover each focal length so you can photograph any subject.



Memory cards

Memory cards are one of the most important pieces of kit. Ensure you have enough memory cards, such as this one from Samsung (www.samsung.com), so you are never caught short of space.

Essential kit for beginners

Your accessories are very important, and allow you to work better as a photographer



Editing software

Editing software is becoming more and

more popular, and is extremely useful in modern photography. Programs like Photoshop Elements (www.adobe.com) can enable you to apply basic filters, effects and fix problem photos.

Tripod

A tripod such as this Manfrotto 055 Carbon Fibre Tripod (www.manfrotto.com) is a useful piece of kit. It reduces risk of blurry images and allows you to easily compose your shots.



Kit bag

A camera bag like this Lowepro Stealth Reporter (www.lowepro.com) is essential. It offers a convenient way to transport your camera and accessories, as well as a safe environment for them to be stored.

Choose a camera

The essential guide to picking the right equipment

Cameraphones

Mobile phone cameras are a convenient option and are becoming more advanced

PROS

- ✓ Usually to hand
- ✓ Small in size so easy to carry
- ✓ Downloadable camera apps

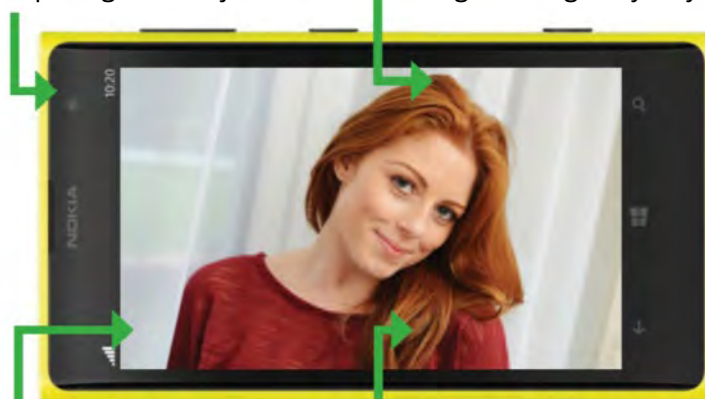
CONS

- ✓ Small sensor affects image quality
- ✓ Fixed lens limits captures
- ✓ Limited results

The Nokia Lumia 1020 here (www.nokia.co.uk) comes with a 41MP camera. Cameraphones commonly have small sensors and therefore limited pixel quality, but can produce excellent photos in the right conditions. The lens fits within the device's body, meaning there's not much possibility of a decent zoom, but apps can improve this.

Lens: Fixed optical zoom range so more suited to capturing close subjects

LCD screen: Large screen makes composition and fine tuning of settings very easy



Downloadable apps: Apps offer more advanced features and controls

On-screen controls: Commonly operated using the device's touch-screen

Fixed lens cameras

Compact cameras and superzooms are basic all-round cameras for any situation

PROS

- ✓ Small in size so easy to carry
- ✓ Many automatic & scene modes
- ✓ Relatively cost-effective

CONS

- ✗ Small sensor affects image quality
- ✗ Lack of manual controls
- ✗ Can't be used with accessories

Compacts and superzooms are referred to as point-and-shoot cameras, billed as easy to use and suitable for all types of basic photography. They come with automatic settings and a general-purpose lens designed to cover the focal lengths that the average person will need.

Compacts and superzooms generally do not offer manual settings, or use external accessories, but with the advancement in photography, compacts and superzooms are adopting more and more advanced technology. The Panasonic TZ60 pictured here (www.panasonic.co.uk) comes with image stabilisation, Intelligent Auto mode and HD video.

Controls: Settings are at easy-to-use places, Advanced features are in the menus

Flash: Basic, built-in flash for taking photos in dark conditions

LCD: A rear LCD for composition and changing settings



Shutter release: Basic shutter release. Half depress it to focus and fully press it to shoot

Lens: Fixed to the body and allows for an extensive amount of zoom, from wide angle to medium telephoto

Compact system cameras

Compact system cameras are a new, yet popular alternative to larger DSLRs

PROS

- ✓ A very compact body
- ✓ Very easy to use
- ✓ Large sensor for good image quality

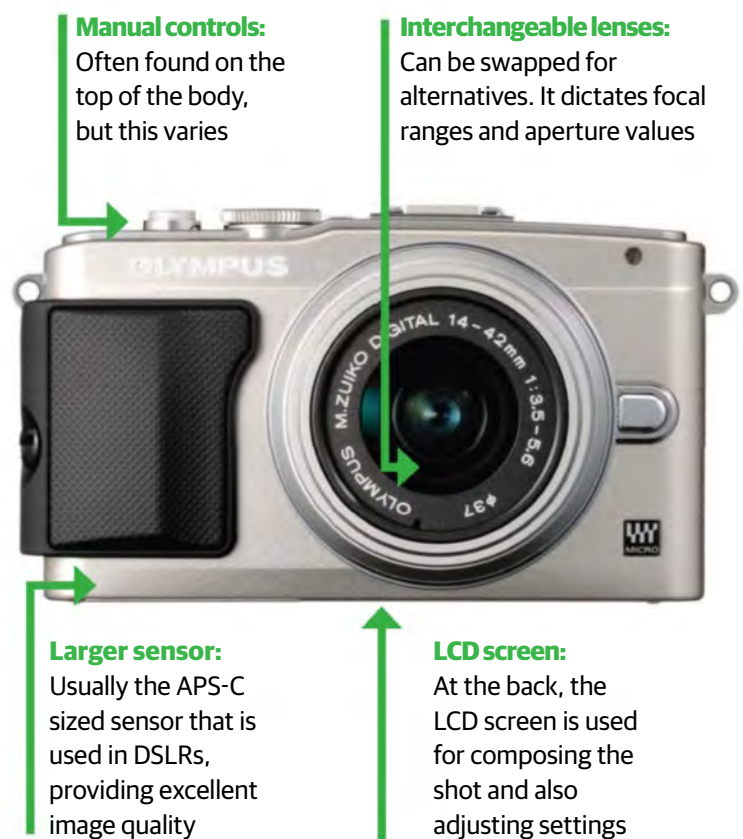
CONS

- ✗ Expensive system to use
- ✗ Handful of lenses available
- ✗ Not as functional as a DSLR

Compact system cameras (CSCs), like the Olympus PEN E-PL5 here (www.olympus.co.uk), are built to allow for DSLR quality images, but with the simplistic nature of a compact camera. They utilise the available automatic and scene modes and include creative filters. Unlike compact cameras they include manual shooting modes.

The CSC has interchangeable lenses and accessories. The lenses therefore dictate the focal range and apertures available.

The image quality of CSCs are fast becoming as good as DSLR cameras, as they utilise the larger APS-C size image sensor and use more advanced optics.



DSLR cameras

At the forefront of image quality, utilising large sensors and high-quality lenses

PROS

- ✓ Large sensor for good image quality
- ✓ Full manual control
- ✓ Accessories and lenses can be used

CONS

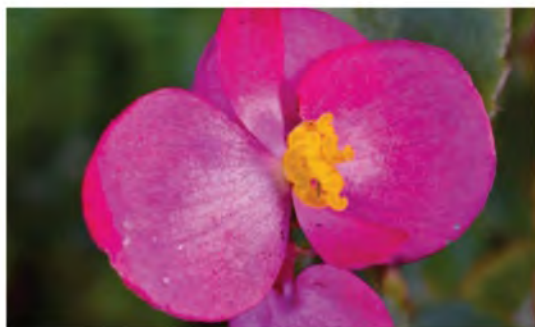
- ✗ An expensive system to use
- ✗ Difficult to use for beginners
- ✗ Large in size so hard to carry

DSLRs are professional-level cameras that produce images of the highest quality. Although most come with automatic modes, they are primarily designed to be used with full manual settings.

People also use DSLRs for the level of control that you are able to have over how the image looks. There is also the large benefit of using multiple lenses, as well as a vast range of accessories.

DSLRs are not necessarily built to be beginner friendly, although entry-level models such as the Canon 1200D (www.canon.co.uk) pictured here are attempting to bridge the gap.





Your first photo shoot

A step-by-step guide to getting a great shot on your first photo shoot

Taking photographs may seem like a simple process, and one which does not need much thought.

Where this is true of simple snapshots, it takes a lot more thought to get great photos each time.

Many great subjects cannot be captured well with simple snapshots, and it requires more control of the camera and subject to get the most out of them.

Good photos take time to capture, and are the work of the photographer as much as the camera.

Before taking the photo, consider the composition you wish to use, the lighting of the surroundings and what you want to present with your photo. You will then be able to focus on the camera setup, and go through the process of adjusting the settings to your preference.

Setting up your very first photo shoot can be a rather daunting task. However, by laying out the steps one by one, you'll find it is actually an easy process that will let you take control of how your shot comes out.

Follow this basic step-by-step tutorial of how to take great photographs every time, and you should be rather pleased with the final result.

Equipment needed: DIGITAL CAMERA | TRIPOD | SUBJECT | EDITING SOFTWARE



1 Consider the lighting
Look at lighting before taking a photo. It determines what settings to use and the outcome of the shot. This is badly lit, so we moved to a different flower in better light.



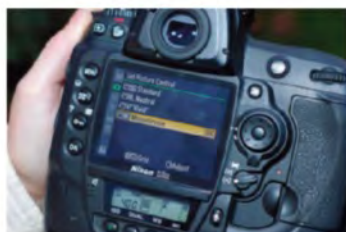
2 Set up a tripod
Using a tripod is often essential. Attempting to hold the camera still while focusing on the subject can cause you to lose the focus or end up with a blurry image.



3 Compose the shot
When composing there are principals that can be followed, like the rule of thirds. Think about these at this stage as they can help to better frame the subject.



4 Change the settings
Use the correct settings for your subject. Consider what is needed in order to get the correct amount of light, and how you want to represent the scene.



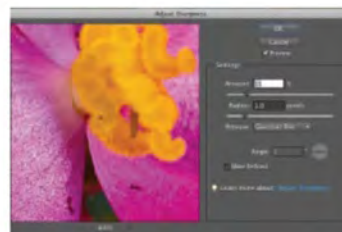
5 Apply in-camera effects
If you would like to add effects, do so now. Most compacts come with a range and DSLRs have some options. Choose the effect from your menu screen.



6 Focus the camera
Ensure the subject is in focus. This can be done by allowing your camera to focus automatically by half pressing the shutter or manually adjusting the focus.



7 Take the photo
When taking any shot, don't move the camera too much, but retain the original composition and focus, ensuring the shot comes out as originally planned.



8 Edit the image
Editing can offer simple but effective improvements. Cropping in to the main subject, straightening a horizon, or sharpening a portrait can have a huge effect to the overall look.

How do you take a good shot?

The key things to consider when taking your first photo

Colours

Colour is an important part of your image. With this shot, boosting the colours in editing software has ensured they are punchy and attractive, drawing the eye in to the photograph



Lighting is key

Try to make use of natural light, but if you are shooting in harsh conditions, or do not have a capable lens, try using the camera's built-in flash to boost the brightness of the scene.

Depth of field

Consider if you want your background to be in focus or not. By using a wide aperture (low f-number) here the background has been put out of focus, drawing attention to the main subject

Focus

Ensure the key part of your subject is in focus, such as the eyes in portraits. Here the focus point is in the middle of the flower

Composition

Composition is key - remove distractions from your subject and try to fill all areas of the frame

9 Share your shot
Once happy with how your shot has come out, you can then use the many different sharing websites to display your photographs for all to see.

"Before simply taking the photo, consider the composition you wish to use"

Improve your compositions

Discover how a new composition can dramatically alter your photo

Photography isn't just about getting your camera settings correct or being in the right place at the right time. A lot of what makes a photo great is down to how it utilises the objects within it. By taking one subject and shooting it in a variety of ways, you can see what a difference composition can make.

Think about angles. Try shooting a portrait straight-on, and then shooting it at an exaggerated angle – the angled

image looks more modern and dynamic.

In a landscape, try shooting lying on the floor to exaggerate the foreground, then shoot standing up and see the difference. Your zoom can help with composition too. Shoot your scene at both the widest angle and the telephoto (full zoom) to pick out little details in a scene.

Whatever you shoot, try to think about different ways you can photograph the same scene and experiment!

02



■ Get up close to your subject for a macro shot like this



01



■ Shooting these flowers from above creates a fairly uninspiring image



03 ■ By lying on the ground and zooming in on the underneath, the shot changes again



Master your camera's shutter speeds

Use different shutter speeds to produce creative effects

The shutter speed dictates the amount of time the camera's shutter is open for. Changing your shutter speed produces a range of effects, and certain areas of photography take advantage of this. Sport photographers can use a high shutter speed to freeze the action, or you can use

slow speeds of one second, for example, on a subject such as moving water and its surface can be softened and blurred for a creative effect.

There's no better place to experiment with shutter speed than in nature. This is where you can take your time composing a scene and playing with exposure for the

best image. We try out three different shutter speeds on this waterfall to see how each one looks. You'll notice that as the shutter speed gets quicker, more detail in the water is captured. If you have a tripod handy, set your camera to Shutter Priority or Manual mode and work your way up through the shutter speeds.



■ Using a slow shutter speed results in a milky effect in the water

01

1sec

Using a shutter speed of one second, with the help of a tripod, exaggerates the movement in the water flow

Master your camera's shutter speeds

02

1/10sec

To reduce the blurriness of the water, the camera's shutter speed is set to 1/10sec. Slight detail can be seen in the water



✓ Keep the camera steady

At slower shutter speeds a tripod may be necessary to keep the camera still and stop unwanted blur from occurring in your shots



03

1/80sec

Speeding up the shutter even more to 1/80sec captures the water in its tracks. Bubbles are now visible but still some movement is captured

Control light and focus

See how the aperture decides how much light is let in and what is in focus

Aperture plays an important part in photography as it dictates how far open the lens is and therefore how much light it takes in. This is set in 'f' numbers – the lower the number the wider the aperture, allowing more light to be let in.

The aperture can also be used to create different depths of field. This is how much

of the scene is in focus. Using a wide aperture, the main focus point will be in focus, with the rest of the scene blurred. Using a larger f-number will allow the entire photo to be in focus.

For portraits especially, many photographers will blur the background behind the subject, so as to remove any

distracting elements. But sometimes keeping the background sharp has its advantages too, just in case something interesting may be happening around the subject.

We shoot three different approaches to capturing one portrait so you can see how aperture effects the overall look.



01

f4.5

If you're close to the model, make sure the background isn't a distraction – using f4.5 creates a shallow depth of field



■ A low aperture creates a blurred background

Control light and focus



f8

Because the model is closer to the lens, using f8 creates a gradual blur from the subjects in the foreground to the ones in the background

02



03

f16

With the aperture set at f16, the entire image is kept sharp. This works well when there's an interesting background around the main subject



■ A high aperture keeps the whole image sharp

Change colour casts

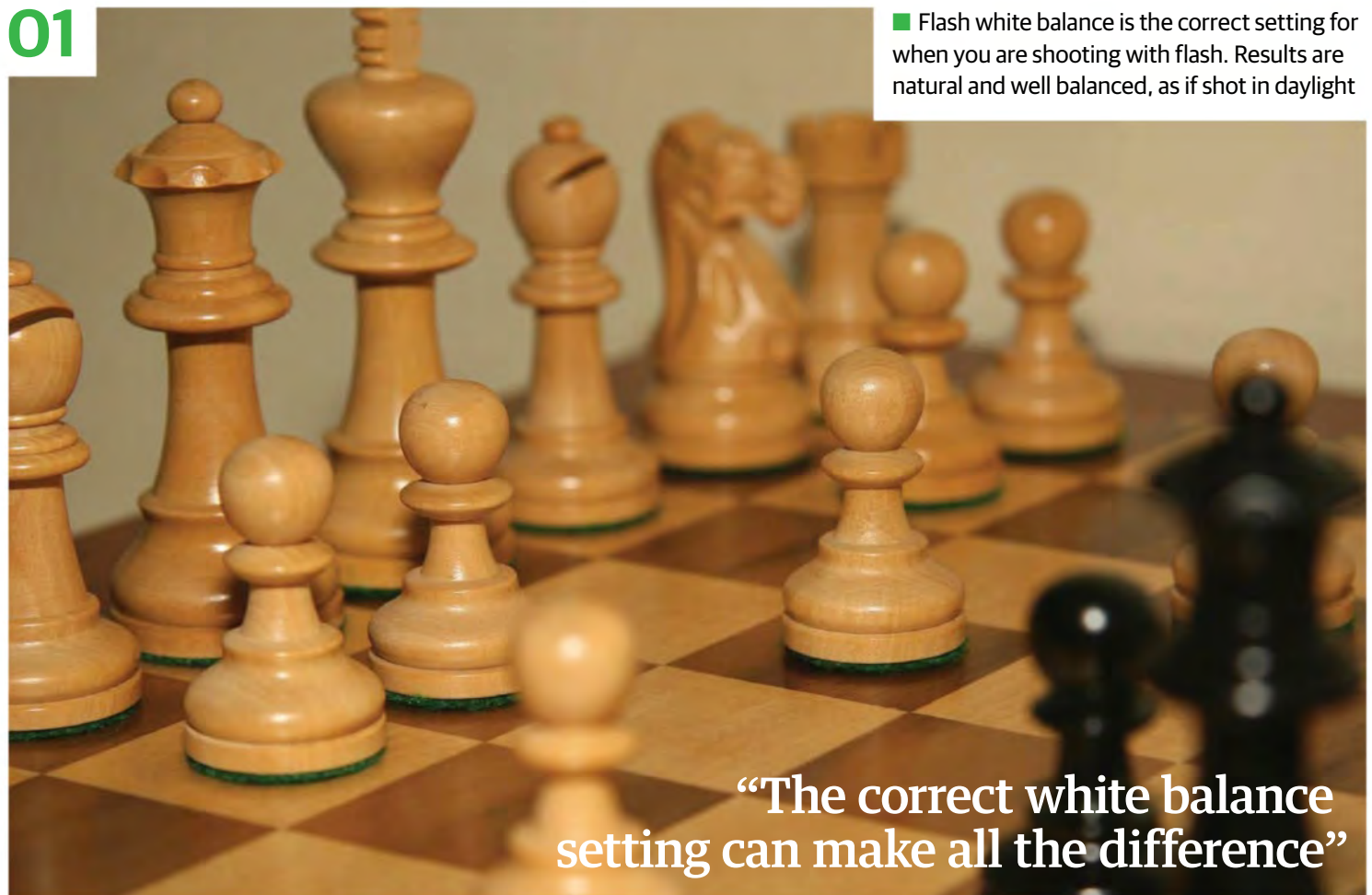
Learn how the white balance setting will drastically change a photo's colour

White balance refers to how the camera reads what type of light is being used for an image. Although this isn't something we usually think of on a day-to-day basis, the correct white balance setting can make all the difference. The idea of white balance is that a certain colour of light is offset with another colour, such as blue or red. Work your way through the various settings, such as Flash, Cloudy, Daylight, Tungsten and Fluorescent, and you'll notice a significant change in the colour of the image.

We look at the same close-up shot of this chessboard, but using the camera's Flash, Auto and Kelvin white balances. Shooting under flash lighting, the obvious choice is the first one of the three, but it's interesting to see how the camera performs on Auto, and also how adjusting the setting manually creates a more artistic effect.



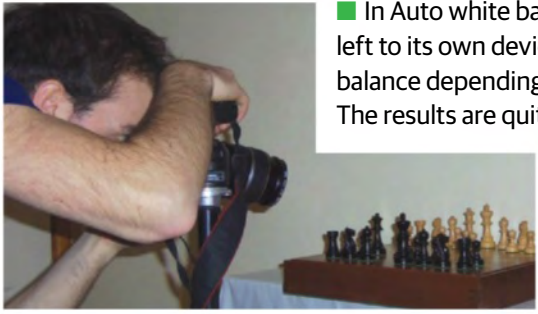
01



■ Flash white balance is the correct setting for when you are shooting with flash. Results are natural and well balanced, as if shot in daylight

“The correct white balance setting can make all the difference”

02



■ In Auto white balance the camera is left to its own devices, setting white balance depending on the lighting. The results are quite warm here



03

■ K (Kelvin) white balance lets you assign a white balance yourself. We set the camera to 4500K, for a slightly colder-looking image



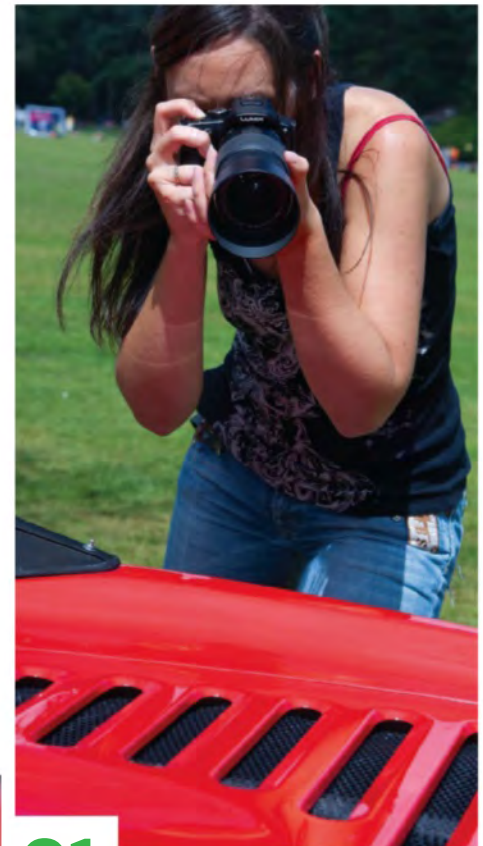
Experiment with lenses

Discover how a lens can change your photo

Take one subject, one camera and three lenses, and you will create three very different photos. If you've invested in a DSLR or compact system camera, chances are you'll have just one lens – the 18-55mm (or thereabouts) kit lens that came with the body. But what lens do you buy next and what can you achieve with it?

We're here to show you how a prime wide angle, a high zoom telephoto and

a creative fisheye lens could change or improve your photography by making you think differently about the way you compose. Each lens has its strengths and weaknesses, and knowing how to use yours will make you a better photographer. For instance, with fisheye lenses you need to use the edges and the angles – high or low – to achieve a creative effect. Experiment with your lenses and you may be surprised at what you can achieve.



01



■ Zoom in on small details and use the zoom to help play with perspectives



02 ■ With fisheye lenses you should shoot at high or low angles or tilt the camera to one side



03 ■ This image is the standard way to shoot a landscape - with a wide-angle lens

01

5:15am

Just before the break of dawn, the sky is lit from underneath. The reflected light turns the mist slightly magenta

Choose the right times

Learn to shoot stunning images at any time of day

Landscape photography is all about shooting when the light is just right. Arrive at the right time and the sun can change and shape the land from the ordinary into the spectacular, so it's important to know just when to strike.

Dawn shoots can often be a real struggle, but it is this time of the morning when magical elements like fog and mist can occur. Staying in bed for those few extra minutes can become 'make or break', so set your alarm clock early and get to a viewpoint three quarters of an hour before dawn.

After the peak of colours, the sunrise changes drastically. As the sun rises it loses its golden colour, the saturation fades and the light levels increase sharply. Don't be surprised if the conditions change entirely, just like this scene. Make the most of the changing light and witness the action unfold, instead of imagining what could have been.



■ If you're creating a sunrise scene, make sure you choose a suitable white balance

02

5:45am

Just minutes later the saturation begins to fade, with the mist turning white. As the air warms, the fog builds



■ Camera Settings

We shot at 75mm and f4 using a custom white balance to make sure all the hues were captured

03

6:30am

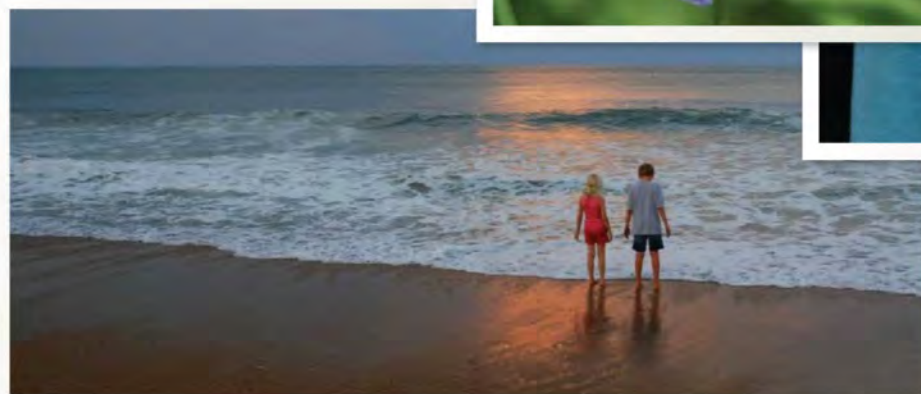
Three quarters of an hour later, fog engulfs the landscape. With the sun diffused, the image lacks dimension



■ Shoot in RAW format

Even with a shot like this, you can rescue a lot of detail hidden by shooting RAW and editing later

Digital Camera Guide



Jargon buster

Aperture

Affects the amount of your image that is in focus - the 'depth of field'

Shutter speed

Fast speeds freeze action while longer ones blur motion

ISO

Refers to how sensitive the sensor is to light and makes low-light photos clearer

White Balance

Affected by the ambient light around you, your camera can alter this setting to ensure a natural colour result

Exposure

A balanced exposure has detail in light and dark areas

Metering

Refers to the way the camera reads the light in the scene

Focal lengths

Wide-angle -

a wider angle of view than normal, eg 28mm;

Telephoto -

a magnified view of distant subjects, eg 200mm

LCD

The screen on the rear of the camera

Megapixels

Number of pixels on the sensor, in millions

Viewfinder

Optical - shows you the view through the camera lens and is good for accurate framing;

Electronic

- shows the view on an LCD in the viewfinder

DSLR

This stands for digital single lens reflex camera

CSC

Compact system camera

Get to know your camera and you'll soon be taking your best ever photos

Deciding which camera to buy can be rather tricky. There are different camera types, manufacturers, features and prices to consider, but we believe it's not just about the camera, it's about knowing how to use it.

Each type of camera has its own set of pros and cons, and which one you choose will be dependent on what you're using the camera for and your past experience in photography. If you simply want to catch quick shots on holiday or take videos of a grandchild, then a compact or cameraphone will probably suit your needs. But people looking for large printouts and more advanced shooting options will need to look towards DSLRs.

No matter what type you choose, with this Quick Start guide you'll get to know all the key aspects of your camera and you'll soon be taking amazing shots.

Symbols explained



Delete
- found on all cameras



Burst mode
button



Playback -
use to review
photos



Metering icon
on pro
cameras



Flash -
switch it
on or off
via this



Exposure
compensation



Movie mode
features



Night time/
low-light
scenes



Macro - for
close-ups



Zoom in on
your photos



Sports - for
fast action



Zoom out of
your photos



Landscapes
- for wide
angles



Self timer
for self
portraits etc



Portrait
- perfect for
people



Image
stabilisation



Manual mode
- for control

Camera types

CAMERAPHONES

Pros...

- ✓ Light and compact
- ✓ Cool app add-ons
- ✓ Instantly share

Cons...

- ✗ Small lens and sensor
- ✗ Flattens perspective
- ✗ Less features



■ Your cameraphone can shoot, edit and share images instantly

FIXED LENS

Pros...

- ✓ Easy to use
- ✓ Light and versatile
- ✓ Lots of features

Cons...

- ✗ Fewer manual options
- ✗ Can be slow
- ✗ Less adaptable

■ Fixed lens camera are easier to use and cheaper



Compact



Superzoom

INTERCHANGEABLE LENS

Pros...

- ✓ Image quality
- ✓ Fast shooting speed
- ✓ Manual and Auto

Cons...

- ✗ Can be expensive
- ✗ Can be complex
- ✗ Can be heavy to carry around

■ DSLRs and CSCs are more expensive but have better image quality



DSLR



Compact system camera

Accessories

01



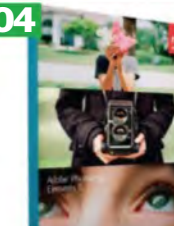
02



03



04



05



06



07



08



1 Card reader: You can pick these up cheaply for one card, but you'll pay more for multiple slots

2 Memory card: Check what type your camera accepts before you buy

3 Bag: Protect your camera, card and any accessories with a camera bag

4 Editing software: Your camera usually comes with its own free editing program on a disc in the box

5 Lens cloth: Keep your camera clean. You could try an old glasses cloth

6 Support: A beanbag will keep shots steady while you decide on a tripod

7 Batteries: Spare batteries are a must have

8 Connection: Check you have all the leads to connect your camera

Modes

1 Auto

Your camera makes all the decisions for you in this mode

2 Scene

You select the type of scene, the camera does the rest

3 Program

You have control over aspects like white balance, flash or ISO

4 Aperture Priority

You control the aperture, but your camera controls all of the other settings for you

5 Shutter Priority

You control the Shutter speed, but your camera controls the other settings

6 Manual

You decide on all of the camera settings; the camera doesn't choose any

Top Tip

If you're shooting with a compact camera that doesn't have a mode dial on it, you should be able to locate your modes in the Menu system



Modes & Settings

Take more control of your camera by getting to know how it works

36 Settings explained
Learn about the Auto mode

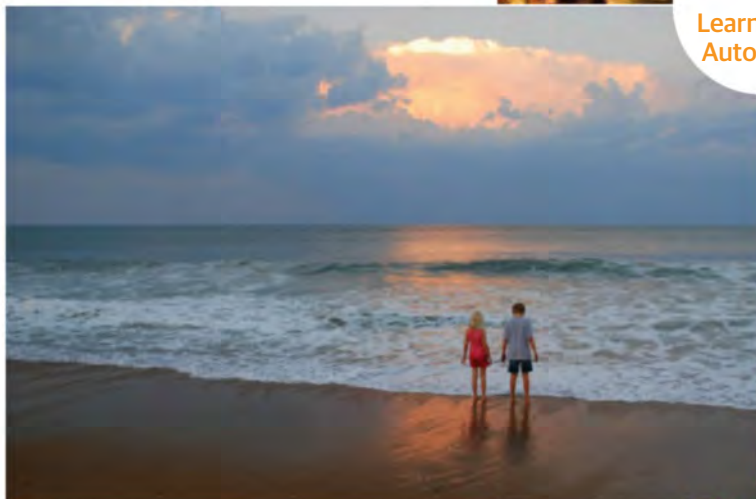
40 Scene modes
Tips on the scene modes

44 Program
Take control over settings

48 Aperture
Aperture Priority mode

52 Shutter speed
Use Shutter Priority

56 White Balance
Understand the settings

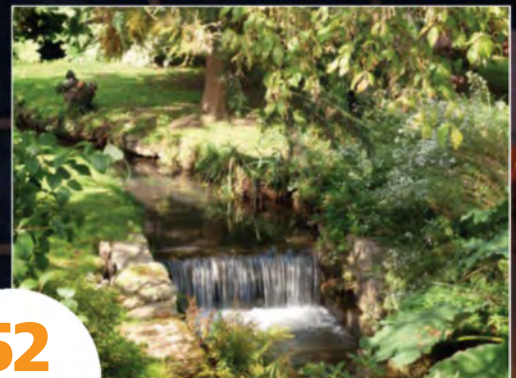


"Once you have learnt all about the modes and settings, you will create much better photographs"



48

What is aperture?



52

Shutter speeds



56

Colour casts explained

Settings explained

We take you through what your camera's settings can do, and how you can tweak Auto mode for better results

All digital cameras come equipped with an automatic shooting mode that's designed to do all of the work for you, so you can concentrate on what is being shot. Auto often utilises the camera's best settings in all situations, but these don't always yield the best results.

We will be showing you each of the functions that Auto mode carries out behind the scenes, how these functions will change the outcome of your photographs and how slight manual adjustments can help you get the most out of your camera.

ISO settings

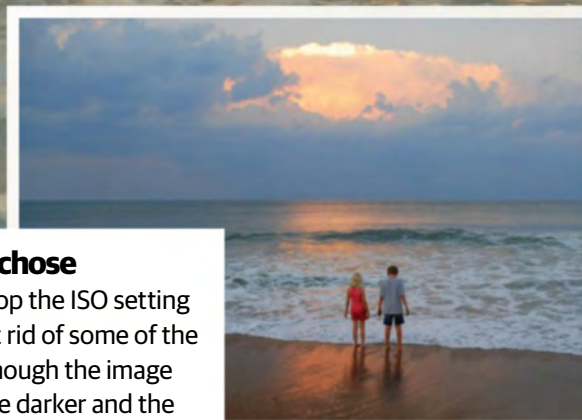
The ISO is the camera's sensitivity to light. The larger the ISO, the more sensitive the camera's sensor is. If the ISO is low, the shots will be clear but darker. Images will be brighter with a high ISO, but will appear grainy.

What the camera chose

■ This shot, taken on an ISO setting of 400, is a little grainy, but has retained the low-light colours of sunset – making it a warm shot. The camera chose a relatively high ISO as there was little ambient light

The settings we chose

■ We decided to drop the ISO setting to 80 in order to get rid of some of the grain and noise. Although the image is still nice, it is a little darker and the warm colours of sunset have been lost



Metering

The camera automatically measures light intensity using different parts of the scene, and then finds the best settings for the image exposure. Getting the exposure right for the end photo can often require one or two attempts.

The settings we chose

While the camera chose to meter one point only, we chose to use multi-point metering to meter the sky and church and achieve better exposure



What the camera chose

Due to the focus being set on the sky, the camera has metered for the bright sunlight. This means the detail of the foreground has been lost

“Getting the exposure right for the end photo can often require one or two attempts”

Aperture

The aperture controls how wide the lens is open, and ultimately the depth of field. A large aperture (a low f-number, eg f2.8) will let in more light and give a main point of focus with a blurred background.

What the camera chose

Leaving the camera on Automatic mode has given us a large depth of field. This means that most of the photo is in focus



The settings we chose

By using a low f-number, the main subject is in focus and the rest of the photo is blurred, putting emphasis on the flower

Flash

If there's not enough light, the camera will fire its built-in flash to illuminate the subject at the time of taking the photo. The flash symbol may appear to inform the user that it's going to be used.

What the camera chose

Because this was a bright day the camera's flash has not gone off. However, the sun was behind our subjects so their faces are in shadow.



The settings we chose

By turning the camera's in-built flash on we have filled in the shadows on the faces, caused by the sun being behind them

💡 Technical tip

■ ISO changes how sensitive a sensor is to light. Higher ISOs gather more light and are better for low-light scenes.

Modes & Settings



The settings we chose

By using a different white balance setting, such as 'cloudy' or 'daylight', the detail in the sky can be clearly seen

White balance

White balance is designed to ensure white objects appear white in the photo, and other objects are free of colour casting. Most digital cameras come with a variety of white balance settings, each tailored to shooting conditions.



What the camera chose

This automatic white balance has made the sky appear too bright, losing the detail in the clouds



The settings we chose

Using a faster shutter speed means the subject appears completely still in the photo

Shutter speed

The shutter speed determines how long the lens is open for, and therefore how long the picture is taken for. A faster shutter speed is useful for shooting fast-moving subjects (cars, sport etc) while a slower shutter speed is best for being creative with long exposures.



What the camera chose

Using Auto, the camera isn't aware the subject is moving, and therefore uses a normal shutter speed, making the subject blurred

Focus

Digital cameras have the ability to automatically focus on the subject, and many now come with different focusing abilities that are suited to different subjects or situations.

Sharp/In focus chose

Make sure you focus on the right subject to ensure crisp details where it is most important to the photo

Blurred/Out of focus

Because we have focused on the person and used a shallow depth of field, the background is blurred



Technical tip

Every manufacturer calls its focus modes by slightly different names, but the icons will usually be similar.



3 common...

Focusing problems solved

Wrong focus point

To select the right focus point, aim at your subject, half-press the shutter button, recompose your shot, and release.

Moving subject

Active subjects can be hard to focus on. Go into your menu system and select AF Tracking or Subject Tracking Focus.

Low-light focusing

In low light, you might find your focus hunts and cannot find a subject. You can switch to Manual focus in these situations.

Types of focus

Commonly used focus settings on your camera



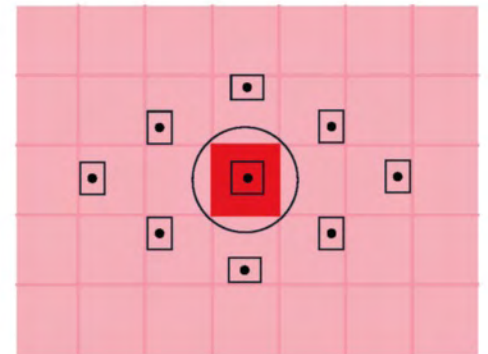
Face priority autofocus

01 If you're shooting people then opt for face priority or face recognition, which most new cameras offer. You'll usually see a little square appear around the faces that the camera is focusing on – some cameras recognise multiple faces at any one time.



Tracking or continuous

02 If you have a moving subject then opt for tracking or continuous mode. It will lock onto the subject and move with it. Keep the active subject in focus. This will be easier than trying to learn how to pan to keep focus on a moving subject.



Single, spot and multi

03 Single or spot modes ensure that the centre of the image is in focus, while multi-area will focus on a number of points. Spot is generally more accurate. If you don't want the subject in the centre of your shot, half-press the shutter to focus, then reframe.

Scene modes

We take you through each of the scene modes you're likely to find on your camera and give tips on how best to use them

Modern digital cameras, from compacts right up to DSLRs, are very user-friendly. With many cameras, there is a focus on preset camera settings which help users of all levels get the most out of their camera in any given situation. These presets are called the camera's scene modes, and they are becoming more diverse with new cameras.

Setting your camera to a new mode when out and about can be cumbersome, and often cause you to lose the shot. However, we will be showing you the advantages of taking the extra time to set up your camera to the correct scene mode.

Landscape

Landscape mode will set the camera up for capturing large and detailed scenes. Using a small aperture (large f-number) ensures as much of the scene is in focus as possible. To compensate for this, a slower shutter speed will be used, meaning a tripod may be required to keep the camera steady.

Automatic mode

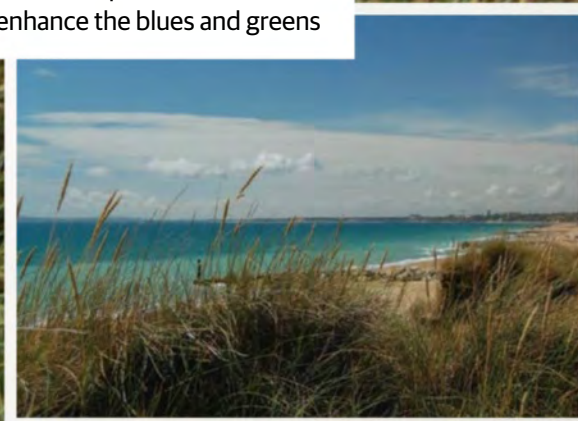
✗ In Auto the sky and the land are exposed for, but they're a little bland

Landscape scene mode

✓ Landscape scene modes enhance the blues and greens

Technical tip

■ Want to get a similar effect with filters? Try using a polarising filter, which will darken the blues and greens.



Automatic mode

✗ Here the minimum focus distance is too far away to capture the detail in the flower



Macro



Macro shooting modes will usually change the minimum focusing distance of your camera, allowing you to get up close and personal with your chosen subject. This mode will also widen the aperture (lower f-number), putting the main subject in focus while blurring the background.

Macro scene mode

✓ With a closer focusing distance we were able to get some great detail from the individual flower



“Macro shooting modes allow you to get up close and personal with your chosen subject”

Portrait



Portrait mode is great for shots of a single person. Much like macro mode, it selects a large aperture (low f-number) to put the person in focus with the background blurred. This draws all attention to the person.



Portrait scene mode

✓ This mode selected a longer exposure instead of using flash and created a more flattering shot

Automatic mode

✗ The Automatic mode has prompted the flash to fire, resulting in an overexposed shot with flat skin tones



Sport/Action



Sport/Action mode is for taking photos of moving subjects. It increases the shutter speed, attempting to freeze the subject in place when you take the photo. This mode works great in bright light.



Sport scene mode

✓ On the sports scene mode, the camera uses a higher ISO and shutter speed to freeze the motion

Automatic mode

✗ On Automatic, our camera hasn't recognised the fast-moving subject so hasn't upped the shutter speed



Modes & Settings

Night Portrait scene mode

✓ This shot, taken using the night portrait mode, shows how the dynamic range can be increased for a better photo result



Automatic mode

✗ This photo shows how your flash on Auto can light the subject, but you miss the background detail

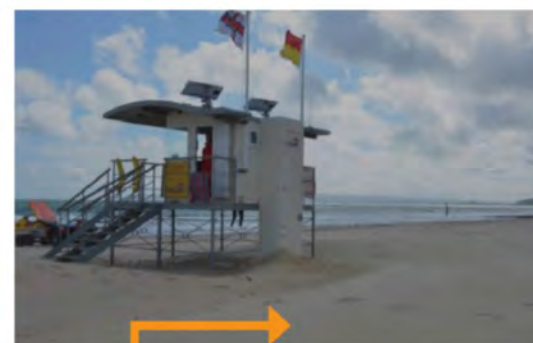
Night portrait

Night portrait mode's designed for taking shots of people in dark situations. It will slow down the shutter speed and allow more light to get into the camera, as well as fire the flash. This can give some great shots, but may require a tripod.



Beach scene mode

✓ Beach and snow scene modes are often combined as the camera is dealing with a lot of bright/light colours, which it exposes for



Automatic mode

✗ Although the Auto mode has captured the sky well, the foreground and sand are a little on the dark side

Beach/Snow

When shooting bright scenes such as sandy beaches or snow, the camera will automatically underexpose, darkening the image and losing the detail of the bright areas. Placing your camera on beach/snow scene mode will brighten up the shot and expose the colours correctly.

Scene modes

High dynamic range

High dynamic range photography is a technique of taking a number of exposures which cover the dynamic range of the scene. This means you are able to capture both the highlights and lowlights of a scene, giving the photo a better tonal range. When processed, HDR photos can look very striking and bring out detail which may not normally be visible.

3 alternative... Scene modes

Sunset

■ Sunsets are notoriously tricky to capture, but by using the dedicated scene modes your colours will be enhanced.

Museum

■ This mode enables you to capture images in low-light settings without a flash and it also turns off all incidental beeps and noises.

Panorama

■ Depending on your camera this will either help you line up a number of shots or let you sweep the camera across the scene.

Automatic mode

✓ By merging the photos together, either in camera or using editing software, the final image should turn out like this

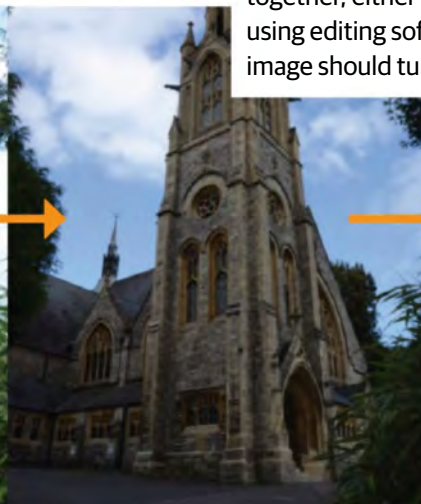
HDR mode

■ Shooting using an HDR mode usually takes three exposures, one normal, one under-, and one overexposed



Normal exposure

Trying to expose for both the sky and the foreground has left this image with no detail in the sky



Underexposed

In this shot the foreground is too dark, but the sky is a nice representation of real life



Overexposed

There's still some great detail in the brickwork, but the sky is completely blown out

Program

Program mode can be found on compacts, CSCs and DSLRs – so it's one feature everyone should get to grips with

Program mode can be found on almost all modern cameras. It's signified by a small P in either the shooting mode menu or on the mode dial. In this mode, your camera still chooses the shutter speed and aperture for the scene in front of it, but it enables you to take control of aspects like white balance, focus modes, ISO settings and flash modes. By controlling these features you can get more creative with your images and ensure that you produce better-looking photos than ever before.

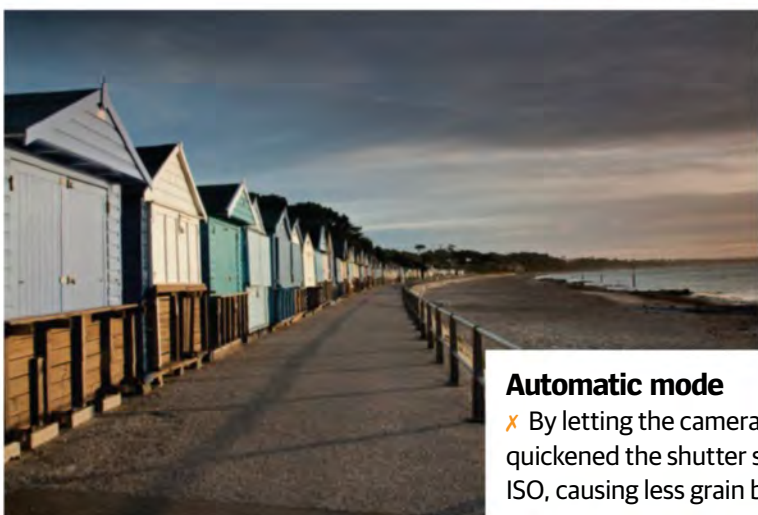
“The higher the ISO number, the more light the camera can gather, which is great for low-light scenes”

ISO

■ The ISO setting refers to how sensitive the camera sensor is to light. The higher the number (eg ISO 800 and above), the more light the camera can gather, which is great for low-light scenes where you're unable to use a flash. Your camera will try to opt for low numbers to keep the photo noise free (higher ISOs do suffer from noise or grain), but sometimes upping the ISO is the only answer.

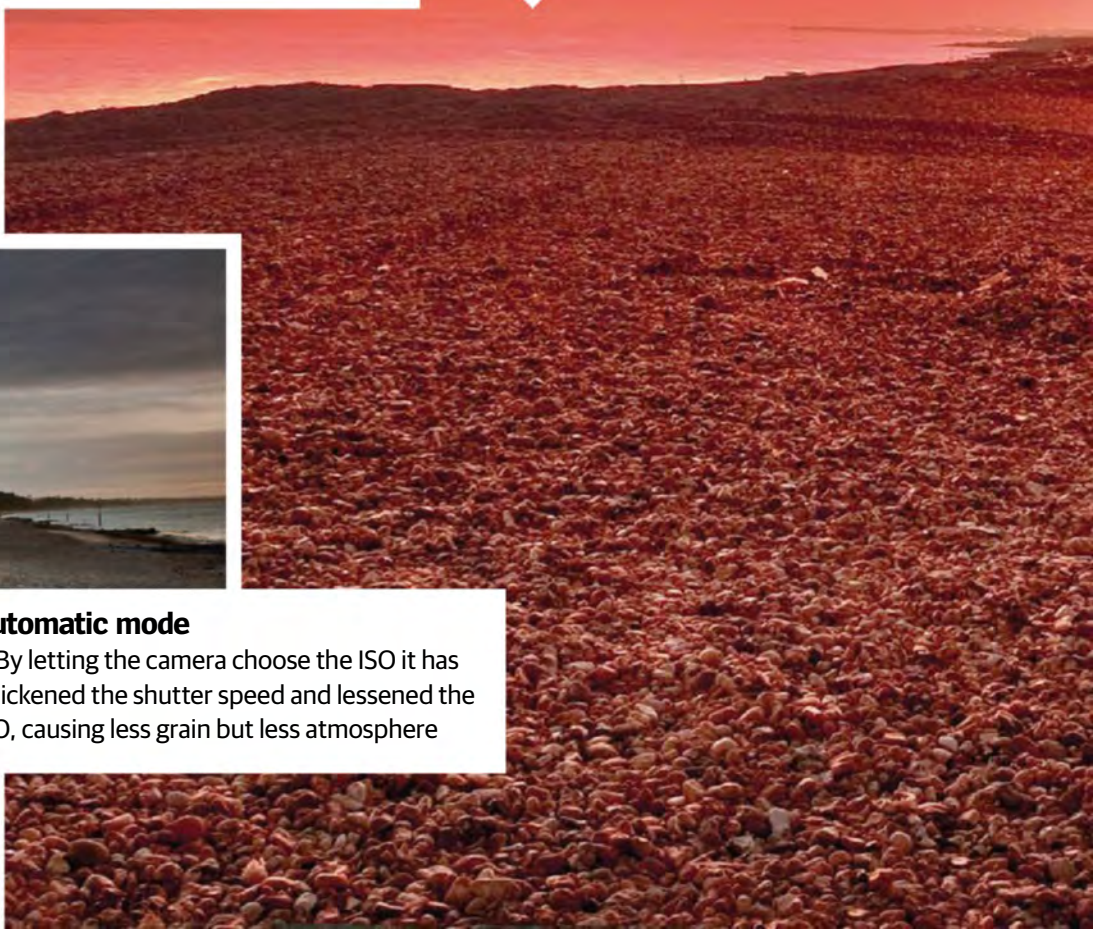
Chosen mode

✓ We wanted to create a blurred water effect, so upped the ISO (thus slowing the shutter speed), which caused a small amount of grain



Automatic mode

✗ By letting the camera choose the ISO it has quickened the shutter speed and lessened the ISO, causing less grain but less atmosphere



White balance

When left on Auto, your camera's white balance will choose the setting it feels is most appropriate, like cloudy, incandescent or tungsten. However, the camera can't always choose for mixed lighting or for situations like sunsets and sunrises, which will cause washed-out colours that don't represent real life. By setting the right white balance you can also add 'creative' colour casts, which could add a new dimension to your shot.

Automatic mode

✗ The camera has selected a warm white balance, probably due to it being quite cloudy

Chosen mode

✓ We chose 'Daylight', which produced more neutral tones that were closer to real life



Focus

On most system cameras, you can select the Focus mode while shooting on Program. This can benefit you in a number of ways. Manual focus can be a great option for macro shots and those with poor light. Continuous autofocus or tracking focus can be great if you know your subject will be moving. Your camera will not be able to anticipate these aspects so may choose the wrong focus and cause you to miss the shot.

Automatic mode

✗ Set your focus on the most important part: the foreground, subject or background

Chosen mode

✓ You can half-press the shutter release to focus and then recompose your image



Technical tip

■ If you have to up the ISO, try converting it post-shoot to black and white, as grain looks retro-cool in mono.

Modes & Settings

Exposure Compensation

Exposure Compensation is represented by a plus and minus symbol, and often has a button for access. Press this button to rotate the control wheel or use the d-pad to move up or down a scale. To correct overexposure (image too bright) use a negative number; to correct underexposure (image too dark) use a positive one.



Automatic mode

✗ When shooting in bright conditions, your camera's Auto mode can easily over or underexpose a scene



Chosen mode

✓ Most cameras offer EV mode, where you can add or take away exposure 'stops' to get the correct balance of light

Drive mode

Some cameras enable photographers to alter the Drive mode when in Program mode - this is great for action lovers in particular. In Single Shot mode the camera will fire just one shot, which is typical when on Automatic. If you select Continuous Drive mode instead, the camera will fire a rapid succession of shots. Self-timer is usually available here too.



Automatic mode

✗ Your camera will automatically shoot single frames which can mean you miss the action



Chosen mode

✓ By switching to Burst mode you can take a series of photos and stitch them together afterwards for creative effect

Automatic mode

✗ Although it's a bright day, as we're shooting inside there are a lot of shadows caused by harsh side lighting



💡 **Technical tip**
 ■ Portraits can benefit greatly from fill flash, especially on days with harsh, bright or direct sunlight.

“Your photos could be vastly improved by taking control of the flash settings”



Chosen mode

✓ By using a flash to 'fill in' the light – a fill flash – the end result is much more pleasing

💡 **Technical tip**
 ■ You can alter the flash's strength, or you can bounce it or diffuse it by putting some masking tape over it.

Flash

Flash can be very useful and yet very underused. Depending on the situation you may want to turn it off completely, use red-eye reduction mode or opt for something more creative like rear curtain or slow sync. All of these terms can be very confusing, though, so most of us just leave the flash to the camera to manage. However, photos can be vastly improved by taking control of the flash settings. Here we're talking about in-camera flash and not a flash that is connected to the camera via the hotshoe, for instance.

3 alternative... Flash modes



Slow sync

When using Slow Sync, your camera will use both a flash and a longer shutter speed, which can be

great for creative movement effects, like capturing a sharp photo of your subject and blurred background.



Rear curtain

Rear and front curtain refer to when your camera will fire the flash during the shot. With rear curtain it

fires at the end of the exposure, but with front curtain it fires at the start of the capture.



Fill in

Great for backlit subjects, fill in flash refers to the 'filling in' of dark areas. For instance, if you're shooting

inside a church against a window, the background will be light but faces may be in the dark.

Aperture

Take control of your aperture and start creating some stunning artistic shots in camera

The idea of apertures and f-numbers are enough to leave many confused, but the general outline is that smaller f-numbers create a wide aperture and larger f-numbers result in a small aperture. But what does all this really mean?

In brief, your aperture works like the iris of an eye: the wider the aperture the more light can pass through the lens, and vice versa when referring to a small aperture. F-numbers simply break this down and represent different opening stages as stops. Depending on the lens you're using you can work with apertures as wide as f1.8 or as small as f32.

It's aperture that creates the artistic blurry background you see in many professional shots, otherwise known as depth of field. A wide aperture, generally anything below f8, will create a shallow depth of field effect, making the subject you are focused on the main point in the frame by softly blurring out any background distractions. A smaller aperture (above f8), however, creates a larger depth of field, enabling you to bring more objects into focus from both the foreground and background.

Follow along as we're going to show you the benefits of using your camera's Aperture Priority mode in order to creatively control this professional-looking effect. Take a look at our aperture suggestions for specific photographic genres and then simply set the f-number that you want to work with. Your camera will then select the right shutter speed for you, ensuring professional, even exposures every time.

“A wide aperture will create a shallow depth of field effect, making the subject you're focused on the main point in the frame”



f2 The wide aperture used to take this shot creates a beautiful shallow depth of field effect with the focus area just on our model's face



Technical tip

■ A low f-number such as this can also be referred to as a wide aperture, and will create a soft background subject.



f4 The background remains blurred and the image is bright. The focus area has also begun to expand with more of the model's body coming into focus



f22

With most of the image in focus now, you are able to pick up on details in both the foreground and background



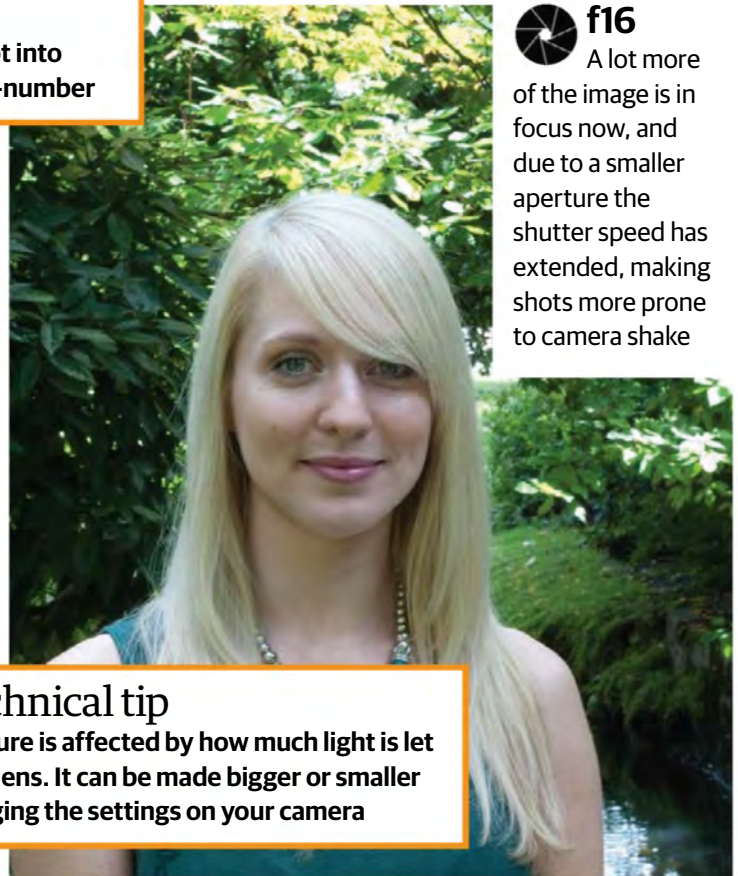
Technical tip

■ Bring more of the shot into focus by using a larger f-number



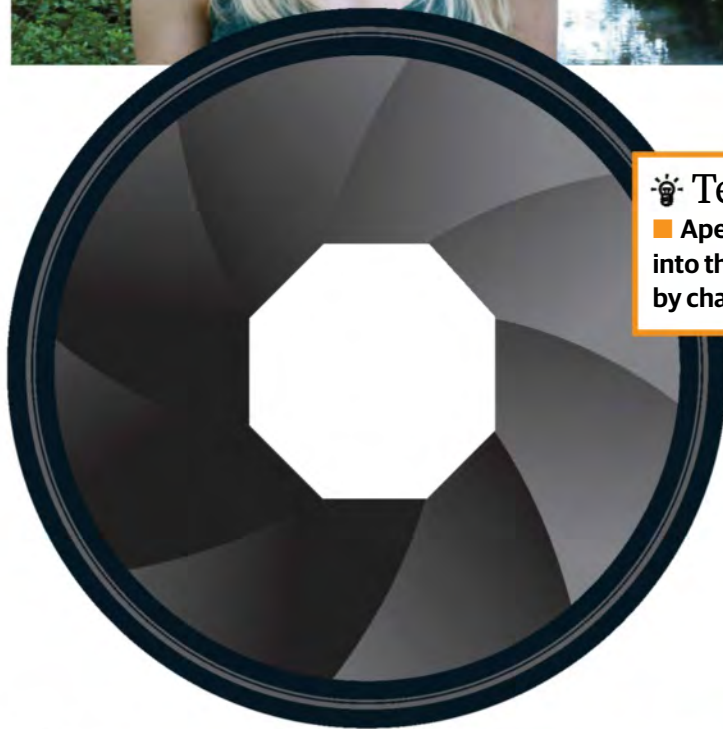
f16

A lot more of the image is in focus now, and due to a smaller aperture the shutter speed has extended, making shots more prone to camera shake



Technical tip

■ Aperture is affected by how much light is let into the lens. It can be made bigger or smaller by changing the settings on your camera



f8

The focus is now beginning to extend to the background, although this f-stop still has a great effect



f5.6

Noticeably more of the foreground has focused and is beginning to bring back details from the bush on the left-hand side of the frame



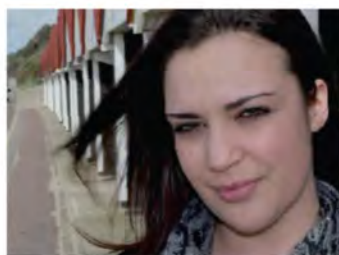
Technical tip

■ When using a wide aperture you'll have less focus area, so ensure you've focused your camera on the right subject.

Modes & Settings

Portraits

Create picture-perfect and professional-looking portraits by using a wide aperture setting. The artistic shallow depth of field effect will draw you into the frame and bring focus to the model's eyes and features. A smaller aperture, however, is great for shooting group shot portraits, as it will help to ensure everyone remains in focus.



F11

✗ Not unsuitable, but the small aperture makes the image appear more 'snapshot' than professional



F2

✓ Keep the focus on your subject using a wide aperture and get an artistic shallow depth of field effect

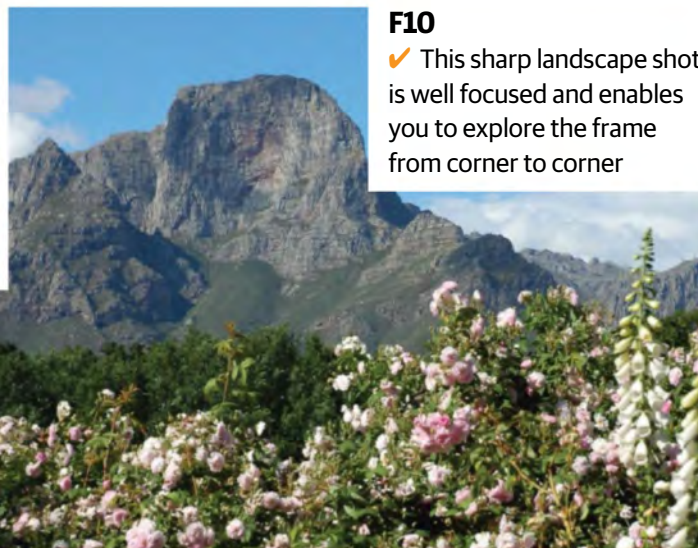
Landscapes

Landscape photographs are best when they're sharp and perfectly in focus. A small aperture setting is ideal for this genre, as it will ensure most of the frame is in focus from the foreground to the background. Remember to use a tripod where possible, as the slower shutter speeds when working with a smaller aperture will result in motion capture.



F5.6

✗ The blur effect is distracting and restricts the view, making wide apertures unsuitable for landscapes



F10

✓ This sharp landscape shot is well focused and enables you to explore the frame from corner to corner

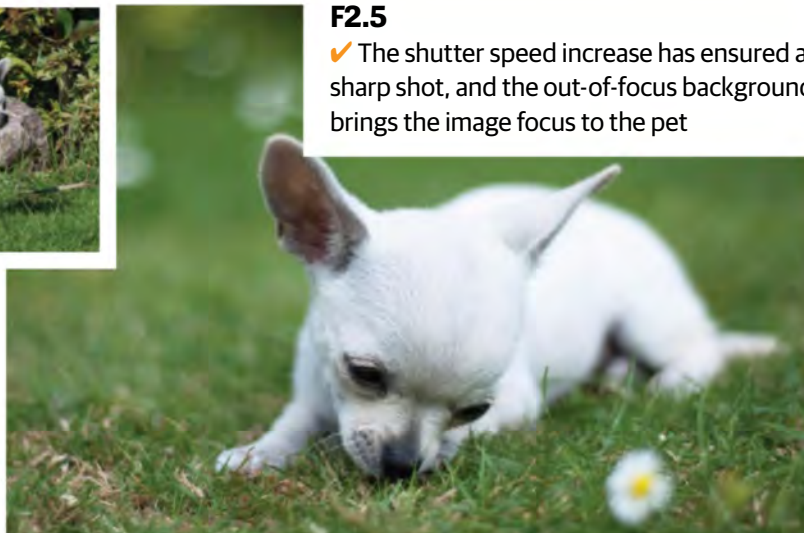
Wildlife and pets

A wide aperture works well when photographing pet portraits or wildlife. The Aperture Priority mode will prevent your image from becoming overexposed by extending the shutter speed, which is also great for freezing fast-moving or fidgety subjects. Like a human portrait you should always ensure your subject's eyes are in focus.



F22

✗ Not ideal for fast-moving subjects like wildlife and pets – a smaller aperture will require a longer shutter speed



F2.5

✓ The shutter speed increase has ensured a sharp shot, and the out-of-focus background brings the image focus to the pet

Macro

You can capture beautiful macro shots with wide apertures. They're ideal for location lighting, and will result in well-exposed images. The faster shutter speed will freeze motion from the breeze or camera shake when shooting up close. The out-of-focus background also adds depth and makes your subject the focus of the frame.



F25

✗ The in-focus background creates an unwanted distraction from our macro subject



F3.5

✓ Softly blur your background with a wide aperture setting, making your macro subject the focus

Still life

Still-life objects can be found all around the home and are really great for practising your photography techniques on. Why not have a go at photographing more than one object to best see how aperture control works? For the most artistic results you should use a wide aperture and focus your camera on just one of the objects within the composition.



F11

✗ A smaller aperture will bring all of your subject(s) sharply into focus, but the results may not be as interesting



F2.5

✓ Using a wide aperture you can create a great, artistic still-life shot like this one

💡 Technical tip

■ A small aperture setting will require longer shutter speeds so you may need a tripod to ensure your shots are sharp.

Sports

Fast-paced sports don't always require quick shutter speeds to get more artistic action-packed shots – just practise your panning technique. Use a large f-number for a small aperture in Aperture Priority mode; the camera will compensate for the exposure by slowing down the shutter speed, enabling you to capture motion blur and speed.



F8

✗ A smaller aperture adds drama but can make an action-themed image look a little static and uneventful



F3.5

✓ A smaller f-number and longer shutter speeds are required for panning shots like this

Shutter speed

Select the Shutter Priority mode on your camera and take control of your creativity

Shutter speed controls how much light is let through the lens. It is measured in seconds and fractions of a second, with most cameras enabling you to shoot as slow as 30sec and as fast as 1/4000sec. Depending on the speed of the setting, you can control how under-, over- or well-exposed your image is.

As a rule you should avoid shooting at speeds slower than 1/60sec unless using a tripod, as the shutter is also responsible for capturing movement. Camera shake and motion blur have ruined many a good photo; however, you shouldn't always overlook capturing movement in a still image. Depending on the genre you're shooting, movement can add an element of energy into an otherwise static shot. By using the right shooting techniques

(such as panning and light painting) and manipulating your shutter speed, you can get some great, creative results in camera.

Freezing motion is another matter, and not always as easy as setting a faster speed – the lens you shoot with can play a big part. When setting your shutter speed, pay attention to the focal length of your lens. Your shutter speed should always be faster than the focal length. If you're shooting with a 55-80mm lens then set your shutter speed upwards of 1/125sec to prevent any motion from being captured.

Take a look at our examples over the next few pages and switch your mode dial to the Shutter Priority setting. Your camera will determine the correct aperture for the exposure, so you're free to experiment and explore how your shutter works.

Technical tip

Remember the higher the shutter speed, the wider the aperture; the slower the shutter speed, the smaller the aperture.



Shots like this are captured using slow shutter speeds

“By using the right shooting techniques and manipulating your shutter speed you can get some great, creative results in camera”

Capturing a carousel

See what a change in shutter speed can do



One third of a second

X This image is overexposed because the shutter's open for an extended amount of time. Hardly any details are visible on the carousel due to the speed of the movement and slow shutter.



One tenth of a second

X Stationary details are beginning to show through with only the moving horses remaining blurred. A tripod is necessary when using a shutter speed as slow as this.



One fifteenth of a second

X There is not a huge amount of difference in this shot to the last, but the shapes of the horses are becoming more defined and the slow shutter speed does give the image a more creative edge.

1/200th



One two hundredth of a second

✓ At 1/200sec the carousel is frozen and all of the detail can be seen

1sec



One second

✗ An extremely slow shutter speed to use on a bright day, a 1sec shutter speed will overexpose an image and create a largely blank white space. Motion will also be recorded as just light strips of colour.

1/25th



One twenty-fifth of a second

✗ The horses and details of colour are becoming more apparent at this shutter speed. The horses at the front of the carousel are beginning to get more shape than before.

1/40th



One fortieth of a second

✗ This image is much better in terms of the overall exposure as the whites aren't completely blown out as before. It still requires a tripod to shoot successfully, but motion blur has eased considerably.

1/60th



One sixtieth of a second

✗ 1/60sec is ideal for shooting most subjects handheld, but even faster shutter speeds are required to avoid the inevitable motion blur when photographing fast-moving subjects.

1/80th



One eightieth of a second

✗ This image is a lot sharper than previous shots, but motion blur is still present up close. We will need to increase the shutter speed further to freeze the movement successfully.

1/125th



1/125 second

✗ A great shutter speed to use on bright days. The exposure in this image is well balanced. The horses and sign are clear, although slight motion blur can still be detected around the edges.

1/160th



1/160 second

✓ 1/160sec enables you to freeze all the action, even when shooting handheld. If in Shutter Priority mode, the camera will set the correct aperture to ensure you get an evenly exposed image.

Modes & Settings

Portraits

You will ensure that your portraits are sharp and picture-perfect by avoiding camera shake and motion blur. Work in Shutter Priority and increase your shutter speed setting – your camera will then compensate for the exposure by opening up the aperture, creating a beautiful shallow depth of field effect that is perfect for portraiture.



1/5sec

✗ Slower speeds will record camera shake. The slightest movement will blur what could have been a great shot



1/400sec

✓ Increasing your shutter speed will open up your aperture, resulting in a professional, softly focused background

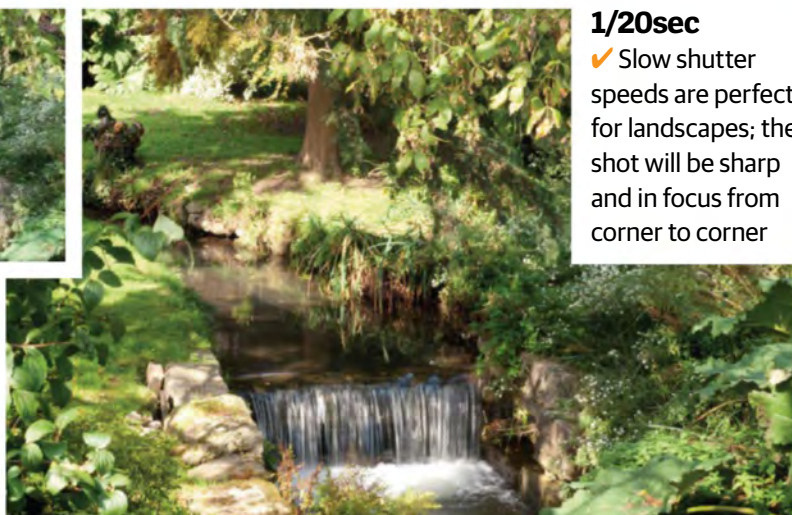
Landscapes

Slower speeds are ideal for landscapes, as they enable you to close down the aperture and get an evenly focused, much sharper shot. The longer the shutter is open, the more dramatic the results – perfect for capturing moody sunsets in low light. Try shooting a seascape with an extended shutter speed and see how you can capture water as mist.



1/250sec

✗ Faster shutter speeds can create snapshot-style images that are a lot less interesting and engaging



1/20sec

✓ Slow shutter speeds are perfect for landscapes; the shot will be sharp and in focus from corner to corner

Wildlife and pets

Fast-moving pets and wildlife can be tricky to capture without motion blur, but faster shutter speeds are ideal for getting great shots. Be sure to increase your shutter speed to freeze your subjects while they are on the go, but always remember that the faster the shutter speed the wider the aperture, so there will be less available focus area.



1/20sec

✗ When shooting with a large focal length lens, increase your camera's shutter speed to avoid getting camera shake



1/125sec

✓ An increased shutter speed will freeze fast-moving subjects and ensure all your shots are sharp

Macro

When taking macro photographs in Shutter Priority mode, you should avoid using shutter speeds that are slower than 1/60sec handheld. The longer the shutter stays open the more likely it is that you will record movement and camera shake, which will prevent your macro shot from looking professional, sharp and in focus.



1/10sec

✗ Slower shutter speeds record movement and aren't ideal when shooting macro images outside in a breeze



1/800sec

✓ Faster shutter speeds will allow you to take sharper shots that have an artistic shallow depth of field effect due to a wider aperture setting

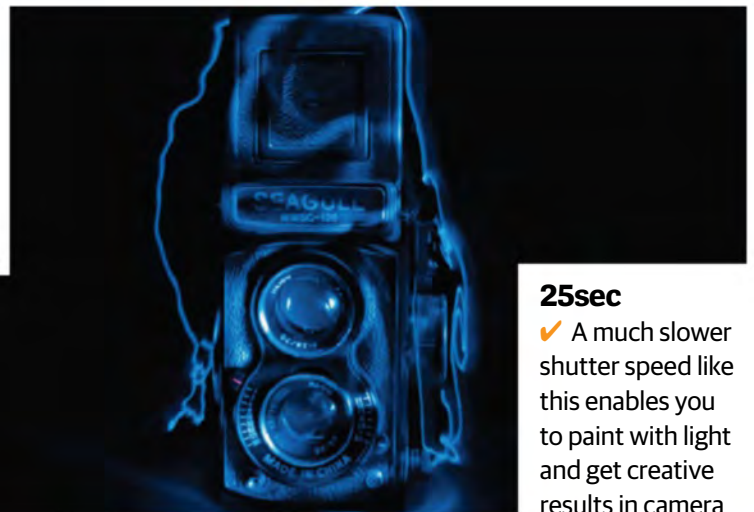
Still life

Experiment with your camera's shutter speed settings when shooting still life in a controlled lighting environment like a studio. Faster shutter speeds are great for getting a professional, shallow depth of field effect, but you can try slowing down your shutter speed and experimenting with the light source for some really creative results.



1/125sec

✗ This image is not unsuitable, but when working in Shutter Priority mode you can experiment and avoid playing it safe



25sec

✓ A much slower shutter speed like this enables you to paint with light and get creative results in camera

Sports

Avoid making energy-packed shots look static by extending your shutter speed to record motion. Panning is a great technique for sport, because it enables you to keep subjects sharp while the background blurs out. It is important to remember that, when using this technique, your camera's autofocus is set to continuous so that it can keep up!



1/1250sec

✗ A faster shutter speed will freeze movement and result in detailed but static shots like this one



1/60sec

✓ Extended shutter speeds enable you to pan with your subject, creating exciting and energetic shots like this

Technical tip

■ Avoid recording movement when shooting handheld by setting your shutter speed to 1/60sec or quicker.

White balance

Understand how white balance settings can affect your captures

Before you make white balance alterations in camera it's important to know how white balance can be affected by the light source you're shooting within.

All light has a colour temperature, which can range from warm orange and red tones (tungsten bulbs) to cool blue and green tones (fluorescent bulbs). Without the right white balance setting these lights will create a colour cast in the photo. The white areas will have a noticeable blue or orange tone.

To overcome this, most cameras have an auto white balance setting to compensate for the casts and neutralise the image so it's a more

accurate representation of the scene. However, it isn't perfect and sometimes the camera will struggle to remove all traces of a cast. This is where your manual white balance settings become useful. Simply match the white balance settings to suit your light source.

You can also get creative and apply the opposite white balance setting to the light source. This will create a controlled colour cast that adds an edge to your image. Most photographers use this in order to warm up an otherwise cold scene or to enhance a mood or feeling that the photograph portrays.

“Auto white balance isn't perfect – the camera can struggle to remove all of a cast”

Good example

✓ We selected the cloudy white balance setting as the subject was shot indoors using natural window light. This setting preserves the warmth of the natural light

Bad example

✗ The incandescent/tungsten white balance setting has failed to compensate for the natural light indoors and has created a cool blue colour cast over the image

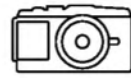


Does my camera do it?



DSLR

- ✓ Offers custom white balance settings for more advanced users and most have in-built colour correction
- ✗ With so many other settings to adjust, a DSLR can be overwhelming



Compact system camera

- ✓ Most have a button on the body for quick access to white balance setting
- ✗ The auto white balance setting won't be as accurate as a pro DSLR's



Compact camera

- ✓ Compacts have pretty accurate auto white balance modes
- ✗ White balance often has to be changed within the Settings menu interface



Cameraphone

- ✓ Smartphones have plenty of editing app options to choose from and download
- ✗ Most don't come with optional settings so you have to rely on Auto

Jargon buster

Colour temperature of light

Colour temperature refers to how warm or cool an image appears. Lights that produce colour temperatures over 5,000 Kelvin create a cool blue cast; lower colour temperature lights create warmer orange casts.

White balance modes Learn what the different white balance settings do



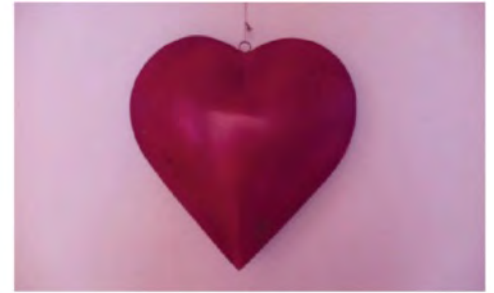
Auto

Auto white balance allows the camera to determine the best setting for the shot based on the lighting conditions. Most cameras will have a reliable and accurate automatic white balance setting that is suitable for changing light conditions.



Tungsten/Incandescent

Tungsten or incandescent light produced by a warm light bulb can create an orange cast like this. By selecting the tungsten/incandescent white balance setting the camera will cool down the effect.



Fluorescent

Fluorescent lights that are often used in public places create a cooler blue-toned colour cast. To counteract the effect you should use the Fluorescent white balance setting so that your camera can compensate by warming up the scene.



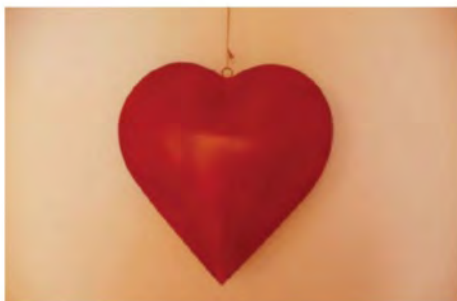
Daylight/Sunshine

The Daylight/Sunshine white balance setting is, rather unsurprisingly, perfect for shooting on bright and sunny days. This setting is relatively neutral and ensures your daytime scene is recorded without any unwanted colour casts.



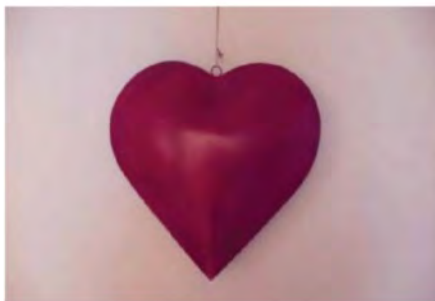
Cloudy/Shade

Overcast cloudy days often appear dull and cool in photographs, but the Cloudy setting helps to warm up the scene. This also makes it ideal for shooting low-light scenes like sunrise and sunset as it brings out the warmth in the sky.



Flash


When you're shooting with your studio or on-camera flash, you can create a cool cast on your images. However, by switching your white balance setting over to Flash, the camera will compensate and warm up the shots.





Custom


Although it's a more advanced white balance setting, most cameras will offer a custom mode that enables you to make specific adjustments to your white balance settings, whether you want to cancel out casts or add them in creatively.


What the icons mean


 **Auto** Auto is a default setting that enables the camera to determine the best white balance setting for the scene.


 **Tungsten/Incandescent** Represented by a light bulb, the tungsten/incandescent setting is ideal for shooting indoors under warm bulb lighting.

 **Fluorescent** This setting is perfect for shooting public places where Fluorescent lights are used, like cafes, gyms and subways.

 **Daylight/Sunshine** The sun symbol represents an ideal setting for shooting on a summer's day as it ensures you won't capture any colour casts.

 **Cloudy/Shade** Perfect for shooting on a cloudy day. This setting is also great in low light, when shooting sunrise or sunset.

 **Flash** If using flash in the studio or working with your on-camera flash, use this to keep shot results warm.

 **Custom** Ideal for removing more complex colour casts, you can also experiment with custom settings to add creative casts.

Modes & Settings



✗ Taken using the Automatic white balance mode, the early morning light creates a slight blue tone that has an uninviting feel

Warming casts

The image above was shot in natural daylight using the Automatic white balance mode. Due to the time of day the natural light appears cooler and makes the cupcakes less appealing. You can switch your white balance to Shade to warm up the image and give the cakes an inviting feel.



✓ This image was taken using the Shade white balance setting, which has helped to warm up the tones in the natural light

✓ The blue colour cast adds drama to an otherwise simple shot and is also in keeping with the subject matter



Technical tip

■ Remember to preview your settings on the back LCD before you shoot to ensure colour casts are corrected.

Cooling casts

You can apply the same technique to create a cooler colour cast. In this image the blue cast adds a creative edge to the photograph and also works with the subject matter. Shot in natural daylight, the white balance setting was switched to incandescent, which cancelled out the warming effect of the daylight and added a blue colour cast.



✗ This image, shot in natural light with the Daylight white balance setting, is technically sound but uninspired

Custom adjustments

To revive colours in this shot we switched the white balance settings to daylight, which added an orange glow. This was overpowering and didn't reflect the flower. Using a Fluorescent white balance we added a magenta cast that highlighted the delicacy. You can also use a custom setting to create a more specific colour cast by selecting a high or low Kelvin number.

✓ The Fluorescent white balance setting adds a magenta cast that creates a more aesthetically pleasing image



✗ This image isn't technically incorrect; however, the warm hues can be overwhelming so we selected a different white balance setting

Common problems solved...

When to use custom white balance

After mastering shutter speed and aperture settings you will want to start exploring ISO and white balance. If you already change the white balance according to where you are shooting, you might now want to understand the custom white balance setting a little better.

White balance moves from cool to warm and is displayed in Kelvin (K), but you need to know how and when to use it. Your camera's custom white balance setting is ideal for correcting colour casts in tricky

lighting situations or when the camera's other white balance settings are not quite right. The Kelvin values represent the colour temperature of the light, with higher numbers reflecting cooler light sources and lower numbers representing warmer lights. Select the right number to cancel out or create a colour cast, depending on where you are shooting.

Check out our quick reference guide below to see what value Kelvin you would need for certain lighting situations.

Colour Temperature/Kelvin	Light Source
1000-2000K	Candlelight/Flames
2500-4000K	Tungsten/Ambient
4000-5000K	Fluorescent
5000-5500K	Flash
5000-6500K	Sunshine/Daylight
6500-8000K	Slight overcast skies
9000-10000K	Cloudy/Shade/Sunrise/Sunset

Editing fix:

Correcting a colour cast in Photoshop



Correcting the cast

Open the image in Photoshop. Go to Levels (Image> Adjustments>Levels). Zoom in and locate the brightest highlight area. Use the Set White Point eyedropper tool to select what should be the brightest part of the photo.



Bringing back the detail

You will now need to select the 'set black point' eyedropper tool and click on the darkest area of the image. Zoom in to ensure you select the right area and use the Preview button to check that the adjustments are correct.



Finishing touches

You can now use the Set Gray Point eyedropper and select the grey areas. Alternatively you can use the midtone slider along the bottom of the histogram to tweak the midtones and ensure your image is true to life. Finally, save your corrected photograph.

Shooting skills

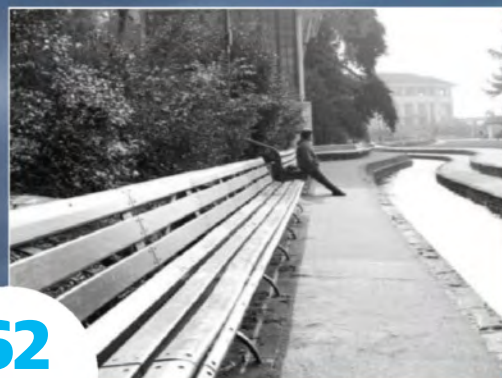
Tips and hints on taking perfect photos of any subject matter

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Stunning
landscapes



"Learn how to take eye-catching shots in key genres, from landscapes to sports"



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your shots



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Get to grips
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Composition

Learn how to compose stunning images in camera with our examples

A good composition is key to any great photograph. Your composition should draw in the viewer's gaze – it should be engaging yet easy on the eye.

Composing what is essentially a restricted view on a real-life scene is not always easy, but knowing some of the rules can certainly simplify shooting. Understanding how to balance a composition is important, and knowing where to place your point of interest is essential to a successful outcome.

Over the next few pages we're going to take you through some of the oldest

composition rules that were developed by master painters of the past. You can apply the same techniques to your photographs while shooting in any genre. Learn how to shoot using some of the essentials as a guide, including the rule of thirds, lead-in lines and the golden spiral. We'll also show you three of the best ways to improve incorrect compositions in Photoshop.

The following rules can be applied to all shooting scenarios and work with any camera type. Take a look at our inspiring image examples, follow the rules and start composing some great captures in camera for yourself.

“The following rules can be applied to all scenarios and work with any camera type”

Bad example

✗ This composition doesn't work because there is a distraction in the foreground. The bad crop prevents you from seeing more of the scene and makes it less interesting



Good example

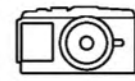
✓ This image shows good use of space in the frame. By obeying the rule of thirds there is a balance throughout the composition and the lead-in line helps draw the eye into the image

Does my camera do it?



DSLR

✓ Option to use both a viewfinder and LCD screen to compose, with an added grid feature for the rule of thirds
✗ Expensive, and you may not always have it on hand for impromptu shooting



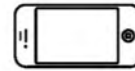
Compact system camera

✓ Great-quality LCDs with some able to tilt/rotate for shooting at awkward angles
✗ With a smaller sensor than a DSLR model, images won't be as high in quality



Compact camera

✓ You can crop your compositions in camera using basic editing features
✗ No viewfinder and a relatively small LCD screen make it harder to compose



Cameraphone

✓ Offers downloadable image-editing apps for compositional corrections
✗ Produces low-quality images that won't look as sharp when printed

Rule of thirds

Use the rule of thirds to correctly line up your landscape scene and ensure you have a balanced composition. Try to place your main point of interest a third of the way up and preferably off-centre. Always remember to avoid shooting too much sky or foreground in a landscape.



3 of the best...

Tips for great in-camera composition



Compose first

Create a paper viewfinder or use your hands to form a rectangle. Look through and pan around yourself for compositions.



Grid guidance

Activate the available grid in your camera's viewfinder or back LCD screen. Use the lines as a guide to follow the rule of thirds.



Correction

Press Playback and zoom into your composition. This will enable you to determine if you have the best possible composition.

💡 Technical tip

■ Ensure the horizon line is straight before you shoot to avoid making extra adjustments in Photoshop.

How to use the rule of thirds

Other ways to apply this compositional law



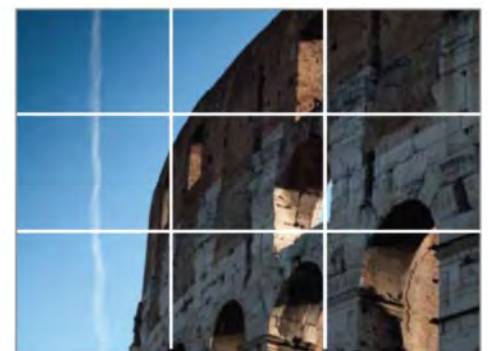
1 Top third

You can apply the rule of thirds in a multitude of ways. In this image the point of interest rests on the top third of the frame in the composition. It works particularly well because the columns help draw your eye up to the point of interest.



2 Portraits

The rule of thirds works just as well when applied in portraiture. Position your model off-centre in either the left or right third of the frame. Use the background to lead your eye up to your subject and create a more interesting composition.



3 Balancing thirds

The rule of thirds applies here, which works because the subject fills the entire right third of the frame before falling onto the left third line. The aeroplane trail creates an added point of interest in the space and balances the shot.

Shooting skills

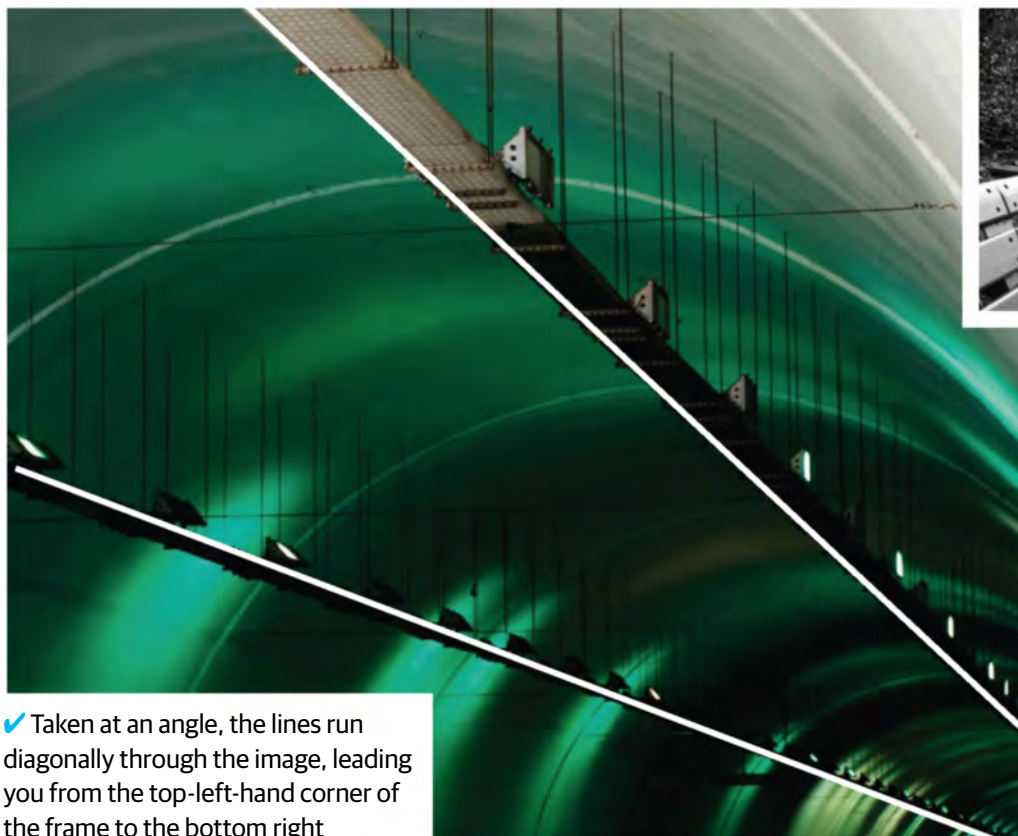
✓ The softly out-of-focus petals lead you towards the centre of the flower, which remains sharply in focus

Technical tip

■ Use a wide aperture to softly blur out the background and keep the main point of interest focused in the frame.

Golden spiral

The golden spiral composition is great when shooting macro images. Place the point of interest in either the top or bottom corners of the frame and use the shape of the petals or background to gradually draw your eye around the frame. This image works as there's more visual space.



✓ Taken at an angle, the lines run diagonally through the image, leading you from the top-left-hand corner of the frame to the bottom right



✓ Lead-in lines work equally well in monochrome images. This shot features several lead-in lines to great effect

Lead-in lines

Lead-in lines are great for navigating your eyes through a composition. You can use them to add depth to an image, lead up to a focus point in any photograph or wander through a landscape scene. The photograph to the left has been taken with an abstract approach, using lead-in lines to create a more artistic image.



Rule of odds

In photography, odd numbers such as threes or fives work better than evens when composing an image. Odd numbers look more natural to the eye, creating a balance within the frame.



Colour

Consider carefully the colours you frame in your composition. Too many conflicting colours can often create a distraction from your focus area. Complementary or repetitive tones create great shots.

Think about the angle and consider your crop

Getting the perfect composition is often a case of trial and error. Consider what the best angle on your subject is and think about what you want your final result to be. You can make buildings look large and imposing by shooting from a low angle, or create a dynamic portrait by shooting at an angle rather than straight on. The way you crop your image can make all the difference to the success of a photo. Don't be afraid to extend your lens and zoom in closer. The well-known pattern of the zebra here means you needn't take such a literal shot of it; often a tighter crop can create a more interesting image. Play around and experiment.



3 of the best...

Ways to fix a composition in Photoshop



Grid

Open the image you want to correct in Photoshop. Now select the grid via View>Show>Grid. Use the vertical and horizontal lines to make a more considered composition with the rule of thirds as a guide.



Crop in

Select the Crop tool from the Tools menu and select the entire image. Hold the Shift key to maintain correct proportions and slowly drag up on the corners of the frame. Move the selection area until happy.



Rotate

Before confirming your crop, hold the cursor in the top corner of the frame until the rotate icon appears. Click and slowly rotate the selection until the horizon's straight, then click OK.

Shooting skills



■ Try using a prop like this umbrella to add interest and colour to your portraits



1/125th



F8

Perfect your portraits

Learn how to improve your portraits by following our five essential lessons

Whether you consider yourself a photographer or not, you will most likely have taken a portrait photograph at some point in your life. Often it would just be a snapshot of friends or family members to mark special occasions or milestones. But for some these photographs just don't do the moment justice or bring out the personality of the people they're shooting, and they're often in need of timely retouches in Photoshop to crop in or remove red-eye.

Over the next few pages we're taking you back to the beginning and sharing some of our insider tips and techniques to getting perfect portrait results.

After highlighting some of the most common portrait mistakes, we will then show you how to change your bad shooting habits for the better with some inspirational images and advice on shooting modes and techniques along the way.

It is important to remember that a portrait need not be as staged as reciting the word 'cheese!' before the flash – it should be about getting some relaxed and happy portrait smiles. If the weather is warm, why not try taking your portraits outside? If you get a little bit more creative with your camera you will find new ways to photograph your loved ones.

Over the next few pages: Portrait shooting advice for every photographer and every type of camera



DSLR

- ✓ It has a larger sensor so you get bigger and better quality images
- ✗ It's harder to use for a beginner who's unfamiliar with DSLR settings



Cameraphone

- ✓ It's always on hand so it's perfect for impromptu portrait moments
- ✗ No adjustable exposure settings and the image size and quality is poor



Compact camera

- ✓ Lightweight and easy to use with Auto settings and portrait modes
- ✗ Has a fixed lens that is usually wide angle, unflattering for portraits



Compact system camera

- ✓ Interchangeable lens options and flexible shooting modes
- ✗ Sensor is not as large as a DSLR's so image quality is not quite as good

5 ways to... Perfect portraits

Follow our five top tips to portrait perfection



✗ Go from this snapshot...

When composing your portraits, make sure that your model's hair isn't in her eyes. Place her off-centre in the frame and try using a large aperture (eg f2) to blur out the background

✓ ...to this perfect portrait!

This photo, taken just a few minutes after the one shown above, takes in all of our simple rules and produces a much better overall result

1 Don't go low
Avoid shooting up from a low angle as this can be unflattering. Angle yourself above the model and shoot looking down.

2 Background
Place your model in front of attractive surroundings. Avoid places where there is too much going on in the background as this will be too distracting.

3 Be aware of hair
Make sure you pull back any unwanted hair from the model's face and eyes so you can clearly see their features.

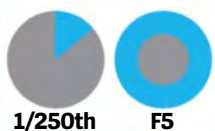
4 Careful cropping
Try to avoid cropping your photographs above the shoulders as this can make an otherwise great portrait look unbalanced.

5 Focus on the eyes
Ensure you focus correctly on the eyes and avoid getting in too close to your subject. You may cause an unflattering lens distortion.

Jargon buster

Aperture

An important setting for portraits is Aperture. Turn your camera to Aperture Priority (A) if it has it, and try taking the same photo at different apertures. Low numbers (like f2) create background blur while higher numbers (like f22) keep the whole photo sharp.



1. Setting up

Use advanced Automatic settings

Portrait scene modes help you achieve great results

Most compact cameras and newer compact system cameras offer advanced Automatic portrait settings. From face detection focusing to smile detection shutter releases, it has never been easier to rely on your Auto mode. Beginners can even shoot using Beauty modes that are designed to enhance skin tones and disguise blemishes.

Some cameras even offer a background blur adjustment, which enables you to achieve professional-looking portraits without messing with aperture controls. Another benefit of shooting in Auto is that you don't have to worry about exposure settings, so you can focus solely on correctly positioning your model and shooting.



1. Portrait scene mode

Portrait scene mode settings enable you to get the best results by balancing the exposure to suit the subject. They also soften the background.

Does your camera do it?

✓ DSLR ✓ Compact system camera
✓ Compact camera ✗ Cameraphone



2. Beauty mode

Beauty modes soften skin tones and help disguise blemishes. More advanced beauty modes will let you adjust the intensity of the effect as you shoot.

Does your camera do it?

✓ DSLR ✓ Compact system camera
✓ Compact camera ✗ Cameraphone



3. Black & White mode

In-built filters, like black and white, allow you to achieve more artistic portrait results without making adjustments later using editing software.

Does your camera do it?

✓ DSLR ✓ Compact system camera
✓ Compact camera ✗ Cameraphone



4. Autofocus (AF) settings

These enable the camera to search and select one area of the frame to focus on without you having to manually search for it via the focus ring on the lens.

Does your camera do it?

✓ DSLR ✓ Compact system camera
✓ Compact camera ✓ Cameraphone

Shooting skills

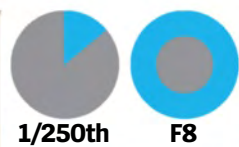
2. Group shots

Shooting group portraits

There are plenty of fun ways to photograph more than one person

Family gatherings and weekends away with friends can be great opportunities to all get together in front of the camera. These images are fantastic for Christmas cards or the family album, so make the most of your time together and get some great fun-filled shots.

Remember that not all family portraits need to be formal – try to think outside the box and look for creative new ways to capture your loved ones. Jumping shots are a great way to add energy to an image and are always popular, especially with the kids. You could also look at shooting from more extreme angles, whether that's getting down low in the grass or standing up high to look down for a new perspective. Above all, just keep it relaxed and try to bring out each individual's personality.

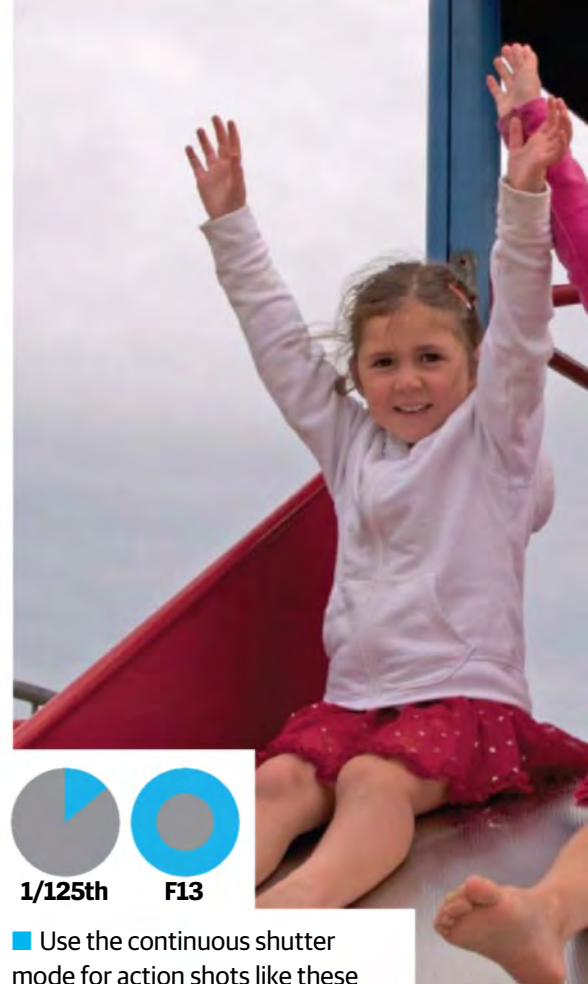


✗ Synchronise your models

Try to get your models to synchronise poses and get them looking in the same direction. For a shot like this you will probably need several attempts before getting it right.

✓ Get down to their level

When shooting children it is ideal to get down low and shoot at their level, but it can sometimes work out better to shoot high up from an angle to capture their small size and innocence.





Jargon buster

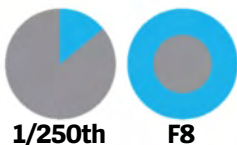
Tagging photos

Many image editors and photo-sharing websites will now allow you to tag photos with names, locations and other information so that you can search for specific images later on with ease. Try Facebook's tagging feature next time you upload your images.

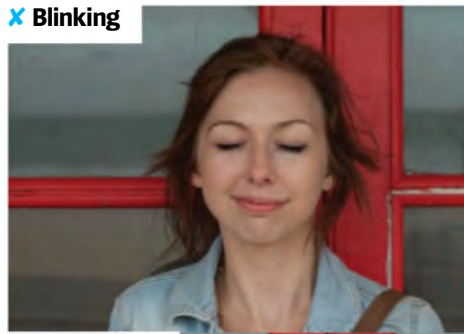


✓ Use colourful props to add interest

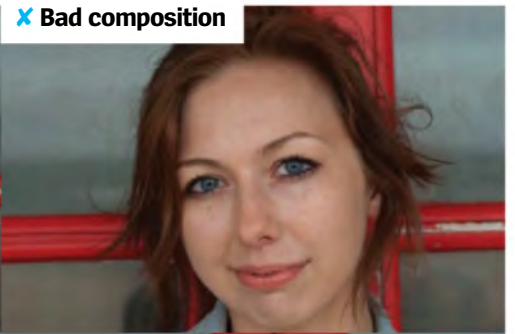
Try adding a prop to your portraits in order to add interest and colour. Balloons, beach balls and flowers all work well



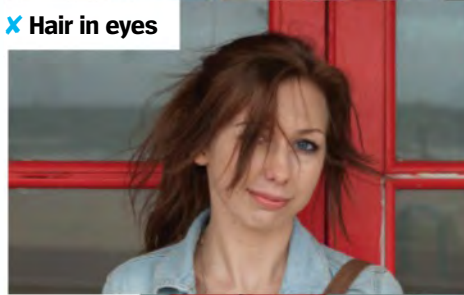
✗ Blinking



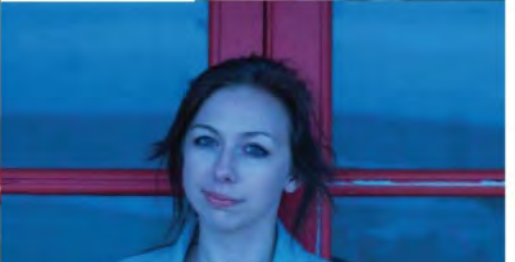
✗ Bad composition



✗ Hair in eyes



✗ Out of focus



✗ Red-eye



✗ Incorrect white balance



3. Avoiding mistakes

Pick out common errors

Improve your portraits by identifying any oversights

Anything from a wonky horizon line to red-eye can ruin your perfect portrait shots, so knowing what to look out for when shooting can help to prevent the same problem pictures in the future.

One of the most common but easy-to-correct photo mistakes is working in the wrong settings; whether you're using Manual or Automatic modes, you must ensure your camera settings are correct for the best exposure results.

You will also need to think carefully about your composition. A portrait needn't be full body or just a tight head and shoulders crop, so move around with the camera and see how else you can frame up.

Most importantly, don't be afraid to take more than one photograph as this will give you a greater chance of getting the right shot.

3 of the best...

Ways to tag your photos



Facebook: Tag others by clicking on the Tag This Photo icon once the image has uploaded.



Flickr: Add tags to your Flickr uploads and make them easier to search for.



iPhoto: Tag images in iPhoto using keywording to help organise them in categories.

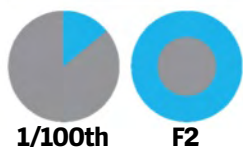
4. Manual settings

Master your Manual modes

Move away from Auto for more professional portraits

More advanced camera users who like to venture into Manual mode settings every now and then are offered a lot more exposure flexibility and creative freedom. Understanding aperture is fundamental to getting great portrait results, and a camera that offers a wide aperture setting is essential for adding depth to an image by blurring out the background.

Being able to adjust your camera's ISO and white balance settings can also be handy when shooting portraits in low light or under difficult lighting conditions. Don't be afraid to experiment even if you're not an accomplished manual user – this is a great way to pick up on using the exposure settings and work out hands-on what each setting can do.



✓ Filling in the light

Flash is not always needed when shooting inside, particularly if it is a bright day and you're near a large window. Use a reflector or a large piece of white card to bounce light back into the image and fill in some of the stronger shadows. You could even increase your ISO slightly to compensate for lower lighting conditions.



✗ Before

There's too much of the background visible, and our model has red-eye



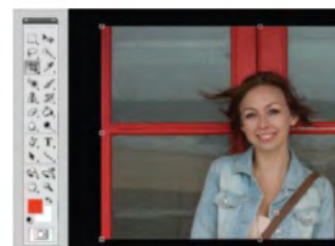
✓ After

We've cropped in, got rid of the red-eye and any blemishes, and finished with a black and white conversion

5. Editing Essential editing steps

Use image-editing software to touch up your picture-perfect portraits

Editing images is part and parcel of photography these days, whether to make a minor correction or a complete clone-out of unwanted dust, marks or people. Software like Photoshop is great for tweaking images and correcting distortions, as it helps improve the quality of your captures. Technophobes are often put off by the menus, but getting to grips with just the essentials can see your portraits perked up in no time. Follow along with these steps to see how easy it is to bring out the best in your portraits.

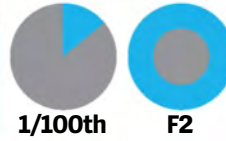


1 Crop the photo

Select the Crop tool from the Tools menu. Click in one top corner of the frame and drag the cursor diagonally to the opposite bottom corner. Hold Shift on your keyboard to retain the image proportions and select one of the corner anchor points, slowly dragging it up until you're happy.

Perfect your portraits

■ Try using a reflector or a piece of white card to reflect light onto your subject

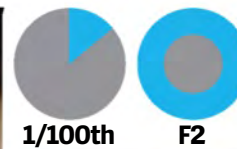


✓ Focus on the eyes

Always focus on the eyes. The viewer will be drawn to them first, so they should be nice and sharp. Try using your camera's built-in autofocus modes as these can be quicker and more precise than manual adjustments.

✓ Depth of field

Using a wide aperture can create artistic results. A shallow depth of field will blur out the background and bring the focus onto the subject. Remember that you will need a faster shutter speed with a wider aperture.



2 of the best...

Shooting apps for Android



Camera Fun Pro

This fantastic Android shooting app enables you to see live photo effects on your screen before you shoot.



Fast Burst Camera

Great for capturing action portraits with the kids. It can take between 5-10 shots per second.



2 of the best...

Editing apps



Colour Touch Effects

A cool colour-editing app, it enables you to selectively recolour black-and-white or sepia images.



TouchRetouch

An editing app that's great for removing unwanted items and marks from cameraphone photos.

2 of the best...

Sharing apps



Photobucket Mobile

A free app that lets you upload and share mobile pictures and videos with everyone in your network.



Plixi for Android

Share photos on Twitter and Facebook. Upload from your gallery or the camera.



2 Red-eye removal

Use the Red-eye Removal tool from the menu on the left. Adjust the pupil size percentage to suit the area you want to correct and increase amount to darken. Click above the pupil and drag the box diagonally, filling the space with the entire pupil. Click OK in order to see the transformation.



3 Clone Stamp

Ideal for removing blemishes. Select Clone Stamp from Tools and zoom in to the affected area. Adjust brush size to match the mark and select a soft edge with the opacity set between 85-100%. Hold down Alt and select a clear area next to the mark you wish to clone out. Now brush it away.



4 Black and white

Convert to black and white by going to Image> Adjustments>Black and white to desaturate your image. Now adjust the sliders in order to bring out more tonal contrast. Ensure you have selected the Preview button so that you can see exactly how each adjustment will affect your monochromatic masterpiece.

Picture-perfect landscapes

Capture inspiring scenes with our lessons in landscape photography

Landscapes are constantly changing throughout the day, month and year, and they give everyone an opportunity to capture some great, scenic shots. Although landscapes are among photography's most popular genres, they can often be a lot more challenging to shoot than they first appear, as various essential elements have to be considered beforehand to ensure you get great shot results.

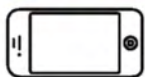
Simply changing the way you shoot and compose your captures will dramatically alter the appearance of your landscape photographs, helping you go from shooting basic snapshots to impressive

vistas. Landscapes are also very unpredictable and can change within mere minutes, so you should learn how best to be prepared and know what you and your camera are capable of.

Over these pages we're going to show you how you can improve your shot success rate with some fantastic tips and advice on correctly composing your captures, selecting the right settings, shooting and editing your final shots.

Regardless of what type of camera you have to hand, you are able to apply the same tips and techniques to any scene and still get impressive landscape results.

Over the next few pages: Landscape shooting advice for every photographer and every type of camera



Cameraphone

- ✓ Most offer great shoot settings such as HDR and photo-specific apps
- ✗ With a fixed lens and a low resolution, image quality is not always particularly good



Compact camera

- ✓ Fantastic in-camera creative settings; most offer rather good image quality
- ✗ No flexible lens options or use of manual settings



Compact system camera

- ✓ Great image quality with a high resolution, which is fantastic for large prints
- ✗ Can be more complicated to use for some novices



DSLR

- ✓ Great image quality, choice of lenses and manual options
- ✗ Usually high cost for body and lens combos, heavy to carry and can be complicated to use





Shooting skills

1. Composition

Take a minute to frame your photo

Learn how to compose your scene correctly in the frame and get some stunning shots

Composition is a key element to getting some great shot results, and framing your captures correctly can make all the difference. Start to think more creatively about how you engage with the scene and find new angles to shoot from to get a range of perspectives. Look for lead-in lines or points of interest to fill the frame, such as rock formations, buildings or trees. You can even follow some compositional guidelines like the rule of thirds, which ensures the horizon sits a third of the way up the frame and creates a more balanced landscape shot.

✓ Shoot kneeling down for a more interesting foreground

Our second shot of the same scene was taken crouching down and brings in some foreground elements for interest and adds a sense of depth through to the back of the image. This makes the shot instantly more dynamic.



✗ Point-and-shoot gives you a dull, flat shot

The shot above was taken standing up and lacks any real point of interest or foreground to draw the viewer into the image. Most new photographers will shoot like this.



■ We've taken the same scene standing up, crouching down and lying on the ground for three different results



■ Try to pick out some interesting foreground elements like flowers or rock formations

2. Settings

Make the most of camera modes

Get creative in camera and experiment using a range of different settings

Newer cameras – including compact system cameras, compacts and cameraphones – now offer a range of smart settings, from intelligent Auto to experimental and advanced manual modes. Easy-to-use Auto and scene modes are great for those still mastering the art of composition as the camera makes all of the technical exposure decisions for you. But with a fantastic range of in-camera effects now available you can also get more impressive and expressive landscape shots with features such as HDR modes and Vivid filters.

Manual modes, on the other hand, are better suited to more advanced users, as they give you complete creative control over the camera's settings. Don't be afraid to experiment with your camera settings to fine out what suits the scene and your own style best.



✓ Get really low down for a creative and unique angle

Our final shot was taken lying down and gives a lot more foreground, almost blurring the background out of focus. Try shooting in portrait orientation to get another result in your landscape portfolio.

3 of the most common...

Landscape errors

✗ Too little or too much sky/foreground

This sky is dull with no cloud interest, so why include so much? Compose to include more land instead of sky



✗ Wonky horizon
Always make sure that your horizon is straight – shoot using a tripod if you need to. There is nothing more distracting than a wonky horizon

✗ Lens flare
The camera is tilted towards the sun, which has created a rather ugly lens flare. Tilt the camera down to avoid this happening again



HDR and creative filters

HDR and creative filters are available in most cameras and cameraphones. Filters such as Vivid are great for more creative images, while HDR modes capture shots that look true to life.

Does your camera do it?

- ✗ DSLR
- ✓ Compact system camera
- ✓ Compact camera
- ✓ Cameraphone

Auto and scene modes

Great for mastering composition, Auto mode enables you to point, frame and shoot while the camera automatically selects the right settings in order to suit the scene.

Does your camera do it?

- ✓ DSLR
- ✓ Compact system camera
- ✓ Compact camera
- ✗ Cameraphone

Manual settings

Manual P, A, S, M modes are more complicated to use and are popular with more advanced users. They give you control over your camera's settings, like shutter speed and aperture.

Does your camera do it?

- ✓ DSLR
- ✓ Compact system camera
- ✗ Compact camera
- ✗ Cameraphone

Shooting skills

3. Timing

Time, season and weather changes

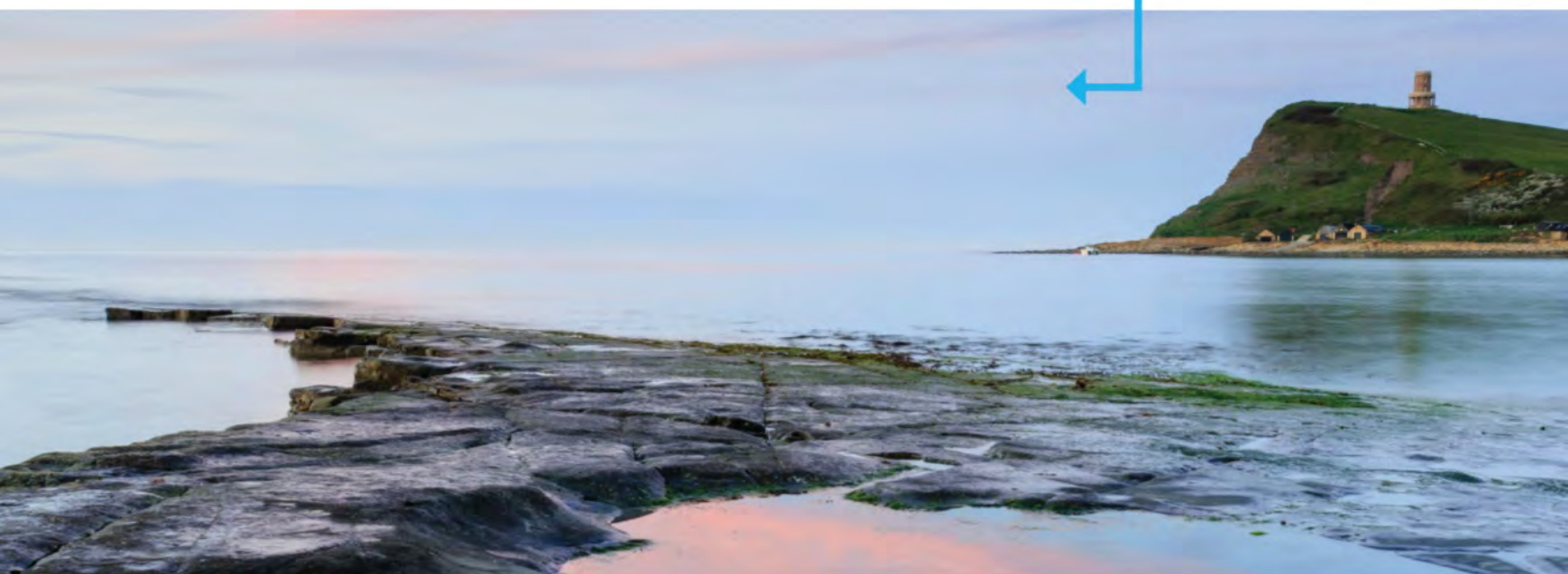
Knowing when to shoot can transform your images

Your landscapes can change dramatically depending on the weather, season and time of day that you shoot. Unpredictable conditions can make shooting landscapes a challenge, but revisiting a scene throughout the day can be a great way to ensure you get the right shot. Shooting your scene after waiting for that dramatic cloud formation to move into the

frame can turn your photograph from mundane to inspirational. Shoot in the early hours to get the mystical soft light effect or wait until late afternoon and sunset for the warmer, richer colours and contrast. Ensure you plan ahead and have done your research before setting off – you should be prepared and know when the sun is due to rise or set.

✓ Shooting on a winter's evening

The cold blue sky can be visually appealing when the sun is just starting to set on a winter's evening. The pink clouds are a nice contrast against the crisp sky here. Most cameras now come with a Snow scene mode, so experiment in really wintry conditions too.



✗ Before

There's a distracting house on the right and marks in the sky we need to get rid of



✓ After

The sky is bluer and any distractions and blemishes have been corrected

4. Editing

Make it a masterpiece

Use photo software to correct and enhance the quality of your landscapes

Processing your shots in photo-editing software such as Adobe Photoshop is a great way to make corrections and enhance the quality of your landscapes. You can use it to straighten your horizons or improve the colour and contrast in your captures – it gives you complete creative control over the final image aesthetic. Simply upload your images onto your computer and begin getting to grips with the essential Photoshop tools. Your photos will go from drab to fab, and you'll soon be creating finished landscapes that could pass as a pro's.



1 Crop the photo

Select the Crop tool from the tools palette and click on the top-left-hand corner of the frame. Drag the cursor down diagonally to the bottom-right of the frame to make a whole selection. While holding the Shift key, slowly bring up one of the edges until you're happy.



✓ A summer day

Some summery scenes can look a bit flat – with no detail in clear blue skies. Try summer sunrises, which are always beautiful and most modern cameras have scene modes dedicated to bringing out those vibrant hues.



✓ A stormy day

Clouds make a much more interesting sky than clear blue, so take your camera out on grey days too. Protect your camera in a simple carrier bag in case it starts to rain.



2 Straighten it

The horizon line may be wonky. Before you click OK on your crop selection, place the cursor over one of the corners until a curved arrow appears. Now click down and rotate the frame. Try to level the horizon line up to the straight edge at the top of the box. When happy, select OK.



3 Enhance colours

Enhance colours using the colour balance tool (Image>Adjustments>Color Balance). Using the cursors, slowly make adjustments to the colour tones, working through highlights, midtones and shadows. Select Preview to see how the adjustments affect your final image.



4 Boost contrast Add contrast to your shot to bring out the detail in the highlights and shadows. Use either the Brightness and Contrast tool or Shadows/Highlights (Image>Adjustments>Shadow/Highlights). You can make more contrasted adjustments using the midtone slider.

5 ways to...

Improve your landscapes

Instantly take better pictures with our top five things to consider

1 Inspiration

Take a shot whenever you see something that excites you. Try taking the same shot standing up and lying down to see how perspective changes the end result. Experiment and have fun!

2 Composition

Consider what you are leaving in the photo and what you want to leave out. Compose your scene so the most interesting point is around a third into the scene (ie a third down and a third from one edge) and crop out any distracting elements.

3 Settings

Your camera will do a fine job if left on Automatic, but if you'd like to take a little more control, switch to your Landscape mode. This will bring out the blues and greens in your image.

4 Timing

Although a well-composed shot will be good, the same scene at sunset may be better. If spending the day in one location, revisit your scene a few times to see which works best.

5 Editing

A little editing can go a long way. While the step-by-step on this page will help get you started, check out this book's Editing section starting on page 180 to take this skill even further.

Shoot water

Make the most of your water shots and experiment with new techniques

Water is a huge subject to photograph, and it's one that can be found in many different contexts. When you think of water, it's easy to simply focus on vast open stretches of rivers and coastlines. However, there are lots of different subjects and a variety of shooting techniques that are great for water photography and will see you getting great shots each time.

Water is a simple commodity that's available to all of us. If you're lucky enough to live on the coastline or near a large expanse of water then you will have even more opportunities and techniques to try out. You can try visiting the water

at different times of day to experiment with reflections, sunsets and different wildlife. Or you could try getting creative with your shutter speed and a filter to get a slow-moving misty water effect that always looks good.

It doesn't matter where you live – your location shouldn't stop you embracing water as a subject to shoot. Water can overlap other subjects, or it could simply be a prop in your photographs. Try using water as a macro subject, experimenting with shooting in the rain, or simply using it to reflect your main subject. We'll show you how to do all this and more over the course of our feature.

Over the next few pages: We show you lots of great ways to use water in your photography



Cameraphone

- ✓ Plenty of apps are available for different slow shutter techniques
- ✗ No external filters are available and you cannot manually adjust shutter speed



Compact camera

- ✓ Some do offer scene modes for long exposures
- ✗ Most do not have mounts for an external filter for creative shots



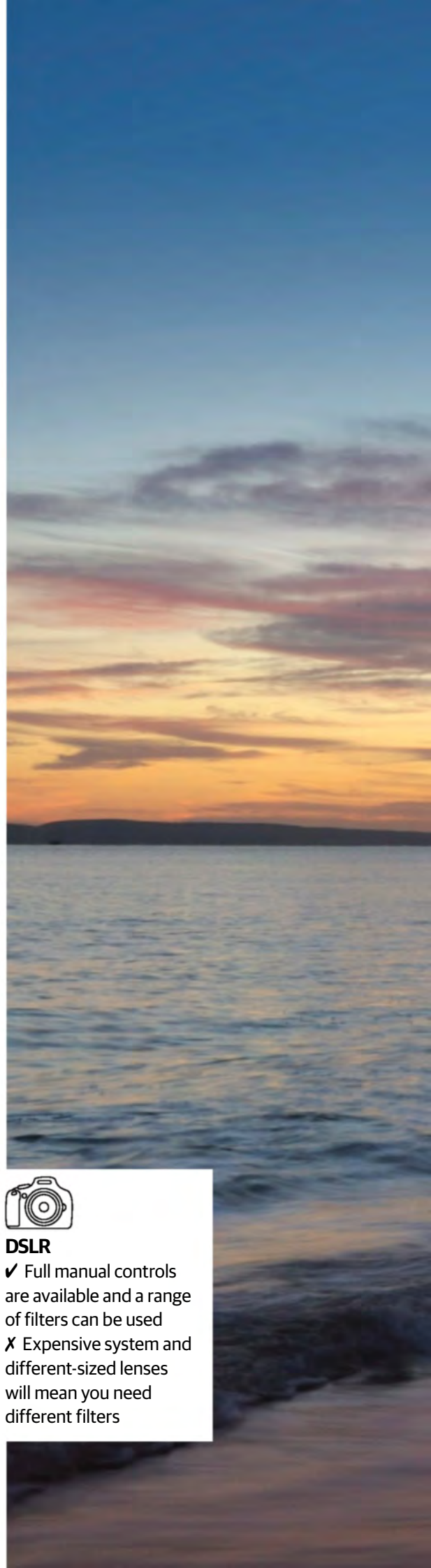
Compact system camera

- ✓ Can manually adjust shutter speed and buy some filters
- ✗ You need to check your chosen filters come in the right lens mount sizes



DSLR

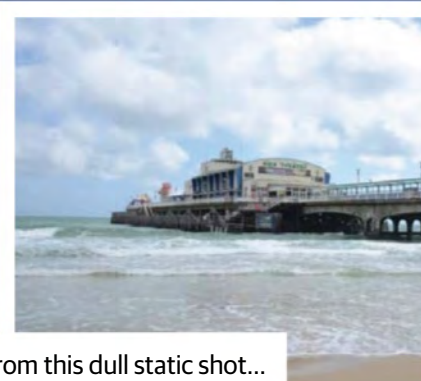
- ✓ Full manual controls are available and a range of filters can be used
- ✗ Expensive system and different-sized lenses will mean you need different filters



“Try using water as a macro subject, experimenting with shooting in the rain, or simply using it to reflect your main subject”

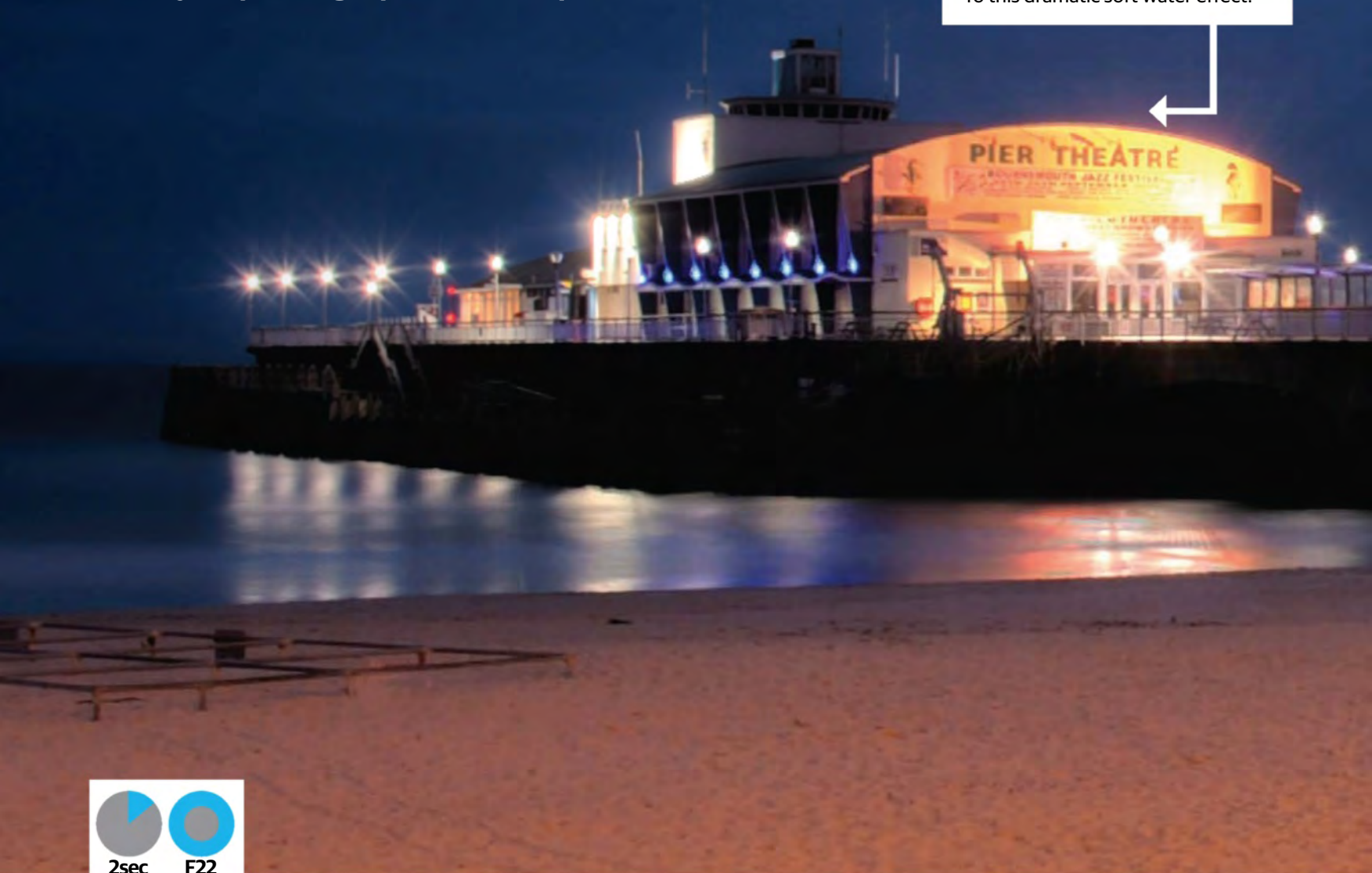
5 steps to... Great water shots

Water photos aren't limited to specific subjects and can be captured with a variety of photographic techniques



Go from this dull static shot...

To this dramatic soft water effect!



Get inspired

01 Water is a vast subject that can be used in a number of ways, and it doesn't always have to be the main point of focus to add to the scene.

Soft water effect

02 Slowing down your shutter speed will allow you to capture the movement of the water and give it a soft and misty effect.

Settings

03 You need to pay great attention to the settings you use when shooting water. This is especially true when using certain advanced techniques.

Setting up

04 Preparing for a shoot is a good way of ensuring that you get the most out of it. Try setting up your own water shot at home.

Editing

05 As with all shots, there are times when things don't go as planned. You can always fake it, as we show you how to create misty water post-shoot!



Jargon buster

Long exposure

Exposure refers to the amount of light captured on the sensor. A balanced exposure means having a good mix of shadows and highlights, while a long or short exposure refers to the amount of time for which the shutter was left open and gathering light.



Shoot water



1. Get inspired

Why not experiment with the different types of water available to you?

You'll be surprised at the scope of water photography and how different subjects can be used in creative ways

If you're thinking about shooting water, don't be fooled into thinking it has to be the main subject – there are many ways to incorporate water into every photo.

Macro photography is a great technique for water, and requires very little to get great results. Simply photographing the morning dew or water droplets running down the outside of your window panes at home will open up a new world for your water shots, and best of all, you don't need any special kit to achieve great results.

Water can also be used to accompany other main subjects, such as shooting a portrait in the rain. Try spritzing water on everyday items like coloured pencils to give them a new lease of life. You could also include water in your landscapes and try to capture the reflection of the main subject.

Although water is most commonly associated with seascapes or waterfalls, there are plenty of ways to make captures of these subjects more interesting, such as by using long exposures.

2 of the best...

Ways to capture water



Reflections

Reflections are a good way to add creativity to your shot. Try trees and sky in a perfectly still pond or a portrait in a puddle.



Water drops

Water drops make great macro shots and also add extra detail to other subjects. Look for them in nature or create your own.

Shooting skills

2. Soft water effect

Learn how to create a misty water effect

Slow down the motion of water by using filters and some simple techniques

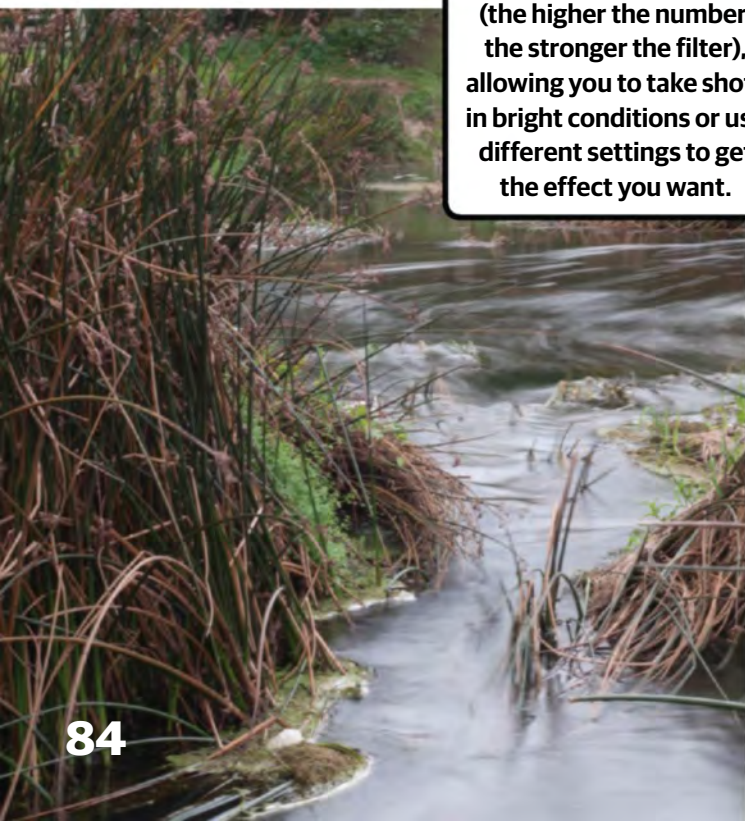
The movement of water is not something that can be captured easily. A normal photo will simply freeze the water in place. However, slowing down your shutter speed manually will allow you to get the effect you want.

By slowing down your shutter speed the camera will let in more light and overexpose the image. It is important to prevent this by using a neutral density (ND) filter. This tinted piece of glass prevents too much light from entering the lens, allowing you to take a slower shot.

You'll need to be using a DSLR or a camera with a filter thread on the lens. Place your ND filter over your lens, and position the graduated section to blend in with your horizon. Bear in mind that ND filters come in a variety of strengths. We're using an 8 here.

✓ Capturing slow-moving water

After using a neutral density filter and slowing the shutter speed down to around five seconds you can see the motion of the water.



Jargon buster

Neutral density filter
Neutral density (ND) filters block out a certain level of light from your lens. They come in a variety of strengths (the higher the number, the stronger the filter), allowing you to take shots in bright conditions or use different settings to get the effect you want.



✓ Correctly placed filter

By using the filter correctly, the water can be slowed down, while the rest of the scene remains bright and colourful. Experiment by placing the darker section over sky or water.



1/5th



F22

✗ Incorrectly placed filter

When an ND grad filter is fitted horizontally, the effect will darken one half of the scene. To avoid the error below, the filter should be placed vertically with the graduated section along the horizon.

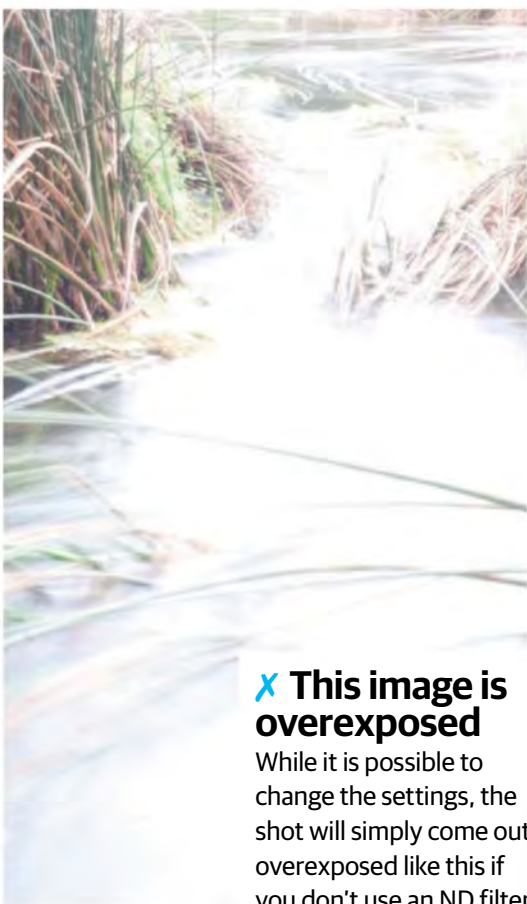


■ You can get square or round filters that fit on your lens face





■ With a fast shutter speed this image looks static & dull



X This image is overexposed

While it is possible to change the settings, the shot will simply come out overexposed like this if you don't use an ND filter.

3. Settings

Think about the effect you want to apply

Changing settings will have a dramatic effect on the overall look of the photo

For some water shots it's as easy as choosing a scene mode and firing away. For example, a close-up shot of a water droplet requires the macro setting, and epic seascapes look great with the landscape scene mode.

For a slow shutter shot there are other things that need to be considered. Settings such as the shutter speed need particular attention, and can completely change the final look of the photograph. To achieve correct exposure, your shutter speed, aperture and ISO all need to work together. If you're working on a DSLR or CSC, choose the Shutter Priority mode (S on the mode dial). This enables you to choose the shutter speed while the camera chooses all the other settings. If you're using a filter, choose your settings and focus before putting the filter on.



1 A tripod is essential. A slow shutter speed will keep the shutter open, so movement will be recorded onto the final shot. Keeping the camera steady is key.



3 ISO dictates the camera's sensitivity to light. Its lowest setting will make it the least sensitive to it, so you can use a longer shutter speed without overexposing.



2 Select settings via Shutter Priority or Manual mode. Shutter speed depends on the water's speed. We used a 2sec exposure with a small aperture of f18.



4 With a very dark filter, the camera struggles to focus on the subject. Focus on the subject, then go to manual before placing the filter on the lens.

3 of the best...

Filters for long exposures



Cokin filter kit

This kit uses a square filter holder, meaning a number of filters can be stacked for different effects.



Polaroid Variable ND

This filter has an adjustable density level. One filter can be set to different strengths, making it versatile for many situations.



Lee Big Stopper

A ten-stop ND filter used by professionals. It's perfect for long exposures no matter how bright the conditions are.

Shooting skills

4. Setting up

Get creative with water at home

Capture a great water shot with minimal kit and without having to leave your home

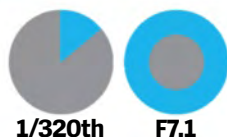
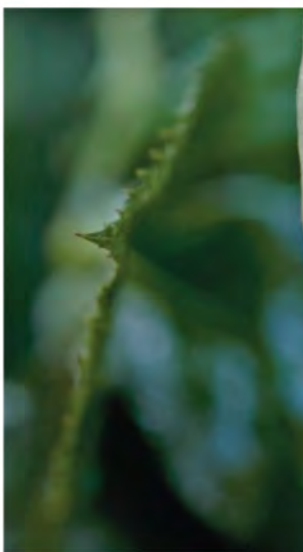
Getting a great water photo doesn't have to mean heading to the coast, or even finding a local river or lake. There are endless opportunities to get stuck in to without having to leave your home.

Here we took some typical flower photos and improved them by spritzing them with water droplets. This gives the flowers a new look and creates more interest in the photo. Spritz the water lightly over the flowers, as the individual drops enhance the light and reflections in the scene. Don't go overboard with the droplets!

You don't need a DSLR to create shots like these. We used a compact system camera but try a compact or cameraphone. Set the camera to Macro mode and get close enough to the subject to fill the frame. Rest your elbows on a flat surface to avoid camera shake. We used glycerin instead of water, as the thicker consistency makes it better for still life photography.



■ All you need to create this setup is glycerin and an atomiser – both available from your local pharmacist



Jargon buster

UV filter

Most photographers will own a UV filter. These inexpensive pieces of kit are ultraviolet filters that help enhance the hues in your images, as well as protect your lens. After all, it's much cheaper to replace a scratched UV filter than buy a whole new lens!

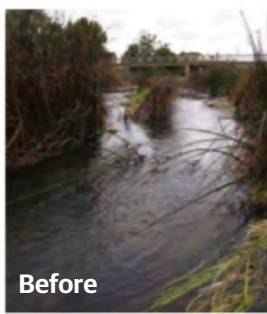
5. Editing

Add a motion blur in Elements

Didn't get the shot you wanted? Learn how to fake movement in the water

Sometimes it's not always possible to get a slow-moving water effect in your shot. It may be due to limited equipment, or even limited time. You may also want to add the effect to an old shot.

Follow this simple tutorial, which will show you the basics of adding a motion blur and demonstrate what can be achieved with some light editing.



1 Duplicate the layer

When working on any photo, use a new layer, as this won't damage the original. We want to duplicate the original background layer, as we'll be working with the water in the shot. Right-click the current layer; select Duplicate Layer.

Technical tip

■ We used glycerin rather than water for a denser liquid feel. Test a small patch first as it will destroy your flowers.



✓ Using water to enhance images

By adding the water drops to the flower, you create extra interest and focal points. The water doesn't have to be the main point of focus, but it can subtly enhance the overall look of the shot.

✓ Creating macro water drops

The water drops can be placed on a subject, but by getting closer it remains the main point of focus. The flower petal provides a more interesting background to the macro water droplet.



■ This shot was taken on Auto!

3 of the best...

Tips for macro water drops



Spray it on

For a more natural look to your shot, use an atomiser to spray the water onto the subject then spread the water evenly.



Shine a light

If you're not getting the lighting you want in the water drops, shine a desk light from an angle for some great reflections.



Focus points

If your camera allows it, set your focus point on the most prominent water droplet for a nice, sharp image.

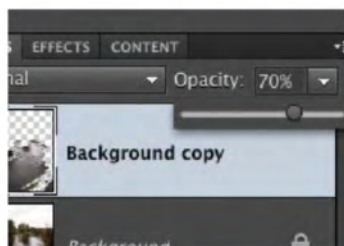
Why not try...

If you really want to embrace water photography, buy a waterproof camera. While you can often buy waterproof cases for your original camera that perform very well, a dedicated compact that works under the waves is a great option to ensure your equipment remains protected. With this kit you can capture some fantastic underwater images. The Fujifilm FinePix XP30 (pictured) is a great example for just £179.99/\$239.95.



2 Motion blur filter

In Photoshop Elements, and other editing programs, there is a preset filter for this. Go to Filter>Blur> Motion Blur. Adjust the direction of the motion blur to go with the flow of the water, as well as its strength to best suit the shot.



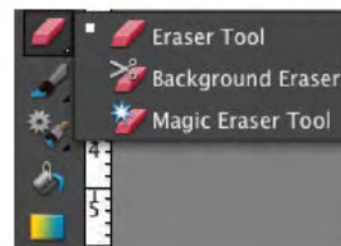
3 Change the opacity

Once motion blur has been applied, it'll add the effect to the entire image. We only want it on the water. When removing parts of the new layer, the original must be visible. Adjust the layer's opacity so you can see both.



4 Select the areas

Remove unwanted blur from the new layer. Simply use the Lasso tool, draw around the unwanted areas and remove them with the eraser. If you have a complicated shot like this one, it may take some time.



5 Remove and finish

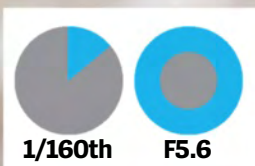
The Eraser tool removes unwanted blurred sections. You may have to switch the opacity back and forth to ensure all sections are removed. Return the Opacity setting to the desired amount and merge your layers.

Shooting skills

■ Capture great wildlife shots no matter what camera you shoot with



■ Learn about some of the most common mistakes in wildlife photography



Shot on location at the New Forest Wildlife Sanctuary

Capture wildlife

Learn how to take great wildlife shots by following these simple steps

Wildlife is a great subject to photograph as it can be done in almost any location. Wildlife is essentially all around us, wherever we are, and is a fascinating subject that offers an incredible number of possibilities for taking images.

Despite what many people may think, wildlife shots do not need to be left to the safari, zoo visits or other more exotic locations. Wildlife is all around us, often as close as our own back gardens, so there is no reason why everyone can't take some great photographs.

Thanks to the incredibly wide range of subjects involved, wildlife shots can

be taken using any kind of camera. It is also a subject that does not necessarily require a certain lens or specific setting to capture a great shot.

No matter what animals you're shooting, one thing you need to remember when photographing wildlife is to try to keep your distance. Leaving plenty of room between you and your subject will not only give you much more natural photos, but will also ensure that the wildlife is not disturbed. It is therefore useful to have a degree of zoom on your camera so you can get some closer shots; however, places like zoos will make this less of a problem.

Over the next few pages: Some great, inspirational wildlife shots and a tutorial to try at home



DSLR

- ✓ The ability to use different lenses means it is great for all types of wildlife shots
- ✗ Switching lenses and settings takes time so you can lose the shot



Cameraphone

- ✓ It's always within easy reach, so it's perfect for any unexpected situations
- ✗ Image quality is not brilliant, and you may not have a sufficient zoom



Compact camera

- ✓ Dedicated wildlife shooting modes, and it's easy to keep about you
- ✗ A lack of manual control may mean you miss the ideal shot



Compact system camera

- ✓ High image quality, and the ability to use manual settings
- ✗ Different lenses are required for different shooting situations

Shooting skills

1. At home

Practise in your own back garden

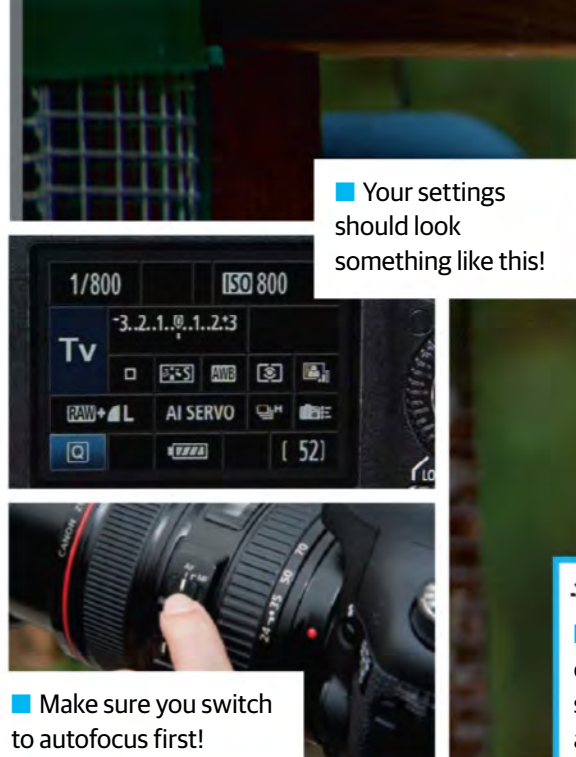
Bring the wildlife to you and set up a simple bird photograph

It is not always easy to go out and take the best wildlife shots. Many of the great wildlife photos are of exotic animals in remote locations. However, this is not possible for the majority of us, and we have to deal with what is within our reach. With this in mind, we decided to try shooting wildlife in our back gardens.

The most common creatures that visit our gardens are birds. They're plentiful and come in all shapes, sizes and colours. The main problem with shooting wildlife is that it is often unpredictable. However, there's nothing wrong with bringing the wildlife to you, stacking the odds in your favour of achieving an excellent shot.



■ Find a secluded spot in the corner of your garden and stay quiet!



■ Your settings should look something like this!

■ Make sure you switch to autofocus first!

💡 Technical tip

■ Try to stay focused on one part of the scene, such as the bird feeder, and wait for the subject to come into view.



✗ Out of focus

This shot is too far away and not focused correctly on the subject, resulting in one blurred bird

Set up a bird feeder

Using a feeder will invite the birds into your shot



01 Position the bird feeder

Place the bird feeder where you can see it clearly. Use this as an opportunity to frame your shot, as the feeder will determine where the birds will be. Avoid placing it where there are any distractions, as these could ruin the final shot.



02 Use a tripod

Using a tripod means that you are able to leave the camera pointed at the bird feeder, allowing you to keep all of the settings ready for when the subjects come along. It will also reduce any risk of blurring image due to inevitable camera movement.



03 Switch the shutter speed

Switch the camera over to Shutter Priority mode. This will allow you to adjust the shutter speed and let the camera adjust the other settings. Use a fast shutter speed (eg 1/1000sec) to freeze the subject, and avoid any risk of a blurred image.

Capture wildlife

2. Watch out

Common errors to look out for

Four things to avoid when shooting wildlife

✗ Fence in shot



When taking photos through a cage or at a zoo, ensure the focus is on the animal

and that the fencing does not come into the shot.

✗ Out of focus



Animals move very quickly, making it easy to get out-of-focus shots. Try using continuous

autofocus and high-speed continuous shooting to combat this.

✗ Reflections



A common error when shooting through an enclosure is that your own reflection will

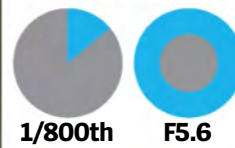
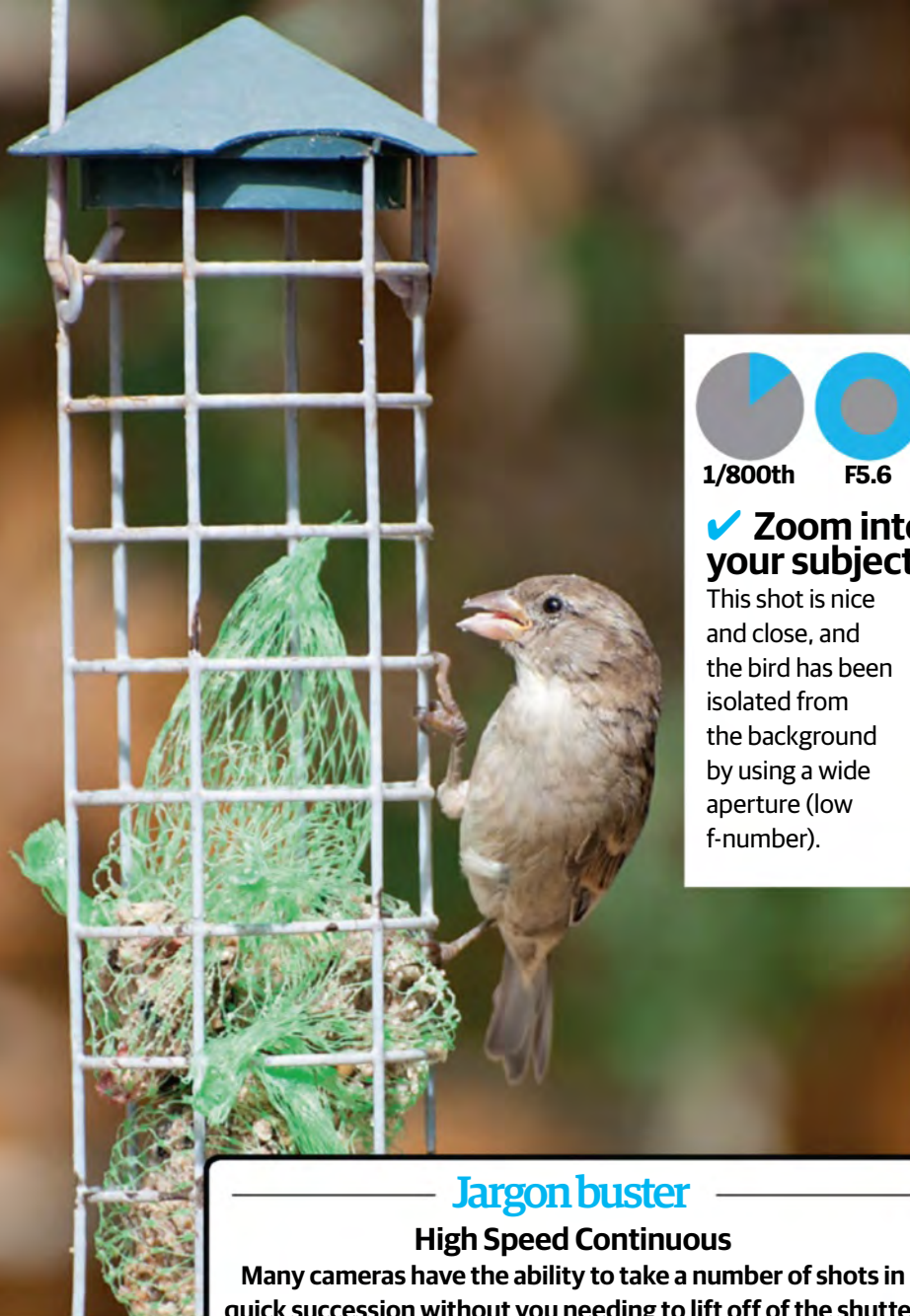
turn up on the glass. Watch out for this in bright, sunny conditions.

✗ Bad timing



Keep an eye on the composition of your shot, as well as animal movement.

Try picking a spot and waiting for the animal, or pan your camera with them.



✓ Zoom into your subject

This shot is nice and close, and the bird has been isolated from the background by using a wide aperture (low f-number).

Jargon buster

High Speed Continuous

Many cameras have the ability to take a number of shots in quick succession without you needing to lift off of the shutter release. The speed at which this can be done depends on the camera, but is incredibly useful for moving subjects.



04 Set the ISO

Even though you are shooting outside in the daytime, boost your ISO up to around 800. This will ensure the camera will get enough light and that the image will remain sharp, even if the weather takes a turn and the scene becomes darker.



05 Continuous shooting

Most cameras have a high-speed shooting option, which enables a number of shots to be taken in succession. Taking several shots very quickly will give you a better chance of getting a good photo, and will ensure you don't miss that perfect picture.

Shooting skills

 **Technical tip**
■ Check on the feeding times for the different animals, as this is likely to be when they are at their most active.

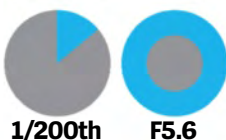
3. Setting up

Get great shots at a wildlife park

Head out to your local zoo and try getting some natural wildlife shots

Shooting wildlife while out in the animal's habitat will give you the most natural photos. However, these shots will be a lot harder to achieve. Using a wildlife sanctuary or zoo is an excellent way of getting up close and personal with the animals. They also provide the opportunity to see more exotic animals that otherwise wouldn't be possible.

There are some animals that are naturally inquisitive, and as such will be interested in you. They may even come to investigate you and get close enough for you to get some great photos. However, the majority of animals will be aware of your presence and will be on edge because of it. Shooting in this situation requires a different approach to taking set-up shots at home.



Jargon buster

Focus point

Sometimes it is not always best to focus on the middle of the frame, and focusing on a subject to the side of the frame will give the best final shot, while keeping the same composition. If your camera allows it, select the main animal's face as the focus point.

4. Editing

Remove a fence in Elements

Use some simple editing techniques to rescue a ruined wildlife photograph

It's very easy to take a great shot but have something small ruin it. While out shooting in a wildlife park, fences and enclosures can make it difficult to get the shot you want and you may find your best shot has a fence or wire running through it, like our example above.

Follow our tutorial to find out how to quickly and easily remove an unwanted fence from a photo.



Before



1 Straighten

A common error is taking a shot that's not straight – an easy mistake, as we're often distracted by the animal's movement. Select the Straighten tool and draw along one of the lines to automatically level out your photo. You will need to crop it afterwards.

5 steps to...

Better wildlife photos

1 Inspiration

Wildlife is not a subject that is restricted to safaris and zoos, so don't be afraid to get out and there and see what you can find.

2 Stay hidden

Try not to get too close to animals in the wild, and don't disturb their habitat. This will help you get more natural photos as well as protect them.

3 Patience

Animals are often very afraid of us, but if you remain in one position for long enough they will become much more comfortable with your presence.

4 Be ready

Many animals are fast and don't stick around waiting for you to get a good shot, so make sure you and your camera are prepared.

5 Settings

Research the best settings for the chosen subject to avoid having to play with them too much when out shooting.



X With a compact

Be aware that a compact generally has less of a zoom, so shooting through a fence won't give great results. Try shooting over the top of fences or use editing software to combat the problem.



✓ With a superzoom

A superzoom will allow you to shoot through obstacles and from distances. However, at full zoom the camera will be hard to stabilise, so try using something like a fence to rest the camera on.



1/223rd

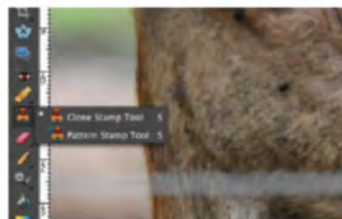


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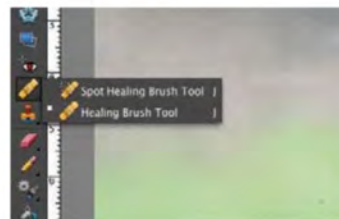
2 Crop

It is difficult to get the correct composition first time. It is also very hard to get close enough to the subject, especially when using a smaller camera. Carry out a simple crop to cut down on any unwanted space, or to get closer to the subject.



3 Clone tool

Cloning takes a part of the image and duplicates it over a selected area. Once you have chosen the Clone Stamp tool, select a source for the duplication and start to draw over the fence. Choose a cloning selection similar to what is being replaced.



4 Healing tool

The Healing Brush tool acts similarly to the Clone Stamp, but will do a lot of work for you. Once selected, use the brush to cover the area that requires further blending. It will then automatically blend the area to the rest of the image as best as possible.



5 Colour curves

Once the fence has been removed, boost the look of the photo to reduce the visibility of the cloned areas. Bring up the Colour Curves window and boost the brightness and contrast. This will improve the photo and detract attention from the cloned sections.

Master macro

Improve your macro shots by following these essential lessons

Macro photography generally refers to close-up images, and you'd be forgiven for thinking it's just for insects and flowers. These are certainly the main interests, as macro photography produces photos where the subject is greater than life size, enabling us to view details that we would not normally see.

However, macro photography can take many forms, and is not limited to specific subjects or styles. Almost any subject can be used in a macro image, and this genre thrives under creativity.

True macro photography means using a lens capable of reproduction ratios greater than 1:1. However, to achieve

this you need to use a camera with interchangeable lenses along with a dedicated macro lens.

However, most interchangeable lens cameras, compacts and cameraphones now come with a dedicated macro function. This function changes many of the in-camera settings to allow macro photographs. For example, it reduces the focusing distance of the lens, enabling you to get closer to the subject while retaining focus.

Macro photography is one of the great subjects in photography that can be experimented with, especially in your own home. Subjects are endless, and techniques are easy to master.

Over the next few pages: We supply you with lots of inspirational macro shots and a step-by-step tutorial



Cameraphone

- ✓ Always on hand for quick photos, and an abundance of apps make editing a breeze
- ✗ Focusing distance may be far away, and low megapixels make it difficult to crop



Compact camera

- ✓ Dedicated macro mode brings the focus distance right down
- ✗ Using the LCD to get focusing correct can be quite difficult



Compact system camera


- ✓ Dedicated lenses, high image quality and many manual shooting modes
- ✗ Dedicated macro lenses are usually expensive



DSLR

- ✓ Dedicated macro lens allows for true 1:1 shots, giving more close-up detail
- ✗ Expensive camera and lens combination; the macro lenses can be difficult to use





1/320th F7.1

■ Get up close and personal with your subject to get your best macro shots



Learn how to... Take macro photos

Follow our five top tips to mastering macro

1. Inspiration

1 Shallow depth of field

Flowers are a favourite of macro photographers. A shallow depth of field completely isolates this flower from the background, making it stand out.

2 Keep it simple

Macro does not have to be restricted to super close-up photographs, and simple subjects can be converted into excellent macro shots.

3 Abstract

This abstract shot of a pair of binoculars shows the intricate detail of the water drops, proving that macro shots can be taken of anything.

4 Flower

By getting very close to your subject you are able to show the detail that would otherwise be invisible in a normal shot.

5 Pencils

Macro photographs can be taken using everyday items. These pencils have some great colour and texture and make excellent subjects for a simple macro shot.

6 Insects

Insects are a popular choice for macro shots, but are notoriously hard to capture correctly, as they don't tend to hang around for long.

Jargon buster

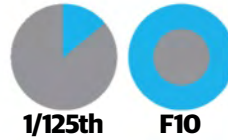
Focusing distance

The focusing distance of a camera or lens determines the distance from the subject at which the camera is able to gain focus. Using a macro setting within your camera or a different lens can reduce this distance, allowing you to get close to the subject.

01

02

03



✓ A great macro image

It is in focus, and the subject has been frozen. This can be done using a faster shutter speed or by placing the camera on a tripod.



✗ Macro snapshot

This shot is out of focus, so the subject is slightly blurred. This can be due to camera shake, or because the subject is moving.

2. Dos and don'ts

Things to think about before you start shooting

Taking macro shots can be simple, but follow these dos and don'ts of macro photography to get the best results

✓ Be creative

Don't always stick to the common macro subjects – be creative and take close-up shots of anything that looks interesting.

✓ Use Macro mode

Settings can be vastly different with each subject, but simply placing your camera on Macro mode can make a huge difference.

✓ Check your background

Check the background of your shot because this can heavily affect the outcome. If it is distracting, then try a shallow depth of field in order to blur it out completely.

✗ Crop your final shot

A little crop is perfectly fine, but cropping in heavily because you were too far away will lose all the detail in the image.

✗ Block the light

Your own body position can greatly change the outcome of the final shot, so consider your shadows and a comfortable shooting position.

✗ Rush your shot

Subject movement is a big problem in macro photography. Take your time and consider wind direction, as the slightest breeze can push subjects out of focus.



3. Settings

Shoot your best macros

Getting your settings right is key to excellent macro photographs

Choosing the right settings for your macro shots is very important. This can be particularly hard to master, as all subjects require different approaches.

The main issue with macro images is focusing. As you're so close to the subject, there is a narrow plane of focus. It's therefore easy to take a shot that's only slightly out of focus, but it'll really show up on a computer. Using a tripod or a faster shutter speed will reduce the risk of any movement that would put the subject out of focus.

Isolating the subject from the background works well. With insects and other small subjects you want the attention to be on a specific part of the image, so use a wide aperture (low f-number) to give the image this look.

3 of the most common...

Macro errors

✗ Movement blur

Moving subjects, or simply ones subjected to wind, can be very difficult to photograph using macro. Using a faster shutter speed will combat this



✗ Out of focus

Due to shooting so close, it is very easy take the photo slightly out of focus. When reviewing your shots, be sure to zoom in to the subject to ensure everything is crisp

✗ Bad composition

Think about the composition of the photo before taking it. We don't want to cut half of the subject out or include anything that may be distracting



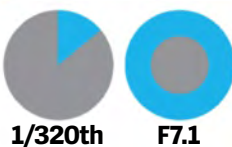
■ If your camera is finding it hard to focus quick enough, try switching over to manual focus for more control



■ Switching to Macro mode will change settings for you and can easily improve your shots

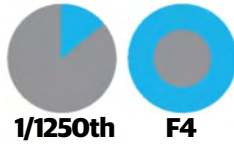
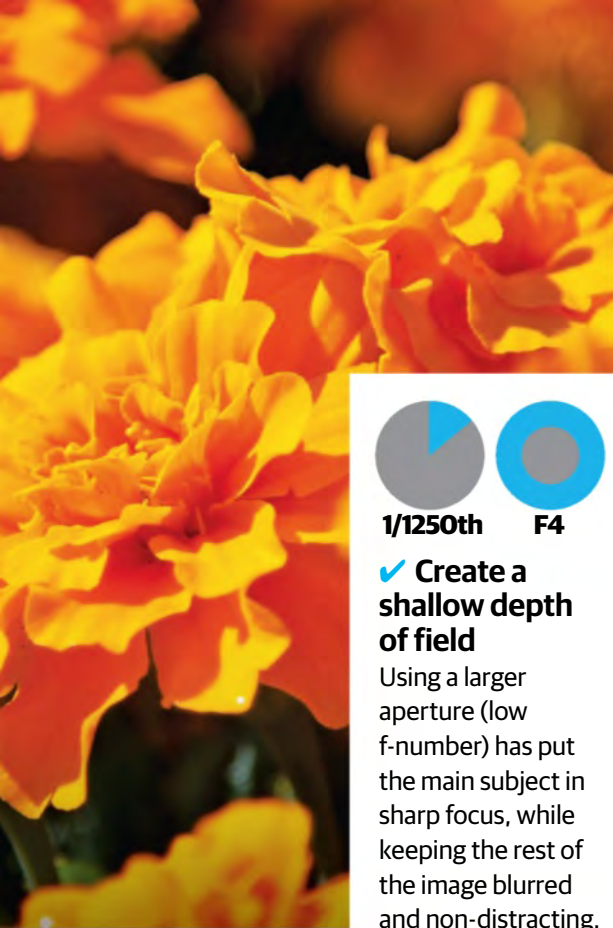
💡 Technical tip

■ Create your own subject or develop more interest by sprinkling some water drops on the flowers.



✓ Use a fast shutter speed

Using a fast shutter speed enables you to freeze your subject in place. It also helps to get a shot that is in focus without using a tripod.



✓ Create a shallow depth of field

Using a larger aperture (low f-number) has put the main subject in sharp focus, while keeping the rest of the image blurred and non-distracting.



Jargon buster

Bokeh

Bokeh is a Japanese photography term that refers to the blur or out-of-focus areas of an image. If an out-of-focus area is smooth and non-distracting, yet the photograph still has some aesthetic quality, then it is said to have good bokeh.



■ The wider depth of field puts the entire scene in focus



■ The narrow depth of field gives a blurred background and draws attention to the flower

Test shots from Panasonic Lumix GF2

Depth of field explained

Use depth of field for maximum impact in your macro shots

Depth of field refers to the distance between the nearest and farthest objects in a shot that are in focus and sharp. Therefore, the area within the depth of field is crisp, and anything in front or behind this focused area will appear blurred. Essentially, the larger the aperture (low f-number), the shallower the depth of field.

Using depth of field in any image can create a great effect. It is sometimes desirable to have the entire shot in focus, and therefore have a large depth of field. This is often seen in landscape shots where the entire scene is the subject. However, for many subjects, such as portraits and macro shots, it is desirable to have a shallow depth of field. This isolates the subject from the rest of the photo, and draws the attention of the viewer to what you want.

Why not try...

Compacts for macro

Look for a camera with a focus distance of around 1cm and a reasonable sized zoom. Focus distance and zoom are important factors to consider for macro photographers.



4. Setting up

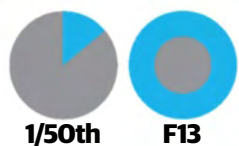
Prepare a great macro shot

Stay at home and create some interesting macro photos with fruit

Macro photography can be very diverse in its subject matter. It is often used while out and about due to what you can achieve, especially with wildlife. However, there is nothing stopping you from experimenting with everyday items in your own home to get your best macro shots yet.

Simple items around your house can be very interesting and allow you to keep the creative juices flowing, even if you're stuck inside. Common items such as pieces of fruit can be very interesting for macro shots. The range of colours and textures you get from them provides endless photo opportunities for close-ups, and setting them up for macro shots is very simple.

■ Taking a shot from a different angle will bring out different details



💡 Technical tip

■ Carefully cut the fruit into thin slices using a sharp knife to ensure nice, clean edges. Have a spare on hand too.



1 Set up

We used a common desk lamp and a thin sheet of glass placed over the top. We could place the fruit on top of the glass and have the light shine through, bringing out the colours and details. Be careful when setting up, as the hot lamp and sheet of glass can be dangerous.



2 Fruit

We wanted to get this shot with the fruit backlit. We sliced it up thin, so the light would easily pass through it. We covered the surface with fruit. Even if each individual slice won't appear in your shot, any blank space will be subject to harsh light from below, which could ruin the shot.

5. Editing Essential editing

Edits can turn a good shot into a great one!

Editing is sometimes necessary to get the macro image you want. Simple adjustments can make a huge difference with small and intricate subjects.



X Before
This shot's captured the subject

perfectly, but it is a little small within the frame



✓ After
By cropping, we were able to get closer to the subject without reducing image quality

3 of the best... Editing tools



Crop Cropping can be necessary if you can't get close to your subject. However, it can lose the detail and quality of an image.



Sharpen Sharpening macro shots can fine-tune the focusing, bringing out detail and making your close-ups look extra crisp.

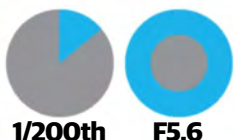
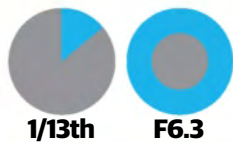


Levels Adjusting the levels enables you to brighten different aspects of your image, which can help rescue any lost detail.



✓ With light By placing the light behind the fruit, we are able to give the photo a completely new look. The tone of the image is warmer, and a lot more detail can be seen through the subject. Try different fruit for different effects.

X Without light This shot is of sliced limes stacked up, but without any extra lighting. The image shows some good detail in the fruit and demonstrates a more realistic colour, but it lacks as an interesting and impressive shot.



3 Camera and tripod
We attached the camera to the tripod, ensuring it was secure, so it could hang over the subject. We positioned the tripod so the camera was directly over the fruit, then adjusted the tripod head so it tilted the camera down, facing the fruit. Ensure everything is tight to avoid camera shake.



4 Settings
The settings will vary depending on the lighting of the room, and the intensity of the light under the fruit. We wanted a very shallow depth of field and focus on the top fruit. Using a wide aperture we were able to separate the top subject from the other pieces of fruit.



5 Focusing
For close-up photos it is often difficult to focus on the correct part of the subject due to the shallow plane of focus. We were shining an intense light through the subject and this confused the camera. Switching to manual focus can help fine-tune the focusing and improve the outcome.

Shooting skills

Beginner's guide to

Sports photography

Master your camera for any sports event and capture some stunning shots

Sporting events are often unique moments that may never happen again. Getting the most out of these photo opportunities can therefore be very important, and if you get tickets to future events, such as Olympics, Wimbledon or other sporting occasions, you may need to brush up on some of your photography skills in order to capture those once-in-a-lifetime moments.

Sports photography may seem like a very specialist subject, and one that is best left to the pros. However, there are lots of opportunities to capture the action in a number of different situations, from big sporting events to school sports days.

The best thing about capturing sports or action shots is that getting great photos from any event doesn't have to

rely on having the latest and greatest bits of kit, and many easy techniques can be achieved with the simplest of cameras.

However, getting your best action shots can be very difficult, especially as you're likely to have absolutely no control over your fast-moving subjects. But mastering simple techniques can ensure that you are able to capture great shots in a number of ways, preserving the action that is unfolding right in front of you as well as letting you take some of your best photographs yet.

So, regardless of whether you're heading out to a high-profile international sports event or simply watching your children run about in your back garden, grab your camera and let us show you how to get the most out of the action.

■ Learn how to freeze movement with shutter speeds



■ Take control of your camera's settings for better sports shots



Over the next few pages: We show you how to capture all the action with some great tips and techniques



DSLR

✓ Lenses for DSLRs can be found in a range of focal lengths, often offering excellent image quality to match
✗ Longer zoom lenses can be very large and heavy, and are often very expensive



Compact system camera

✓ Lots of zoom lenses are available, and some are compatible with DSLR lenses
✗ Like DSLRs, CSC lenses can be very expensive and too large to carry around all day



Compact camera

✓ Many compacts and superzooms are now able to outreach most DSLR lenses
✗ You'll notice that image quality can often deteriorate when using longer focal lengths



Cameraphone

✓ Quick and easy to zoom in, and specialist lenses can give good magnification
✗ It is all digital zoom, so image quality will decrease when using longer focal lengths



"Whether you're shooting a Sunday morning football league or pro-athletes at the Olympics, these tips will help you get started"

Shooting skills



Wide angle



Mid-length



Telephoto



Jargon buster

Scene Modes

The scene modes of your camera are ready-made shooting modes that are designed for specific shooting situations. Setting a scene mode will tell the camera exactly what you are going to be photographing, leaving it to decide on the best possible settings for your subject.

1. Focal lengths

Use your zoom to capture the action

Learn how to set your focal lengths of your camera to get the best results

Whether you are using a DSLR, a simple compact camera, or even your smartphone, chances are you'll be able to zoom in on the action. For sports photography, this can be very useful.

Capturing what is going on sometimes means getting in close. Zoom in fully (the telephoto end of the zoom) to shoot close-up details or action that's happening far away from where you are positioned.

However, although a long and powerful zoom on your camera can ensure you can get up close wherever you're shooting from, capturing the wide-angle shots by not zooming in can often be a great way of putting the action into context with the entire event.



■ The zoom on a compact camera will usually be a lever on top of the camera. Use two fingers to zoom in if you're shooting with an iPhone



■ Whether it's with a zoom or by utilising your particular position, to shoot those dynamic images it's absolutely essential that you get in close to the action

2. Sports settings

Prepare any camera for shooting movement

Master the settings on your camera to help it keep up with your subject's activity

Capturing dynamic sports photos, freezing the action, and portraying the event doesn't have to rely on expensive equipment and professional techniques. Mastering the settings on your camera, and using them effectively will ensure you get the best shots every time.

Most cameras come with a host of dedicated settings that are ideal for getting great action shots. A common scene mode within any camera is the sports setting, which speeds everything up to keep up with your subjects. Team this up with continuous autofocus and a high-speed burst mode and you'll be able to freeze your subjects with ease.

✓ Good example

Using the perfect shutter speed can keep the subject in focus while maintaining the sensation of movement



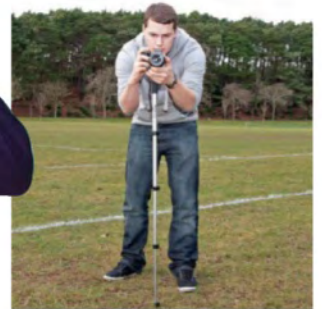
■ Many cameras have a 'burst mode' which takes several shots in quick succession, ideal for freezing action. Look for an icon like this...



💡 Technical tip

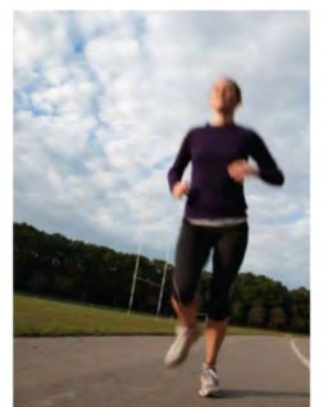
■ Using burst mode may see your memory card struggle, so try reducing your picture size so it can handle the load.

■ Shooting from different angles can give a new perspective on an otherwise dull shot



■ A monopod is ideal for sports photography as it's more mobile than a tripod

■ If you're shooting on a compact camera, for best results look out for this icon which indicates 'Sports mode'



✗ Bad example

If you have manual controls on your camera, increase the shutter speed to avoid blurred shots like this

Shooting skills

3. Freeze and blur action

Take control of advanced settings for better shots

Capture sports using different techniques for more dynamic action shots

There are two different ways to deal with motion in sports: one is to freeze it, portraying an exact moment in time, while the other is to keep a bit of that movement in your shot through motion blur. Simply freezing the action in the shot is not always enough to display the effort and sense of competition, and blurring the movement and presenting a sense of speed in your shots is an excellent technique for sports photography. Making use of the methods for freezing and blurring we show you over these pages can be all that's needed to turn basic images into sports shots to be proud of.

✓ Good example

Using the correct technique will keep the subject in focus, with the background having lots of movement blur



Freeze motion



1/125sec F7.1

✓ Good example

By using a fast shutter speed the subject has been frozen perfectly in place, stopping the action at just the right moment



■ Be aware of other spectators at an event – shoot through the gaps so they don't spoil your shots



■ To freeze motion, you'll need to set your camera to Shutter Priority and use a fast speed such as 1/125

4. Master panning

Convey some motion

Move with your subject to give a sense of movement while keeping them sharp

Panning is a great way of portraying the action in your shots. It allows you to keep the main subject perfectly in focus and well exposed, while the background is washed away in a blur of motion.

Panning is a simple technique that relies on you mastering your own movement. You'll need a steady hand, or a monopod, and it may take a little bit of practice to get the technique right, but the results are worth it. Follow our tutorial and begin panning with perfection.

Bad example

✗ Although the background has some great movement, the subject is too blurry due to unwanted camera shake, which unfortunately ruins an otherwise great photo opportunity



1 Shutter speed

You'll need to use a fast shutter speed to keep the subject sharp, but you'll also need to keep it slow enough to allow for time to pan. Start with a speed of around 1/50sec and experiment depending on your subject.



■ Set a high ISO to compensate for the lack of a flash for indoor shots



■ If you don't set the correct White Balance you'll end up with a colour cast like the one below



✗ Bad example

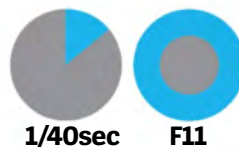
In this shot the white of the subject has a colour cast, and the shot is too dark



Blur motion

✓ Good example

By using the right shutter speed, the movement of the scene has been captured while the main subject is frozen in place



✗ Bad example

Although there is movement in this shot, you can see there is a lot of unwanted blur in the main subject



■ In order to blur motion, you'll need to slow the shutter speed down to about 1/40sec but you'll need to hold the camera very still or use a tripod



2 AF mode

To keep the subject in focus while you are moving the camera, it is important to use a continuous auto-focus mode. If your camera has it, turn on focus tracking, which will track your subject as it moves across the frame.



3 Continuous burst

Although you will be panning with your subject, you will be taking more than one shot as they move across the frame. Using a continuous burst mode will allow you to take several shots as your subject flies past.



4 Stabilisation

To get the best results when panning you may need to find a way of keeping your camera still. Using a monopod will allow you to move your body and camera along with the subject, tracking them as they move past.



5 Action

Once you're ready, keep an eye on your subject as they enter the frame. As you begin to take your shots, gently sweep the camera along with the subject, being sure to keep a steady pace with them as they go past.

5. Editing

Fake a motion blur in Photoshop Elements

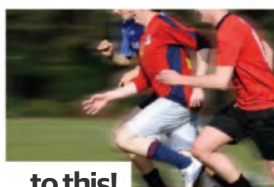
Follow these simple steps to create a sense of movement in your shot

Getting the right look of motion in your images can be a difficult technique to master. Fast-moving subjects are difficult to capture, and being prepared for the opportune moment can prove to be quite tricky.

You can easily give your action shots the panning effect. Simple editing techniques can be used to apply motion blur to the background of your shot, allowing you to instil a sense of movement in the image.



From this...



...to this!



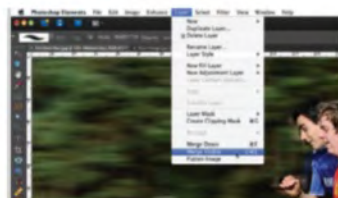
1 Duplicate the layer
Duplicate your layer to apply effects and edit the shot without affecting the original. This gives a simpler way of applying motion blur too. Right click the background layer and select Duplicate Layer.



2 Motion Blur
Go Filter>Blur>Motion Blur. Choose the intensity of the blur, and change the direction. Align the motion with the subject's direction of travel and choose a distance to match the subject's speed.



3 Quick Selection
The main subject must be perfectly sharp. Reduce opacity on the top layer and use the Quick Selection tool to draw around the subject. A dotted line will appear around the edge to show the area selected.




4 Erase and finish With the subject selected, simply delete the selected area. This will remove the subject from the motion blur layer, putting it back in sharp focus. Merging the two layers together will give you your finished motion-blur shot.



"Teaching yourself to keep an eye on the action through the camera will save precious seconds"

■ To get a sharp motion shot like this, you'll need to use a fast shutter speed





■ Surfers tend to move from one end of the beach to another – be prepared to move with them otherwise you'll miss the shot!



■ Get down low and shoot up to create interesting shots like this one



6. Top 10 tips

Follow these tricks for better action photos

Professional photographer Jordan Weeks shares his advice for great sports shots

Sports photography covers a huge area, with lots of techniques to capture a wide range of subjects. A lot of these principles can be applied to most action shots, but getting the best out of each opportunity takes time and patience.

We spoke to professional sports photographer Jordan Weeks to get his top ten tips on how to get your best action photos. He explains it is as much your ability to control your camera as it is to consider your subject in order to capture stunning shots. For more of Jordan's images, head to www.jordanweeks.com.

1 Shutter speed

Think about the effect you want. A slow shutter speed will help to create a sense of movement with blur, whereas a fast shutter speed will give a pin-sharp, crisp shot.

2 Depth of field

Assess whether the background will be a distraction. Use a large aperture of f5.6 or less to blur out the background, or to keep it sharp use a narrow aperture setting of around f22.

3 Research your subject

It is a very good idea to research and understand the sports which you photograph, so that you can predict when the action is about to take place.

4 Plan your photo shoots

Prepare in advance. Grab a notepad and plan the photos you want to take. Think about angles and check the weather!

5 Move with the subject

Don't be afraid to follow the action. When photographing surfers, for instance, they zip quickly across the beach, so move with them or else you'll miss the shot.

6 Autofocus vs manual focus

Autofocus can be great, but often you'll need to set your focus manually on one point, then take the shot when the subject enters this 'focus zone'.

7 Watch the action through the camera itself

Teaching yourself to keep an eye on the action through your camera and instinctively hitting the shutter at the right time will save precious seconds.

8 Be patient

Sports photography requires a lot of patience. You'll often find that you're hanging around waiting for a long time. Just try to be patient and use the time to learn more about the sport which you're shooting.

9 Go prepared

Sometimes when photographing sports, it can be an all-day event. Take some food, drink and suitable clothing.

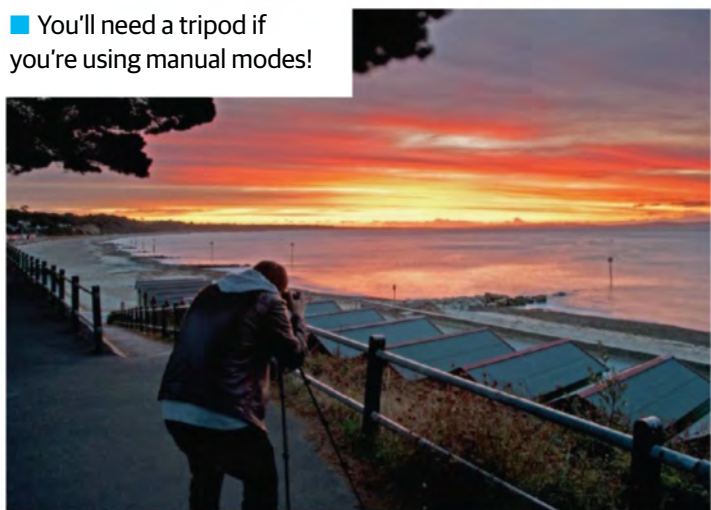
10 Tripods are optional

You will need a tripod for a large (and heavy) lens, however, smaller lenses are no bad thing because they allow you to get up close as well as move freely with the action.

Shooting skills



■ You'll need a tripod if you're using manual modes!



Low-light shooting

Learn how to take your best low-light shots with our simple guide

Low-light photography can be applied to a broad range of subjects, and deserves a good deal of attention. It can encompass anything from sunrise and night time landscapes, all the way through to indoor group photos and simple snaps at home. It is therefore something that photographers of all abilities will come across, and something that most of us will have struggled with.

Photography in general very much depends on the available light, as it is the light that completely alters the way a shot will look. There are always specific times of day for the optimum shot in

natural light. However, much of the time we cannot control what time we shoot at, and there will always be situations when we're taking photos indoors.

It is particularly difficult to capture a great shot in much darker conditions. Even if you are using the most advanced cameras and the different lighting systems available, taking your best photographs in low light can be somewhat of a challenge.

However, taking control of your camera, altering the settings accordingly and making use of what light there is available will help you to get some excellent photos in difficult conditions.

Over the next few pages: We give you some great tips on how to deal with low light in any situation



DSLR

- ✓ A long shutter speed coupled with a graduated filter allowed for rich colours here
- ✗ Few dedicated scene modes meant it was difficult to quickly get a good shot



Cameraphone

- ✓ By using an app with different scene modes we were able to get very good colours
- ✗ The detail in the brighter areas has been blown out, losing some of the detail



Compact camera

- ✓ Varying scene modes allowed us to interchange and experiment
- ✗ We couldn't take control of the shutter speed, so the colours weren't as rich



Compact system camera

- ✓ Using a longer shutter speed meant we could capture the intense colours
- ✗ Limited filters; a graduated filter would have given far more foreground detail

5 steps to... Better low-light shots

Use these tips to make better
use of low-light situations

■ Go from this
underexposed shot...



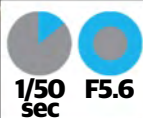
...To this candle-lit portrait!



Jargon buster

ISO

The ISO setting determines the camera's sensitivity to light. A higher ISO value (eg 1600) will enable the camera to produce a brighter image in darker conditions. This can, however, give the shot a grainy and unpleasant texture.



01 Get inspired Low light can be a hindrance to some shots, but it inspires a whole photography subject at the same time. There are plenty of opportunities to get creative with whatever light is available.

02 Sunrise & sunset Dawn and dusk are popular times at which to shoot. Sunrises and sunsets are two of the most common types of low-light photographs, but can present a variety of problems.

03 Settings A large number of problems that occur when shooting in low light can be overcome with better use of different settings. Take control of your camera and get the most out of low-light situations.

04 Interiors Low-light interior images are also very common, and they can pose many problems. However, there are some easy tips that you can follow that will help with any shot.

05 Editing For those times when your shot didn't quite come out how you had hoped, we're sharing some quick fixes for common errors that occur when shooting in low light.



1. Get inspired

Learn how to get creative with your low-light photography

You may think there is nothing to photograph in low light, but there are many subjects and creative options to get involved with

Evenings, night times, and even indoor events can put us off taking our cameras out. They are notoriously hard to capture, and often leave us with a host of blurry and unpleasant photos. However, there is no reason why you can't take control of your camera to get the shot you want, as well as use the darker surroundings to your advantage.

There are plenty of quick fixes for low light, most notably automatic scene modes. You can also take full control of your camera and discover creative ways to shoot in low light, as well as ways to deal with the tricky conditions to get the shot you want.

Don't neglect the evenings, late nights, or even indoor functions. By stretching your camera's capabilities, as well as using the light available to you, there are endless possibilities for stunning shots.

3 of the most common...

Mistakes for indoor shots



Always using flash

When shooting in low light, it's easy to switch on the flash to light up the scene. However, this can create harsh shadows.



Focusing problems

A camera can struggle to focus in low light. Ensure the focus is set correctly, so it exposes for the correct part of the photo.



Auto ISO

Leaving your camera on auto ISO can mean it's overused, producing bright but grainy images. Use in moderation.

Shooting skills

2. Sunrise & sunset

Learn how to capture a stunning sky

Sunrises and sunsets can be hard to capture, but getting them right is very rewarding

Many factors can affect the type of sunrise or sunset you capture, but location, weather conditions and time are the biggest problems to overcome.

Sunsets are accessible, especially around winter. Earlier evenings mean you're more likely to be outside at the right time. Sunrises can be difficult to capture, as they may clash with your lie-in, but it's worth getting up early to take advantage of the great morning light.



■ You'll need a long exposure (around 5sec) to capture enough light

3 of the most common...

Landscape errors

Wonky horizon

The wonky horizon can detract from the image. Make sure you use a tripod or spirit level to ensure your landscape shots are straight.

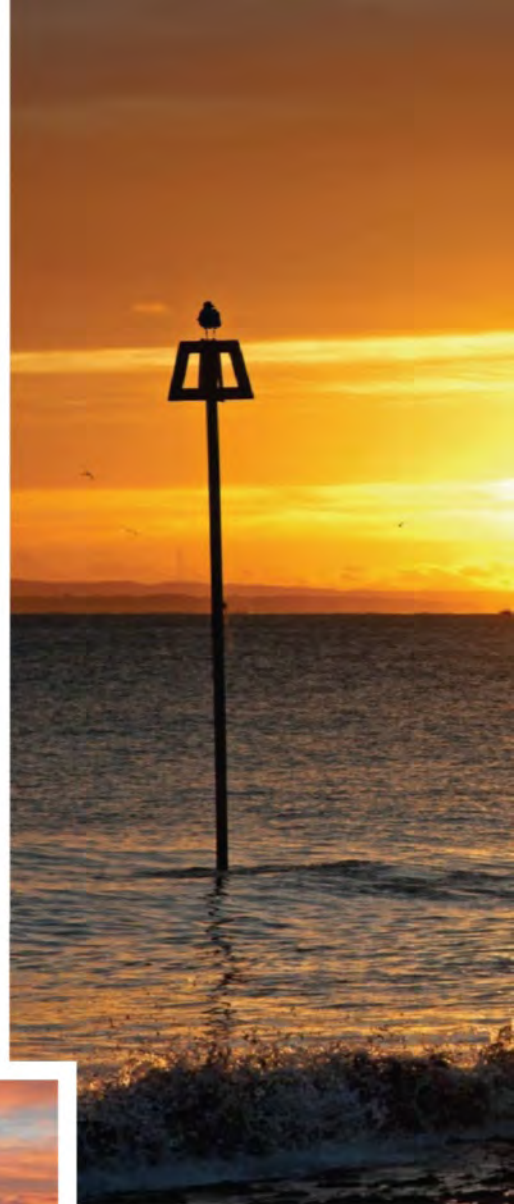


Too much foreground

This shot has too much foreground, resulting in dead space with no real focal point.

Overexposed

Focusing on the foreground in Auto mode will often result in an overexposed sky.



✓ Using lead-in lines

Some foreground interest and a lead-in line guides the eyes through the scene and onto the sunrise.

Capture sunset on a compact

Utilise the built-in scene modes for a great shot



Tripod

01 Even using a compact camera can require a tripod. They are essential bits of kit for landscape and low-light shots. Smaller tripods are ideal for compacts as they are easy to transport.



Shooting mode

02 It is tempting to leave a compact camera on Auto. However, due to the many colours of the sky and the fast-changing light, this is often not suitable for sunrises and sunsets.

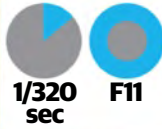


Scene selection

03 Most compacts come with scene modes. Many have dedicated shooting modes for sunrises and sunsets, but a night time or even landscape scene mode will improve your shot.

✓ Using a focal point

By using a main focal point, reflections of the water and a correctly exposed sky we have created a great sunrise shot



💡 Technical tip

■ Set a low ISO and use a high f-number to ensure very little noise with everything in focus. This requires a tripod.



■ Some smartphones, such as this Nokia N8, now include scene modes



Taking the shot

04 Make sure you have set up your tripod securely for a straight shot. Test out different angles and play with the scene modes to get the best out of the situation.

3. Settings

Use the best settings to achieve the best results

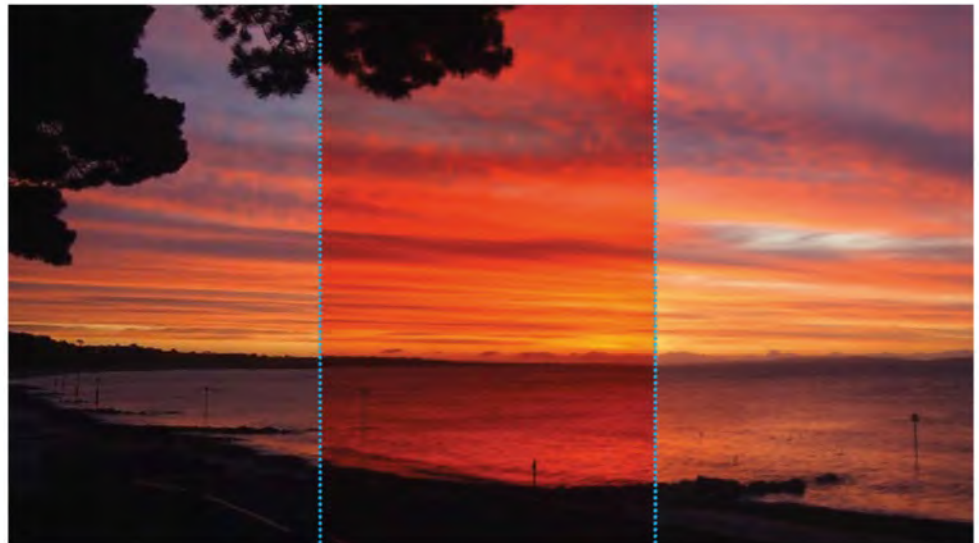
Make sure you know which camera settings to use and when to use them

Most newer cameras, including the more advanced compact system cameras, now come with built-in automatic scene modes. These are designed to suit any situation and provide the best settings for the shot. These are excellent if you simply want to focus on the subject and fine-tune your composition.

However, if you would like to take more control of how your shot comes out, you

will need to shy away from the automatic modes and get to grips with manual shooting. It is worth noting, though, that various settings will require other considerations.

A shot like the one below will require a slower shutter speed and a high f-number, which will keep everything in focus, but it will also require you to use a tripod to keep the image sharp.



Automatic settings

Creative art filters and full auto modes can produce perfectly good shots. However, the camera will not know what subject you are photographing, so it will be unable to optimise the settings.

Does your camera do it?

- ✗ DSLR
- ✓ Compact system camera
- ✓ Compact camera
- ✓ Cameraphone

Sunset scene modes

An automatic scene mode tells the camera to apply the ideal settings for the scene. With a sunrise or sunset it boosts the saturation, making the sky more colourful and striking.

Does your camera do it?

- ✓ DSLR
- ✓ Compact system camera
- ✓ Compact camera
- ✗ Cameraphone

Manual settings

Manual modes are more difficult to use and only come on advanced cameras. They give you more control over how the shot turns out, so you can bring out the detail where you want it.

Does your camera do it?

- ✓ DSLR
- ✓ Compact system camera
- ✗ Compact camera
- ✗ Cameraphone

Shooting skills

4. Interiors

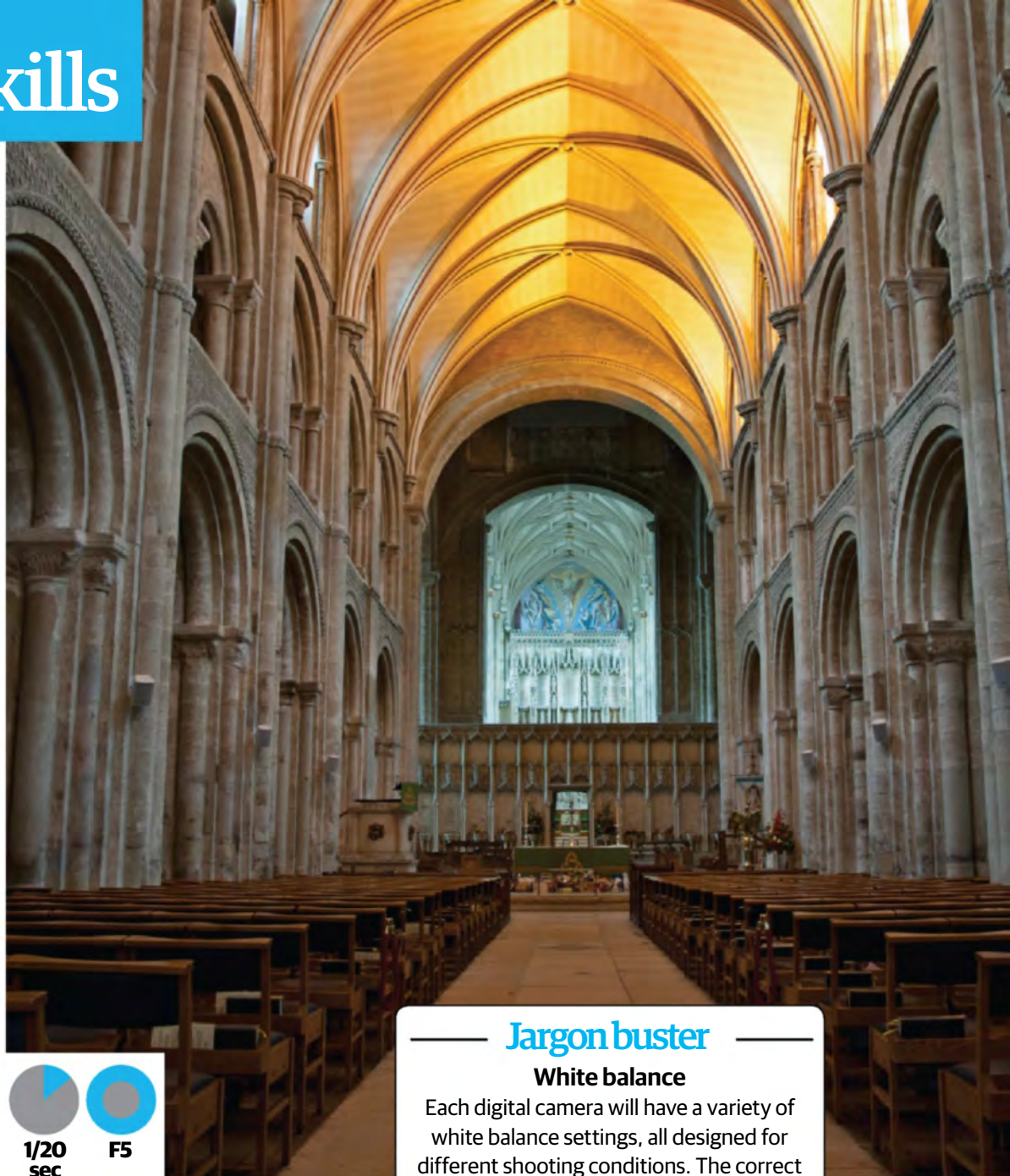
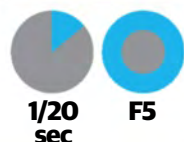
Master low-light interior shots

Capture some great interior shots, even in difficult conditions

Interiors of buildings are notoriously difficult to photograph well for a number of reasons. They are usually badly lit and have lots of dark areas, while the lighting that is there is artificial, making it very hard to expose correctly.

Some simple settings changes on your camera can make a huge difference to the final shot. Boosting your ISO and adjusting the white balance to the correct setting will help you to capture the shot, as will using a wide aperture and a slower shutter speed.

Using your flash correctly can be a quick fix when shooting interiors, but in some situations it will simply light up the foreground subject, and is therefore not always ideal.



Jargon buster

White balance

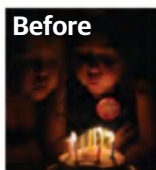
Each digital camera will have a variety of white balance settings, all designed for different shooting conditions. The correct white balance will adjust how the camera sees the whites in the scene and then it'll change the colours of the scene accordingly.

5. Editing

Quick fixes for low-light problems

If your photo doesn't turn out how you'd like, these tips will help rescue your shot

Although there are many ways to deal with low-light situations, there are always times when your shot doesn't come out how you wanted it and you can't retake it. Shooting in RAW format will allow you to rescue your images quite easily; however, there are lots of quick and easy ways to bring an image back to life in Photoshop Elements.



Shadows and Highlights

01 This shot has come out too dark, with darker areas accentuated by the brighter candles. Shadows and Highlights will boost the lighting in the shadows, while reducing the intensity of the brighter candles. Don't boost too much, though.

Upload shots to Flickr from your iPhone



1 Open Flickr

Open the Flickr app on your iPhone and make sure you're logged in. Tap the top-right-hand button to upload.

2 Take photo

If you've yet to take your shot, hit 'Take photo or video' and snap away. Otherwise select 'Upload from library'.



3 Add details

The Flickr app allows you to add information such as a title and description. When ready, hit 'Upload'.

4 Upload

It should only take a few seconds to upload your photograph, but it will depend on your internet connection.

■ No flash means this image is noisy and slightly blurred

✓ Use your flash to avoid blur

Flash is very helpful for indoor shots as it will reduce noise and blur, but be careful as it can bleach out areas of your image. If you wish to shoot without it you can slow the shutter speed or boost the ISO.



✓ Candlelit portraits

This is a prime example of a low-light situation, but one that would be ruined with a flash. Try to adjust your settings to keep the subject bright, but the flames correctly exposed.



Brightness and Contrast

02 Now open up Brightness and Contrast to further adjust the look of the photo. This enables you to raise the lighting of the image as a whole. Using the contrast will also help to restore any darker detail lost through raising the light levels.



Noise reduction

03 Once happy with the look, open up the noise reduction feature. A low-light shot will contain lots of grainy noise, which will become more visible as you brighten it. Using noise reduction will help remove some of the grain and bring back the detail of the photo.



Crop

04 Cropping is simple but very useful, especially for low-light shots. This image contains a large amount of dark space, which surrounds the main subjects. By cropping out this unwanted darkness, the image looks brighter and the composition is stronger.

Shoot architecture

Develop an eye for architecture, making everyday buildings look extraordinary

Architecture is a broad subject, spanning castles and grand estates, to office blocks and churches. It is so easily accessible that it's unsurprisingly one of the most popular genres of photography. Like any subject, however, there are some rather helpful techniques that apply to any type of building in order to make your shots all the more impressive.

The fact that the subject is stationary is an advantage, but being at the mercy of changing light and weather conditions can confuse matters. Try heading out with your camera early in the morning when places tend to be less busy and when the lighting is at its best. Architectural

photography isn't just about the surface details so venture inside and practise capturing images indoors. This might mean switching the flash off if you are inside a church or cathedral, and you might need to consider taking a tripod with you.

Lighting is the key to all good photography; it sets the mood and brings inanimate objects to life. There really is no time frame for shooting architecture, because you'll find that buildings come alive after dark with neon signs and street lamps. This feature will help you get to grips with this rewarding genre that's accessible to everyone, no matter where they live.

Over the next few pages: Get inspired and learn all about composition, settings, cityscapes and editing your images



Cameraphone

- ✓ There are plenty of apps to play with to enhance the character of the building
- ✗ The lens isn't as wide-angle as some camera lenses, so composition is limited



Compact camera

- ✓ Pocketable and portable for outdoor, architectural shooting
- ✗ Low light architectural shots can suffer from noise with smaller sensors



Compact system camera

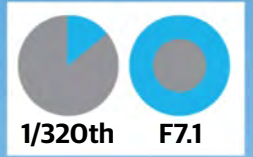
- ✓ Some have flexible LCD screens for capturing dramatic angles
- ✗ Lack of optical viewfinder so you will have to rely on the screen



DSLR

- ✓ A range of manual modes, lenses and filters available
- ✗ Different lenses mean different sized filters, which can be expensive





Shooting skills

5 ways to...

Improve your architecture shots

The best settings and compositions that will capture amazing architectural shots

1 Get inspired

All buildings are different, so inject some personality into each one by using different techniques. Think about shots creatively – you don't even need to have the building as the main focus.

2 Composition

Lie on the floor or climb up high to capture exciting angles. Zoom in really close and pick out interesting details or patterns for some striking abstract images.

3 Settings

Practise using your camera's manual modes on the local area, or even your own house, before venturing out to your chosen location.

4 Architecture in the city

Cities are packed full of visually interesting buildings, both old and new. Modern architecture makes for fantastic close-ups, so get out there and check it out.

5 Editing

Make buildings appear miniature by using a tilt-shift lens, or fake this popular effect for free using editing software; we show you what to do post-shoot.

01

■ Don't limit yourself to buildings; bridges and gates count, too. Come back at sunset for dramatic shadows



02

■ Scout out the building to find out what its most interesting features are, and try to capture these



Shoot architecture

03

✓ Get the right exposure

With the right settings, the exposure is balanced. Here we've used a high f number to keep every part of the image in focus.



✗ Over exposed

This shot is blown out (over exposed), and a faster shutter speed and a higher f-number is needed here.



1. Inspiration

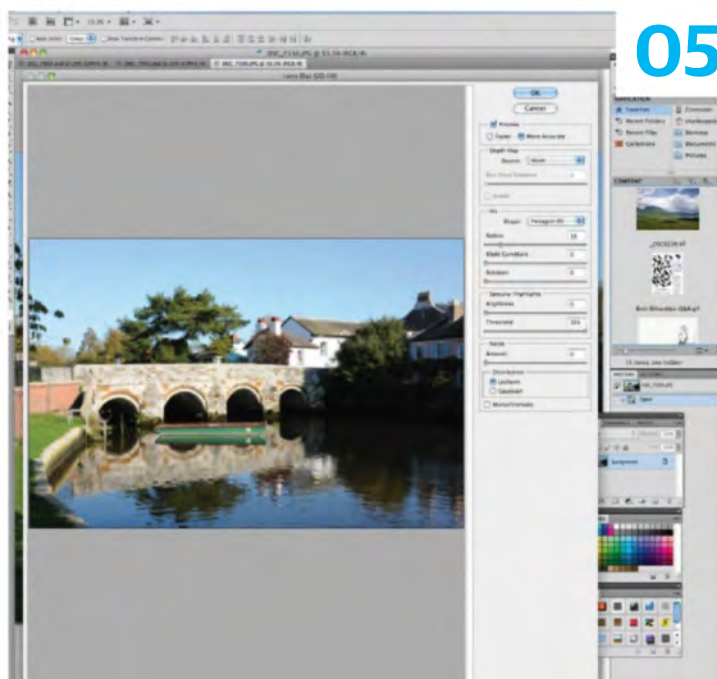
Fantastic architecture is all around us – learn to see it

Take a closer look at the buildings around you for photographs with personality

Next time you notice a building that captures your eye, really examine it for what makes it special. Is it the way the light is falling across it, illuminating the colours of the brick and adding texture to the nooks and crannies? Do the windows create patterns, or are there curious details like gargoyles that leap off the building's façade?

Find out what you admire about the structure, and compose your shot in order to highlight it. This might mean zooming in close to a specific detail, or pulling right back to include the surrounding area. Remember that architecture photography is not just about buildings. Nearby water can create beautiful reflections, and winding paths will help to guide the viewer's eyes to the main point of interest. Try visiting the location at different times of the day, especially at sunset where the shadows are long and artificial lights play with the appearance of the architecture.

05



Shooting skills

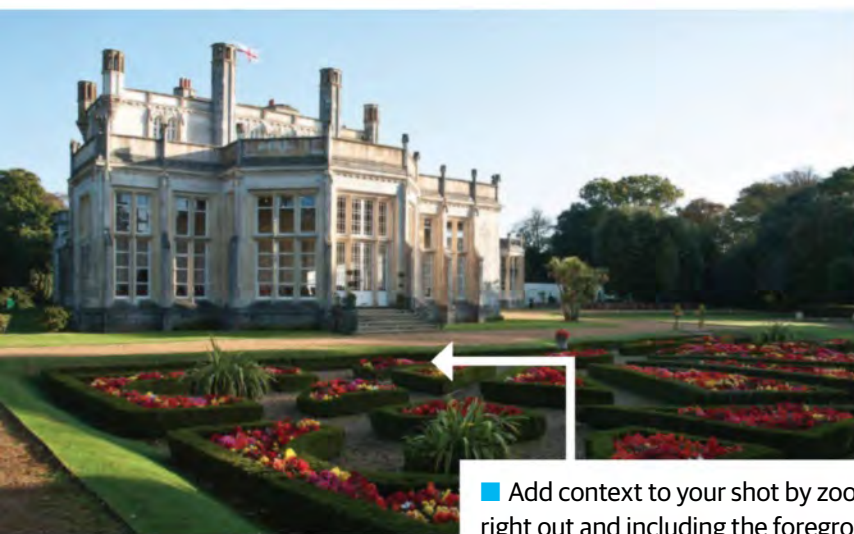
2. Composition

Learn how to compose your shots effectively

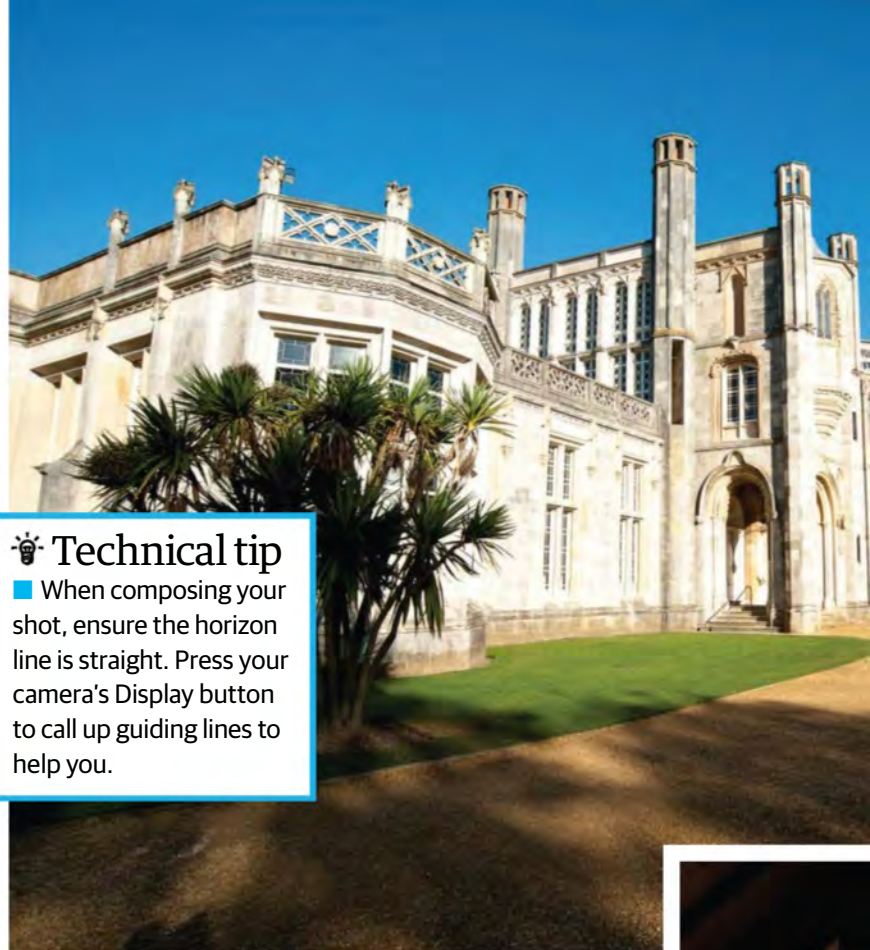
Add drama to your images by playing with angles and distances

Take one interesting-looking construction and try capturing it from at least five different angles. This will help you to realise the different effects you can create, and you'll find the images have more impact as a result.

When you peer up at a tall structure, you'll notice that the vertical walls start to meet each other. This is a natural distortion and it's not something to fear. Towers, for example, look imposing and strong when captured this way, creating drama in your shot. However, if you'd rather avoid this, try taking the photo from a distance. You can use the camera's zoom to bring the building closer, or you could crop post-shoot.

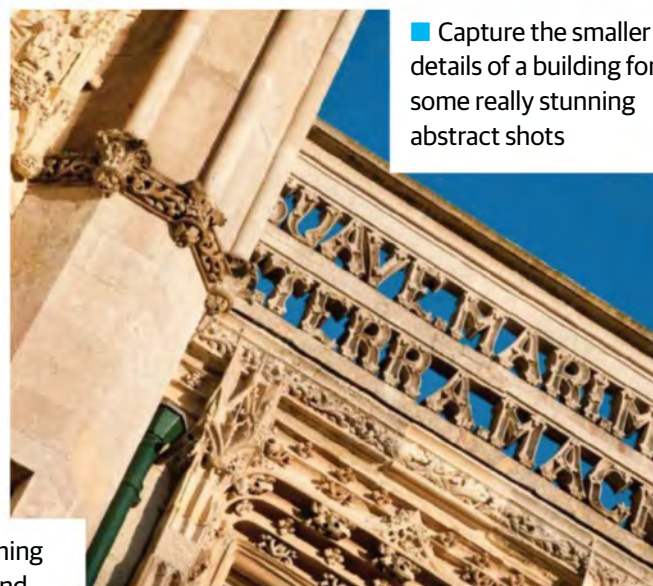


■ Add context to your shot by zooming right out and including the foreground



Technical tip

■ When composing your shot, ensure the horizon line is straight. Press your camera's Display button to call up guiding lines to help you.



■ Capture the smaller details of a building for some really stunning abstract shots

3 of the most common...

Architecture errors



✗ Framing

Think about your subject's position within the frame. This picture feels off-balance.

✗ Horizon

Try and get the horizon line straight in-camera because you lose detail when correcting in Photoshop.



✗ Over exposed

This shot is over-exposed and needs a smaller aperture to let less light through. Try f5.6 or higher.



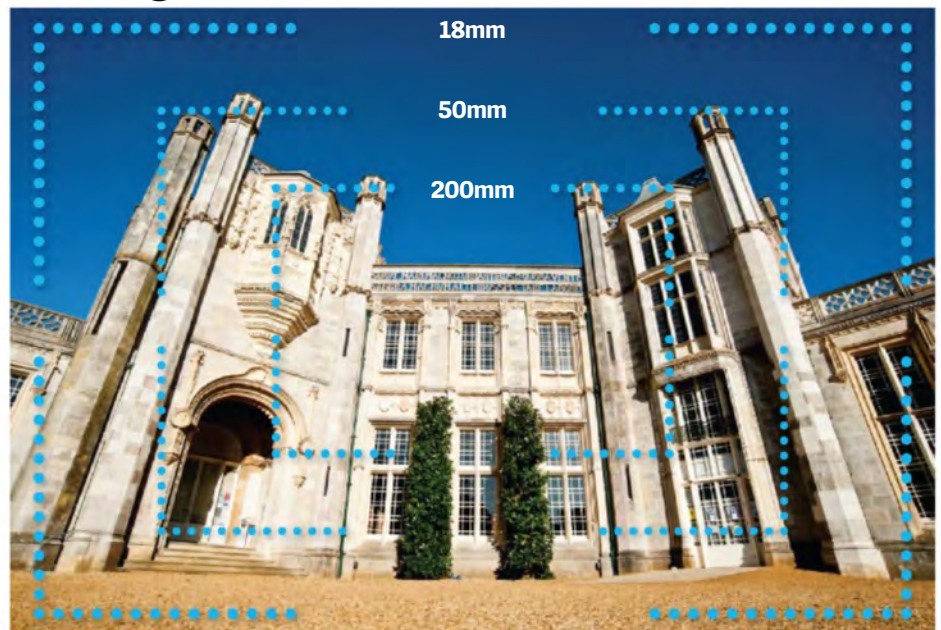
3. Settings

Optimum settings for architecture

Shoot the perfect architecture picture by using these very straightforward tips on exposure, white balance and focal length

Twist the mode dial to Aperture Priority and select a high f-number (narrow aperture). This will ensure that objects in the foreground, middle ground and distance are in focus. Then select Auto white balance so that you don't need to worry about this. Set the ISO no higher than 400 to maintain image quality and make sure the shutter speed is faster than 1/250sec for handheld shooting. Use your lens at its widest angle (such as 18mm) to try to fit in as much of the building as possible, or zoom in to focus on details. The diagram below shows what elements of our building we can see at different focal lengths.

Focal length



Taking the shots



✓ Angles

Kneel or lie on the floor in order to get a low angle. This can result in the building looking grand and rather imposing.



✓ Aperture Priority

Set your camera to Aperture Priority if possible, and use a high f-number in order to keep all details in focus.



✓ Shutter speed

A high shutter speed will help to keep shots sharp when hand holding the camera.



✓ Keep it steady

A wall or fence to lean on will keep your arms steady and help to keep shots pin-sharp.



■ Venture inside the building and practise your low-light shooting skills. Cathedrals make great subject matter, inside and out



Shooting skills

4. In the city

Get creative in the city centre

Admire the mix of old and new, and start shooting stunning cityscapes

In the city, there is usually a healthy mix of grand, long-standing structures and modern elements, so there will be plenty of photo opportunities. You can afford to be more experimental with newer creations by cropping in close to show off the unusual design. Use natural frames such as over-hanging branches and iron gates to highlight your subject, and use staircases and roads as leading lines that naturally recede towards your main subject.

City centres are designed to look exciting at night. Buildings are illuminated with vibrant coloured lights and cast interesting shadows. For low-light shooting, use a tripod to prevent camera shake and set the ISO to a higher setting, such as 400 or above.



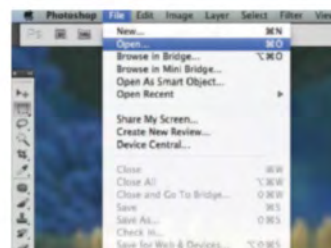
■ A tilt-shift effect has been added, creating a soft blur around the edges

5. Editing

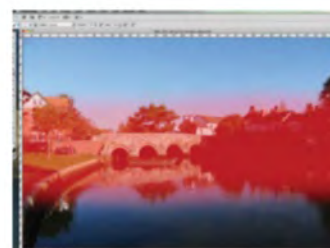
Add a tilt-shift effect

Create a toy town look by following these steps

Tilt-shift lenses are pricey, but you can create the effect simply and cheaply using your editing software. The effect is known as Miniature mode, Toy Town effect, and Diorama mode, and some cameras have it as a Creative Scene mode. If not, it's easy to achieve in Photoshop by using the lens blur filter. The finished effect makes the objects in the scene look tiny, emphasised by the blur that surrounds the edges. These steps will show you how to achieve this fun and creative effect.



1 Open your image
Open your image in Photoshop. Try to shoot from 45-degrees above, as it enhances the appearance of looking down on a miniature model. Ours was taken at a distance and is just as effective.



2 Quickmask mode
Press Q on the keyboard for Quickmask, and G for the Gradient tool. Select Reflected Gradient and draw a line from the area you want to be in focus across to the area you want to appear blurry.

Shoot architecture

💡 Technical tip

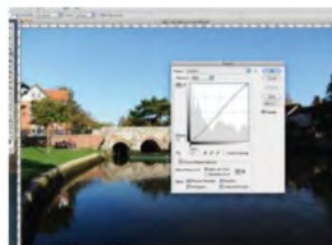
■ To minimise camera shake without a tripod, lean your elbows against a wall or post to give you some additional support, or tuck in your arms.



■ Close-ups of contemporary architecture pack a visual punch; zoom in on the parts that catch your eye



■ Experiment with angles and break the rules; this modern building looks abstract and striking with a wonky horizon



3 **Exit Quickmask**
To exit Quickmask mode Hit Q and make the mask a selection. Go to Filters>Blur>Lens Blur and play with the settings. Increasing the Radius will increase the blur effect.

4 **View the selection**
Get rid of the selection areas by pressing Ctrl + D. If you're not satisfied, go to Edit> Undo the effect, and go back to step 2, but place the line in a different part of the image this time.

5 **Colour pop**
Boost colours and enhance the toy-town look by clicking Image>Adjustments>Curves, and plot a curvy S-shape on the graph. Use the preview screen to check the effects then click 'OK'.



■ Shoot both portrait and landscape orientation to see which works best

Black and white

You'll discover new opportunities when you look through black-and-white eyes

Black-and-white photography can look really stunning. It can work in all weather conditions, indoors or outside, and with lots of different subjects. This is because images without any colour rely on the light and contrast to produce the depth and interest in the shot. Subjects with a vast contrast range work especially well, and this means looking for any subject with a large variation of tones from pure white to pitch black, and everything in between.

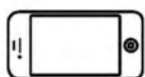
Considering the available sunlight or enhancing it with your flash can be a great way of boosting the contrast for black-and-white photos. Think about adding in

a harsh side light for portraits or shooting on an overcast day for landscapes so you have lots of white, grey and dark tones in the sky to later enhance.

Creating black-and-white photos can be very simple, and there are now a variety of ways in which it can be done. Using a preset camera mode is the easiest, because it enables you to see the final shot straight away.

However, even with black-and-white photos, the colour range still affects how the final shot looks. Therefore simply taking a colour image and using editing software to remove and edit the colour tones can often give you the best results.

Over the next few pages: Learn what to look for and how to shoot amazing monochrome photos



Cameraphone

- ✓ There are lots of apps designed to shoot in and convert to black and white
- ✗ Due to the smaller sensor, the image loses a lot of quality during conversion



Compact camera

- ✓ Most compacts come with specific black-and-white scene modes
- ✗ The sensor can lack good detail and colour range, compromising the quality



Compact system camera

- ✓ Most CSCs have art filters that give B&W shots a dramatic look
- ✗ Some filters can negatively affect the quality of the shot



DSLR

- ✓ Dedicated B&W modes; the large sensor helps to retain the detail of the shot
- ✗ We still needed to convert the RAW image in editing software for the best results



Black and white



■ The original, coloured shot looks less appealing, with a flat colour range and an uninteresting sky

5 steps to...

Great black-and-white shots

Follow these steps to improve your black-and-white photos

1 Inspiration

Black-and-white photography can work well with many subjects, and you can improve the overall look of many shots by removing all of the colour from the scene.

2 Landscapes

Landscapes are very popular in black-and-white photography because the many different tones and colours in the scene can be enhanced when converted to black and white.

3 Settings

There are many specific shooting modes available for black and white, and, depending on the camera, there are creative art filters that can enhance the look even further.

4 Portraits

Removing the colour from a portrait can remove any distractions from the shot, as well as draw attention to the expression and details of the subject's face.

5 Editing

Some of the greatest black-and-white photographs are created by removing the colour in an image-editing program post-shoot. We show you the best techniques for creative conversions.



■ Go from this simple coloured shot to this unusual but excellent black-and-white photo





1/60sec



F16



Black and white



1. Inspiration

Use black-and-white photography to your advantage

There are lots of subjects that lend themselves to being shot in black and white, with the lack of colour enhancing the shot

Black-and-white photography may seem like an easy technique to master; however, it is not suited to every subject, and can often be used in the wrong context, leading to flat and dull images. Many photographs will lack the colour and contrast range suitable for effectively converting to black and white.

Photographs with a large amount of textural detail are also great for black and white, as the conversion will bring out the details in all areas of the shot, from the main focal point of the image, right through to any background interest.

Black and white can also be used to enhance a photo, removing the colour as a distraction from the main subject and bringing all the focus to where it is intended. This works well in shots that have an uncontrolled and potentially distracting background.

3 of the most common...

Uses for black and white



Landscapes

Landscapes often hold a vast tonal and contrast range, and are therefore suited to black-and-white conversions.



Portraits

Portraits are excellent for black and white, as removing colour from the shot can create softer and more flattering skin tones.



Abstract

Abstract photos can vary in subject matter, but removing colour can draw attention to the intricate details of the object.

Shooting skills

2. Landscapes

Use black and white to enhance a landscape

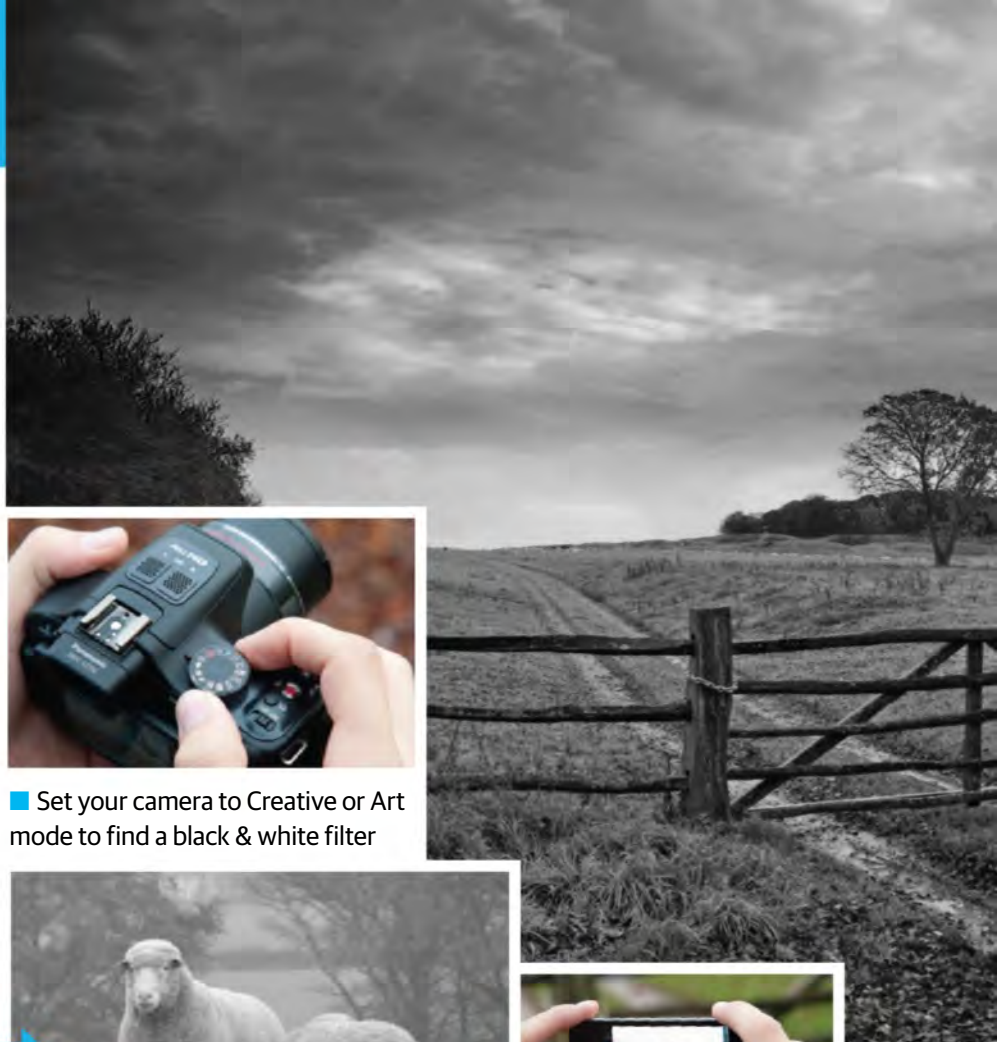
Weather given you a dull sky? Discover how black and white can rescue your shot

Landscapes are great for black-and-white photography, mainly due to their large tonal range. Converting landscapes to black and white will also enhance the details of the scene, and can often be used as a tool for rescuing unflattering skies.

The sky in any shot is important, but even more so when shooting black and white. A plain, boring sky will convert into a dull, white sky, which can leave an image looking flat. Overcast skies with a lot of cloud formations will contain a large amount of contrast; perfect for black and white, as we show here...

X Lack of contrast

This image lacks tonal contrast when shot in black and white – the sheep blend into the background. This results in a flat and rather uninteresting image.



■ Set your camera to Creative or Art mode to find a black & white filter

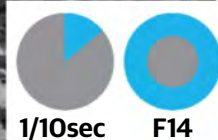


■ Use an app such as B+W Camera or Instagram

💡 Technical tip

■ With black-and-white photos, the lighting is everything. Try using the sunlight to add depth and detail to your shot.





✓ Find some foreground

Using foreground interest will add more depth to your scene. A tree silhouetted against the sky will provide some sharp contrast.

3 of the most common...

Black & white errors

✗ No detail

Lack of detail isn't great for shooting black and white. Avoid cloudless or overcast days and go out when there are a few clouds in the sky.



✗ No focal point

There is no main point of interest to this scene.

✗ Tonally flat

With only 2 blocks of colour, this shot is tonally flat and not ideal for black and white.

3. Settings

Utilise the settings available to get the best results

Experiment with the different filters as well as converting to see which produces the best shot

There are two main ways to create black-and-white images – in-camera art filters or post-shoot image editing. Many digital cameras now come with a host of dedicated scene modes and art filters, including black-and-white. These modes seek to remove the colour and boost the contrast of the shot. Sepia mode is a popular one and seeks to recreate an old Sepia film effect whilst many cameras also offer Grainy Film mode that convert to mono and add a noise grain, like old film photos.

However, many photographers still choose to ignore these automatic modes and convert their colour shots to black and white using image-editing software post shoot.

We find out whether in-camera effects or image editing gives the best results below.



Sepia mode

Sepia mode is a creative filter found on a large number of cameras. It gives the photo a retro effect, replicating the look of old film photos using a distinctive brown-tinted monochrome colour.

Does your camera do it?

- ✗ DSLR
- ✓ Compact system camera
- ✓ Compact camera
- ✓ Cameraphone

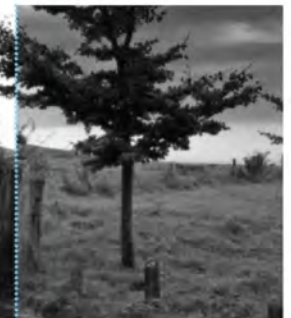


Film Grain mode

Film Grain mode removes the colour from the shot while boosting the blacks. It replicates the look of an old film, adding in a grainy look as well as boosting the contrast to enhance the shot.

Does your camera do it?

- ✗ DSLR
- ✓ Compact system camera
- ✓ Compact camera
- ✓ Cameraphone



Converted from colour

Converting the image from colour is a common technique. It enables you to control the different colour levels, boosting areas to enhance the photo. However, this process is time consuming.

Does your camera do it?

- ✓ DSLR
- ✓ Compact system camera
- ✓ Compact camera
- ✓ Cameraphone

Shooting skills

4. Portraits

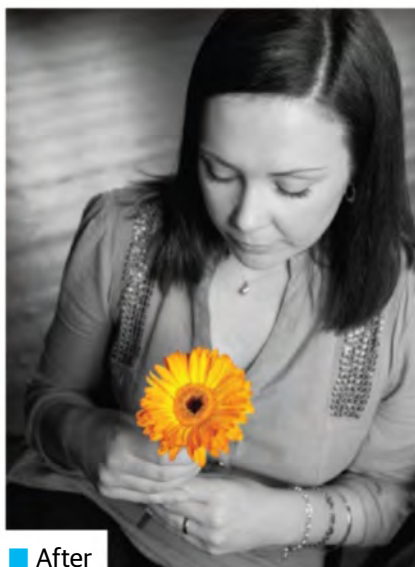
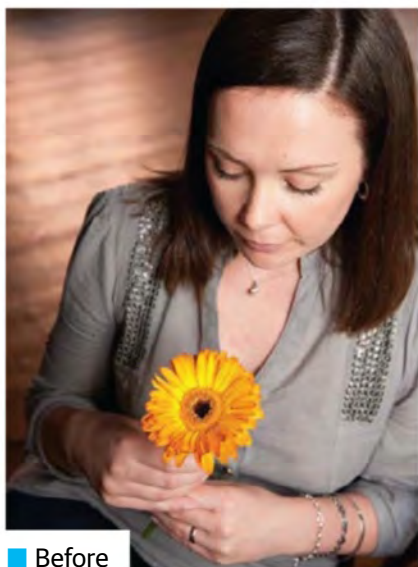
Shoot portraits for black and white

With the right lighting, any portrait can look excellent in black and white

Portraits are very popular in black-and-white photography. Converting a portrait to black and white can soften and enhance the skin tones, as well as enhance the details in the facial expression. Babies and older people can work particularly well with wrinkles and skin textures being enhanced, but any subject can work as we will show you.

Removing the colour from the photo will help to achieve more flattering lighting, as well as help to remove any distractions from the background. It can also draw attention to the main focal point of the image – the subject's eyes.

Portrait photos can also benefit from the use of different shooting effects, such as high and low-key lighting, which adjusts the direction and strength of the lighting of the scene, and can be achieved using in-camera modes or using lighting like flash effects.



5. Editing

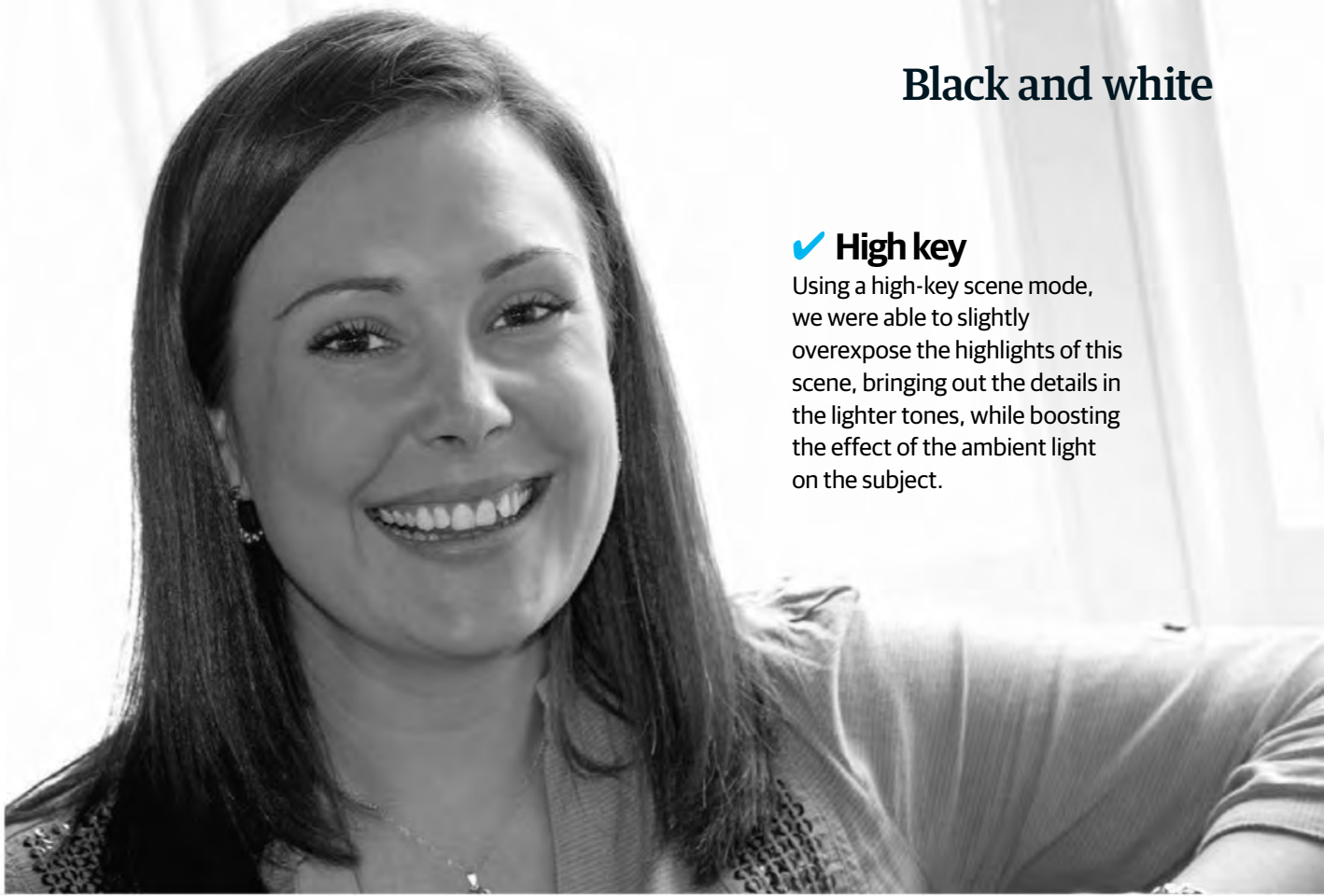
Use black-and-white conversions creatively

Add a touch of colour in Elements with our selective colouring tutorial

Selective colouring is the process of converting an image to black and white, while choosing a specific part of it to retain its colour.

This technique highlights the coloured object as the focal point of the photo. This leaves the rest of the photo without colour to frame and draws particular attention to the chosen subject. Experiment to see what works!

Black and white



✓ High key

Using a high-key scene mode, we were able to slightly overexpose the highlights of this scene, bringing out the details in the lighter tones, while boosting the effect of the ambient light on the subject.



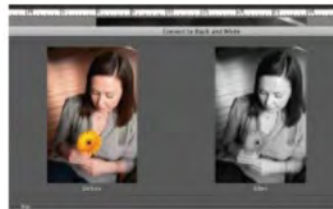
■ High-key and low-key scene modes work well for black-and-white portraits

✓ Low key

By facing the subject towards the light and using the low-key shooting mode, we were able to underexpose the background, losing some of the detail but drawing all attention to the subject's face.



1 Duplicate layer
Duplicate the background layer to create a black-and-white layer and carry out adjustments on this second layer, thus not altering the original. It also means you can erase the unwanted black-and-white areas of the second shot.



2 Convert
Select the new layer. Go to Enhance>Convert to black and white to open a dialog box to adjust the colour channels. Use the sliders to experiment with different lighting tones, and ensure your image is set correctly before proceeding.



3 Reduce opacity
With the new layer still selected, use the Opacity tool to adjust how much of the new layer can be seen. You'll be able to view the colours of the original image more easily, and also see which parts of the new layer you are removing.



4 Erase
Now, using the Eraser tool, erase the black-and-white areas that you would like to restore colour to. Next, simply return opacity of the black-and-white layer to normal and then merge both of the layers together.

Perfect lighting

Learn to use light effectively and get great shots with our lighting guide

Lighting is a key element in photography and is responsible for almost all of your good and bad shots. Encompassing all photographic genres, it can affect the outcome of every photograph that you take. To ensure you get great shots every time you shoot, we have put together all you need to know about working with available light in this simple guide to lighting.

Whether you photograph landscapes, portraits or still life, we have outlined some of the most important lighting tips and techniques over the following eight pages. With some fantastic

hands-on advice, you will soon master shooting indoors and out, as we cover all the need-to-know lighting basics. Learn how to use a reflector and discover when it's best to work with flash. We will also share some great still-life lighting advice and show you how to enhance your final shots in Photoshop.

It's time to start paying attention to the light, and uncover new and creative ways to shoot in-camera. You can now follow our simple setups at home and achieve the same professional results that we have, regardless of what camera system you find yourself using.

Over the next few pages: Get inspired and learn how to light portraits and still life, as well as how to fill in with flash, and quick lighting fixes



Cameraphone

- ✓ There are great editing apps that help enhance the lighting contrast in your captures
- ✗ Due to the small sensor, image quality is poor and you can lose out on capturing lighting detail



Compact camera

- ✓ With built-in shooting modes you can achieve great creative results in-camera
- ✗ With a fixed camera flash you are unable to adjust the direction or strength of the flash light



Compact system camera

- ✓ Most of these have speedlight accessories for the hotshoe, for low-light shots and fill-in flash
- ✗ Unlikely to offer as many accurate light-metering modes as a DSLR camera

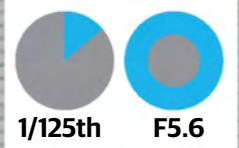


DSLR

- ✓ Its large sensor means it can produce fantastically detailed photographs
- ✗ This is an expensive system for beginners who do not quite understand how manual modes work yet



Perfect lighting



✓ Try and make use of natural light by placing your subject by a window or any other well-lit area. No flash was used here, because the light was strong enough.

Shooting skills

5 ways to...

Improve your lighting

Follow these five quick lighting tips for better photographs

1 Get inspired

Look for the light and get creative with what's available. Always aim to enhance and illuminate the main subject in your shot.

2 Perfect portrait lighting

Balance out the light, and bring detail back in the shadows by repositioning your model and also by using a reflector.

3 Fill in with flash

Take control of your speedlight or on-camera flash's direction, and discover how you can fill in with flash light.

4 Lighting a still life

Shoot some stunning still-life shots at home by simply using directional and diffused ambient light from a lamp.

5 Editing

It doesn't matter if you don't capture it in-camera, there are some simple editing steps you can follow in Photoshop to enhance your lighting.

3 of the best...

Accessories for improving the light in your photographs

Reflector

A collapsible reflector, such as this one from Lastolite (www.lastolite.com), is an ideal camera-kit accessory. Portable, it can be used on location or indoors to bounce light back into the shadows of your shot.



Tripod

A key piece of kit for landscape photographers, a tripod such as this Manfrotto 458B Neotec Pro Photo Tripod (www.manfrotto.co.uk) will enable you to set longer shutter speeds for exposures that capture more light.



Speedlight

A detachable speedlight such as this Metz 54 AF-1 flash unit (www.metzflash.co.uk) is a great investment for portrait photographers, and will enable you to get better exposure results in low-light shooting situations.



✓ Use light creatively

Waiting patiently for the streams of sunlight to break through the clouds has turned a potentially dull shot into a stunning landscape photograph.



✗ No directional sunlight

Shot on an overcast day, this image appears flat without any directional sunlight to add depth and contrast.

1. Inspiration

Get inspired by lighting

Look for the light and get creative

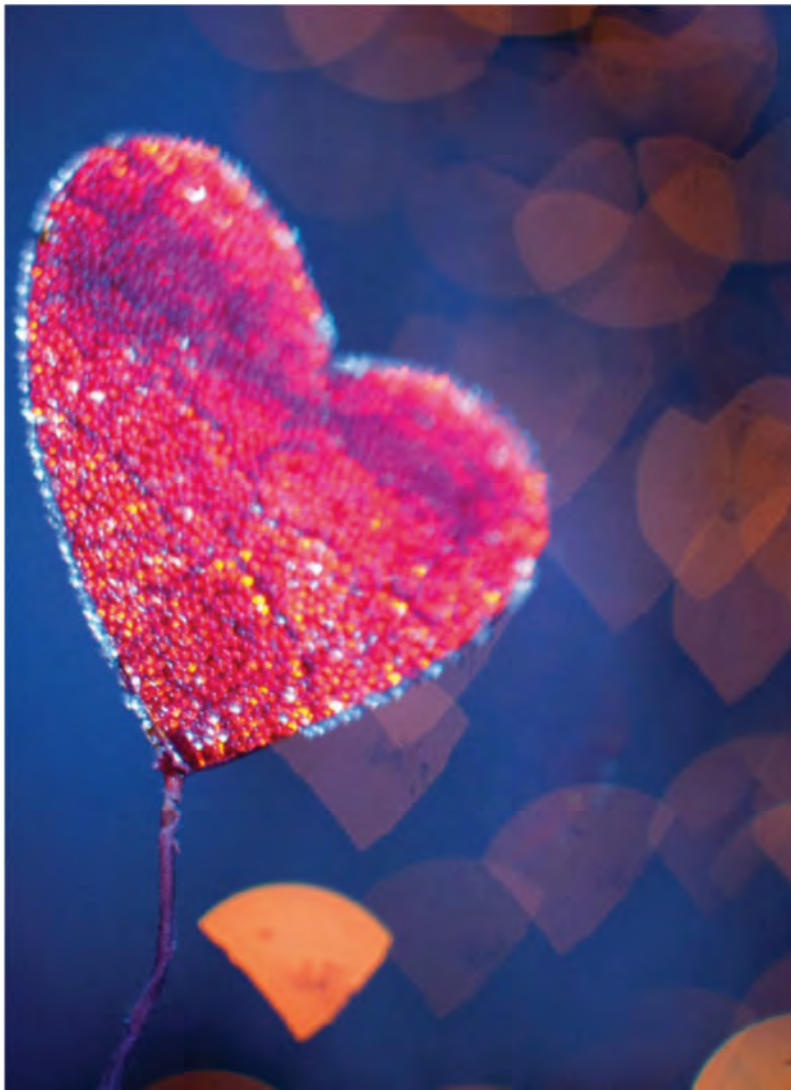
Light is what transforms your photograph from a dull snapshot into a stunning work of art. When shooting, it is important to pay attention to how light falls and reflects within your frame. You can then set your camera accordingly to pick up on the light regardless of whether you're working in manual or automatic modes.

Get creative and don't be afraid to experiment with your camera settings. Try shooting in optional scene modes or add a creative camera filter to see first hand how you can transform the light in your photographs. Even try switching over to shooting in manual modes and set longer exposures for more creative light captures.

Whether you're shooting a landscape, portrait or still life, get inspired by the available light and remember that when taking a photo, it takes time and patience to achieve professional results.

✓ Use light creatively

Using fairy lights, or another light source, you can create a pleasing 'bokeh' photo like this, with blurred-out light. Experiment with light for some creative results.



✓ Head outside

The sun can make for perfect lighting on a bright day, so make use of this natural light-source for some well-lit images. Sunlight to add depth and contrast.



Shooting skills

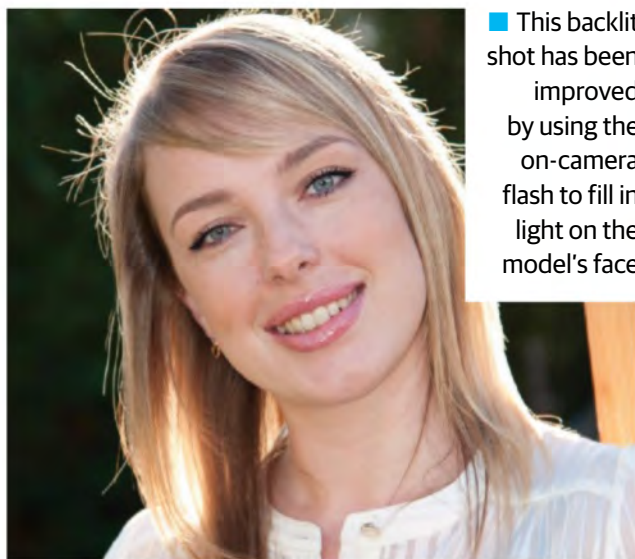
2. Portraits

Master lighting for perfect portraits

Learn how to light your portraits following these simple steps

Portraits are one of the most popular subjects to shoot, but they are not always the easiest to get right. Lighting plays a big part in how successful your portrait photographs are, based on how flatteringly the light falls on the model's face.

Whether you are working with ambient light or flash, ensure you pay particular attention to how you position your model in relation to the light. You want to accentuate their most flattering features and avoid creating harsh and distracting shadows across the face. To overcome this, always try to use a reflector or fill-in flash, which can balance out the shadows and bring light back into the model's most important features: the eyes.



■ This backlit shot has been improved by using the on-camera flash to fill in light on the model's face



3 of the most common...

Lighting errors



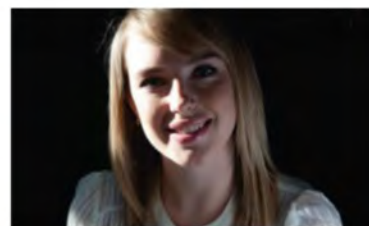
✗ No reflector

The background light creates a halo highlight in the model's hair, but without light reflecting on her face, it's difficult to see the model's features.



✗ Bad Composition

Badly composed, a distracting shadow has fallen across the model's face in this picture, and the strong direct sunlight has made her squint.



✗ Incorrect light direction

Sitting side-on to directional light creates shadows across one side of the face. Reposition the model or use a reflector to fill in shadows.



■ Using a white piece of card as a reflector, the natural light in this backlit shot has been bounced back into the model's face, illuminating her features and adding highlights in her eyes



■ Sometimes facing the model in the direction of sunlight can create striking results, but avoid taking too long to shoot, as the model will begin squinting before long

3. Flash

Fill in the shot with flash light

Discover how changing the direction of flash can significantly affect how your photo looks

Most on-camera flashes will fire automatically when low light is detected, but this won't always result in better image outcomes. A basic pop-up flash is provided with almost all camera systems, and is capable of flashing straight on, but results aren't always as artistic as you may have hoped, with highlights often blown out and strong contrast shadows appearing in the background. Some advanced cameras work around this by offering different flash strengths, allowing you to alter the

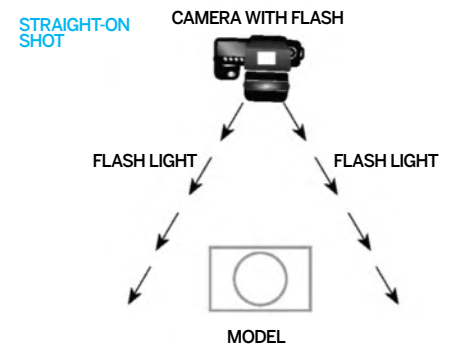
settings, or add a speedlight accessory via the hotshoe.

Ideal for filling in the shadows or illuminating faces in low light, when used correctly, speedlight flash can creatively enhance your captures. With a rotatable head you can adjust the direction and strength of the flash before it reaches your model. Below we have outlined a few basic flash-head adjustments to show you just how easy it is to transform your photographs into professionally lit portraits at home.

Face-on flash



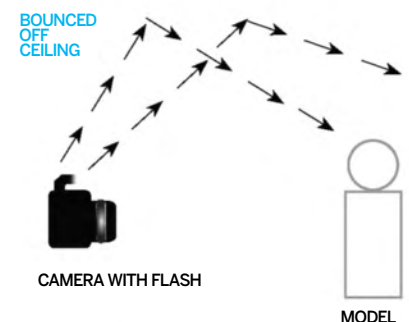
1 The flash brightens the middle of the face, but the light graduates out quickly and creates strong shadows in the background. Direct camera flash like this is ideal for filling in light on predominantly backlit shots, creating a balance between the foreground and background.



Bounced off ceiling



2 Bouncing the flash off the ceiling first will diffuse the light and let it land more naturally onto your subject. With high ceilings, increase the power of the flash to ensure that enough light falls back down onto your subject.

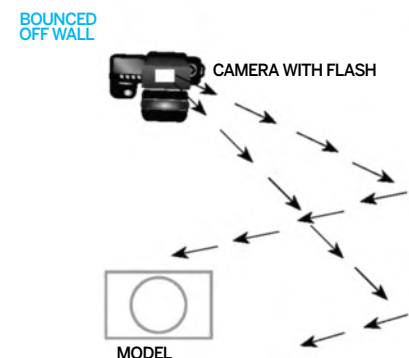


Bounced flash off wall



3 By rotating the flash head sideways at a 45-degree angle, you are able to effectively

bounce the flash off the side wall first, therefore replicating a professional and flattering side light across the model's face, as in this picture.



4. Still life

Lighting a still life

Learn how to light and shoot a stunning still life at home

Still-life photos need not be taken in the studio with flash. You can create the same professional-looking shots at home using ambient light in a controlled way. Set up a simple still-life shoot at home with a bowl of fruit and a desk lamp. An ideal light source for this type of shot, it will give you control over the direction and strength of the light. Look closely at how the light falls on your subject, and aim to accentuate the shape of the fruit. Remember when shooting with warm ambient light like this to set your white balance accordingly in order to prevent colour casts appearing in your captures.



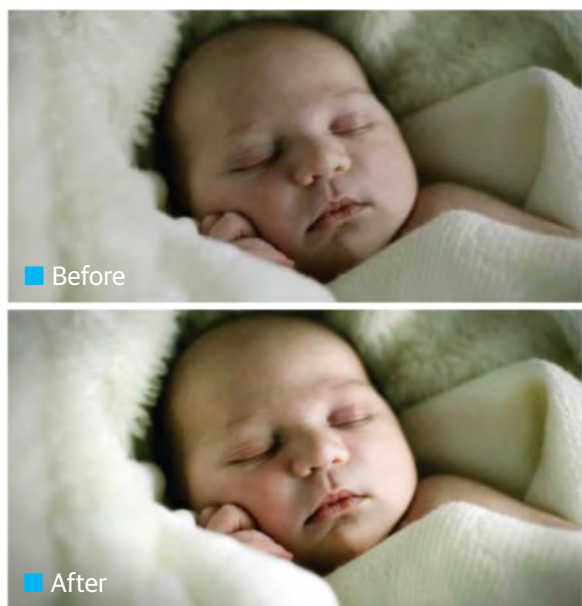
5. Editing

Fix the light at a later stage

Quick lighting fixes in Photoshop

You may not always get the shot you had wanted in-camera, which is where Photoshop steps in. Correcting what you may have missed, there are some fantastic editing tools and techniques that are ideal for enhancing light.

Open your RAW image file in Adobe Photoshop and follow these five simple steps in order to improve the contrast in your captures.



1 Create a new layer
Upload captures onto your computer and then select one that you want to edit in Photoshop. Once loaded, create a new layer via Layer>Duplicate Layer. Rename your new layer 'Edit' and click OK. Select your new layer in order to activate it and go to Image>Adjustments>Levels.



■ Lighting from the side can help to add depth to an image by creating contrasting shadows. Remember that the closer the light source is to your subject, the stronger it will be, which can create blown-out, distracting highlights, as seen in this image



■ Holding greaseproof paper over the light has helped to soften its intensity, and has nicely dulled the highlights while still accentuating the shape of the oranges here



X A flat snapshot

Lit using an overhead ambient light, this image appears flat and lacks any depth making it more reminiscent of a snapshot than a composed still life.



2 Use the histogram
The histogram is bunched to the left, meaning there are no highlights and the shot is dull in midtones. Select the highlights slider at the bottom-right of the histogram and drag it up to where the mountainous range begins. Tick the Preview button, to see how this will affect the shot.



3 Adjust the midtone
To add in more midtone contrast, select the midtone slider and slowly adjust it towards the highlights slider. When you are sure you're pleased with the results, just click OK. You can now select the Burn tool from the Tools palette, which is on the left-hand side of the screen.



4 Use the Burn tool Use the Burn tool to darken areas in the frame. Select a wide, soft-edged brush with the range set to shadows. Set exposure to 6% for gradual build up. Begin brushing areas that need more contrast and depth. Burn around the edges of the frame to draw the eye into the centre subject.



5 Brighten and save
Switch to the Dodge tool to lighten areas. Select a good size soft-edge brush with the range set on either midtones or highlights and the exposure up at 20%. You can now add brighter highlights to your image. Flatten the layers via Layers>Flatten Image, and save your shot as a JPEG.

Starter projects

Guides to creative projects to make your shots stand out

144 Creative projects to try today
Practise your new skills

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Create macro artwork



"Take your photos a step further and learn how to get creative with them"



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Take group portraits

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Lots of projects

Creative projects to try today

Practise your skills using these ideas for amazing photos

When you're starting out in photography, the most important thing you can do is practise. It may seem really obvious, but getting out with your camera and experimenting is the quickest way to learn techniques and master your new kit. Rather than let yourself get bored shooting the same old things day after day, though, we have some great ideas here to inspire you. We've got plenty of fun projects that you can do in your home on a rainy day, such as creating art out of incense and some really interesting macro shots. If you'd rather get outside with your camera, we've got plenty to suit you too, from creating a HDR landscape to playing with shadows.

With these simple projects, you will learn just what your camera is capable of while practising essential skills you can apply to other genres. And what's more, you'll get some truly standout images along

the way to show off to friends and family. Why not display your endeavours from these projects in your very own calendar – we even show you how to craft your own from scratch for a truly personal way to share your snaps.

Have fun with these great, creative projects and why not post your results up on www.photoforbeginners.com or share them on the PFBMag Facebook page. Try out your own creative ideas too, and let your imagination run wild.

“We’ve got plenty of fun projects that you can do on a rainy day”

Top tips for creative photography

Consider framing

Try various angles and reposition the subject to get the strongest shot. Consider whether it looks best in portrait or landscape.

Light the shot

Lighting is fundamental for any photo. Position subjects near natural light, or use a flash or a reflector to fill in harsh shadows.

Think about colour

Using a vibrant subject can help add impact to your shot, but don't overuse colour – stick to three colour tones for the best impact.

Select a backdrop

Ensure the background isn't distracting. Attention should be on your subject, so use coloured card or even a bed sheet hung up.

Add creative filters

Most cameras come with filters like fish-eye, miniature, sepia or cross-process. Use these effects to make your shot stand out.

Tweak your shots

Apply creative effects as well as edits. Get some great ideas from tutorials on www.photoforbeginners.com.

01 Action images

Freeze motion by using a fast shutter speed

Freeze it

■ Use a fast shutter speed (over 1/200sec) to freeze the action. Slow it down if you want to show some movement blur

Perfect exposure

■ You may have to set a lower f-number when using a fast shutter speed to let in enough light

Use flash

■ Firing your flash can help to freeze movement in shots like this. Try putting a piece of tracing paper in front of it if it's too harsh

Shoot quickly

■ Burst mode lets you take a series of images quickly, improving your odds of getting the dice at the height you want them

Keep on trying!

■ High-speed shots are often trial and error, so keep experimenting until you get the right positioning

Keep it sharp

■ Using Continuous AF mode will help to keep the moving subject as sharp as possible

Starter projects



02 Creative portraits

Use props to take unique people pics

To capture this creative portrait, set your camera on a tripod at eye-level with your model. Using string or colourful ribbon, attach an empty frame to a nearby branch and lower it down so that you can see through it to your subject. Be sure that there is enough light so you can shoot without flash, as flash will blow the detail of the frame. Set your camera to Aperture Priority and f8, zoom in so that the frame fills the edge of your view, then set your focus on the model and not the background or frame.



03 Fun shadows

Capture shadow shots on sunny days

Bright, sunny skies offer plenty of great photo opportunities. Get creative with the sunlight by shooting the shadows it casts. You can create unique shadow shots like this using a brightly coloured prop such as an umbrella. You'll need to position your model to face the direction of the sun and then shade them using the

umbrella. Ask your model to pose so that the shadow has a clearer definition. To ensure you can fit the scene within the frame, shoot in landscape orientation. You'll need to focus on the umbrella and set a narrow aperture (around f11) and fast shutter speed (over 1/125sec) to prevent the image from overexposing.

04 Great macro

Take a rare look at macro subjects

Set your camera on a tripod and place a glass vase on a piece of white paper. Set up a background with coloured card or even a colourful scarf. Fill the vase with tonic water (for bubbles) and place in a cherry. Use a desk lamp from a safe distance or an external flashgun, slightly raised (try placing it on a stack of books) but lighting the cherry. Make sure your focus is on the cherry rather than the glass and use a wide aperture (low f-number) to throw the background out of focus. Macro mode or a macro lens will help you to get in even closer to your subject.





05 Light painting

Paint pictures in low light using a torch, tripod and your camera

To paint with light, you must either shoot outside at night or in a dark room. Set your tripod up and attach your camera. Make sure it's secure and set it to Timer mode, so you can be in the right place at the right

time. Now set your camera to Shutter Priority and lower the shutter speed to at least 10sec and make sure your ISO is low to avoid noise appearing. Now press the shutter to start the timer, jump into place

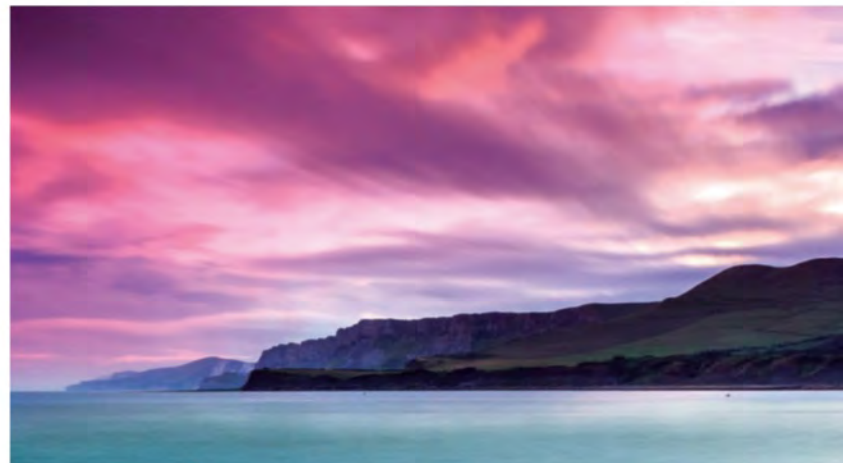
and start 'drawing' your picture with the torch, being sure to keep moving so you don't appear in the frame. It is often easier to draw around people or objects as a guide, like we have here.



06 Perspectives

Get fun images by changing perspective

It can be fun to play with perspective. For effective results, you'll need to work in a wide, open space. If you're placing a model in the frame, get them to stand as far back as possible to give the illusion that they're a smaller size. You can then introduce objects or hands around the side of the image at a closer proximity to the lens, so that they will appear larger when compared to the model. Give your model clear instructions to pose so that it appears as though they are interacting with the object or hands.



07 Motion blur

Use shutter speed for special effects

The easiest way to convey movement is to use a long exposure. This means using a long shutter speed to blur the subject, but keeping everything else in focus by using a tripod. By keeping the camera steady, you can ensure that stationary elements are sharp.

Switch to Shutter Priority on the mode dial and set it to around 5sec, steadily increasing the time until you are happy with the results. You might need to use an ND filter in order to reduce the amount of light coming into the lens and help avoid overexposure.

Starter projects

08

Selective colouring

How to make your subject stand out from the scene

The selective colour technique is a clever way of drawing the eye to a particular part of a picture. It works by converting the image to black and white, then restoring colour to the subject so that it leaps off the frame. Some cameras offer this as a creative filter, and although this is the easiest way of achieving the effect, the results can be much more accurate when you do it yourself. For the best results, choose a photograph with a colourful focal point, such as a bunch of flowers. We've used some fruit and free editing software GIMP to create the effect.

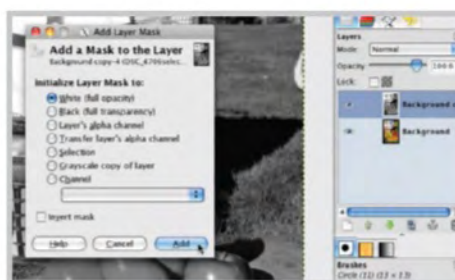


Using layer masks A guide to selectively colouring shots in GIMP



Drain the colour

■ Open your image then save it under another name. Go to Layers>Duplicate Layer, then select Desaturate from the Colors menu.



Add a layer mask

■ Go to Layer>Mask>Add Layer Mask and opt for White (full opacity). Select the mask thumbnail and paint with a black brush to reveal colour.



Flatten the image

■ Finally, select Image>Flatten Image to merge all the layers into one. Then save the image (File>Save) and export it with File>Export.

09 Zoom burst

Use zoom for vibrant still-life shots

A zoom burst adds focus to a central point, blurring the outside in a creative way. Select a brightly coloured subject that is stationary. Switch your camera to Shutter Priority mode and set a shutter speed of around 1sec. This should give you just enough time to zoom out while the shutter is open to capture the effect. Frame the subject by zooming in so that it fills the image. Now focus the camera on the centre. Position your hand on the lens around the zoom ring and once you're ready, release the shutter. As soon as the shutter opens, rotate the zoom ring anti-clockwise to zoom out and capture an effective zoom burst result.





10

Retro shots

Create an old-fashioned photo

Vintage is currently on trend, and not just in regards to clothing; it's made a comeback in photography too, with vintage-inspired camera designs and filter effects that will transform your shots into old-fashioned works of art. To create your own vintage image, check your camera's shooting modes. Some may offer a sepia or specialist filter effect that you can apply instantly. Alternatively, use tools in Photoshop such as Hue/Saturation and the Add Noise filter for effective results. Reduce saturation first and then increase the yellow hue for a sepia effect.

11 Bokeh

Blur light for fun images

Place your cup on a small table, about two metres from the wall behind it. Light it with a desk lamp or external flash gun positioned about a metre to the left of the camera and above it. Hang black cloth on the wall and suspend fairy lights from the top. Put your camera on a tripod and manually focus on the cup. Using a wide aperture (low f-number), the background lights should be blown out of focus to create this lovely effect. Then position the cup so it looks like the lights are steam coming from it!



12

Themed portraits

Take a creative approach to portraiture

There are plenty of great ways to get creative with portraits. Using a theme will not only give you a brief to work towards, but it will also enable you to include more elements within the frame in the way of props and styling. Selecting a character from a book or a favourite film is a great way to start. You'll need to get hands-on with posing your model using props for this, and consider the location of the shoot carefully as it will be dependant on the character you're photographing. You can also ask your subject to change their expressions to convey different emotions.

13 HDR vistas Learn to get perfect results in tricky lighting

If you look at a sunrise or sunset scene, you'll see a full range of tones, including detail in the darkest parts of the land and the brightest parts of the sky. However, camera sensors are unable to record the

same range of tones, so will under or overexpose certain areas. The solution is to take three (or more) identically-framed pictures at different exposures: at, under and below the camera's metered exposure.

This is known as 'bracketing'. Many cameras have an auto-bracketing facility. You then use software like Photoshop Elements or Photomatrix to merge the pictures into one image that contains the full range of tones.

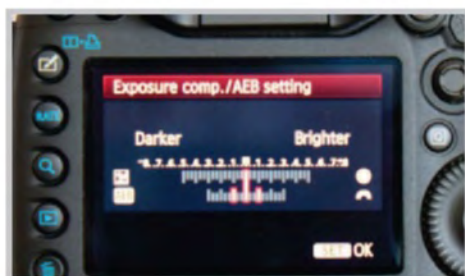


Before

Without using HDR, detail is lost in the shadow areas. If we were to expose for the shadows instead, the sky would be blown out



HDR from start to finish How to set up, shoot and edit HDR



Choose your settings

■ Set Aperture Priority and pick a high f-number. Set Exposure Bracketing in the menu and move the dial until the lines are under the 1.



Use a tripod

■ Keep the camera steady, as change between shots causes 'ghosting'. Take three shots (the camera will take three different exposures).



Merge the shots

■ Open the shots in your software and find the 'Merge to HDR' option, which combines them. Use sliders to adjust contrast and highlights.



■ A simple setup in your home can produce some striking images that look great as a canvas



14 Smoke art

Capture striking abstract images

A great project to try at home is shooting smoke trails. It's easy to do, and all you really need is some incense sticks and some black card. It can take a bit of trial and error, but you'll have a lot of fun experimenting. Here's how it's done...

Set up the project

Place an incense stick on a table in front of a piece of black card so that any smoke will be easily visible (with a bit of distance in between). Set up in front of a bright window so the light hits the smoke from behind.

Choose your settings

Ideal settings are a low ISO, fast shutter speed, such as 1/250sec, and high f-number, but experiment. Turn off your flash and use Burst mode for the best chance of a great shot.

Get started

It is important to keep your camera steady on a tripod or hard surface such as another table. Manually focus on the end of the incense, light it, turn off the lights and start shooting! Use your hands to fan the smoke.

Edit the shots

Open your best shot in editing software and crop out the incense stick or clone it out. Open the Levels tool and move the sliders in towards the edge of the graph. Play around with the Hue slider to change the colour.

15 Custom calendar

Make unique gifts for your friends and family to enjoy

Photo presents are a great way of sharing your favourite moments with people you know and love. What's more, since it's a calendar we're making, your homemade gift is both useful and beautiful. Bonus!

Before we begin, you'll need a selection of photographs to work with. Print them out using your home printer, or order a batch from a professional printing service. The size of the photos will ultimately depend on how big you'd like the finished piece to be. We wanted an A5 calendar, so we opted for mini prints to ensure we had a nice selection of shots on offer.



Take group portraits

Essential tips for taking perfect group shots

Match colours for a perfect shot

Think about the colours in the scene. Try to get your subjects to coordinate their clothing and make sure that the backdrop doesn't clash either



Take group portraits

Getting the whole family or an entire group of friends together is a great excuse to practise your group portrait skills, and is particularly important for preserving precious memories if these occasions are rare. Group portraits can be trickier to get right than single portrait shots, because you need to pay attention to several subjects instead of just one. This can increase the chances of mistakes, such as people blinking or looking away from the camera in your photos.

Luckily, there are some foolproof tricks that you can use to guarantee great photos quickly and easily, which is very useful when trying to keep the attention of small children. Using blink detection or Burst mode will help you to get a photo where everyone is looking at the camera, and some cameras even have a smile detection function. It is also important to make your shoot fun for everyone, so you could try out whacky poses and introduce humorous props to keep everyone entertained. This

will also help you to evoke natural smiles and facial expressions that convey your subject's personality instead of forced and cheesy grins. You could even give your shot a theme, maybe getting everyone to wear festive jumpers to give the shot a winter feel.

In the first part of our guide, we will show you how to set up your group portrait shot and get yourself in the picture too. Then discover how to edit your photo for flattering results, learning how to whiten teeth, remove blemishes and smooth problem skin. You can then find out how to turn your photo into a great card to send to your loved ones and give your message a personal touch.

Alternatively, you could turn your shot into a canvas print to place above the mantelpiece or simply print it out for your photo album. So whether you are shooting a family portrait in the living room, or photographing your best mates at the local park, follow our step-by-step guide to producing fantastic shots.

Shoot Get everyone together for a group portrait



Position your subjects

01 Find a suitable location, considering your backdrop, and then get everyone into position. Try getting your subjects to sit or stand at different levels to avoid a dull shot with everyone in a straight line.



Control your aperture

02 Set your camera to Aperture Priority mode and choose f8. This should be narrow enough to keep everyone in focus, but wide enough to create some background blur. Keep the ISO low to avoid noise.



Use Burst mode

03 If your camera has a blink detection function, use this to prevent the risk of blinking eyes in your shot. Alternatively, use Burst mode to take a series of shots and increase your chances of getting a good one.



Use the zoom

04 To ensure everyone is in the frame, you may need to zoom your lens out. This may also capture some of the scenery to add context. If you can, though, take a few steps back and zoom in to avoid distortion.



Light the shot

05 Try to make use of natural light by shooting outside or by a bright window. If you can't or any of your subjects' faces are in shadow, fire your flash to fill in these areas, or use a reflector to bounce light back in.



Get into the frame

06 If you want to be part of the shot, set the camera up on a tripod or sturdy surface and then switch on the self-timer. Once you press the shutter, quickly get into position before the shot is taken.

Starter projects

3 of the best...

Items of kit
for portraits



Flashgun

Sometimes the flash on your camera can be a little bit harsh. External flashguns usually have tilting heads that are perfect for bouncing the light off of the ceiling, for softer results.



Camera with articulated LCD

If you want to get yourself in the shot, a camera with an LCD that flips out or tilts up is great for framing. If your camera doesn't have this feature, set it up on a tripod and use the self-timer.



Reflector

Fill in any unflattering shadows in your shot by bouncing the light back into the dark areas with a reflector. Different colours create different effects – gold, for example, will cast a warm light.

Edit Perfect portraits with Photoshop Elements



Brighten it up

07 Go to Enhance>Adjust Lighting>Brightness/Contrast and boost the Brightness slider. Tweak the exposure further by going to Enhance>Adjust Color>Adjust Color Curves.



Remove imperfections

09 To remove blemishes or stray hairs, select the Spot Healing Brush tool. The Content Aware option must be on. Adjust brush size then click/drag the cursor over the problem area.



Brighten the eyes

11 You can use the same technique to brighten the whites of the eyes. Just make sure that you use a small brush size to avoid brightening the iris and pupils of the eye too for an unnatural effect.



Bring out the detail

08 To sharpen it, go to Enhance>Unsharp Mask. Increase the Amount slider to sharpen, the Radius slider to determine the area and the Threshold slider to set the amount of contrast.



Whiten the teeth

10 Select the Dodge tool and set the Range to Midtones. Set the Exposure value to 50% and brush over the teeth. The longer you hold down the cursor, the whiter they will get.



Smooth the skin

12 To smooth out areas of skin, select the Blur tool. Set Mode to Normal and Strength to around 40% (it depends on how smooth you want to go). Brush over the skin to get it looking perfect.

Share Create a card with Snapfish



Choose a template

13 Go to www.snapfish.co.uk, click the Cards tab and choose a style – we chose Greeting Cards. Select the card template. We went with Full Photo. Select an orientation then click Create Card.



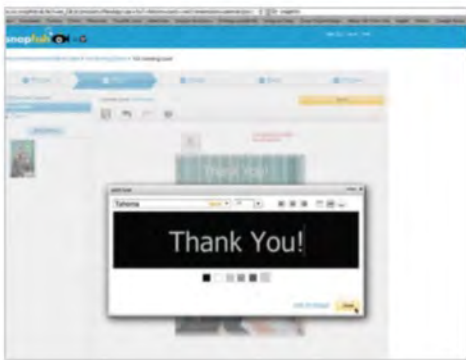
Upload your photo

14 Click the Upload button, create an album to upload your photo into and pick an upload speed. Tick the automatic photo correction box if you want Snapfish to make basic edits.



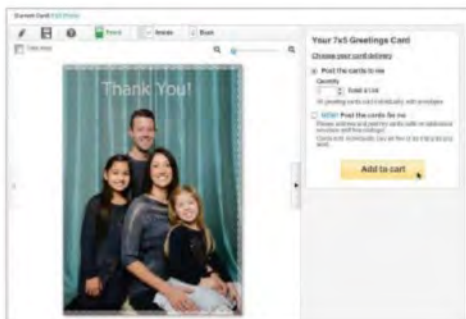
Position your shot

15 After you have uploaded your photo, click on the Front tab and drag and drop the photo onto the front of your card. Click in the centre of your photo to drag it into a position you're happy with.



Add some text

16 Click the Text button and position the text box where you want it. Select the Edit Text icon and type your message, choosing the font, size, colour and alignment of the text. Click Done.



Order your card

17 Select the Inside and Back tabs to edit the rest of your card. You can add more photos inside. Go to the Review tab and choose where you want your card to be posted, then click Add To Cart.

Extra space

Make sure you leave enough room for the message on your card when you take the shot

Natural smiles

Interact with your subjects to help them relax and get natural smiles

Simple backdrop

Find a simple yet colourful backdrop to complement your group of subjects

Get together

Make sure everyone is close together to close up any gaps and create an intimate photo



Consider your shooting angle

Shoot from a high angle or at eye level for the most flattering results. A low angle accentuates chins and noses.

Create a stunning macro masterpiece

Discover how to capture incredible floral close-ups



Create a stunning macro masterpiece

Macro is arguably one of the most intriguing types of digital photography, as it allows you to peer into a microscopic world that is otherwise missed by the naked eye. Once under magnification, even the most simple of household items can be transformed into a detailed utopia, which makes for some truly stunning photographs. Flowers are a common choice in macro photography, as their bright colours and intricate textures translate well when under magnification.

In order to photograph close up and personal with a subject, your camera is going to need to be able to focus much

closer than normal. Unfortunately, most standard lenses have a limit as to how close they're able to get to a subject before they're unable to lock on and achieve sharp focus. Macro lenses have been specially built so that they can focus much closer to subjects, and are available for most makes of DSLR and CSC. Most macro lenses will have the word 'Macro' written on the side of the lens, though the magnification they offer will ultimately vary between different makes and models, so it's always best to check to see what the lens's enlargement ratio is – this is also usually found somewhere on the lens barrel. 'True' macro images are taken at a ratio of 1:1, while

lenses with a smaller ratio (ie 1:2) will only offer half the amount of magnification.

If you don't own a macro lens, there are other cheaper alternatives to gaining close-up pictures, including close-up filters that screw onto the front of a regular lens to increase its minimum focusing distance, as well as extension tubes that sit in between the camera and lens to let it focus closer. If you don't own an interchangeable lens camera at all, some compact cameras feature a built-in macro mode. When activated, this allows the camera to take photos much closer than normally possible, so there are plenty of ways to join in with the macro fun!

Shoot Set up and start shooting your subject



01 Use a tripod

When shooting under magnification using a macro lens, even small movements will be exaggerated, so setting your camera on a tripod should avoid knocking the shot out of focus.



02 Set up your subject

Sit your flower in a vase and place it next to a brightly lit window (or go outside if the weather is nice). Placing a piece of coloured paper behind the flower will create a clutter-free backdrop.



03 Add the drops

Dissolve two teaspoons of sugar in a small cup of water to help the droplets stay in place. Using the head of a pin, or the tip of a pencil, carefully blot small drops of water onto the flower.



04 Set your aperture

Switch the camera to Aperture Priority mode (A or Av on the mode dial) and set an aperture of f8. When focusing close up, even using an aperture of f8 will only create a very small in-focus area.



05 Use Live View to focus

When taking photos close up, it can be hard to get the focus where you want it using autofocus. Switch to manual focus and activate the camera's Live View function to help get sharp focus.

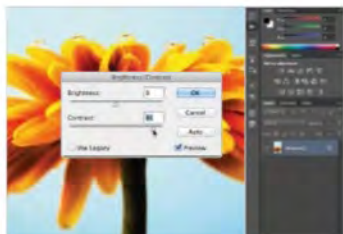


06 Take the shot

While looking at the rear screen, turn the focus ring on the lens until the drop of water is pin-sharp. Fully depress the shutter button to take the shot. Be careful not to knock the camera.

Starter projects

Ways to add contrast to your macro



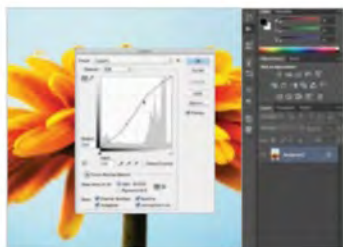
Increase Brightness/Contrast

Go to Image>Adjustments>Brightness/Contrast and move the Contrast slider right to add contrast. This is the quickest and easiest way, but offers less control than the methods below.



Adjust the Levels

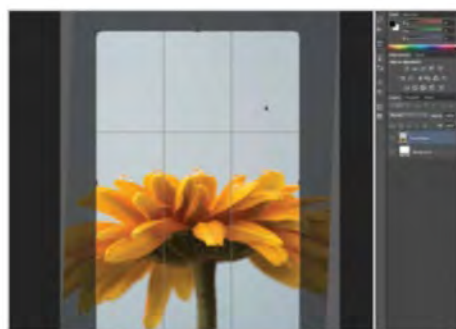
Head up to Image>Adjustments>Levels. In the window, move the Black point slider to the right to darken the shadows, then move the White point slider to the left to brighten the highlights.



Experiment with Curves

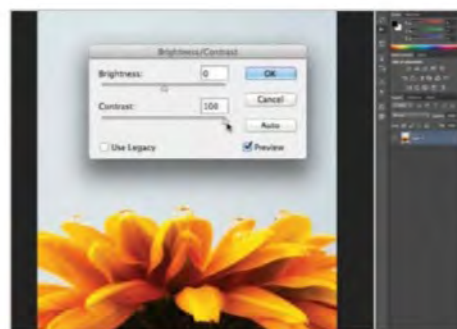
Go to Image>Adjustments>Curves. In the window, click and drag on the curves diagram in order to adapt it into an S-curve. This will darken shadows and brighten highlights to boost contrast.

Edit Use Photoshop to enhance your floral shot



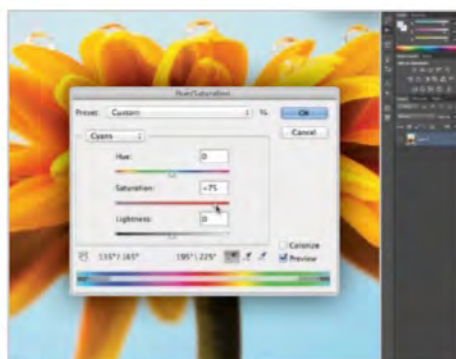
01 Crop the image

Open your image in Photoshop and grab the Crop tool from the toolbox. Make a tight crop around your subject while holding Shift on the keyboard to keep the crop in proportion. Hit Enter once you're happy.



02 Add contrast

Head up to Image>Adjustments>Brightness/Contrast. In the window that appears, drag the Contrast slider to a maximum value of 100 to give your image a real boost of contrast. Click OK to apply.



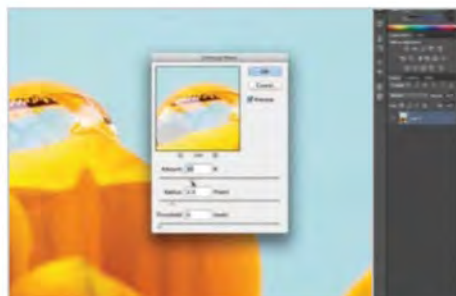
03 Boost saturation

Go to Image>Adjustments>Hue/Saturation. We want to boost the background, so click where it says Master and choose the correct colour (Cyans here). Increase the Saturation to +75 and click OK.



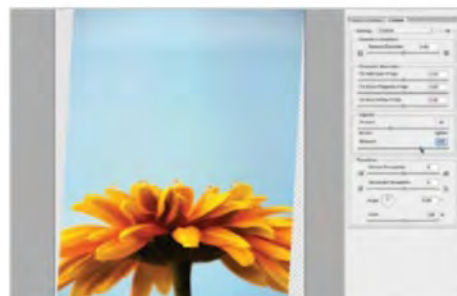
04 Remove blemishes

Grab the Spot Healing Brush (J) with a brush size of around 20px. Make sure that the Content-Aware option is ticked at the top, then paint over any imperfections on the flower to quickly remove them.



05 Sharpen your shot

Go to Filter>Sharpen>Unsharp Mask. In the window that appears, set the Amount to 50, then move the Radius to a value of 2. Leave the Threshold set to the default value of 0 and click OK to confirm.



06 Add a vignette

Go to Filter>Lens Correction. Click the Custom tab and locate the Vignette options. Move the Amount slider to the left to around -30, then move the Midpoint slider right to around +70. Click OK.

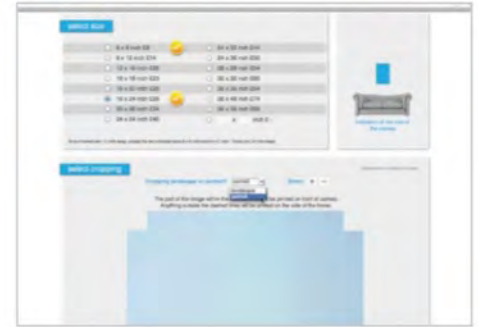
Share Turn your image into wall art with HelloCanvas



01 Visit HelloCanvas Enter www.hellocanvas.co.uk into the web address bar. Once you are at the website, click on the orange Order Here button in the middle to get started making your canvas print.



02 Upload your image Click the Upload Photo button at the top of the list and, in the window that appears, locate your image. Click on it to select it, then click the Open button. Wait while your image uploads.



03 Adjust the canvas Select the size of canvas you would like to order, then decide whether it should be portrait or landscape. You can also determine the edge style using the options lower down the page. Click the Next button.



04 Additional features On this screen you can adjust the number of prints you'd like to order, add creative effects such as sepia toning or black and white, or add a wooden frame to your canvas. Once you're finished, click Next.



05 Place your order You'll be given a rundown of your order. To make adjustments to this, simply hit Previous to go back a step. Otherwise, click Next to complete your order by entering your payment and postage details.

Pleasing backdrop
Keep it plain and clutter-free for a professional studio look

Stay sharp
Making sure your water droplet stays pin-sharp is the key to a great shot

Bright colours
Make your image really pop with eye-catching, vibrant colours

Refraction
Angle your camera so you can see the flower's centre in the droplets

Technical tip
A macro lens is able to focus much closer to objects than a standard lens and is vital if you want to capture close-up images.



Improve your images with these post-shoot edits

- 162** Creative editing effects in an instant
Unleash your artistic side
- 168** Fix exposures with traditional skills
Edit with adjustment layers
- 172** Repair old prints
Work miracles on tattered shots
- 174** Fix unwanted colour casts
Take control of terrible hues
- 176** Add impact to black-and-white conversions
Turn shots monochrome

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Fix bad exposure

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Creative editing



"Even minor editing can turn mundane shots into something special"



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Restore old
photos



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Fix colour
casts



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Convert from
colour

Creative editing effects in an instant

Unleash your artistic side with our easy-to-follow guides to applying fun effects in Photoshop Elements

What you'll need...

- ✓ A selection of suitable start photos
- ✓ Photoshop Elements

We used...

- ✓ Photoshop Elements 12

You could try...

- ✓ Older versions of Photoshop Elements or the full suite. Techniques will differ, though

What you'll learn...

- ✓ How to add fun effects to your images in post-production

Toolbar

Find all the tools here. Choose colours at the bottom. The front box shows foreground colour, while the back square shows background colour. To alternate, double-click on one

Menu bar

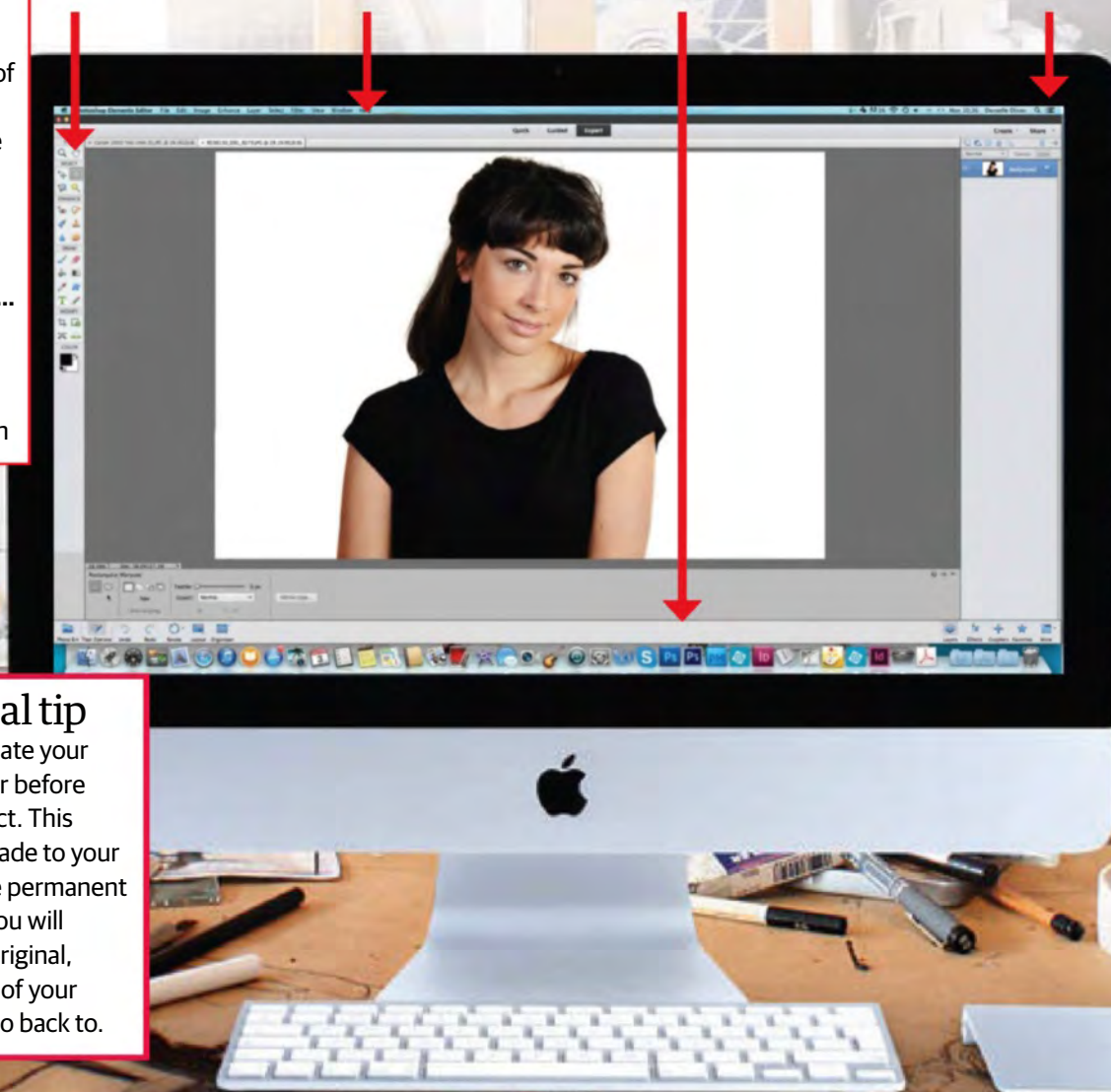
Explore what is hidden within these drop-down menus in this top bar. We'll use the Filter and Enhance menus over the next few pages, but you can also save, print and more from here

Tool Options bar

Whenever you click on a tool in the Toolbar, further options will appear at the bottom of the interface. You can choose to alter the opacity, tool setups, brush type, strength and much more

Layers panel

Choose to mask, duplicate, change opacity and blend modes, add adjustment layers, delete and much more in this side panel. All layer effects and multiple layers can be found here



Technical tip

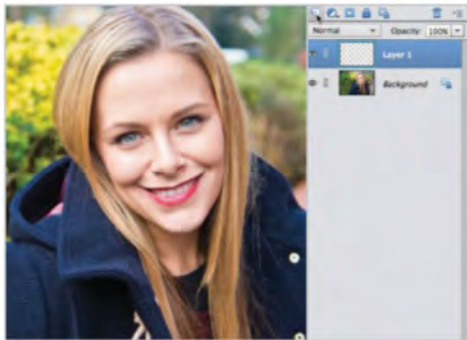
■ Always duplicate your Background layer before you start a project. This way, any edits made to your photo will not be permanent if you hit Save. You will always have an original, untouched copy of your photo saved to go back to.

Retro film effect Transform photos with vintage light techniques

Before

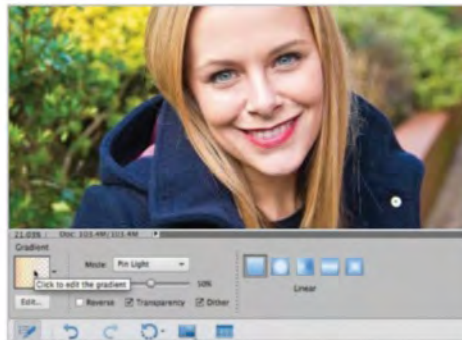


After



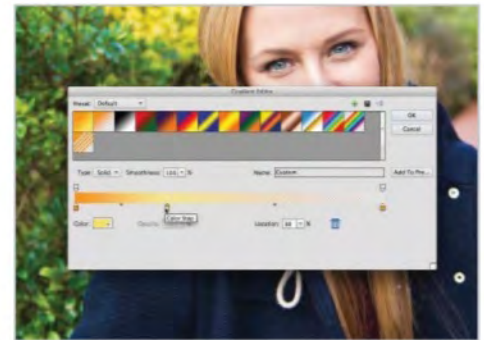
1 Add a new layer

To open an image go to File>Open> Select your chosen start photo. To fill your screen with your photo, choose View>Full Screen. Go to the Layers panel (right of your screen) and click on Create a New Layer at the top of the panel.



2 Choose the Gradient tool

The new layer will sit above the Background layer. Click on the Gradient tool, then the Foreground colour square and select orange. Go to the Tool Options bar and click on the coloured gradient thumbnail to bring up the Gradient Editor.



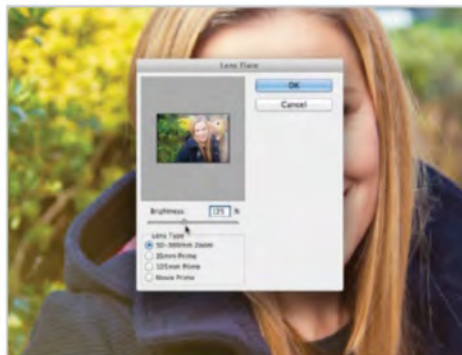
3 Set up your gradient

Click the Foreground to Transparent blend. Click under the coloured line in the dialog box to add another colour stop. Double-click this new stopper and select a new colour from the dialog box. The gradient now has two colours. Hit OK.



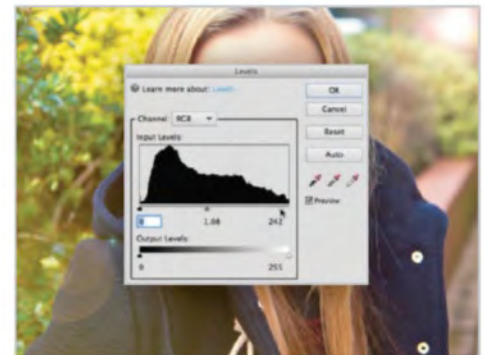
4 Add a layer blend

In the Tool Options bar choose Pin Light, 50% Opacity, Linear Gradient. The top layer in Layers must be selected. Draw a line on the canvas from the bottom-left towards the centre. In the Layers panel, change the blend mode to Pin Light.



5 Duplicate a layer

Click on the Background layer, then the top-right drop-down icon and select Duplicate Layer. Press the eye icon next to the new duplicate layer, go to Filter in the top bar, then go to Render>Lens Flare.



6 Lens flare and levels

In the preview window, you can move the effect and alter the Brightness. When happy, hit OK. Go to Enhance in the top bar, select Adjust Lighting>Levels, then move the middle and right stoppers left on the graph to lighten the whole image.

Transform and crop your image



1 Activate Free Transform
Open the start photo. Go to the Layers panel and double-click on the Background layer. Go to Image> Transform>Free Transform (Cmd/Ctrl+T). Corner pointers will appear.



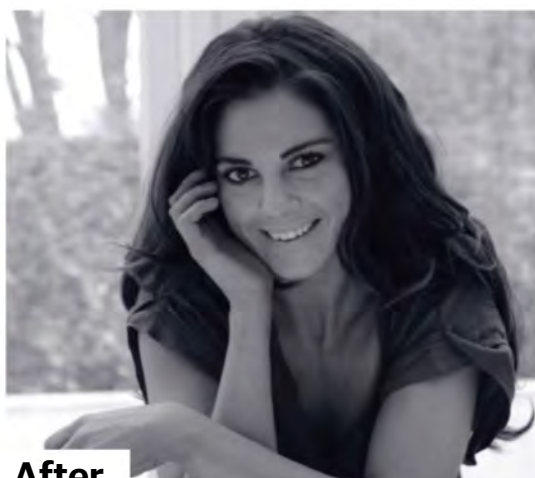
2 Rotate to suit
Hover over a corner and a rotate icon will appear. Rotate the image, placing it at an angle. To alter the image size, hold down Shift to keep perspective, then move a corner pointer. Hit Enter.



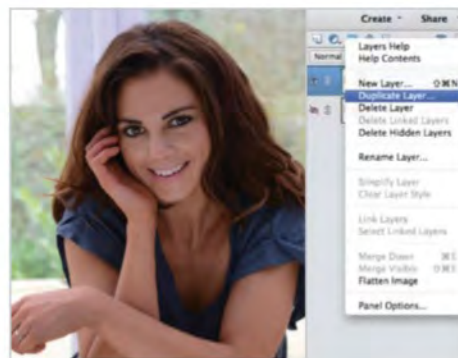
3 Select and crop
Select the Crop tool (C) and draw over your image, selecting the area to keep. Move the pointers and hover over the edges to rotate more if needed. When happy, press Enter.

Split toning Colour effects made simple

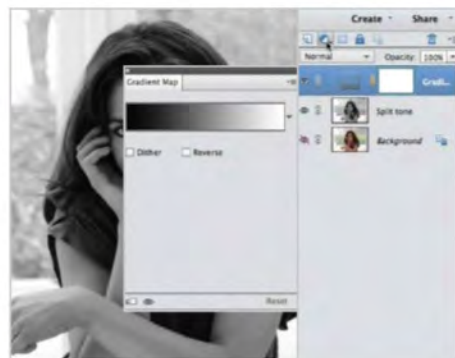
Before



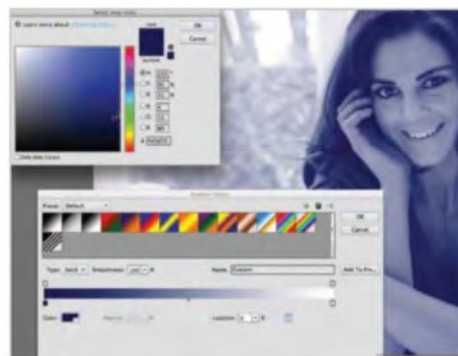
After



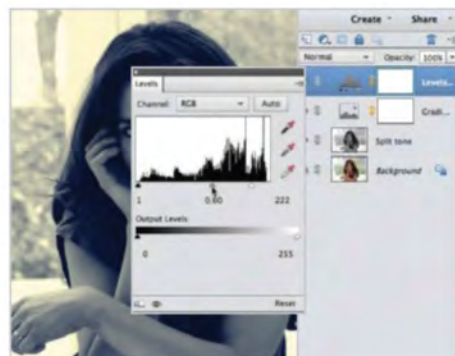
1 Duplicate for safety
Open your photo in Elements. Go to the Layers panel, click on the top-right menu icon and select Duplicate Layer. Press the eye icon next to the bottom Background layer, hiding it from view.



2 Add a Gradient Map layer
Click on the visible top layer and go to Enhance>Adjust Color>Remove Color, transforming it to monochrome. Go to the Layers panel, click Create new fill or adjustment layer and pick Gradient Map.



3 Choose a blend and colour
Click the coloured box in the Gradient Map dialog box, bringing up the Gradient Editor. Ensure Foreground to Background option is selected. Double-click the black stopper and select a dark blue.



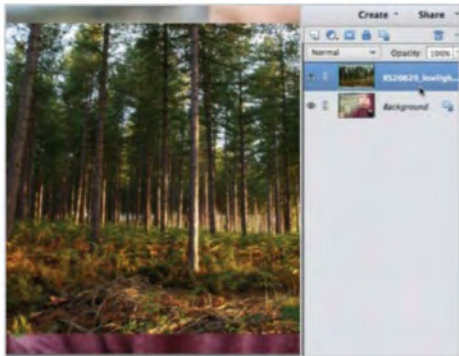
4 Finishing off
Double-click the other stopper and choose a pale yellow. Click on the 'Create new fill or adjustment layer' icon, choose Levels, and move the sliders to enhance the shadows and highlights.

Double exposure Merge images to create striking compositions

Before

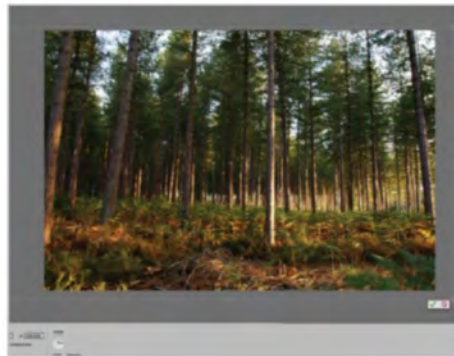


After



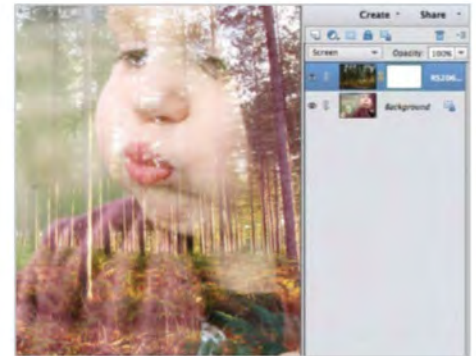
1 Drag and drop to merge

Open the images and press Photo Bin, showing all open images. Double-click the base-photo image. Drag the thumbnail of the other photo from the Photo Bin onto the other open image canvas.



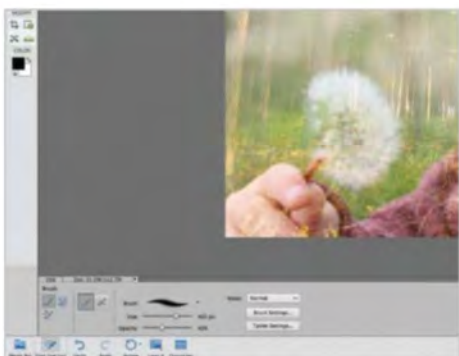
2 Transform to size

Click the second image on top of the other in the Layers panel, go to Image> Transform>Free Transform. Hold down Shift and drag a corner pointer out to increase its size, matching the layer below.



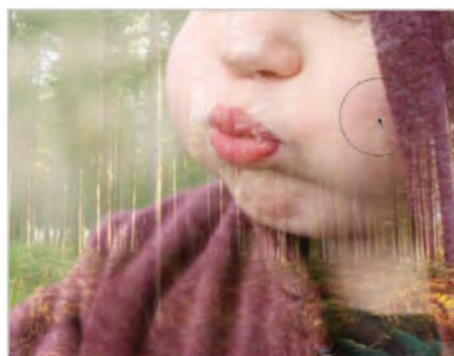
3 Choose a blend mode

Return to the Layers panel, click on the Blend Mode drop-down menu and experiment with the options. The results vary depending on the photos and their colour make-up. We've chosen Screen.



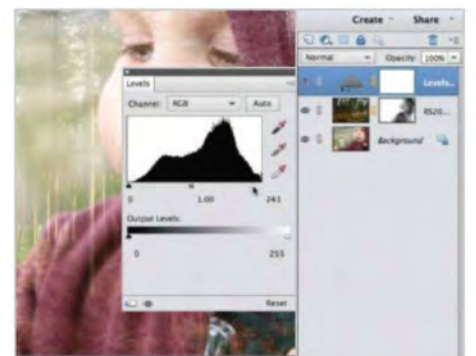
4 Add a mask to the top layer

Click on the mask thumbnail. Select the Brush tool. In the Tool Options panel select a large, soft-edged brush at 40% Opacity. Foreground/background colours in the Toolbar must be set to black/white.



5 Mask and reveal

Paint away some of the top layer so the face is clearer. To paint back in an area, switch the foreground/background colours to white/black by pressing the arrow next to the coloured squares.



6 Opacity and levels to finish

For a subtle effect, lower the top layer's opacity. Click 'Create new fill or adjustment layer' on the Layers panel and select Levels. Move the right white arrow left to enhance highlights.

Create a funky fish-eye effect



1 Set up the Selection tool

Open your image and duplicate your Background layer as a backup. Select the Elliptical Marquee tool (if not visible select Rectangular Marquee and choose it from the Tool Options bar).



2 Create a new layer

Holding down Shift to keep perspective, draw a circle over the central part of your image. With the selection active, press Cmd/Ctrl+J to lift the selection onto its own layer.



3 Apply the effect

Cmd/Ctrl-click on the top layer in the Layers panel to create an active selection, go to Filter>Distort> Spherize, move the slider to 100% and press OK. The effect will be applied.

Tilt shift Miniaturise with creative blurring

Before

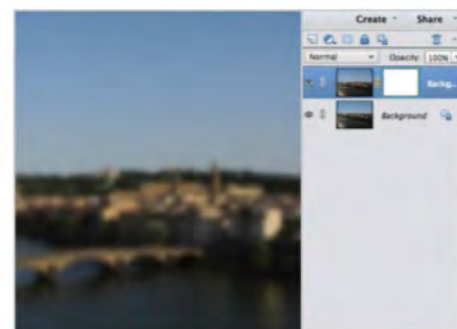


After



1 Duplicate and blur

With your photo open, go to the Layers panel, click on the top-right drop-down menu and select Duplicate Layer, keeping both layers visible. Click on the top layer and go to Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur.



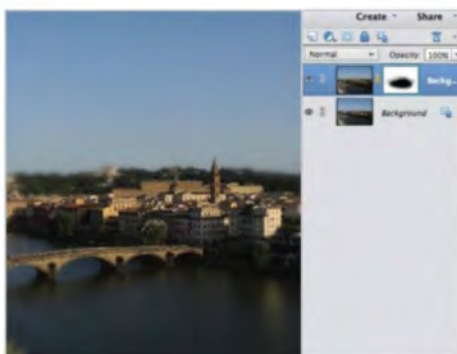
2 Add a mask

Set blur radius to 20 pixels and press OK. Add a mask to the newly blurred layer located at the top of the Layers panel. In the Toolbar, set the foreground/background colours to white/black.



3 Erase your selection

Go to the Rectangular Marquee tool, and in the Tool Options bar select Elliptical. Set the Feather to 100 pixels. Draw an ellipse over the area of the image you wish to be sharp and press Delete.



4 Create a gradual blend

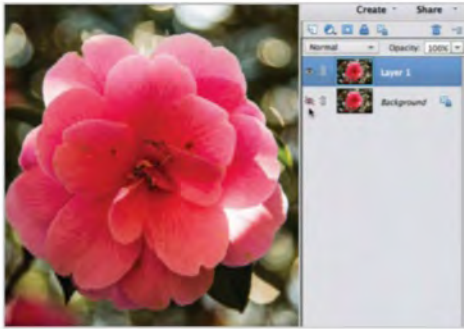
If the area doesn't mask away, switch the order of the foreground/background colours. The feather should create a gradual blend. If it's too harsh, switch to the Brush and manually mask away.

Zoom burst Use the Radial Blur to add motion

Before

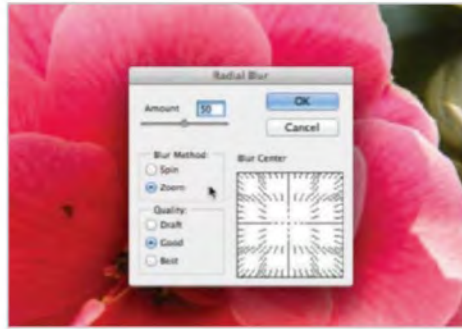


After



1 Duplicate and hide

Duplicate your Background layer, as this blur effect will be applied to your photo layer. Hide the base layer and click on the newly duplicated top layer in the Layers panel.



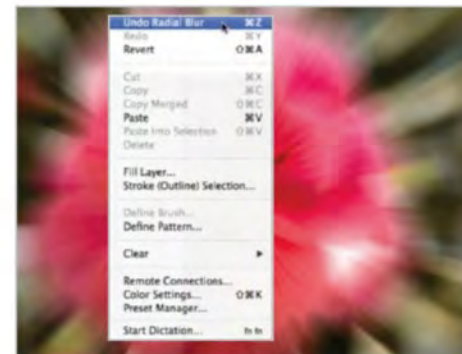
2 Add radial blur

Click Filter in the top menu bar and select Blur>Radial Blur. In this dialog box, check the Zoom option. Good quality is fine. The Amount slider is what you move to control the impact of the zoom effect.



3 Trial and error

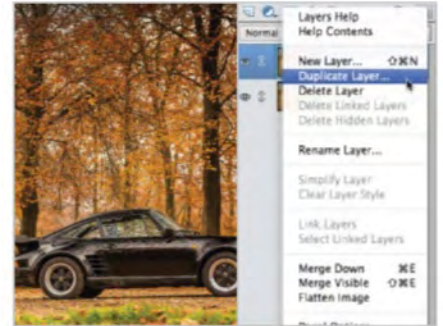
There isn't a preview mode in this dialog box, so the end result can be trial and error. Start off with an Amount of 50, press OK and see the effect applied. If you want to alter the level you can.



4 Undo and repeat

Go to Edit>Undo Radial Blur (Cmd/Ctrl+ Z) and repeat the process until happy. If you want to experiment further, add on a mask like shown in the tilt shift step-by-step for a gradual blur effect.

Add motion blur speed effects



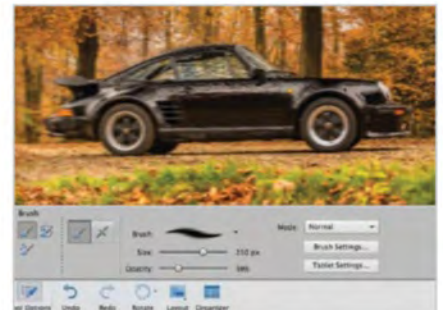
1 Duplicate first layer

With your start photo open, go to the Layers panel. Click on the top-right menu button and select Duplicate Layer. Click the top layer in the Layers panel, highlighting it blue.



2 Add your blur

In the top options bar, click Filter>Blur>Motion Blur. Experiment with the Angle and Distance and hit OK. Go to the Layers panel, click Add a Mask icon and click on the mask thumbnail.



3 Mask away to finish

Select Brush tool. Set foreground/background to black/white. In the Tool Options bar, set Opacity to 30% and pick a large, soft brush. Paint on your photo, masking away some blur.

Fix exposure with traditional skills

Use adjustment layers to emulate the traditional practice of dodging and burning

Before



■ This image is rather dark and lacks detail and punch



■ By using the Dodge and Burn tools the image has more colour and detail

Fix exposure with traditional skills

Dodge, Burn and Sponge are three tools packaged within Photoshop that should spend most of their time locked in the cupboard under the stairs. They're destructive, meaning that if you use them directly on a pixel-based layer, you've only got the Undo command should you decide that you've made a proper mess or aren't happy. And this means undoing everything else you've done in the process.

A better, non-destructive method is to use adjustment layers and their masks. Separate Curves layers can be used instead of Dodge and Burn, and separate Hue/Saturation layers can be used as an alternative for Sponge. The layer mask

allows you to apply these edits to specific parts of the image just as you would with those naughty Dodge, Burn and Sponge tools, but this time all of your work is recorded on the layer mask and undone at any time by simply brushing with black instead of white.

But why should you dodge, burn and alter saturation in the first place? Well, quite often the lighting or tones that nature provides aren't always the most beautiful. Dodging can draw attention to pivotal details, while burning is great for knocking back elements that are better hidden. Saturation is great for focusing the eye to the centre of the frame, and used together they're a formidable image-editing team.

What you'll need...

- ✓ Digital photo
- ✓ Image-editing software or app

We used...

- ✓ Photoshop

You could try...

- ✓ Elements
- ✓ iPhone
- ✓ GIMP
- ✓ PhotoPlus
- ✓ Own brand software

What you'll learn...

- ✓ How to use Dodge and Burn
- ✓ How to use adjustment layers
- ✓ How to use the Brush tool

Layers and layers

We begin by creating lots of layers



Add a Dodge layer

01 Add Curves adjustment layer using bottom button on the Layers palette. Push Curve up hard with a single point. Invert layer mask using Cmd/Ctrl+I. Double-click layer text. Rename Dodge.



Add a Burn layer

02 Add a second Curves layer, but pull the Curve down hard with a single point for your burn effect. Invert the layer mask. Rename Burn. Add a third adjustment layer for Hue/Saturation.



Saturation layers

03 Push Saturation to +35. Invert the mask. Double-click layer text and rename 'Sat Increase'. Add Hue/Saturation layer and pull the Saturation slider down to -35. Invert and rename it 'Sat Decrease'.



Set up the Brush tool

04 Press 'D' to reset colour palette to white and black; 'B' for Brush tool. Set it to 0% Hardness. We'll use Dodge to bring out detail in the darker areas. Click Dodge layer mask to make active.



Zoom in

05 Use Cmd/Ctrl and '+' to zoom in to dark areas. Hold down Space and click and drag to move around. Resize the Brush tool with 'I' and 'J' and press 3 to set the brush Opacity to 30%.



Dodge to balance tones

06 Brush over the dark areas as many times as necessary to lighten them to match similar tones. In our image, the stone wall on the left needed balancing to match the right one.

3 of the best...

Simple ways to improve exposure



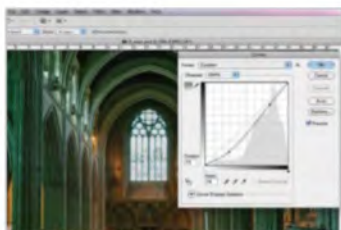
Shadows/Highlights

Head to Shadows/Highlights in the Adjustments menu to alter exposure. Let the computer work out settings for you or play with the two sliders. Work on an adjustments layer to make edits non-destructive.



Brightness/Contrast

This handy tool is again found in the Adjustments menu. This two-slider tool allows you to alter both the brightness and the contrast in your photo. Make sure you have checked the Preview box so that you can see what effect you're having on your image. Don't push it too far.



Curves

Add a Curves adjustment layer and create a gently sloping 'S' shape to create the perfect balance of shadows and highlights in your photo.

Let's get dodging... ..and burning



Dodge people

07 Elsewhere the tones are pretty symmetrical, so we'll use Dodge to draw attention to important areas. The people and the stall are good starting points for us; zoom in close and brush over important parts in your image.



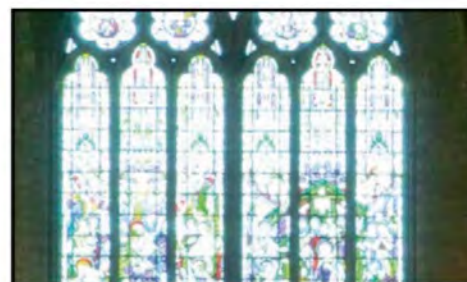
Dodge the details

08 Work around the rest of the image, picking out areas to lighten. We chose to lighten the flowers in the foreground and the chairs in the centre of the shot. We also worked over the spot lamps along the top.



Burn corners

09 Click the layer mask on the Burn layer. We're going to use a very large brush at 30% to darken the top-right and top-left corners to focus attention towards the middle of the shot. Brush twice over each corner – don't overdo it.



Burn windows

10 Press O for 100% Brush Opacity, size the brush very small and zoom in on areas that need lightening. We worked on detail in the window without touching the walls in between, which would become too dark at 100% Opacity.



Sat increase

11 Saturation increases bring out colour in important areas. Click the Sat Increase layer mask. Stay at 100% Brush Opacity to increase the colour in our chosen areas by the same initial setting of +35 as we did with our burn.



Brush the colour in

12 We worked over the people, pews, the foreground foliage and any areas with orange light, as well as the back wall, including the stained-glass windows. You can alter the Saturation slider if you want to increase or decrease the effect.

Quick Photoshop tips

Dodge and burn in colour

Traditionally, dodging and burning were used on monochrome images. The process of removing colour already affords a sense of unreality so adjustments to tonality rarely bother the viewer. Colour imagery provides greater expectations of reality, as it's viewed as being that much closer to an authentic reproduction of the world. This means dodging and burning tend to have a much stronger impact on the eye, appearing to drive a scene more towards a cartoony mood. If you're trying to maintain a semblance of reality, you'll need to be conservative with your adjustments and focus them on larger areas rather than details.

Converging verticals

When shooting large structures, you're going to have to point your camera upwards, and this means that the verticals are going to lean inwards. Correct this by running Edit > Transform > Perspective on a duplicate of the Background layer.

Burning for the corners

If you're using dodge or burn layers to correct large areas rather than small details, you need to use a very large brush for a more graduated effect. Zoom far out and pull the edges of the window to reveal an area outside of the canvas, then work with the brush edge for subtlety.



Sat decrease

13 To reduce saturation in certain areas, click the Sat Decrease adjustment layer mask. Work at 100% here as -35 is a good setting. The stone work has a green tinge, so we can use this layer to pull some of that colour out.



Brush the colour out

14 Resize the brush to suit and carefully brush the adjustment into the areas in your image that need the colour knocking back a bit. Pulling out the colour in our image also made the orange-lit areas look more impressive.



Sharpen to finish

15 Run the Unsharp Mask filter on a duplicate of your Background layer (use Cmd/Ctrl+J to duplicate). A Radius of 0.5 pixels with 300% Amount is great for a full-res image, though you may need to go as low as 80% for some photos.



Before



After

Repair old prints

Use Elements 12's Restore Old Photo guided edit

What you'll need...

- ✓ Editing software
- ✓ An old photo

We used...

- ✓ Photoshop Elements 12

You could try...

- ✓ GIMP

What you'll learn...

- ✓ How to repair tears and stains and restore colour using the Restore Old Photo guided edit

Dig out old photographs and load them into Photoshop Elements 12 to restore them back to their former glory in just a few clicks. Follow our steps for using the Restore Old Photo guided edit, and see how it can work miracles on tattered, scratched and torn images.

Over time, photos can deteriorate in quality for a number of reasons. These include fading and discolouration, caused by too much exposure to sunlight, or bent corners and scratches from being stored loose in a box. These, along with other factors, can destroy photographs that could reveal clues to our past.

If you have images that have suffered from a tear here, or a crease there, scan them in to your computer and the new Restore Old Photo feature in the latest version of Photoshop Elements offers the right tools for undergoing some serious restoration. From the Spot Healing tool for dealing with those

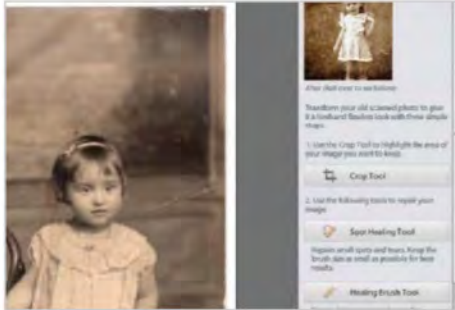
small, indiscriminate blemishes, to the Clone Stamp tool for gradually weeding out larger areas such as tea stains or faded corners, you're sure to find what you need.

Once all of the blemishes have been cleaned up, converting your image to black and white will remove any discolouration or sepia toning. Sharpening and Dust Removal also form part of this new guided edit, but they are not necessarily required for every restoration project. As a guided edit, Elements makes it very easy for anyone of any ability to follow along, but working knowledge of the tools is still required for making the very best results possible.

When you're happy with the final restoration, we even show you how to really bring the image to life by adding colour. The end result is a transformation worthy of framing on the wall or showcasing in the family tree.

Restore shots

Give a new lease of life



New view mode

01 Open an old photo in Elements 12 and click on the Guided tab. Pick the Restore Old Photo option from the list of edits down the right. From the top-left, set the View mode to Before & After – Horizontal.



Spot the marks

02 Crop the image by clicking on the first option. Look to remove raggedy edges and to straighten the image. Click on the Spot Healing tool and draw over small specks and white marks to remove them.



Heal pixels

03 Use the Healing Brush on medium-sized specks and crease lines. Hold Opt/Alt to sample 'good' areas and then paint over the 'bad' pixels. Use the Clone Stamp in a similar way to fix the largest areas.



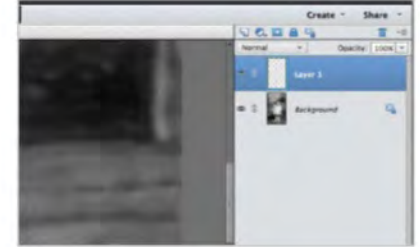
Complete coverage

04 Using the Spot Healing, Healing Brush and Clone Stamp tools, go over your image in order to heal the remaining problem areas. Be sure to sample areas of similar pixels so that the results look clean.

Restore colour

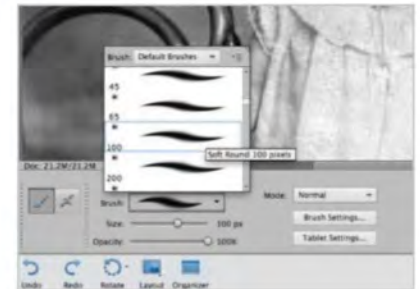
05 Finally, click on Convert to Black & White to remove the sepia colour. Using Auto Levels and Contrast will adjust the exposure to normal. Go back over the image with the Blur tool to hide any imperfections.

Colourise black and white images



Expert mode

After restoring the image to black and white, you can add colour using Brushes. After hitting OK in the Guided Edit, click on the Expert tab. Click on Create a New Layer at the top of the Layers panel.



Brush setup

Change the layer's blend mode to Color. Select the Brush tool (B) and in the Tool Options choose a soft, round, 100px brush. Click the Foreground colour box and set its colour to a fleshy tone.



Apply colour

Brush over the skin and watch how your old image suddenly comes to life. Select a dark brown for the hair, and light red for the lips. Add new layers for each colour, setting blend modes to Color.

Fix unwanted colour casts

Take control of terrible hues and learn to balance colour for better images



Goodbye blues!

No longer is this image suffering from a poor colour cast – a few tweaks and the strong, bluish tint can be reduced



What you'll need...

- ✓ Photo with a colour cast
- ✓ Editing software

We used...

- ✓ Photoshop Elements 12
- ✓ Serif PhotoPlus X6
- ✓ Photoshop Touch

You could try...

- ✓ Lightroom
- ✓ Photoshop CS or above
- ✓ GIMP

What you'll learn...

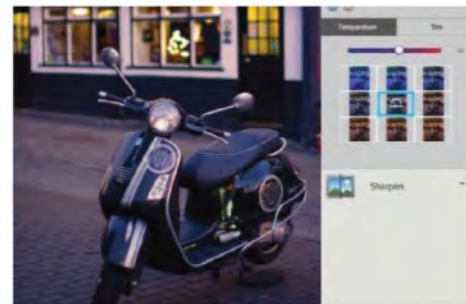
- ✓ Use auto commands
- ✓ Add colour adjustments
- ✓ Balance colour in images

White balance, or colour temperature, is usually taken care of by the camera automatically at the moment an image is captured, but it's not always accurate. Auto white balance settings can struggle in strong or mixed lighting conditions, which will result in unwanted colour casts. When an image has the wrong colour balance, it will appear to have an obvious tint of either blue or red. The strength of this tinting can, in some cases, damage colour in your image beyond repair.

To help you sort out your white balance woes, we have picked out three applications that can correct colour casts quickly and accurately.

Photoshop Elements 12

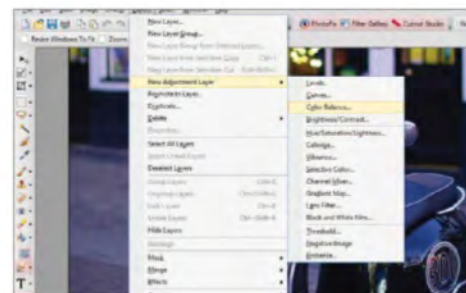
Available on: Mac/PC Price: £78/\$100



1 One way to correct colour in Elements 12 is to go into the Quick mode using the top buttons, and then click on Balance. Use the slider to offset the cast, moving it to the right to reduce a blue cast.

Serif PhotoPlus X6

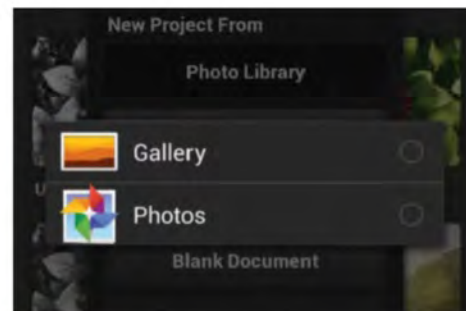
Available on: PC Price: £71/\$90



1 Once you've brought an image into PhotoPlus, adjusting colour can be done with an adjustment layer. To add one, go to the Layers menu along the top and down to New Adjustment Layer>Color Balance.

Photoshop Touch for phone

Available on: iOS/Android Price: £2.99/\$4.99



1 Open the app and tap the middle button along the bottom (picture with a plus symbol in the corner). Pick the Gallery option to load an image from your stored photos. Tap it to go straight into the app.

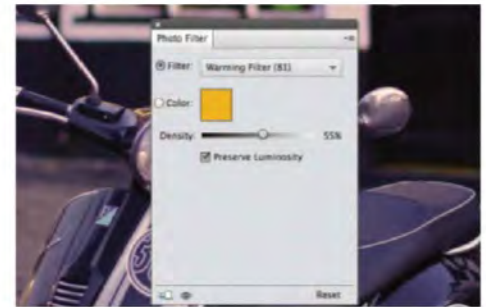
Fix unwanted colour casts



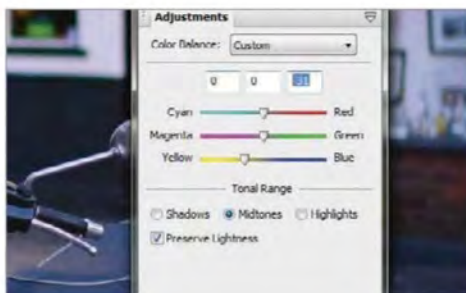
2 If the first method doesn't fix the colour cast, try going into Expert mode instead. In the Enhance menu along the top of the Elements interface, click on Auto Color Correction. This is an instant way to fix a subtle colour cast.



3 Another method for removing a colour cast is to go to Enhance>Adjust Color>Remove Color Cast. Use the eyedropper to click on parts of the image that should be either black, white or grey, until you see normal colours return.



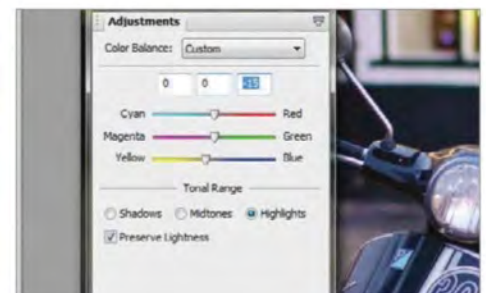
4 Colour can even be tweaked by going to Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Photo Filter. Apply a Warming Filter (81), at 50-60% Density, with Preserve Luminosity ticked. This will offset the blue cast. Use a Cooling Filter for red casts.



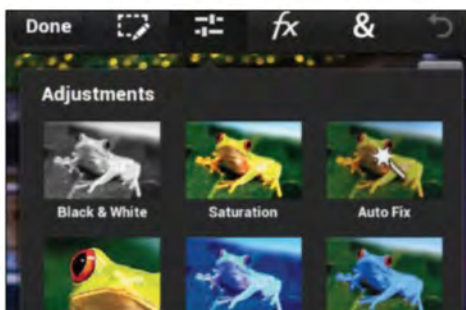
2 The adjustment will load as a new layer inside the panel. If you don't see it load, double-click the Color Balance thumbnail in the panel. As this image is predominantly blue, start off by sliding the Yellow/Blue pointer to show 0, 0, -31.



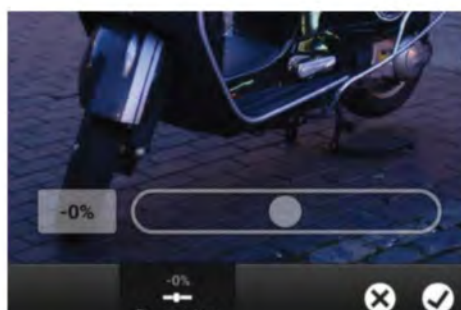
3 Notice how there's still a hint of a green cast in the shadow regions. To correct this, slide the Magenta/Green adjustment to -10 (the figures should read 0, -10, -31). That's the midtone areas fixed. Now click on the option for highlights.



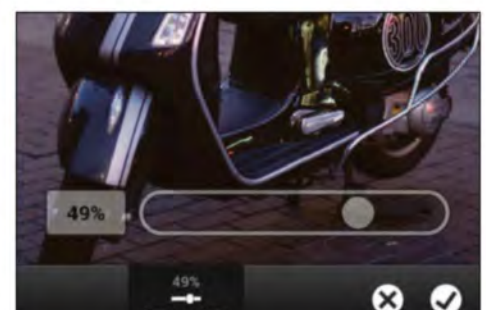
4 There's still a slight hint of blue in the white areas of the image. Slide the Yellow/Blue down to -15 to colour balance the highlight regions. View a before and after of the corrected image by clicking on the eye symbol on the layer.



2 Inside, tap on the Adjustments button at the top. A menu containing a number of image fixes appears. Try Auto Fix first to see what kind of results this gives. If it is not to your liking, press the back arrow in the top-right to undo.



3 Go back into Adjustments and choose the Temperature option. This is much easier to use than the Color Balance adjustment. Temperature has one slider that controls the amount of blue and red, to cool down or warm up the image.



4 To reduce a strong, blue cast, slide up the adjustment until it reads around 45-50%. Tap the tick button to confirm the changes, and then tap Done in the top-left of the Photoshop Touch interface to save the image to your device.



Add impact to black-and-white conversions

We show you a great way to convert from colour using Photoshop Elements and GIMP

What you'll need...

- ✓ Colour photo
- ✓ Editing software

We used...

- ✓ Photoshop Elements 11

You could try...

- ✓ Photoshop CS
- ✓ Other Photoshop Elements versions
- ✓ GIMP

What you'll learn...

- ✓ How to make your conversions really pop

Earlier in the book we showed you some top tricks for shooting in black and white, including five tips on how to make monochrome masterpieces in camera. So now you have got some cracking shots, you will need to know how to convert them to black and white in Photoshop!

There are many ways to do this, one of the easiest being to move the saturation slider all the way down to strip away the colour, but these quick methods can often lead to flat and dull tones. If you spend just a little more time and use some simple tools effectively, you can really make your tones leap out.

If you shot your images in RAW, you'll be able to take a lot more control over your shots. Open them in a program that supports RAW files such as GIMP. If you're using Adobe Camera Raw, click

on the HSL/Grayscale tab and click Convert to Grayscale, then use the sliders to control the tones. You may also want to use the Tone Curve and Fill Light slider to adjust the tones even more. If you're using a RAW file, you can then open it in Photoshop and skip step 1 of the below tutorial.

If you're using JPEGs, though, you can get stuck in from step 1 and we'll show you how to make your black and white tones really pop! All it takes is some blend modes and a contrast adjustment layer – it's easy to do and really effective. We even show you how to do the same effects in GIMP over in our boxout. After this tutorial is complete, you may want to explore other editing options such as sharpening (Enhance>Unsharp Mask in Elements) and Shadows/Highlights to really finish off your shot. Let's get started converting better black and whites!

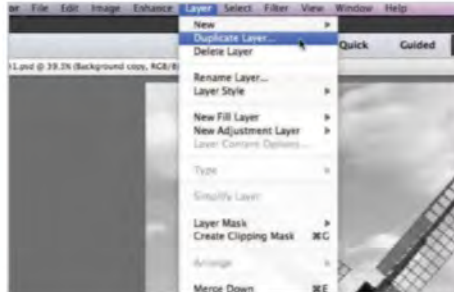
Go monochrome

Add depth to your conversions



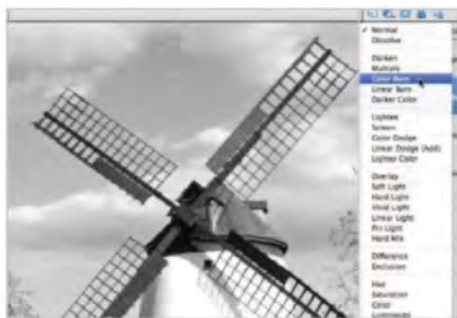
Duplicate and convert

01 Open up your image then duplicate it (Layer>Duplicate Layer). Now go to Enhance>Convert to Black and White, pick a default and adjust the red, green and blue sliders until the tones look their best.



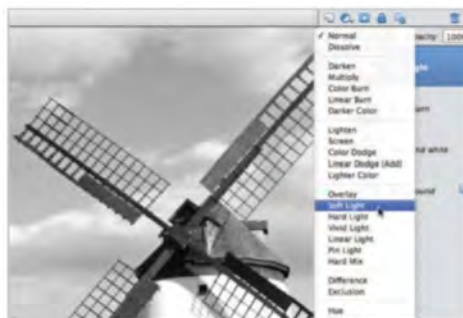
Duplicate the new layer

02 There are ways to make tones pop more. Duplicate this black and white layer twice, either by going to Layer>Duplicate Layer, or dragging the layer to the 'Create a New Layer' icon in the Layers palette.



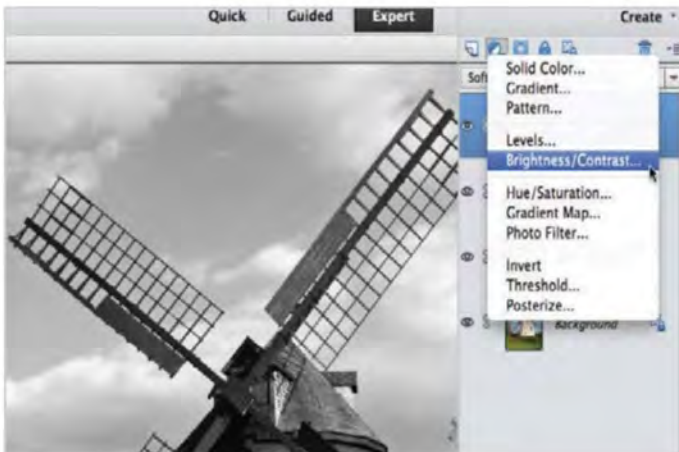
Set to Color Burn

03 Rename the layers by clicking on the text and changing it to something memorable. For the first duplicate black and white layer, set the blend mode to Color Burn, at an Opacity between 5 and 15%.



Set to Soft Light

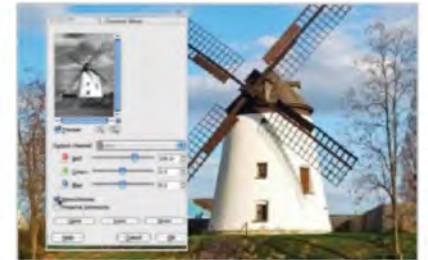
04 For the second duplicate layer, set the blend mode to Soft Light and Opacity between 5 and 15%. The tones should now have more depth. Turn off the layer to see the effect it's had by clicking the eye symbol.



Increase contrast

05 Go to Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Brightness/Contrast or click on the adjustment layer symbol in the Layers palette. Now increase the sliders until you get the effect you want. Go to Layer>Flatten.

Convert in free editing program GIMP



Convert to monochrome

Open the image in GIMP then duplicate the image (Layer>Duplicate Layer). Now go to Colors>Components>Channel Mixer, tick Monochrome and adjust the sliders to get the tones you want.



Set blend modes

Duplicate this black and white layer three times (labelling them as you go) and set the blending mode of one to Burn with a 5-15% Opacity, and the second to Soft Light (also 5-15% Opacity).



Increase contrast

With the third duplicate layer we will increase the contrast. Go to Colors>Brightness-Contrast, adjust the sliders, then click OK. Finally, select Image>Flatten image then you can save it.

Sharing

Give your friends and family the chance to see all your shots

180 Upload your photos on Twitter and Flickr
Create a gallery and share it

182 Upload your photos to Facebook
Share via Facebook

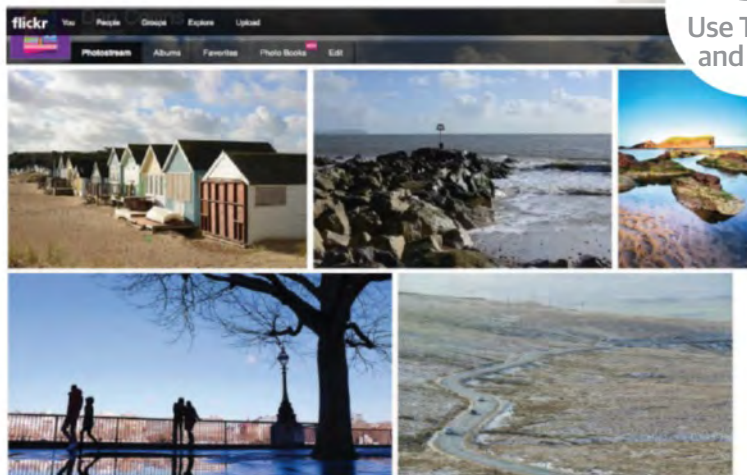
184 Collaborate on an online photo album
Be part of the community

186 Back up using iCloud and Photo Stream
Sync between devices

188 Make a slideshow with iMovie for Mac
Put images in a slideshow

188
Make a
slideshow

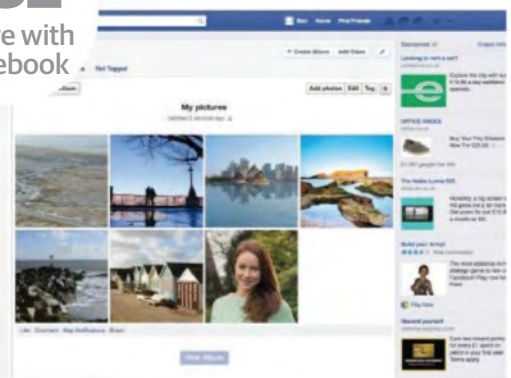
180
Use Twitter
and Flickr





182

Share with
Facebook



184

Photobucket
albums



186

Use Photo
Stream



Share your photos on Twitter and Flickr

Learn how to invite your Twitter followers to view your best images on Flickr

What you'll need...

- ✓ Photos
- ✓ Twitter account

We used...

- ✓ Flickr

You could try...

- ✓ Twitpic
- ✓ yFrog
- ✓ TwitPix

What you'll learn...

- ✓ How to integrate Twitter with Flickr

Browsing through photo albums online is now the norm for many. It's easy, convenient and more suited to everyone's busy lifestyles. As such, sharing your shots through sites like Facebook has become a fuss-free click of a button.

Like Facebook, the micro-blogging site Twitter offers photo sharing as part of its service, but only one image at a time. There are also plenty of third-party image-hosting websites out there that'll link to your account safely and securely.

For this tutorial we'll be using Flickr, a photo-sharing site with added Facebook and Twitter functionality. Flickr is a reputable site that enables you to upload full albums, individual pictures and short video clips. This free service enables you to

store and organise the photographs however you wish, using different names, categories and so on.

When you join the site, you're joining a community. Aside from being home to billions of images, Flickr features groups you can join and a search function for you to browse for inspiration. But you won't have to share with anyone you don't want to – there's the option to tweak security and privacy settings on your own photos.

Once you've uploaded your images to your Flickr account, it'll generate a shortened web address that transports your audience directly to the album or picture you'd like to publicise. Simply add this to your Tweet and your followers will have access to your snaps in no time.

Social-network sharing Show off your best shots



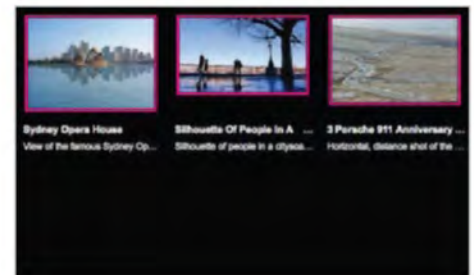
Create a Flickr account

1 Go to www.Flickr.com and click Sign up. Flickr is owned by Yahoo!, and creating a Flickr account will also create a new Yahoo! account. If you have an existing Yahoo! account, click Sign in to access Flickr with your Yahoo! details.



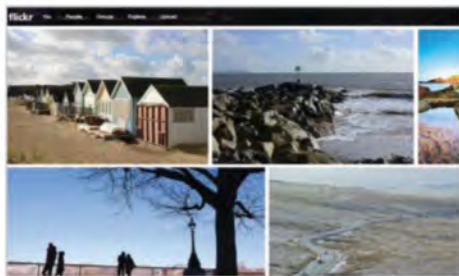
Choose your snaps

2 To upload photos, go to Upload on the top bar and click on the pink 'Choose photos and videos' bar. A pop-up box will appear, listing the items you have on your computer. Locate your images, pick your pictures and press Open.



Upload the photos

3 You'll now see your shots in a grid. To get rid of one, just highlight it and click on the cross. You can also add descriptions, change the privacy settings and make basic edits. When happy, click the blue upload button in the corner.



Finishing touches

4 The pink progress bar under the list of filenames indicates how long the upload process will be. When completed, click on your images to change the names and add descriptions and additional comments. Make sure you click Save.



Authorise sharing

5 Click on the Share icon (a box with an arrow) in the top right of the screen to see a list of sharing options, including Facebook and Tumblr. We want to share on Twitter, so click the Twitter icon and then 'Authorize app' to authorise sharing.



Post on Twitter

6 Once the two accounts are linked, you will be able to post on Twitter directly from the Flickr page. A pop-up Twitter window will appear containing a short description and a link to your Flickr photostream. You can edit these details.



Other ways to share

7 When happy to proceed click on Post and the link will be posted to Twitter. You can also link and post to other accounts from the share menu, or click on Grab The Link to copy the link and share it manually to your other networks.

4 of the best...

Photographers to follow on Twitter



Nicholas Samaras
(@NSUWP)

Nicholas is a great underwater photographer and most of his Tweets tend to point you to his latest work.



Todd McLellan
(@Todd_McLellan)

Todd's portfolio is varied and enjoyable to browse through. Of particular interest is his very cool 'Disassembly Project'.



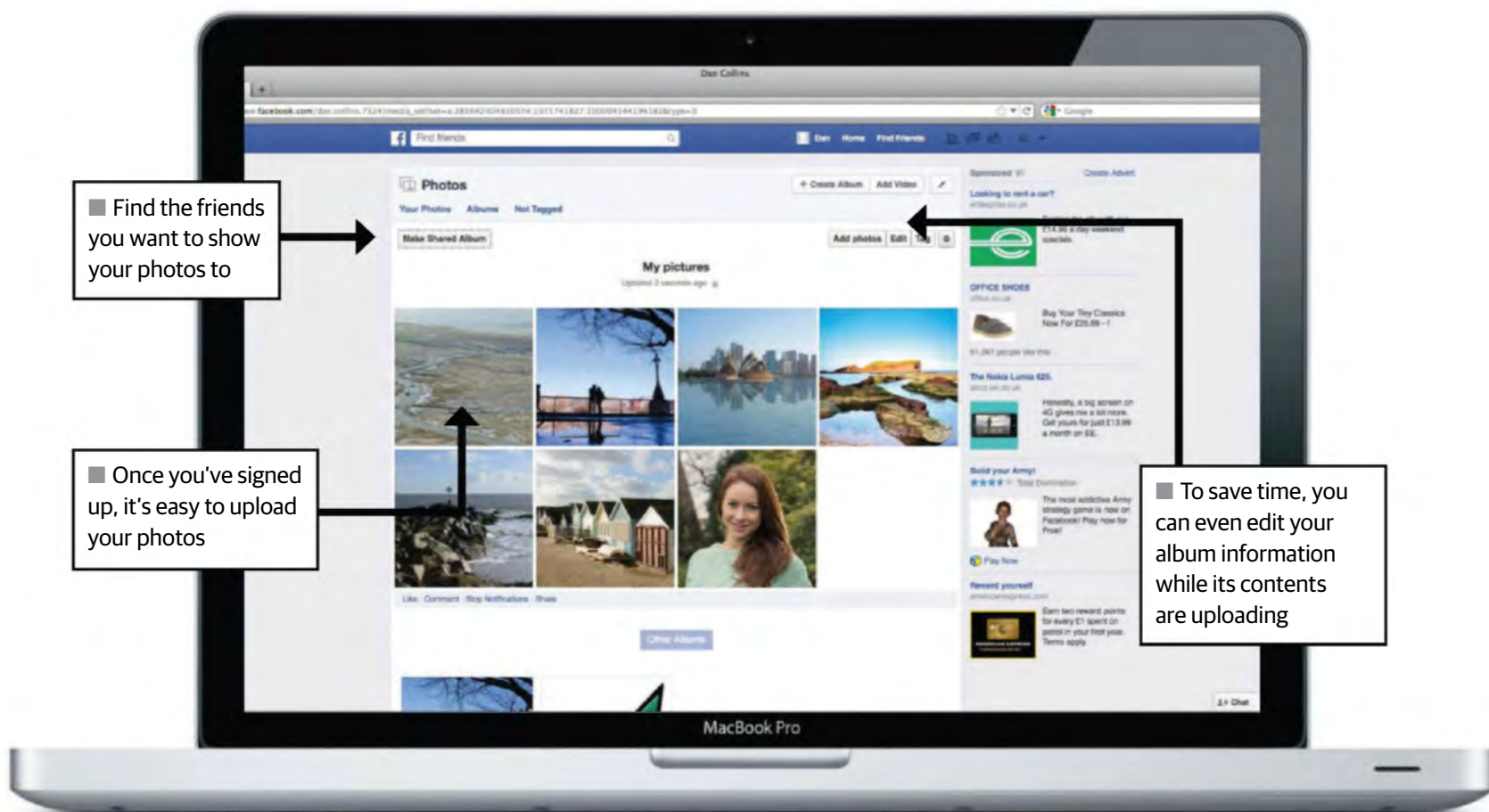
David Bailey
(@BaileyQuotes)

The official Twitter feed from photographer David Bailey – his Tweets are short and sweet, but worth a gander.



Daniel Berehulak
(@berehulak)

Daniel is a staff photojournalist for Getty Images based in New Delhi. His work is both poignant and rather impressive.



Upload your photos to Facebook

Discover how to publish your pictures through this social-networking site

What you'll need...

- ✓ Photos to share
- ✓ An email account
- ✓ An internet connection

We used...

- ✓ Facebook

You could try...

- ✓ Twitpic
- ✓ iPhoto

What you'll learn...

- ✓ How to share photos on Facebook

Love it or hate it, Facebook is one of the most popular and influential websites ever created. It's also made the world a smaller place, reuniting long-lost family members and acting as a powerful tool of communication and socialisation for the many people that use it.

If you've not done it before, setting up an account (also known as a profile) with Facebook is free and easy to do. Once you've created this profile, there's plenty of scope for personalising your page, and sharing your photos through the site is one way in which to do this.

Publishing photographs to Facebook is a great way to update friends and relatives on your latest antics and activities. From family gatherings

to birthday parties or trips to the park, sharing photos through Facebook offers others a chance to indulge in the event – whether it's to relive the occasion or to take a look at what they missed.

As for the photos themselves, it's often a good idea to group them into themes or categories to make it easier for people browsing through. This is especially relevant if you plan to upload a lot of photos to your profile page. For example, creating folders titled 'Holiday snaps', 'Dave & Cara's wedding' and 'Our new house' on your computer will help organise them all when you transfer them to your account. You can then edit the details, giving them the same filenames, on your Facebook 'Photos' section of your profile.

Publish images to Facebook

Upload and share photos



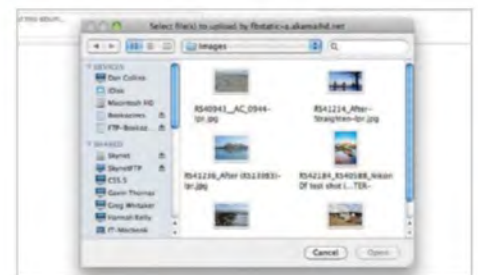
Create an account

1 To register, go to www.facebook.com and fill in the details requested in the Sign Up panel. Once you've done this, click Sign Up. If you already have a Facebook account set up, log into it in the usual manner and go to step 2.



Personalise your page

2 Once you're on your profile page, click on the Photos tab along the top bar. Now you'll see the Create Album button. Click on this and give your album a name, then click on the Add Photos button in the middle of the screen.



Pick your pics

3 You will now be invited to upload images. Navigate to where your images are kept and select the files you would like to upload. Once selected, click Open. Select as many images as you wish. The images will then begin to upload.



Who can see

4 Before clicking Post Photos to add images to Facebook, select who can see them by tapping the arrow next to the Post Photos button. You can choose between Public and Friends, or custom enables you to select certain people.



Add information and Post

5 Underneath each photo are three buttons, which you can tap to add more information about the image. The person tags people in your picture, the clock adds a time, while the pointer adds a location. Click Post photos when done.



Tag friends

6 Facebook is equipped with facial recognition software, so if any shots have people in them, you can 'tag' them. If they are on Facebook it emails them with a notification. It may automatically recognise when a face needs tagging.



Add contributors

7 When images are uploaded, you can allow friends and family to add photos to your album. Click Make Shared Album then add names of the people you'd like to contribute into the text field. Click Save when you're done.

4 of the best...

Photographers & organisations on Facebook



Getty Images

Getty Images' Facebook page is a great source of inspiration. It is updated frequently with photos on a variety of subjects.



Abduzeedo

Abduzeedo is a design inspiration website, so its Facebook page publicises the latest content to be uploaded there.



Flickr

Flickr's Facebook page is home to an excellent photographic community. Its Newsfeed contains plenty of helpful info.



Photography For Beginners

Check out Photography for Beginners magazine's Facebook page for photos and tips that'll help while you're out and about.



■ Link your Photobucket account and stories to Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest etc after you have created your story

■ Multiple users are able to collaborate on the creation of a 'story' by uploading images, videos and text

What you'll need...

- ✓ A Mac or PC
- ✓ Start images

We used...

- ✓ photobucket.com

You could try...

- ✓ Photobucket app

What you'll learn...

- ✓ How to set up, create and share a collaborative Photobucket Story

Collaborate on an online photo album

Use Photobucket Stories with friends and family

Photobucket Stories are a recently-added feature to the Photobucket image-hosting service. It allows multiple users to collaborate on the creation of a 'story' by uploading images, videos and text.

The software's editing and sharing features are simple to understand and allow you to choose your individual levels of privacy. You can also connect your devices with the Photobucket app from iTunes and Google Play.

This sort of story-telling format is great for occasions when a lot of people, who are not

geographically close, get together for special occasions. Weddings, birthdays and holidays are all perfect opportunities for a Photobucket Story. The great thing about having many contributors is that even if you missed the perfect shot, someone else may have bagged it. With Photobucket Stories you can add it in with the rest of your pictures.

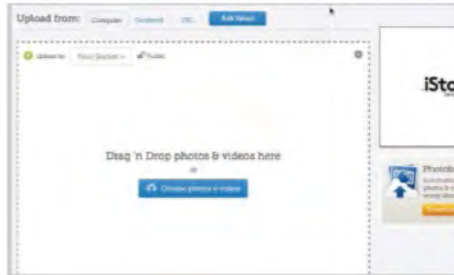
You can link your Photobucket account and stories to Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest etc after you have created your story. We'll show you how to get started and to create an album that family and friends can share.

Create a Photobucket Story Share your story online



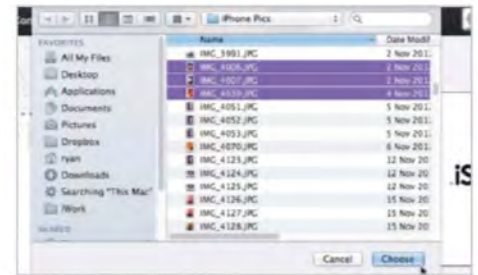
Set up an account

1 Head to photobucket.com and set up an account. You get 2GB of storage for free or you can upgrade later. To save setting up and remembering another set of details you can sign in using your Facebook or Twitter account.



Go to your account

2 You'll be presented with options about connecting your devices – you can either browse them or just click the X in the top right-hand corner and you'll be through to your blank account. Now click on the Choose Photos & Videos button.



Upload to Photobucket

3 You'll be offered different ways of uploading pictures: either drag and drop the files from your desktop, use the app, or add from Facebook. The uploader allows you to add several files at once by holding Shift as you scroll and select.



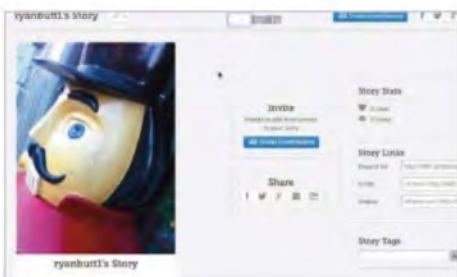
Create a story

4 The Create Story button is on the left-hand of your Photo Bucket homepage. There is a video tour available to show you what a finished story could look like and it is useful to see how text and video elements can be incorporated.



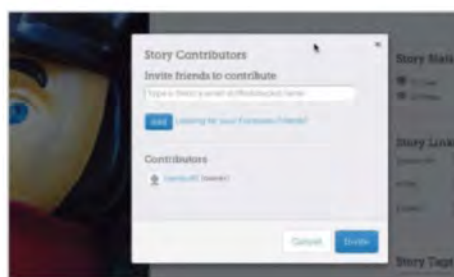
Start your story

5 Any images you've already uploaded will be offered to you to add straight away, but you can browse other albums or upload again. Click your images to select and add the chosen few by clicking the Add button in the bottom-right.



Personalise your story

6 Tailor your story before you invite others to collaborate. Hover over each photo for a drop-down menu, which enables you to edit and resize the image. You can also add backgrounds, text and other media via the bottom menu.



Share your story

7 Share your story by clicking the Invite Contributors button top-right. You can invite some existing Photobucket users or invite others to join in via email. You are also able to share a story via Facebook or Twitter.

4 of the best... Apps for sharing your photos



Muzy

Muzy has over 20 million users worldwide and allows sharing and editing of pictures either through the phone app or your web-based Muzy profile.



Instagram

Instagram also facilitates photo sharing and editing, and currently has over 100 million users with superb edits and filters for retro-looking images.



Flickr

The official app for the world's largest photo-sharing site. Flickr also has built in-camera/editing functions to share you images in the moment.



Livemapp

Livemapp allows you to snap and share your travel images by pinning them on a map, so they're available for your Livemapp community to enjoy.



What you'll need...

- ✓ iPhotos
- ✓ Twitter account

We used...

- ✓ Flickr

You could try...

- ✓ Twitpic
- ✓ yFrog
- ✓ TwitPix

What you'll learn...

- ✓ How to integrate Twitter with Flickr

Back up using iCloud and Photo Stream

Take advantage of iCloud's awesome free photo back-up and sharing service

Photo Stream is an excellent concept, letting users share and back up their latest and greatest photographs with little to no effort. The system is based on iCloud, so you will need to have at least OS X Lion 10.7.2 and iOS 5 set up and running on your Mac and iOS device respectively.

With the updates added and iCloud set up, all you need to do is enable Photo Stream and the system will begin to collect your most recently taken shots on your iPhone or iPad. They then become instantly visible on all of your iOS devices and Mac (as long as you're connected to Wi-Fi).

There are a couple of conditions, which is to be expected with a free service. The limits imposed on storage are up to 1,000 photographs or 30 days worth of images. If you reach either of these limits then any photographs that are taken or stored afterwards will replace the earlier ones that were added. So, as a backup, you have a limit, but as a sharing service you always have the most recent pictures.

Photo Stream is wonderful because you will never need to connect your iDevice to iPhoto again, as they are automatically saved in a new event. Here's how to use it...

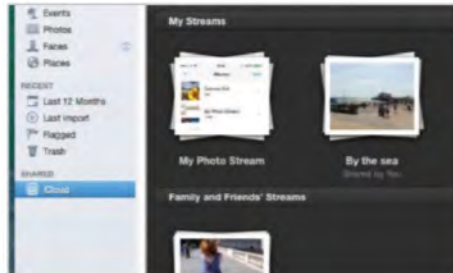
Using iCloud

Set up a Photo Stream on your Mac



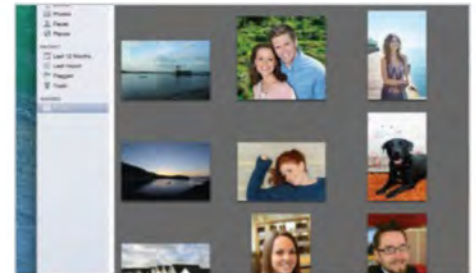
System Preferences

1 If you have already set up iCloud, you'll come straight to this screen after clicking the iCloud icon from your System Preferences. All you need to do is enable the service by clicking the tick box in the options provided.



iPhoto

2 You will need to make sure that your copy of Apple iPhoto is up to date. If it is, you will see the screen above when you click iCloud on the left-hand side of the interface. Click Turn On Photo Stream and it will begin to populate.



Import existing pictures

3 All of the pictures you have taken within the last 30 days will begin to fill the interface in iPhoto. You can now view these images as you would any other photos. Drag them into the Pictures folder to save and keep them locally.



Add to Photo Stream

4 If you want to add new pictures to your Photo Stream from your iPhoto library, just click on the image, hit the Share button (in the bottom-right corner toolbar) then click on the Photo Stream option. It's as simple as that.



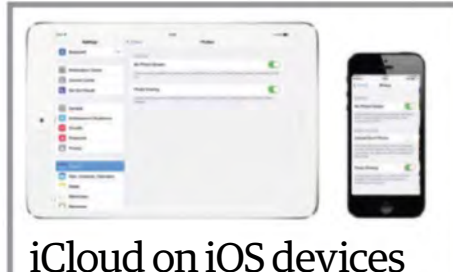
Visit the cloud

5 Open your web browser and go to www.iCloud.com, enter your username and password, and then click on your name at the top of the browser. That will bring up the screen shown above. Click on the Advanced option.



Deletion

6 As with all permanent moves on a computer, you will be prompted to make sure you want to proceed. If you're okay with this, click OK. If you wish, you can also reset your Photo Stream and remove your images from iCloud.



iCloud on iOS devices

■ Apple's iCloud and Photo Stream services are fantastic for backing up, as long as you activate them on your devices first! Open the Settings app and go to the iCloud category. Go to Photos and make sure the My Photo Stream slider is to the right.

4 of the best... iCloud features of iPhone & iPad

iPhone and Contacts

Sync contacts via all your devices

iOS 5, iOS 6 and iOS 7 enable you to create new contacts or update old ones with email addresses and the like, and then sync them across multiple devices.

Mac and iTunes

Making music accessible

The new iTunes and iCloud work together to remember your purchase history and download the same songs to multiple devices.

iPad and iBooks

Read on any iDevice

Buy a book on your iPad and iCloud will remember it so you can access it via your iPhone or Mac later.

Documents in the Cloud

Change the way you work

Start a spreadsheet on your iPad and then pick up where you left off on your Mac later on that day when you're back in the office.

■ Share

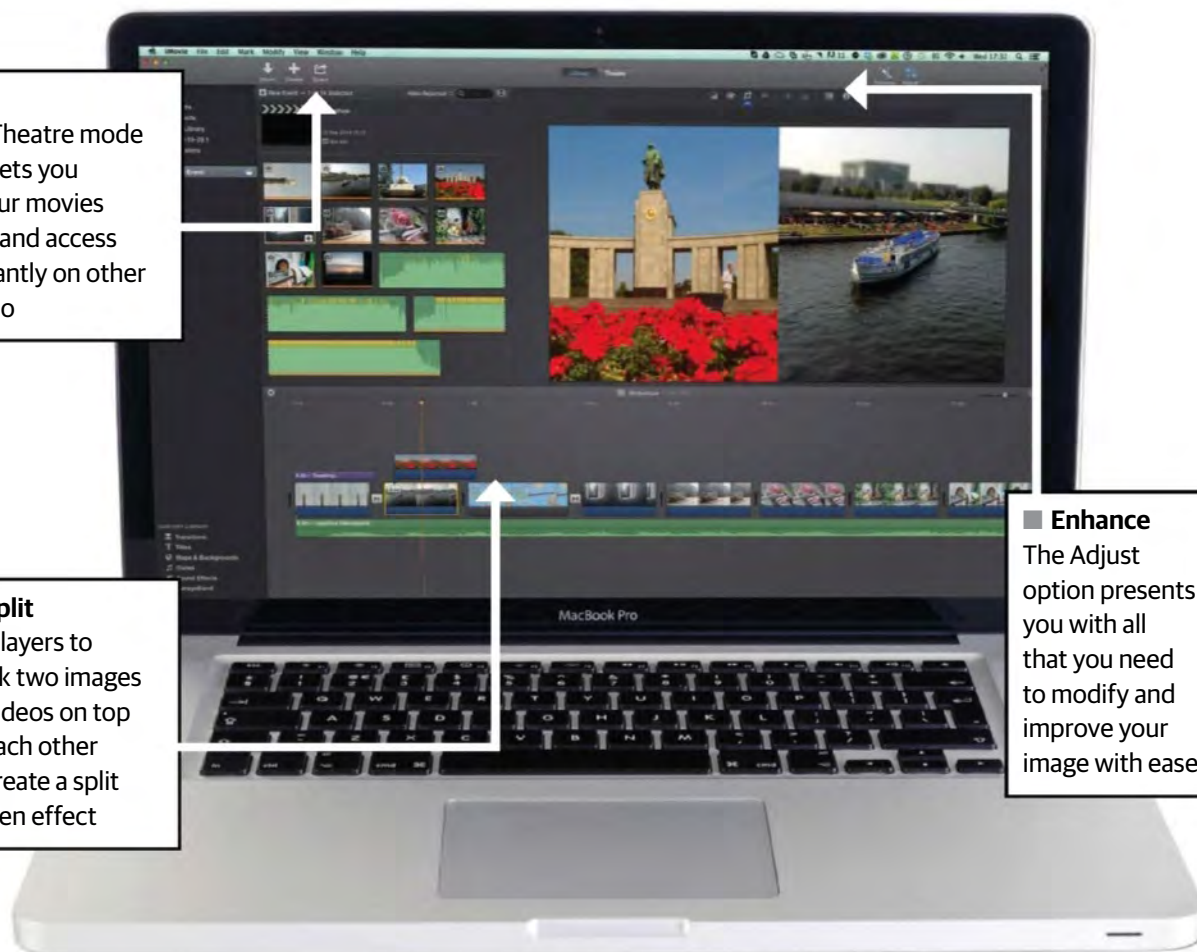
The new Theatre mode in iMovie lets you upload your movies to iCloud, and access them instantly on other devices too

■ Split

Use layers to stack two images or videos on top of each other to create a split screen effect

■ Enhance

The Adjust option presents you with all that you need to modify and improve your image with ease



What you'll need...

- ✓ iLife featuring iMovie
- ✓ A collection of photos stored on your computer

We used...

- ✓ iMovie 10.01 on OSX Mavericks

You could try...

- ✓ All previous versions of iMovie
- ✓ Previous Mac OSs
- ✓ Windows Movie Maker

What you'll learn...

- ✓ How to make a slideshow of your images in iMovie

Make a slideshow with iMovie for Mac

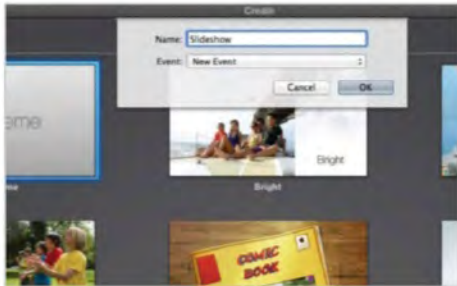
Assemble your favourite images into a video slideshow, adding transitions, effects and music

Creating a slideshow of photographs has always been a great way to exhibit your latest work, and with image software like Preview on Mac or Photo Gallery on Windows, it's no trouble to assemble your snaps into a slideshow quickly. If you want to take things a step further and create a more advanced and detailed slideshow, giving yourself complete control over the positioning, presentation and duration of your images, then check out this tutorial. We'll show you how to build a slideshow out of your images using iLife's iMovie software, which is available on Mac. iMovie is made primarily for editing together video clips, and

because of this it has the perfect interface for assembling a slideshow using a series of images. You'll also be able to use iMovie to add extra content to your slideshow including transitions, titles, music, sound effects and more. You can also use it to crop your image and make edits like colour correction.

Once you're happy with your creation you can simply export the slideshow in a variety of different ways, uploading it directly to YouTube, posting it on your Facebook account or burning it onto DVD using iLife's iDVD. Follow these simple steps to start piecing together a fantastic slideshow of your own.

Create a slideshow Showcase your photos in iMovie



Create a project

1 Open iMovie. In the top toolbar go to File>New Movie. In the Themes window, select No Theme so you're working with a blank canvas, then click Create. Title your movie. Click OK to create the project.



Import your images

2 In your new project, click Import, which can be found above your media library. Browse the folder that holds your images, select the images that you want to import, then click Import Selected/All.



Arrange your images

3 Click and drag an image into your timeline, and then repeat this process with all of your images. Click and drag on the edge of an image in the timeline in order to change its duration in the slideshow.



Edit your images

4 Click on an image so that a yellow box appears around it, and then click on Adjust. Click the palette icon to colour-correct an image, or use the contrast square icon to adjust an image's colour balance.



Motion effects

5 Select the crop icon above the image window, then select the Ken Burns effect. Position and resize the Start box, then do the same for the End box. This will add a motion effect to your selected image.



Content Library

6 In the Content Library, click Titles. Drag a title thumbnail onto your timeline. Double-click on the text in the image window to edit it. Click iTunes. Here you can drop a music track into your timeline.



Share your slideshow

7 Click Share in order to share your video in different formats. Click File to export an .mp4 version of the video. Change the size to reduce the file size. Click Next, select a destination and click Save to export.

3 of the best... Ways to spice it up



Add transitions
In the Content

Library, select Transitions. Click and drag a transition thumbnail between two photos in your timeline to add it to the slideshow.



Add a map
If you want to put together a

travel slideshow, you can use Maps and Backgrounds in the Content Library to add location information.



Enhance your images
Click Enhance in

order to automatically improve the colour and contrast of your images. You can then adjust the colour effects manually.

Photography glossary

What does it all mean? We take a moment to talk about key phrases you're likely to come across in photography



■ Large apertures create blurred backgrounds

Aperture

Aperture decides how much light is let in to the camera, and it is measured on a scale of f-numbers. This setting also dictates how much of the image is in or out of focus.

SMALL APERTURE – A small-sized aperture of f11, f16 or f22 keeps objects that are in the distance looking sharp.

LARGE APERTURE – Shooting with a large-sized aperture of f2, f2.8 or f4, will make objects in the distance appear out of focus, placing emphasis on the main subject closer to the lens.

APERTURE PRIORITY MODE – This lets you choose the aperture with which you need to shoot. You'll find that the camera will automatically control other important settings in the process.

Colour cast

Colour cast describes the tinting that an image may have due to the type of lighting used. This could be due to either wrong settings or for creative effect.

Contrast

Contrast is the vividness of the colours and tones in an image, and how much they stand out from subject to subject.

Exposure

Exposure describes the amount of light that has entered the camera to form an image. This is dependent on camera settings being correctly balanced, so that enough light is captured for a perfect exposure.

OVEREXPOSE – If an image is overexposed, too much light has entered through the lens and the subject appears 'bleached' out, or far too white.

UNDEREXPOSE – Underexposure is when not enough light has entered the lens, and images look dull and lack lustre in their contrast and colour.



■ This underexposed photo is far too dark

LONG EXPOSURE – Light has been allowed to enter the camera for extended periods. This is usually put to use to create movement in landscape or sports photography.

Filters

Filters can be applied over the lens for replicating certain styles or effects. Some types include colour, grain and lighting effects. A lot of compacts will also add in-camera filters.

Focal lengths

Measured in millimetres, camera lenses have various focal lengths, which are used to zoom in or out on a subject. Focal lengths can be fixed, made to extend to huge distances, or to capture subjects close up.

TELEPHOTO – Lenses which are telephoto are used to capture subjects that are in the distance. These lenses are popular with sports and wildlife photographers, using a lens with a focal length of 200-400mm, for example.

WIDE-ANGLE – Lenses that have a wide angle cover a very broad field of view. Focal lengths include 15-30mm and these are extremely useful for landscape photography.

FISH-EYE – Fish-eye lenses distort the scene you are shooting in order to produce a sometimes-abstract composition, almost creating a bubble effect. The focal lengths involved in fish-eye photography can be 10mm or less.

HDR

HDR stands for high dynamic range and describes an image that has strong details, lighting and colours throughout.

Histogram

A histogram like the one below is used in photography to assess the lighting pattern through any given image. It shows which areas are most inside the visible spectrum.



■ The histogram should have an even spread

Image stabilisation

Either built in to a lens or in-camera, image stabilisation counter-balances unstable movement. This helps to reduce the amount of blur that is caused by hand movement.

ISO

This is how sensitive the camera sensor is to light, starting as low as ISO 64 (which is not very sensitive) and up to ISO 3200 or above (which is very sensitive). Sensitive ISO ratings produce the most distortion, however.

JPG

JPG is used in all digital cameras to capture images in a compressed but high-resolution format. Images are portable but they cannot be enlarged.

Live view

Live view is available with DSLR cameras and it allows you to use the screen to compose an image. This is instead of using the viewfinder.

Macro

Macro is the art of capturing subjects at extreme closeness, creating heavy blurring in the process. Subjects can be larger than they are in real life.

Megapixels

The number of pixels in an image is measured in megapixels (mp). The more megapixels, the larger the resolution and printable size of the image.

Metering

Metering is the way in which the camera analyses the lighting of the scene to make the exposure, for example, using just the central part, or an average. Metering modes are altered according to the scene and also the subject.

SPOT, OR PARTIAL, METERING – In this setting, the camera takes a light reading from the centre of the scene and calculates the exposure. Light in the background is not considered.

EVALUATIVE METERING – This takes the entire scene's lighting into account to make the exposure. It's also ideal if you're not sure which setting to use, or if the scene is constantly changing.

CENTRE-WEIGHTED METERING – This metering system is where the camera uses the most central part of the scene to calculate the exposure, as well as some of the surrounding light. It's halfway between Spot and Evaluative metering.

■ Choose your metering system wisely to get the best exposure



■ Fast shutter speeds freeze the action



Noise

Created by the lack of light in a scene, noise is the distortion of pixels mainly seen in the shadow areas of an image. Noise occurs with sensitive ISO ratings.

Prime lens

A prime lens has a single, 'fixed' focal length, with no zoom function, for example 50mm. These are popular for their excellent build quality and advanced optics.

RAW

RAW images are uncompressed and high-quality. They have a level of detail that is second-to-none in post-shoot editing. This is a standard feature of DSLR cameras.

Saturation

The strength, or amount, of colour in an image is described as 'saturation'. A highly saturated image has unusually strong colour, and can look unnatural.

SD/SDHC/SDXC

These are common memory cards that many compact and DSLR cameras use to store images. Measured in gigabytes, the larger the card size, the more photos you can shoot.

Shutter speed

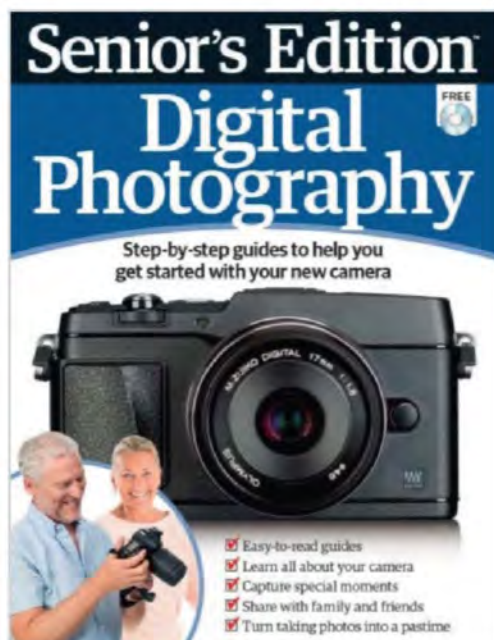
Shutter speed is the length of time that the camera sensor is exposed to light. Measured in fractions of a second, fast speeds prevent blurring.

White balance

White balance is used to keep the colour of light in an image looking natural (as if shot in daylight). Types of white balance include tungsten, flash and fluorescent.

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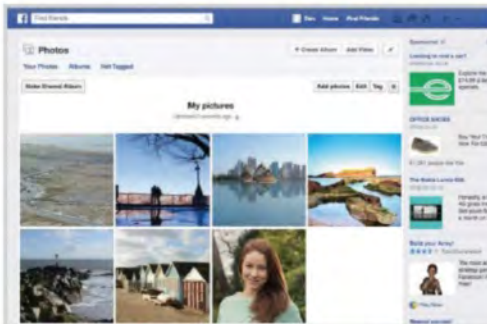
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