

Tuesday 9 April 2024

# Amateur Photographer



**Fujifilm X100VI**  
It's the most pre-ordered camera in history.  
Read our **in-depth test** to find out why

**PREMIUM EDITION**  
APRIL 2024

Passionate about photography since 1884

# Master your camera

Tips and techniques to make  
you a better photographer



**APOY 2024**  
New year, new sponsors...  
**£17,500 worth of prizes**  
to be won! Details inside

**In-camera B&W**  
Get **great mono** shots  
without computer editing

**Ditch the tripod**  
Get **pin-sharp** shots  
handheld – here's how

**Camera  
...Action!**  
Setting up your  
camera for  
**fast-moving**  
subjects

**Custom  
buttons**  
How to set up  
your camera just  
the way you like it



**Samsung Galaxy S24 Ultra** Why this is our Smartphone of the Year



mpb.com



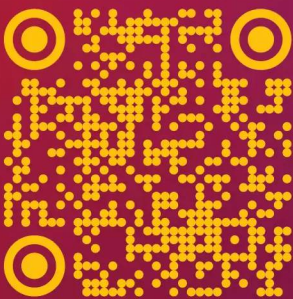
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**Create** 



**Used Fujifilm XF 18-55mm f/2.8-4 R LM OIS**

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© ANDY WESTLAKE



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© SERENA BROWN



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## Welcome



There's always something new to learn about the art of photography, which keeps it interesting – it's a brave person who claims to have mastered everything. So this issue, we focus on essential camera techniques and I'm sure you'll find it useful, whether you need to brush up existing skills or acquire learn ones. From metering to monochrome, all you need is here. Other highlights include the definitive review of the most eagerly awaited camera of the year so far, the Fujifilm X100VI; and we also test a power-packed, high-end smartphone, the Samsung S24 Ultra. And last but not least, APOY 2024 is now open for entries, with over £17,500 worth of prizes from Camera Centre UK, Adobe and ViewSonic. We can't wait to see your entries!

**Geoff Harris, Deputy Editor**



COVER PICTURE © ROBERTO MOOLLA/GETTY IMAGES

Our cover shot is by Getty Images and illustrates the theme of our bumper issue about mastering your camera

## THIS ISSUE'S CONTRIBUTORS



**RICHARD SIBLEY**

The former AP technical editor explains how to set your camera's custom buttons for different genres



**STEVE FAIRCLOUGH**

The AP regular talks to six action pros about the best ways to capture action



**WILL CHEUNG**

Mono master Will Cheung shares all you need to know, to capture your finest black & white images yet



**ROD LAWTON**

Top pro Rod explains when you can be free of your tripod, and the situations when you still need one



**JOSHUA WALLER**  
Online Editor

Joshua reviews the Fujifilm X100VI, and also tests the Samsung Galaxy S24 Ultra



**PETER DENCH**

The documentary photographer talks to the curator of a touring exhibition on working class life today

## Connect with us

@ **EMAIL US** at [ap.ed@kelsey.co.uk](mailto:ap.ed@kelsey.co.uk) with your letters, send us a link to your online gallery, or attach up to 5MB of low-res sample images

**JOIN US ONLINE** in one of these AP communities:

**WEBSITE:** [www.amateurphotographer.com](http://www.amateurphotographer.com)

**FACEBOOK:** [amateur.photographer.magazine](https://www.facebook.com/amateur.photographer.magazine)

**TWITTER:** @AP\_Magazine

**INSTAGRAM:** @AP\_Magazine

**FLICKR:** [flickr.com/groups/amateurphotographer](https://www.flickr.com/groups/amateurphotographer)



# Keenly priced Nikon Z superzoom lens

IT'S been another good week for competitively priced lenses – hot on the heels of the £1,299 Sigma 50mm f/1.2 Art lens comes the Nikon Z 28-400mm f/4-8 VR, for just £100 more.

This new superzoom lens for Z mount packs a 14.2x zoom into a compact and lightweight body that weighs just 725g, making it the lightest Z-series lens to go as far as 400mm (the focal length ranges from 28mm at the wideangle end to 400mm at the super-telephoto end). In addition, the lens features 5 stops of image stabilisation/vibration reduction, which increases to 5.5 stops when the lens is attached to a Nikon Z camera with Synchro VR capability.

Nikon is also stressing the lens's close-up versatility, with a minimum focus distance of 0.2m at the wide end, and 1.2m at 400mm. The maximum reproduction ratio of 0.35x further facilitates close-up and macro shooting.

Other features

include a stepping motor for finding focus quickly and quietly, a customisable control ring and dust and water sealing around the mount and moving parts. The lens hood is interesting too – its squared design can be inverted to save space when storing the lens, and it's possible to shoot with the hood still inverted. '(The lens) is perfect for people who want to carry just one lens and be ready for any photo opportunity, near or far,' said Nikon Europe product manager Zurab Kiknadze.

The Nikon Z 28-400mm f/4-8 VR is available mid-April for £1,399.



The Nikkor Z 28-400mm f/4-8 VR weighs just 725g

## Music photographers honoured

THE SO.CO Image of Music Awards 2024, designed to 'celebrate the unsung heroes behind the lens,' have been announced, with Fearghal McGlinchey winning top prize for a dramatic shot of Greta Van Fleet's Josh Kiszka. Greta Van Fleet are famed for their on-stage pyrotechnics, and as Fearghal recalls: 'As soon as I saw their pyros go off, I thought to myself, I have to be in the perfect position for these later on. Josh's harmonica even looks like it could be a lighter!'

New York-based photographer Grace Prachthausser was Young Music Photographer of the Year, a category designed to reward emerging talent under the age of 23. AP's Lifetime Achievement winner, Jill Furmanovsky, was named the So.co Legend, in recognition of her sterling 50-year career. Innovation of the Year went to the Canon EOS R50, selected by the judges for squeezing high-end tech into an entry-level camera. So.co was set up to connect photographers, musicians and fans with images and stories from concerts, festivals and events. Visit [so.co/awards](http://so.co/awards)



Fearghal McGlinchey's overall winning image



Affinity's Ashley Hewson (left) with Canva's Duncan Clark

## Affinity sold to Canva

WEB-BASED design platform Canva has bought the Affinity creative software suite, which includes the Affinity Photo editing software. Back in January, Canva reported that it had around 170 million monthly users worldwide. 'The one thing Canva don't do is actually produce any tools for creative professionals – and that's really why they ended up contacting us now,' said Affinity CEO Ashley Hewson in a video. 'And the great thing with this is that really nothing changes. All of our team is still here, there are no layoffs.' Affinity is based in Nottingham, while Canva is a Canadian company which opened a European HQ in London last year.



Paulo Sousa won last year's competition with his image, 'Glacier Requiem'

## Scientific approach

THE ROYAL Society of Biology's annual photography contest is now open, with the theme, Transforming Life. 'We invite submissions that explore the profound changes occurring across our planet, highlighting the resilience and adaptability of life in response to environmental changes, human intervention, and scientific innovation,' said the society. There is a £1,000 prize for the over 18s category winner, while the under 18s winner gets a £500 prize. Entries close on 20 June. Visit: [rsb.org.uk/get-involved/rsb-competitions](http://rsb.org.uk/get-involved/rsb-competitions)



# SIGMA

The SIGMA 50mm F1.2 DG DN | A is the new definitive ultra-fast-aperture standard zoom for mirrorless cameras, delivering incredible optical performance, an F1.2 aperture, dual HLA motors for extremely rapid AF and a remarkably compact build. Available from 18 April.

**A** Art

## 50mm F1.2 DG DN

Designed exclusively for mirrorless cameras

Protective Case, Lens Hood (LH782-03), Front Cap (LCF-72mm III), Rear Cap (LCR II) supplied.

Available mounts: L Mount, Sony E-mount

L-Mount is a registered trademark of Leica Camera AG.





of four images per round.

**Photographers win prizes**

This year, Amateur Photographer of the Year is joined by Camera Centre UK as headline sponsor, with Adobe and ViewSonic also providing great prizes. In total, more than £17,500 worth of prizes is being provided. The APOY 2024 grand prize winner gets a £1,000 voucher to use at Camera Centre UK, while round winners each get a £500 Camera Centre UK voucher and an 'All Apps' Adobe Creative Cloud annual subscription, worth £660.

The runner-up in each round will win a one-year subscription to the Adobe Photography Plan, which comprises Lightroom and Photoshop (worth £120). There are also generous prizes for the Young APOY overall winner and round winners, as well as for camera clubs.

To enter, and for full details of the terms and conditions and prizes, go to [bit.ly/APOY2024](http://bit.ly/APOY2024).

We wish everyone the best of luck!

● See page 14 for the brief, and full details.

# APOY 2024 now open for entries

OUR prestigious annual photography competition, Amateur Photographer of the Year, has launched for 2024.

Amateur photographers from all over the world are invited to enter the competition, known as APOY, and the same goes for Young Amateur Photographer of the Year – which is free to enter for photographers aged 21 and under. This year's APOY has ten rounds, and the first is Black & White, which closes on 22 April.

Photographers can

choose to enter all rounds, or pick and choose. Regardless of how many rounds you enter, you will be in with a chance to win prizes, along with points that go towards the final leaderboard. A shortlisted entry can give you ten points, so it's all to play for.

You can enter up to five images in each of the ten rounds, with one free entry per round using a code published in AP before the round closes. Without the code, you'll be able to enter a maximum

## Bold claims by Yashica tie-up

I'M Back and Yashica have announced the tiny MiMi Micro Mirrorless camera, described as the 'smallest mirrorless ever', on Kickstarter. The camera promises image quality 'superior to most smartphones,' which is quite a claim, and reached its funding goal in less than 30 minutes. The new camera has been designed with vloggers and content creators in mind and is designed for people looking for an alternative to smartphones.

The kit includes three different types of lenses: a wideangle, a standard lens and a telephoto lens. There is also a Wi-Fi feature for transferring photos to a smartphone.

To support the MiMi Micro Mirrorless camera's Kickstarter page, and for more information about it, visit [bit.ly/yashicacam](http://bit.ly/yashicacam). Kickstarter contributions start at \$199 (around £157) and packaging and shipping are scheduled to start in November.



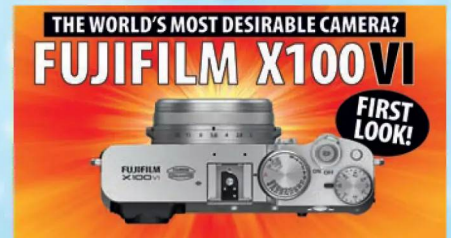
The MiMi Micro Mirrorless camera aims to offer image quality 'superior to most smartphones'



## Follow AP on YouTube

Don't miss our videos for the latest kit, tutorials, behind the scenes tours and exclusive interviews with top photographers

**SOME RECENT VIDEOS**



To find our channel simply point your smartphone camera at this QR code or type our name into Google:

**YouTube/AmateurPhotographerTV**

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- JASON LANIER *PROFESSIONAL PHOTOGRAPHER*



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ALL IMAGES BY DOROTHY BOHM © ESTATE OF DOROTHY BOHM



# About Women: Photographs by Dorothy Bohm

Until 15 December 2024.  
Burgh House, New End Square, London NW3 1LT

**Dorothy Bohm's observant, empathetic images give an insight into women's everyday lives over her seven-decade career, writes David Clark**

Dorothy Bohm (1924-2023) had a gentle, understated photographic style but in her own quiet way was a pioneer of photography. Born in what was then eastern Prussia, she arrived in the UK as a refugee from Nazism at the age of 15. Drawn to photography as a teenager, she began by working as a studio portrait photographer before setting up her own business in 1946.

However, she far preferred the spontaneity of working outside to the formal and controlled environment of a studio, and after her husband Louis established a successful business, she was able to pursue the work

she wanted. She was happiest when photographing people in their everyday lives, as she said, 'photographing what I saw', in sometimes informally posed but more often candid images.

From the late 1960s, her work was exhibited in major galleries including the Victoria & Albert Museum and she herself was involved in the founding of the Photographers' Gallery. She was an Associate Director of the gallery for 15 years.

This exhibition occupies two rooms and a hallway in the peaceful and elegant surroundings of the 18th-century Burgh

House in Hampstead, the part of London in which she lived from the 1950s onwards. It shows a wide range of her photos of women, taken both in the UK and on her worldwide travels over her seven-decade career.

Bohm said that women were a natural subject for her, 'because women often express more in their faces, and are less inhibited in showing emotion', but also because 'women are less threatened by a woman, so it is easier for me to approach them without seeming intimidating. I can win their trust, move closer.'

The women in her images are shown in their ever-evolving role in society, on streets, in pubs and shops, sometimes at work but more often at leisure. Frequently, they are shown at moments when their social mask slips and their real feelings are on display. These often wry, observant photographs are never critical of their subjects, but instead display warmth, empathy and affection for them. This exhibition represents only a fraction of Dorothy Bohm's vast output as a photographer, but it captures the essence of her work.





All images: Dorothy Bohm © Estate of Dorothy Bohm



All images: Dorothy Bohm © Estate of Dorothy Bohm

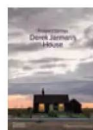
## Books & exhibitions

The latest and best books and exhibitions from the world of photography



### Prospect Cottage: Derek Jarman's House by Gilbert McCarragher

£25, Thames & Hudson, hardback, 192 pages, ISBN 978-0500027233



Prospect Cottage, the home and garden of the late director Derek Jarman, has in many ways attained more of a cult status than the man himself. On the bleak yet wildly beautiful Dungeness shingle beach, the cottage and its garden is familiar to many. Fewer, however, have seen the interior. Gilbert McCarragher, an artist and photographer, was a neighbour of Jarman and his partner Keith Collins, who died in 2018. Invited to document the house, McCarragher reveals the details, punctuated by the very particular light of that region, of the cottage. Everything from a pot of brushes to the blue-painted electrical trunking paints a picture of the minutiae of life there. A quietly beautiful tribute to the pair who made the place what it was, and a must for fans of the unique environment.

### The Camera Bag Companion: Your Personal Photography Tutor By Benedict Brain

£22, Ilex Press, paperback, 192 pages, ISBN 978-1781579299



For many people starting a serious interest in taking pictures with a camera rather than a smartphone, photography is a minefield of technical terms and techniques to master. Benedict Brain ARPS is a highly experienced photographer, author, workshop leader and photography journalist, and here he distils all the essential information needed to really get to grips with photography, from camera basics to post production. Instead of being a weighty tome filled with photographs, this is an easily portable book with hand-drawn illustrations. Everything is explained in a clear, jargon-free, accessible style. It's not only a great introduction for newcomers but also offers a range of useful reminders to more experienced photographers.



# It's good to share

Our favourite photos posted by readers on our social media channels this week

## AP picture of the week

### Llandudno Pier by John Wakeling

Nikon Z 5, Nikkor Z 24-120mm f/4, 2.5sec at f/13, ISO 100

'This image was taken in Llandudno, north Wales, just after sunset in blue hour. I knew I wanted to make the pier the main feature for this photo, using the incoming tide and a long exposure to capture the water flowing between the rocks to make sure there was an interesting foreground.'

**Instagram:** @johnw\_photograph  
**YouTube:** John Wakeling Photography

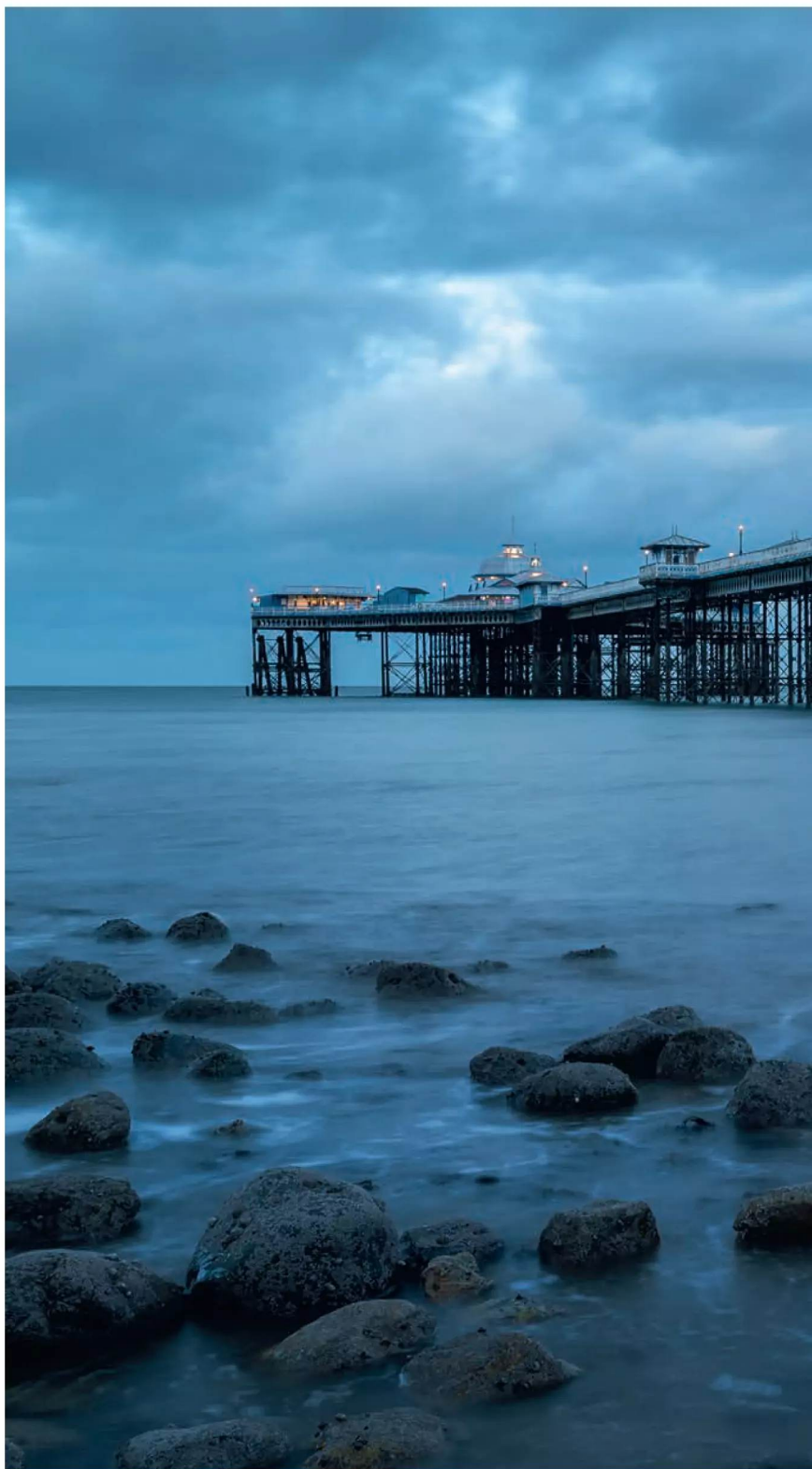
## #appicoftheweek Win!

The AP Pic of the Week winner will receive a beautifully framed print of their winning image worth up to £100.

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Visit [thispicture.co.uk](http://thispicture.co.uk)







**It's good  
to share**

## Stonechat on Lookout by Sally Sherfield

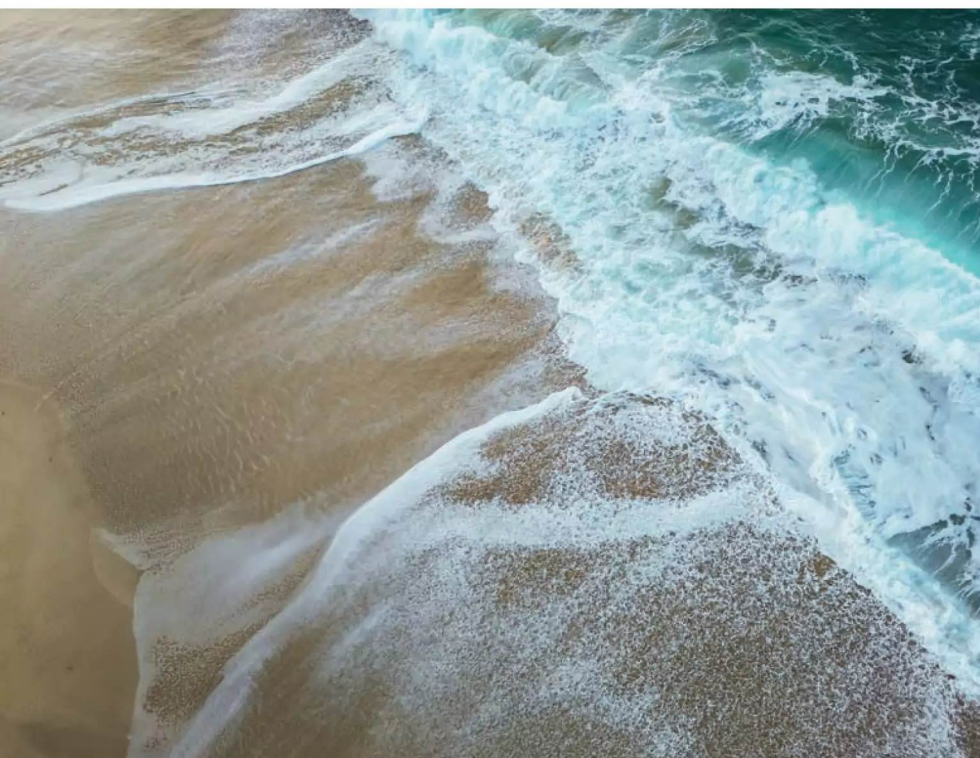
Nikon D7100, Sigma 150-600mm,  
1/1000sec at f/6.3, ISO 1000

'I shot this image on a bird watching/  
photography trip to Ormskirk in February.  
We visited Burton Mere Wetlands and after  
a very misty start the weather cleared and  
the birds started to show. I spent about an  
hour in the hide waiting for a cetti's warbler  
when this stonechat arrived and posed  
perfectly for me.'

**Instagram:** @sally\_sherfield\_photography



We also  
liked...



## Emerald Seas by Max Warner-Tate

DJI Mavic Mini Pro 3, 1/80sec at f/1.7,  
1/80sec, ISO 100

'We recently relocated to the Isle of Lewis,  
Outer Hebrides. Flying the drone and  
seeing the island from a different  
perspective just adds to the beauty of the  
coastline. The image was taken at  
Mangersta Beach during sunset. The waves  
viewed from above looked incredible.'

**Instagram:** @maxwarner\_tate

**Youtube:** WarnerTatePhotography

**Website:** [www.warner-tatephotography.com](http://www.warner-tatephotography.com)

Want to see your pictures here? Simply share them with our  
Flickr, Instagram, Twitter, or Facebook communities using the  
hashtag #appicoftheweek. Or you can email your best shot to  
us at [ap.ed@kelsey.co.uk](mailto:ap.ed@kelsey.co.uk). See page 3 for how to find us.

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# Amateur Photographer of the Year Competition

# £17,500

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# APOY 2024

In association with



## About Camera Centre UK

Based in South Wales, Camera Centre UK is a family business that prides itself on providing first-class service to its customers and stocks a vast array of the latest digital cameras, lenses, camcorders, drones, and photographic accessories both online and at the flagship store in Cardiff. Thanks to its part-exchange service, it also has a huge selection of used equipment including a wide range of film cameras and lenses as well as many exciting hidden gems. Camera Centre's knowledgeable team is dedicated to offering expert advice tailored to its customers' needs, whether seasoned professional or amateur enthusiast. Visit [www.cameracentreuk.com](http://www.cameracentreuk.com)



## About Adobe

In the 40 years since Adobe was founded, the firm has become a watchword for creativity, innovation and excellence. Adobe Photoshop is the industry-standard image editor for ultimate creative control. Adobe Lightroom is aimed at photographers, with its useful combination of editing tools and organisational capabilities. With Lightroom, photographers can manage workflows, retouch photos and create easy-to-navigate catalogues of images. Photoshop specialises in image manipulation, creation, and enhancement, while Lightroom focuses on editing, organising, and processing photos. Visit [www.adobe.com/uk](http://www.adobe.com/uk)



## About ViewSonic

Founded in California in 1987, ViewSonic has become a major player in the visual display market. With a commitment to innovation and forward-thinking, ViewSonic offers complete hardware and software solutions, including monitors, projectors, pen displays, LED displays, interactive displays, and software suites. Its ColorPro monitor range, designed to for photographers, videographers and other artists, offers unparalleled colour accuracy and award-winning ergonomic design for outstanding visual performance. Visit [www.viewsonic.com](http://www.viewsonic.com)

**A**mateur Photographer has always championed the best in image-making, and nowhere is this clearer than in our annual Amateur Photographer of the Year award (APOY), where the best non-professional photographers in the world compete over ten rounds to win some fantastic prizes.

This year, we are excited to announce three new sponsors: Camera Centre UK, Adobe and ViewSonic. Together, they are giving away some £17,500 worth of vouchers, software and products.

As always, the categories cover everything from black & white, to close-ups, to people and more, so there's something to suit every

photographic interest. And this year, we have a new category. Round Ten is 'Open' – so anything goes!

You might submit images to only one or two rounds, or you might set yourself the challenge of entering them all, with the aim of taking home the main prize – a £1,000 voucher to spend at Camera Centre UK.

Once again, we are running our Young APOY competition, open to photographers aged between 13 and 21 by the closing date. And we are also delighted once more to encourage camera club members to enter and accumulate points for their society.

**Turn over for details on how to enter Round One**

To enter, visit  
[www.amateurphotographer.com/apoy](http://www.amateurphotographer.com/apoy)

\*PLEASE NOTE THAT FOR 2024, THE CAMERA CENTRE UK VOUCHERS ARE AVAILABLE ONLY TO WINNING PHOTOGRAPHERS WHO ARE BASED IN THE UK

# Amateur Photograp

Your chance to enter the UK's most prestigious com

## Round one Black & White

A black & white picture has a certain something that a colour photo simply can't emulate, and the pursuit of a great monochrome picture is something many photographers devote their whole lives to. The joy of this category is that it is completely open – any subject goes, as the medium is equally stunning whether you shoot landscapes, portraits or street photography. It's always worth shooting with a conversion to black & white in mind – don't make it an afterthought.



### Your guest judge

Your guest judge for Round One is Aneesa Dawoojee. Winner of AP's Power of Photography award in 2023, the portrait and social documentary photographer is from south London. Her images aim to break stereotypes, celebrate community and initiate social discussion with historical references. She has been published in *Portrait of Humanity* volumes 4 and 5, is an associate lecturer and a Fellow of the RPS. [aneesadawoojee.com](http://aneesadawoojee.com)

## Plan your APOY 2024 year

Below is a list of all this year's rounds, including when they open, when they close and the dates the results will be announced in AP

THEME	OPENS PHOTOCROWD	OPENS AP	CLOSES	RESULTS
Black & White	26 March	9 April	22 April	4 June
Animal Kingdom	23 April	23 April	20 May	2 July
Urban Life	21 May	21 May	17 June	30 July
Action	18 June	18 June	15 July	27 August
Landscapes	16 July	16 July	12 August	24 September
People	13 August	13 August	9 September	22 October
Macro	10 September	10 September	7 October	19 November
Dusk to Dawn	8 October	8 October	4 November	17 December
Travel	5 November	5 November	2 December	14 Jan 2025
Open	3 December	3 December	31 December	11 Feb 2025

### YOUR FREE ENTRY CODE

Enter the code below via Photocrowd to get one free entry to Round One – Black & White

**APOY32674441**



Boris Bekelman won the Black & White round of APOY 2023 with this imaginative still life

To enter, just

## ALL ABOUT APOY 2024

### The camera club award

Do you belong to a camera club? You can accumulate points for your society when you enter APOY, and after all the ten rounds are complete, the club with the most points will win a superb ViewSonic X1-4K projector worth £1,500, with image quality powered by advanced 3rd generation LED technology that offers a 60,000-hour lifespan without lamp replacement. In addition, the member of the winning club who contributed the most points to their club's overall tally will win a ViewSonic ColorPro VP2786-4K monitor worth £1,000.





# her of the Year

petition for amateur photographers

£17,500  
worth of  
prizes



visit [www.amateurphotographer.com/apoy](http://www.amateurphotographer.com/apoy)

# APOY 2024

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## What you win

### APOY prizes

The winner of each round of APOY receives a voucher for £500 to spend at Camera Centre UK\*. In addition to this, the winner of each round will also receive a one-year subscription to Adobe's All Apps plan, worth £660. The runner-up of each round will receive a one-year subscription to Adobe's Photography plan, worth £120.

The overall winner after ten rounds wins a £1,000 voucher to spend at Camera Centre UK.

### Young APOY prizes

The winner of each round of Young APOY receives a one-year subscription to Adobe's Photography plan, worth £120. The overall winner of Young APOY will receive a £500 voucher to spend at Camera Centre UK\*.

### Camera club prizes

The camera club with the highest number of points after ten rounds will receive a 4K ViewSonic projector worth £1,500, while a ViewSonic monitor worth £1,000 will go to the club member who contributed the most points to the winning club's final points tally.

## The Young APOY award

For the fourth time, we are running an APOY Young Photographer of the Year competition, to encourage our up-and-coming snappers. Entrants should be 21 or younger by the competition's final closing date of 31 December 2024. All the categories are the same as for the main contest – simply select the Young APOY option on Photocrowd when you upload your images. Entry is free. Each category winner receives a one-year Adobe Photography Plan subscription, worth £120. The overall Young APOY winner receives a £500 voucher to spend at Camera Centre UK\*.



© POLYANNA VENTURA/GETTY IMAGES

# Winning ways

The winner of APOY 2023 was **Daniel Sands**. Here, he shares his thoughts about his success, and adds some advice for this year's entrants

**When did you start taking pictures?**

I've been interested in photography since I was very young. I studied photography at A level years ago, but didn't own a camera until 2008 when I started my current job as a programmer. The camera spent most of its life in a bag not being used, until I started taking photography a little more seriously in 2016 and bought a Canon EOS 5D Mark III.

**What are your preferred subjects to photograph?**

I've flirted with most genres of photography, especially during lockdown when I tried out macro,

toys, creative portraits, etc but I think I've settled recently on landscape and low light.

**You have a quite distinctive style – how did it develop?**

My introduction to 'more serious' photography was social media – I set up a page on Facebook and quite quickly became hooked on capturing mass-appeal type images. I craved likes and followers, and attributed higher follower counts to being more successful. More likes made my images better. This was completely unsustainable of course, so in 2018 I made the decision to shoot for myself



**Above: Long exposure of the famous Cobb at Lyme Regis, taken during blue hour**

**Left: A drone with a strobe attached was flown in a circle around the lighthouse, for something a little different**

regardless of reception. This freeing of the shackles (as it were) led to me exploring many different techniques in my work – from Intentional Camera Movement (ICM) to blending Multiple Exposures (ME) both in-camera and in post. Ultimately, as I was shooting for myself I was producing work that I liked, so I guess my style has developed based on my own tastes more than anything.





### What were you hoping for when you entered APOY?

The hope was to get a top ten place in one of the categories, to see my image printed in Amateur Photographer. I never really dreamt of winning a category, never mind finishing top overall! Having been a subscriber to AP for some time, I thought I might as well use the entry code from the magazine – nothing to lose, as it were.

**Top right: A portable fog machine adds atmosphere to the tunnels at Portland Higher Batteries**

**Right: The new building at the end of Summer Street in London reflects the golden light of dawn**



### What was your plan?

As I knew I'd get a free entry to each category, I looked at each of the months and picked an image from my collection that I thought might suit. None of the entries changed except for the low light one, ironically, which I had a last-minute change of mind about! [Daniel won the Low Light category.]

### Which categories did you feel were best suited to your style?

At the start of the year, when laying out my entries, I felt my strongest contenders were in the B&W and landscape rounds. I was a bit stumped by wildlife, though, because this is an area I've not had much experience in. In hindsight, in a review of my images, I think I'm drawn naturally to low light.

### What might you do differently next time?

As a personal challenge to myself to try new things, I might try to take a new image each month to meet the corresponding APOY category.

### What did you spend your MPB vouchers on and why?

I'm a long-time lover of the Canon EOS 5D series of camera bodies, having owned a 5D Mark III since 2016, so the vouchers went on a long-overdue upgrade to the 5D Mark IV. I've already found the upgraded features immensely useful, not least the built-in intervalometer and bulb timer.

### What were your feelings when you learned you'd jumped from tenth place to first?

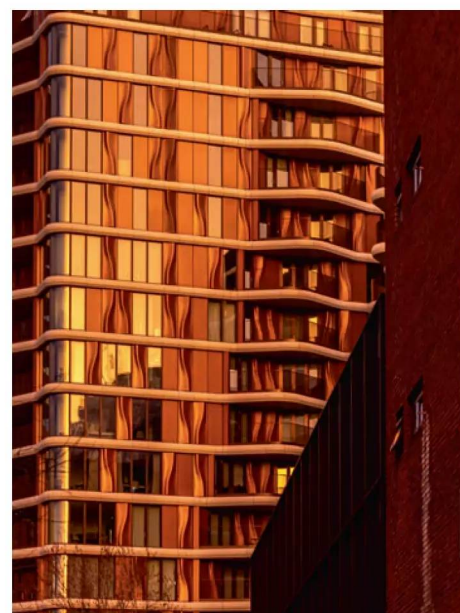
Honestly – disbelief. I remember

when I received the email letting me know I'd won. I read it over and over and it still didn't feel quite real!

### What advice would you give to someone entering APOY for the first time?

I would strongly recommend that you try to enter something into every round. Even if you don't feel it's your strongest area, try to assign an image to each category now, and perhaps use the time before a round opens to improve any areas you feel are your weakest. But above all else, shoot for yourself. Even if your image doesn't get shortlisted, remember to have fun with photography and try new things – we're amateurs after all and have nothing to prove, so we can afford to be experimental.

AP



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AMP424P

# LETTER FROM THE EDITOR



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Nigel Atherton, *Editor*

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# Daniel Radcliffe

**Harry Borden** looks back on photographing actor Daniel Radcliffe at a pivotal moment as he made the transition from child star to adult actor

The massive success of the *Harry Potter* movies catapulted their star, Daniel Radcliffe, to international fame at the age of 12. Most child actors struggle to establish themselves in adult roles and Radcliffe was in great danger of his career ending with the franchise. To avoid this fate, in February 2007 Radcliffe made the bold move of starring in the revival of Peter Shaffer's controversial play *Equus* at

London's Gielgud Theatre.

It was a particularly brave choice, because he was playing the character of a disturbed teenager who had a psycho-sexual obsession with mutilating horses and the role required him to appear naked on stage for a full ten minutes. At the time, he was just 17, so it was a high jeopardy move that could have been seen as taking a step too far.

A month before the play opened, I was commissioned to shoot his

**Far left: The shoot was at Jasmine Studios in Shepherd's Bush, where Harry asked Daniel to stand in a lift, as Harry likes to use the local environment**

portrait for a feature in the *Observer* magazine. From the outset, as the shoot was all about promoting his role in *Equus*, it was arranged that it would involve some pictures of him with his shirt off. Sex does sell, and this rather strange and esoteric play needed all the publicity it could get. I don't normally shoot people with their clothes off, but as Radcliffe knew what was being asked of him, I didn't particularly have a problem with it.

The shoot took place at the now-defunct Jasmine Studios in Shepherd's Bush, west London. It was a terrific little complex of small studios with great daylight and I had photographed quite a few celebrities there previously. Also present at the shoot were Radcliffe's publicist and my assistant, Chris Owens.

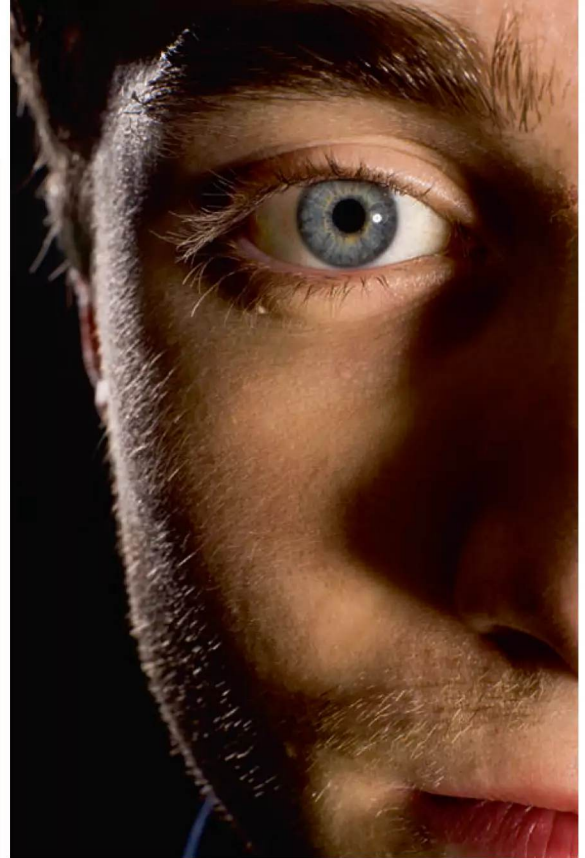
Radcliffe was clearly a nice and well-brought-up young man. Given that his life had been irrevocably changed by the huge juggernaut that was *Harry Potter*, he seemed very down-to-earth and well-adjusted.

However, I was a man in my 40s who had never seen any of the *Harry Potter* films and beyond the initial pleasantries I was struggling to maintain a conversation with him. Luckily, Chris was in his early 20s and chatted easily to him about the bands they liked, which really helped make a convivial atmosphere. I don't normally encourage my assistants to talk to the subject too much, but on this occasion, Chris saved my bacon.

We started off with some straightforward portraits. I was shooting with my Canon EOS-1Ds Mark II and a 50mm lens, and lit him with a bare Profoto studio light coming from the right which gave hard, contrasty light with dark shadows. While doing these portraits, I noticed that he had unusually large, piercing blue, owl-like eyes with long eyelashes, so decided to go in close to make the most of them. For that reason, I attached an extension tube (a piece of kit I rarely use) to the



**Left: The shoot was to promote Daniel's role in *Equus* so Harry had been commissioned to take some shots of him with his shirt off. Daniel kept his trousers on, but in Photoshop Harry took out the tops of his trousers**



**Above: Harry noticed that Daniel had piercing blue, owl-like eyes with long eyelashes, so decided to take this close-up shot to make the most of them**

**Left: Harry took shots of Daniel removing his shirt and it was like a visual metaphor for his evolution as an actor**

think it's more interesting and offers more of a narrative. I just used ambient lighting because I liked the atmosphere. I also liked the idea of playing with his celebrity status and showing him in an everyday situation; it's as if you've just got into a lift and you're not really sure if the person in front of you is really Daniel Radcliffe.

However, of course the picture that was used in the *Observer* and got the most attention was the shot with him bare-chested. Looking back, I feel I was lucky to have photographed Radcliffe at that time and to capture a compelling image of him, vulnerable and apparently naked. He went on to star in *Harry Potter* films for four more years afterwards, but this was undoubtedly a pivotal moment in his career. **AP**

**As told to David Clark**

## Harry Borden



Harry Borden is one of the UK's finest portrait photographers. He has won prizes at the World Press Photo awards (1997 and 1999) and in 2014 he was awarded an Honorary Fellowship by the Royal Photographic Society. The National Portrait Gallery collection holds over 100 of his images. His new book, *On Divorce: Portraits and Voices of Separation*, was published by The School of Life in 2023.

➤ 50mm lens, which gave a macro effect.

After that, I asked him to take his shirt off for the agreed shots, which felt awkward despite the good atmosphere that had developed thanks to Chris. I took some shots as he removed his shirt, and it was almost like he was emerging out of it, like a butterfly coming out of a chrysalis. I immediately saw the shot's potential, because it was like a visual metaphor for his evolution as an actor – a child actor making the transition to being taken seriously as a character actor.

However, I was only able to get a couple of frames of him in the act of

removing his shirt, because the publicist stepped in and said she didn't like him being photographed like that. It was a puzzling decision, because afterwards she was perfectly happy with him being photographed completely shirtless.

For those pictures, I lit him with a single light from above the camera, diffused with a large octa softbox. He kept his trousers on, but the final, edited pictures make it appear that he was naked because I took out the tops of his trousers in Photoshop.

For the final set of images, I asked him to stand in a lift in the studio building. I prefer using the local environment when possible as I





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## This year's theme: Sports and Games

### Scope and Contest Rules:

Entrants should provide 5-8 photographs on the theme of 'Sports and Games'. Your subject matter may include professional and amateur sports as well as games. All entries must be in digital format (camera or scanned film originals) and must be taken by you between 1 May 2023 and 30 April 2024 (EXIF data will be checked as proof). Older portfolios and AI-generated images are excluded.

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AP is running this EISA contest in conjunction with Photocrowd. To enter your portfolio, go to [bit.ly/maestrosport](https://bit.ly/maestrosport) AP will choose the top 3 and publish them in a June or July issue. The winner will

National Maestro winners will also be published on Facebook at the end of June 2024 for the EISA Public's Choice competition. Prize for the winner: €1000.



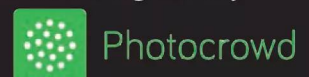
receive a one-year digital subscription to AP and go forward to the International round.

### INTERNATIONAL JUDGING: JUNE 2024

The winning entries from all 16 participating EISA countries will be judged together at the Association's General Meeting in June 2024. The International results will be celebrated at the EISA Awards Gala in Sept 2024 and revealed, online, alongside the EISA product Awards on 15 August 2024.

Don't forget to visit [bit.ly/eisa-maestro](https://bit.ly/eisa-maestro) for tips on creating a successful portfolio. The winning International photos will be published in the Sept/Oct issues of all 16 EISA photo magazines/websites. For details, terms & conditions, see [www.eisa.eu/maestro](https://www.eisa.eu/maestro)

Check out Photocrowd and take part in some great photo contests, including APOY24. It's a great way to get your best work seen and appreciated. [www.photocrowd.com](https://www.photocrowd.com)





**Ice Bed** by Nima Sarikhani, UK,  
Canon EOS-1D X Mark III, 70-200mm f/2.8 lens at  
200mm; 1/500sec at f/5, ISO 400

Photo Insight

# Ice Bed

by Nima Sarikhani



## Jessica Miller finds out more about the Wildlife Photographer of the Year People's Choice winner

**M**ore than 50,000 images were entered into the Wildlife Photographer of the Year competition last year and of these, 25 were shortlisted by the judges for the People's Choice Award – decided by a public vote. After a record number of votes (over 75,000 people worldwide voted) British amateur photographer Nima Sarikhani came out on top.

Nima had gone on a two-week-long expedition in the search for polar bears in the far north off Norway's Svalbard archipelago. Only met by thick fog in the first three days, the expedition vessel changed course. Perhaps a disheartening moment on board having spent three days seeing nothing but fog in front of you, but as the vessel turned and headed to the southeast, they made a promising

discovery of more sea ice.

This is where Nima and the rest of the vessel encountered two polar bears, a younger and an older male, among the drift ice. Polar bears need drift ice to hunt seals, and Nima noted there was minimal ice around. Excess stress from swimming makes the bears liable to weaknesses and illness.

Around eight hours were spent with the bear, which Nima described as 'magical'. Likely already exhausted from swimming and finding his rest spot, just before midnight the young male clambered onto a small iceberg. He clawed away at the iceberg to carve out a bed for himself before drifting off to sleep.

Nima captured this peaceful and tranquil moment against the stunning pink and blue sky. A dreamy image that, while beautiful, has a twofold meaning and acts as a bleak reminder of habitat loss and survival. Out of many photos taken in this time, this one captured Nima's heart the most. Likewise, across social media upon the announcement of Nima's win, the image has understandably been met with strong emotion.

Director of the Natural History Museum, Dr Douglas Gurr, said, 'Nima's breathtaking and poignant image allows us to see the beauty and fragility of our planet. His thought-provoking image is a stark reminder of the integral bond between an animal and its habitat and serves as a visual representation of the detrimental impacts of climate warming and habitat loss.'

Of his win Nima said, 'I am so honoured to have won this year's People's Choice award for WPY, the most prestigious wildlife photography competition. This photograph has stirred strong emotions in many of those who have seen it. While climate change is the biggest challenge we face, I hope that this photograph also inspires hope; there is still time to fix the mess we have caused.'

---

You can see Nima's photo and other images shortlisted for the People's Choice Award at the Wildlife Photographer of the Year 59 exhibition, on display at The Natural History Museum until 30 June 2024. Visit [www.nhm.ac.uk/wpy](http://www.nhm.ac.uk/wpy). Nima's work can be seen at [Instagram: @nsarikhani](https://www.instagram.com/nsarikhani)

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## LETTER OF THE WEEK

### Everyone chant OM...

Further to John Wade's 'Film Stars' (AP 26 March), in the summer of 1963 I purchased an Olympus Pen S 35mm half-frame camera, and upgraded to an Olympus Pen F, 35mm half-frame SLR in 1966.

I shot mainly colour slides, and from January 1967 to July 1968, I documented the city of Cambridge, whilst working and living there.

In 2008, my wife and I began making digital audio-visual (AV) sequences. Using a Nikon 9000 ED film scanner we digitised the half frame transparencies and produced an AV sequence based on our memories, entitled 'Cambridge Remembered'. The quality of the scans was exceptional, considering the age of the original transparencies (see above Kodachrome 25 image of King's College Cambridge taken on 23 March 1967), and is a testament to the technology of Kodachrome 25 and Ektachrome 64 films. The AV sequence was very well received, winning us a PAGB Silver Medal, and



Taken on Kodachrome 25 in 1967

© MALCOLM GEE

a number of international awards.

Since 1975 I have used Olympus 35mm OM-series film cameras, and now have a digital OM Systems OM-1 camera which we use to produce our AV sequences. As one of the world's leading optical companies, the technology behind Olympus and OM Systems cameras and lenses is, in my opinion, second to none.

**Malcolm Gee**

Thanks for this interesting letter, Malcolm, looking back on your storied photographic career. It's great to see Olympus's camera and lens division reborn as OM System, which continues to bring out world-class products. There are indeed many passionate and long-term Olympus/OM System users, as you exemplify.

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One of AP's articles on smartphone photography

### Smartphone scenics

Pop the corks, raise a glass, and give three cheers to Jeff Carter and Amy Davies for the excellent nine pages given to smartphone photography in AP 19

March. What a great read, adding lustre to another quality issue.

Jeff's standout work on his landscapes was an eye-opener and also a spur to countless readers wanting to get more from their smartphones. As ever, the expertise of Amy Davies was to the fore in her round-up of top picks, written in style, with thought-provoking comments. All-in-all, bonus points to AP for recognising the growing role of smartphones in the photography spectrum. Perhaps even diehards will take another look at the immense potential?

**Shaun Parker**

Glad you enjoyed the features, Shaun. Smartphones are now getting to the stage where even experienced photography pundits would struggle to tell the difference between a landscape taken with a high-end phone, and one with a decent camera.

### Focus, please

In your buying guides, it would helpful maybe to add a column to your lens charts to indicate which lenses have autofocus. Sometimes the fact that a lens is manually focused is stated in the summary but not consistently. After all, you do have a column for Image Stabilisation, so why not for autofocus?

**Mike Appleyard**

Technical editor Andy Westlake replies: A good point, but space is at a premium in our buying guides, as there is already so much information to pack in and we need to keep it manageable for readers to navigate. The majority of lenses now have AF, and it's mostly specific manufacturers that don't – Laowa and Voigtlander being the primary examples.

LETTER OF THE WEEK WINS A SAMSUNG 256GB PRO ULTIMATE SDXC CARD. NOTE: PRIZE APPLIES TO UK AND EU RESIDENTS ONLY

# Working class mess

**Peter Dench** talks to curator Johny Pitts about a new exhibition attempting to piece together complex and counterintuitive expressions of working-class life today

‘At the beginning of last year Brian Cass [senior curator, Hayward Gallery Touring] approached me and said we want to work with you. He’s a very thoughtful and enigmatic man. I said in what kind of capacity? He said would you ever think about curating and I said yeah, so they gave me complete carte blanche. I said what do you have in mind? They said we just want to know what your ideas are,’ explains self-taught photographer, writer and broadcaster Johny Pitts.

In 2021 Pitts collaborated with poet Roger Robinson on the exhibition and book *Home is Not a Place* (William Collins, Sept 2022). The product of an African-American musician father and a white working-class mother, Pitts began to question what is black Britain today. Together they travelled around the British coast in search of an answer. Pitts’s black experience around

Britain became the jump-off point for *After the End of History*, British Working Class Photography 1989-2024, an exhibition which moves between Coventry, Southend and Nottingham throughout 2024.

‘Within the photography world I noticed that so many of the ‘black photographers’ and people who control the industry were actually from very different places to the one I grew up in,’ he says.

‘I started to get more interested, or at least as interested, in notions of class. As soon as I wanted to incorporate class into the curation, that’s when everything started to take form for me.’

The title references Francis Fukuyama’s influential 1989 essay, *The End of History?* in which he announced that the great ideological battles between east and west were over, and that western liberal democracy had triumphed. Pitts left behind the British documentary photographers he



Clayponds by Serena Brown, 2018

Harold and Elsie Walton feeding sheep, 1993, by Richard Grassrick



COURTESY OF THE ARTIST © RICHARD GRASSRICK



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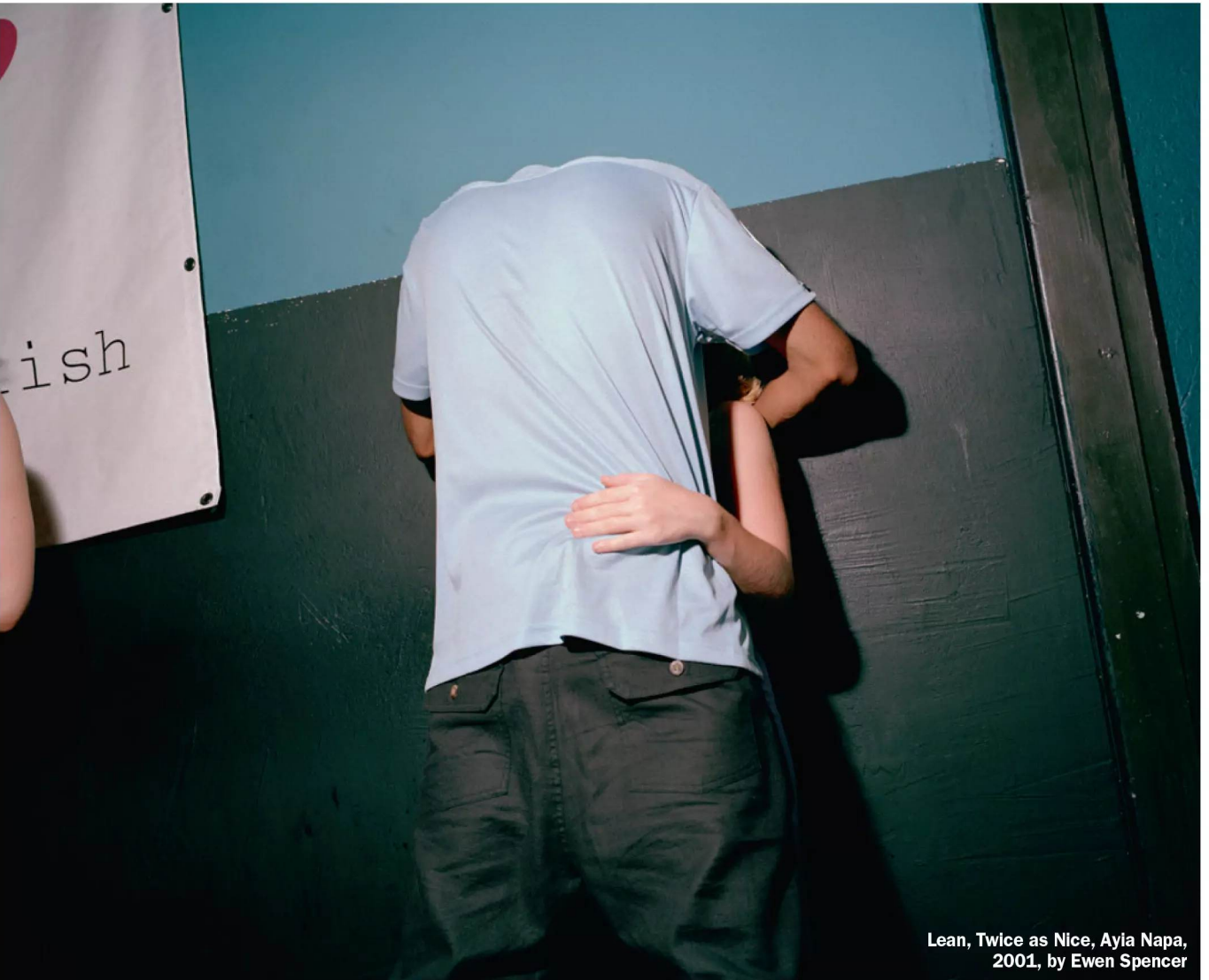
Steve in his kitchen, 1993-96, by Elaine Constantine

Neighbours, Dundonald Road, 2018, by Kavi Pujara



COURTESY OF THE ARTIST © KAVI PUJARA

COURTESY OF THE ARTIST © EWEN SPENCER



Lean, Twice as Nice, Ayia Napa, 2001, by Ewen Spencer



admired in the era they helped define – Martin Parr, Paul Graham, Chris Killip – and began his selection process post-1989 and looked at what happened after he came of age.

‘What became of working-class culture when it became harder to pin down, where you had even people on the so-called left saying we’re all middle class now; and what does it look like?’ he says. ‘For me, I found out it was more complicated than this more coherent aesthetic of protests and miners and industrial landscapes of the 1980s. I found that when you get into the 1990s, unfortunately in some ways, brand names start to colonise the working class; and club culture becomes more multicultural, less of a white working-class experience. New fashions start to emerge and it just becomes messier.’

**The search for photographers**

For the exhibition, Pitts searched for working-class photographers who had or were producing interesting work within this time frame. He’d then have a matter-of-fact conversation about whether they were working class, if they’d grown up in a precarious situation, experienced life with little money

and how and where they grew up. ‘This is a weird thing for me to say because my thing is usually about inclusion; this project I think became a project about exclusion,’ he explains. ‘Who did I want to exclude? I wanted to exclude the hedge fund kids. I wanted to fan out across the UK and not make it too London-centric. It’s very complicated but for the most part I was very blunt – I’m working on this show about working-class photographers, is that how you would describe yourself?’

The exhibition includes some 30 photographers: Richard Billingham, Joanne Coates, Elaine Constantine, Rene Matic, Jim Mortram, Eddie Otchere, Khadija Saye and Hannah Starkey are featured, among others.

Mortram works as a carer and records the lives of disadvantaged and marginalised people living near to his home. Billingham photographed his parents, who lived within the effects of alcoholism and poverty. Coates explores issues around class and the countryside using photography to question stories around power, identity, wealth, and poverty. Most of the work is made out of necessity, taking photos while working multiple day

jobs or when socialising, using whatever affordable technologies are to hand. ‘This show is really diverse,’ enthuses Pitts. ‘You have members of the LGBTQ+ community dealing with notions of non-binary, you have black photographers, white photographers, female photographers, photographers working in the city, photographers working in the countryside. I felt really lucky because by the end, I was like, “well, where are the gaps?”.’

Artists, authors and film directors can help the working class understand themselves. Some are arguably guilty at times of reducing the working class to avatars of oppression to make a moral point. After the End of History is political in a way that’s not. ‘The thing I kept saying to all the photographers I wanted to include, which probably didn’t inspire massive confidence, was that I wanted the show to be a mess,’ Pitts states. ‘I wanted people to walk into a show that was just an absolute mess of working-class culture. That was never too coherent, that clashed, an explosion of colour and incoherence in some ways because that’s what I feel was the working-class experience that I knew growing up.’

**After the End of History**

● Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, Coventry: 29 March to 16 June 2024

● Focal Point Gallery, Southend-on-Sea: 3 July to 14 September 2024

● Bonington Gallery, Nottingham: 27 September to 15 December 2024



**Left: Untitled, 1993, by Richard Billingham**

**Right: Nana's Bathroom, by Kelly O'Brien**



COURTESY OF THE ARTIST © KELLY O'BRIEN



**Right: From a series titled Small Town Inertia, by Jim Mortram**

COURTESY OF THE ARTIST © JIM MORTRAM

COURTESY OF THE ARTIST © RICHARD BILLINGHAM



© FRANCIS BOMPARD

# Get set for **action**

To discover the best ways to capture action AP examines the variables and speaks to six pros about their favourite modes and methods

**T**he thrill of freezing a split-second moment of fast-moving action is one of the great joys of photography but it's important to always be aware that if you fail to prepare, you must be prepared to fail. It's a cliché but, as with many genres of photography, capturing action requires you to prepare well to give yourself the best chance of getting great shots. If you're looking to freeze fast-moving motorsport or a bird soaring in the sky, you'll need to set up your camera and equipment to help to ensure you can shoot what you want. There's nothing worse than turning up to a sports event, airshow or game drive without being prepared. The benefit of setting everything up in-camera before you venture out, is that you can relax and

**Adrien Theaux of France during the Audi FIS Alpine Ski World Cup Men's Downhill Training on December 16-17, 2020 in Val Gardena, Italy**  
Sony A9 II, 70-200mm, 1/60sec at f/16, ISO 160

control over shutter speeds and dual memory card slots to handle rapid-fire shooting bursts.

You'll also need either a telephoto lens or a telephoto zoom as most action tends to happen some distance away from you and your camera. As a general rule, for each 10 metres you are away from your subject you'll need 100mm of lens focal length. So, if you are around 30 metres away you'll need the equivalent of 300mm in 35mm format and so on...

### Focusing choices

In many cases when you're dealing with a fast-moving object a great focusing choice is continuous autofocus (C-AF), which is sometimes known as AI Servo/Focus. In continuous mode cameras will continue to hunt for focus when the shutter button is half-depressed. Alternatively, you can choose to set your camera to auto AF mode, which will switch between single AF (S-AF) and C-AF if it detects a moving subject. But, basically, C-AF is probably the most effective option to select when you're set to track and shoot moving subjects.

Beyond choosing C-AF you'll need to decide which autofocus areas to deploy. A solid choice is Dynamic-Area AF mode, which allows you to choose a focus point within the frame where you expect your subject to be. If the camera's AF system detects any movement it will automatically switch to the neighbouring autofocus points in order to keep up with the subject.

As a general rule, larger focus areas are the best choice when capturing action subjects that are on the move. Many modern cameras have an auto-area mode, in which the camera does the work and automatically detects the subject and selects the focus point. This is useful if your moving subjects have erratic movements and you can't predict where they are going.

### Detecting subjects

For shooting sports and/or wildlife, subject detection and deploying eye detection are significant weapons in any photographer's armoury. For example, you might be trying to lock on to an eye through a motor racing helmet or be looking to ensure you get an animal's eye in sharp focus.

In a similar vein to eye detection, selecting subject-detection mode means the camera automatically hunts for the subject and locks focus on it. This frees up your creativity to compose your action pictures and ensure you've got all your exposure settings spot on, whilst the camera makes sure the subject is sharp.

Within subject-detection systems – for example, Canon's R-series cameras – there are menu settings to detect people, animals or vehicles. For Animals the camera detects

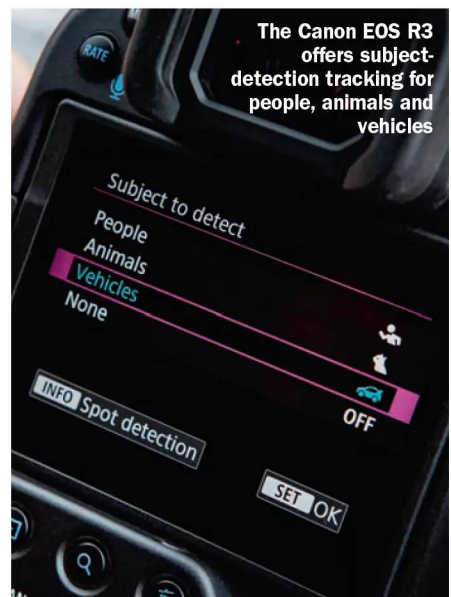
and tracks the eyes, face and whole body of animals. For Vehicles the mode is best for sports cars and motorbikes, but some cameras can also detect trains and aircraft.

### Picking speeds

There are two major decisions to make when choosing speeds for shooting action – your camera's shutter speed and the frames per second you want to shoot at. As a rule you can start shooting a sport like athletics from around 1/250sec, as even the world's fastest sprinters are 'only' travelling at around 23mph. Consider that a cheetah can sprint at up to 75mph so shutter speeds will need to be increased significantly. In such cases it's usually best to start at a minimum shutter speed of 1/1000sec.

You will want to keep control of shutter speeds – so choose shutter priority setting or pre-program your camera with custom settings that allow for this added control. When you feel more confident about capturing action subjects you can then experiment with slower shutter speeds to add creative blur in backgrounds and motion in panning shots.

With regards to frames per second shooting rates the choice will, again, be down to your subject. Basically, the faster-moving your subject, the higher you'll have to push the frame rate (usually at 10fps and beyond). The payoffs are that you can quite quickly fill up a memory card and will face a large editing task. The plus side is that it's more likely you've got the action shot you wanted.



To find out some of the best ways to set up your camera for shooting action across a variety of genres and using different cameras, AP spoke to six photographers who revealed their favourite settings and approaches to action. Just turn the page to find out more...

concentrate on what's unfolding in front of your camera and lens.

The variables are pretty standard – focusing/AF choices, control over shutter speeds, the ability to choose high ISO settings, ensuring you get stable images, making decisions on customising your camera, deciding on custom buttons, lens choices, whether to deploy burst modes and making other creative choices (such as whether to capture creative blur).

Without going into a deep dive about which are the best cameras for shooting action, do bear some basic 'must haves' in mind. It's best to use a camera that offers a wide range of AF modes, customisation options that include button assignments, menu settings for action, good frame rate options (ideally, at least 10fps if not more),

## Sports

### Marc Aspland, The Times Canon



Marc Aspland is the chief sports photographer for *The Times* newspaper and has worked for the paper for over 30

years. He has shot all of the summer Olympics since Atlanta 1996 and all of the winter Olympics since Albertville 1992. He has won numerous Sports Photographer of the Year awards and was made an honorary fellow of the Royal Photographic Society in 2014. He is the author of the book *The Art of Sports Photography*. Follow him on X at @MarcAspland and Instagram at @marc.aspland



Luton Town v Manchester United, 18 February 2024. Luton's Carlton Morris scores past United keeper Andre Onana  
Canon EOS R3, 400mm, 1/1600sec at f/2.8, ISO 800

Shooting with Continuous AF is my preferred choice on all my camera bodies as sports photography relies on having fast-moving subjects sharp. I use subject detection and I actually really like this function. I'll often use it to accurately track and hold focus on a person when both the foreground and background are moving around the subject.

Focus tracking on the Canon EOS R3 and R5 cameras has been a game-changer. It gives the photographer complete trust that the camera will track fast-moving subjects – this is perfect for shooting sport and wildlife, for example. I always have my cameras set at the H+ which offers me continuous shooting that allows multiple frames to be taken in a tiny time-frame and in ultra-fast



The full-frame mirrorless Canon EOS R3 is Marc Aspland's favoured camera for shooting action

succession. I do use a faster AF setting and it is very good. I prefer to use the back button for focusing and the shutter button to shoot.

For sport my general 'go-to' shutter speed is 1/2000sec – this includes shooting sports such as football, rugby, horse racing and cricket, for example. I'm a photographer who often uses very slow shutter speeds – for shooting all of the above sports I mentioned – to create a pan-blur effect, thus giving the subject movement and colour. I always use the camera's electronic shutter. For me, this has been part of the mirrorless revolution – it means I can be freezing subjects at up to 1/64,000sec and in silence!

I assign the custom buttons on all my cameras to be exactly the same – that's the focus button, separate eye-detection button, change of shutter speeds and ISO using different buttons too. I don't really have any specific items saved to a 'My Menu' as all my camera bodies are configured exactly how I like them.

I tend to shoot in JPEG on the R3 for everyday sports action etc and then shoot raw on the R5 for portraits and features work. I don't really need dual memory card slots as I prefer to use just one CFexpress card in

one slot. I also do use image stabilisation when the situation arises – for example, when shooting with slow shutter speeds or in very low light. I'll use a monopod when using 400mm and 560mm – the 560mm is a 400mm lens tele fitted with a 1.4x converter.

My best tip for shooting action would be to configure your camera exactly to your individual needs and habits. You should be able to pick up your camera with your eyes closed and know exactly how it will perform. Today, these cameras are incredibly technically advanced and we simply should use their capabilities to enhance and stretch our ability as photographers.



### H+ high-speed setting

Marc Aspland sets up his Canon EOS R3 camera on the H+ drive setting, aka High-speed continuous shooting+, which gives him continuous shooting to allow for up to 30 shots per second when shooting with the electronic shutter. In low-light situations he pushes the ISO setting up to around ISO 5000.



A punch lands full in the face of heavyweight boxer Anthony Joshua  
Canon EOS R3, 400mm, 1/1250sec at f/2.8, ISO 5000

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# 5000

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**Frozen motocross action, Peaty's Steel City downhill 2023, Sheffield**  
Fujifilm X-H2S, 11-20mm, 1/500sec, f/2.8, ISO 800

## Alex Denham's tips

Practise, is my top tip. I started at a shutter speed I felt comfortable at and then I'd go one stop slower at a time. Once I could confidently get sharp images at that new speed on repeat, I'd go down again to the next speed. Don't put too much pressure on yourself and try new angles and viewpoints. That's the magic of creative arts, there's no 100% right way or wrong way, just the way you view the world through the lens.

## Motorsport & squash

### Alex Denham Fujifilm



Alex Denham is a global automotive and motorsport photographer who has covered events such as the Goodwood

Festival of Speed and the Monte Carlo Rally. She says she is 'driven by adrenaline to capture a photograph that you will never see again but always remember'. She is an official Fujifilm Ambassador and has been honing her craft for over a decade. Follow her on Instagram at [@the\\_denham](#) and check out more of her work at [www.alexdenham.com](#)

I shoot with the Fujifilm X-H2S body and my 'go-to' lenses are the 16-55mm f/2.8, the 50-140mm f/2.8, the 56mm f/1.2 and a couple of other telephotos. I use all of my lenses for shooting sport, depending on the situation, but it's the 50-140mm zoom for me for pitlane, track shots and detail shots in other sports.

I usually use Continuous AF, due to the erratic movements in sport, but for some of my more creative ideas I'll use manual focus. I don't use subject detection for sports photography, but I do use focus tracking. I'll use it on the X-H2S when shooting sport with erratic movements and when there's an obvious main focal point, such as a car or athlete.

For motorsport I usually shoot at 10fps but for other sports, such as squash, it ranges from 10fps to 20fps depending on the shot I'm trying to achieve. For motorsport my 'go-to' reliable shutter speed for panning, and just getting the editorial shots, is 1/125sec or 1/100sec. However, when I'm shooting creatively, it can range between 1/60sec to one second. Within other sports, such as squash, I'll usually sit at around 1/640sec or 1/800sec. I'd also be around these speeds if I'm shooting a car head on or if shooting things in the pitlane, such as refuelling.

I switch between using the mechanical and electronic shutter. I find both of them really reliable, but the electronic shutter allows me to use the 20fps and faster settings. For shooting motorsport I tend to use the mechanical shutter as I don't need the frame rate to be quite as quick.

I have a few of the buttons on the camera set up to give me

**Diego Elias v Karim Abdel Gawad, PSA World Championship, May 2023**  
Fujifilm X-H2S, 16-55mm, 1/1000sec at f/2.8, ISO 2000



fast access to certain settings. For example, I have Eye Detection set to one of the top buttons so I can switch it on and off quickly. I like how the menus are laid out on the X-H2S, so I haven't felt a need to change anything. I shoot in raw uncompressed to retain quality and my camera has both SD card and CF card slots. I mostly use a fast SD card, but sometimes use the CF card due

to its superior speed.

On some of my telephoto lenses – for example, the 50-140mm – there's the secondary option of switching OIS [Optical Image Stabilisation] on, which I usually do. Most of the other lenses I have don't have this option as it is built in. On the camera there is an 'IS Mode', which I set to 'Continuous'. Over the years, for motorsport, I have used a focus distance limiter on some of my telephoto lenses but I don't usually use it outside of that environment.

I learnt to shoot motorsport handheld, so I've always stuck to that. I almost always have a battery grip on the camera due to using telephoto lenses and I find it helps the camera feel balanced. I have always used shutter button focusing and have been happy with that, but maybe it's time to try out back-button focusing!

**The 26MP Fujifilm X-H2S is Alex Denham's camera of choice. It can shoot up to 40fps with its electronic shutter**



## Wildlife

### Konsta Punkka Nikon



Konsta Punkka is a nature and wildlife photographer who hails from Finland. His work has been featured by

dozens of outlets, including *National Geographic* and the BBC, and he is a Nikon Ambassador. He spends around 200 days a year abroad working on commissions and is probably best-known for his images of bears and wolves close to the Finland/Russia border. Follow him on Instagram at [@kpunkka](#) and see more of his work at [konstapunkka.com](#)

I carry a fair amount of gear with me when I'm out shooting. My kitbag includes two camera bodies – a Nikon Z 9 and a Nikon Z 7II or a Z 5. The Z 9 is my main camera and the Z 7II or Z 5 work as my second camera – either remote-controlled or as a motion-triggered camera. I tend to switch between a 70-200mm and 400mm for wildlife action shots. When it's a flying bird or a running mammal I prefer to use my Z 9 with a 400mm f/2.8 lens to nail the action sequence.

The animal-detection mode also comes in handy. I normally use the Wide-area AF (L-animals) mode to detect animal eyes to focus on – it does the job almost every time. There are a few occasions when shooting – for example, eagles – I also use the camera's 3D tracking or customised C1 or C2 autofocus areas to capture as



Dancing eagles, Lofoten Islands 2021  
Nikon D850, 800mm, 1/3200sec at f/5.6, ISO 1000

ALL IMAGES ON THIS PAGE © KONSTA PUNKKA

much of the bird's flight as possible. Sometimes the camera can keep up with the focus faster when you have pre-selected an area where it should focus. This helps when capturing flying birds in a snow storm or any other challenging weather conditions.

Sometimes when shooting very fast-moving subjects I again prefer to customise the autofocus area, so that the camera doesn't need to try to find the animal from the whole area but within a closer range. This can help to cut down the possible errors and gives you more chance to capture all the shots you had in mind.

I use the focus tracking every time I'm following the subject. I was once photographing a fox who was hunting voles in a

field. I tracked down the animal to make sure when the fox jumped the focus was locked on the subject. I normally use the halfway shutter release press instead of the AF-On button... I just react faster using that.

If it's a rare moment I might go to 20fps. If it's an eagle flying towards me I often go 5fps, so as not to have too many shots to edit. One learns what are the precious moments and which moment needs more frames than others.

To freeze moments, I normally shoot between 1/1600sec and 1/5000sec. But if I want to capture some beautiful panning shots of a bird in flight I might go as low as 1/250sec and move the lens along with the bird's flight path to keep the bird sharp while the background gets thrown out of focus for a nice blurry effect.

With Nikon's latest mirrorless cameras, I use the electronic shutter in every situation. It's nice for wildlife photography as it's silent, so you don't disturb the wildlife with shutter sounds. I'm quite traditional, so I normally don't have many custom buttons. The Z 9's focus mode button is nicely positioned in the front of the camera so I can quickly switch between different AF/continuous modes, helping me

to freeze the action moments.

I always shoot raw when it comes to wildlife photography. When I'm shooting wildlife in action I use compressed raw because it gives me the chance to shoot continuously at the maximum speed possible.



### Continuous AF mode

Nikon's AF-C Mode (aka Continuous Servo) allows the photographer to keep focusing on track by continuously focusing on the subject whilst the camera's shutter button is half-depressed. In AF-C mode if the main subject moves towards or away from the camera predictive focus tracking is automatically triggered. This calculates the most likely position of the subject (based on its speed and direction of travel) at the moment of capture and adjusts focus accordingly.



Konsta Punkka pictured with some of his favourite kit



## Wildlife

### Tesni Ward OM System



Tesni Ward has worked as a full-time wildlife and nature photographer since 2016. She regularly works on

projects with specific species and uses her images to promote conservation and respect for wildlife and nature. She also runs regular workshops and tours to share her knowledge of fieldcraft, tracking and wildlife. Follow her on Twitter/X at @Taznii and check out more of her work at [www.tesniward.co.uk](http://www.tesniward.co.uk)

My current kitbag includes an OM-1 Mark II, an OM-1 and an Olympus OM-D E-M1X body. I also have a 150-400mm zoom, a 40-150mm, a 90mm macro, a 12-40mm f/2.8, a 7-14mm f/2.8 and 1.4x and 2x TC converters. For capturing action my preferred set-up is the OM-1 Mark II paired with a 150-400mm zoom and a 1.4x TC.

I always use continuous AF mode and deploy back button focus to give me the complete flexibility between switching between shooting a static and a moving subject. I prefer back-button focusing, though I do change to front button [focusing] for birds in flight.

My AEL button, which is next to my back button focus, jumps me to C1 which is for birds in flight... this is manual with the appropriate shutter speeds – around 1/1600sec and typically auto ISO, in case of rapidly changing conditions. I use subject-detection autofocus most of the time, except when there are too many subjects in the frame, which could confuse the tracking. I never use focus tracking, just subject-detection/tracking.

If I'm shooting general birds in flight I'll use SH2 with a lower frame rate, around 25fps. For rapidly moving subjects I'll move up to around 50fps. My shutter speed choices really depend on the light, but I'll go up to 1/500sec or faster, unless I want to introduce intentional



ALL IMAGES ON THIS PAGE © TESNI WARD

**The Narrow Beam**  
Olympus E-M1X, 150-400mm,  
1/1600sec at f/7.1, ISO 800

motion blur. I always use my camera's electronic shutter as it has no impact on image quality and it achieves a faster frame rate without disturbing wildlife.

In My Menu I have C-AF Sensitivity in case I need to increase or reduce this. Increase for rapid, unpredictable subjects, reduce if shooting through obstacles. I also use AF Limiter to stop the focus jumping to the background. I don't use a focus distance limiter function on my lens as I'm using the digital limiter (AF Limiter) instead.

I always shoot raw and just use Auto switch on my dual memory cards, so if one fills, the other automatically takes over. There's normally no need to use a camera support, as I have 8.5 stops of IS, but if I'm static throughout the day with a very specific shooting corridor I'll use a support for convenience. I just use Auto IS as it is intelligent enough to detect the movement and adapt accordingly. This includes lens and in-body stabilisation.

As for my best advice for shooting action? Make sure you use a custom mode so that you have a preset ready for when you need it... which, often, is when you least expect it!



### C1 mode for birds in flight

Within the menu of her OM cameras Tesni has assigned her AEL button, which is next to her back button focus, to jump her to C1 custom setting for capturing birds in flight. In this case she's set it for manual with the appropriate shutter speed (1/1600sec) and Auto ISO (6400) to cope with any rapidly changing conditions.



**The Steady Landing**  
OM-1, 40-150mm, 1/1250sec at f/2.8, ISO 200



Tesni Ward's current kit includes an OM-1 Mark II, an OM-1 and an Olympus OM-D E-M1X, a 150-400mm, a 40-150mm, a 90mm macro, a 12-40mm f/2.8, a 7-14mm f/2.8 and 1.4x and 2x TC converters

## Extreme sports

### Jonas Borg Panasonic



Jonas Borg is a Sweden-based, international, prize-winning freelance photographer and filmmaker. He has

worked all over the world and with major international daily newspapers, as well as many companies and organisations. His background is in photojournalism and he shot the wedding of the Swedish Crown Princess in 2010. Follow him on Instagram at @jonastborg and check out his work at [www.jonastborg.org](http://www.jonastborg.org)

For shooting action, I currently use the Panasonic Lumix S5 and S5II cameras. I'll usually use them with a 70-200mm f/2.8 zoom and a super-wideangle 12-24mm Sigma lens. Also, to help freeze movement, I have a very old Elinchrom Quadra ELB400 flash system that really helps to isolate the action from the background.

The focus modes that I use for action depend on what I'm shooting. If it's a scene where the action will suddenly appear I use manual focus and pre-set focus where I anticipate to be the 'right' place. If the action is visible, and 'trackable', I'll use continuous autofocus. I prefer shutter button focusing to using back button focus.

I switch between using very high shutter speeds to freeze movement or I'll deliberately use slow shutter speeds to

Mountain biking action shot from below  
Panasonic Lumix S5, 14-24mm,  
1/1000sec at f/2.8, ISO 2000



ALL IMAGES ON THIS PAGE © JONAS BORG

achieve motion blur. It's a very nice, but difficult, effect when panning. Sometimes I use slower shutter speeds to get motion blur, but I freeze the subject with flash. If I'm not using flash, I tend to use high speed burst mode when possible. If I need really high shutter speeds such as 1/8000sec, I will make use of the electronic shutter. This is a great tool when capturing really quick movements.

I don't really configure any custom buttons or shooting modes to help me to capture action. I usually just manually adjust the ISO and aperture in order to get the shutter speeds needed for a specific shot. Sometimes I have clients who want video as well as still images. When filming I have an array of custom settings assigned to different buttons.

I always, always, shoot JPEG+raw. Safety is key for me when using dual card slots. I mirror the information on the two memory cards. In case a memory card breaks down, it means I've got the same information on the other one.

Since the Lumix cameras have great stabilisation built-in to their bodies, as do most telephoto lenses, I see no reason not to use it to my advantage. I don't use a focus distance

limiter function on my lenses, but sometimes perhaps I should in order to get a slightly quicker autofocus. I don't use any camera support or a vertical grip as I prefer to have my gear as light as possible.

My best advice when shooting action is: it is most important to get shutter speeds that are as fast as possible. To achieve this, it's helpful to have a higher ISO setting to get those high shutter speeds. Also, if you have access to brighter, 'faster' lenses it's much easier to get the required shutter speeds... even in difficult lighting conditions. When showing your images always think about editing the images to black & white. So many images come alive once converted to monochrome and I do miss this in action shots.



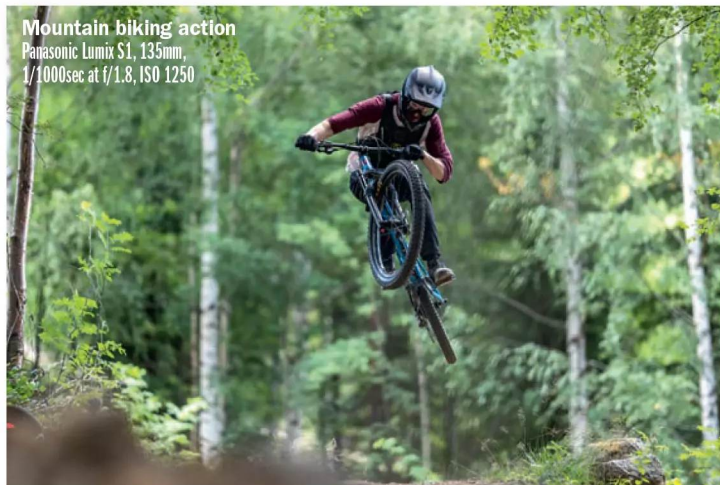
### Manual or Continuous AF?

Jonas Borg varies his focusing modes for action, depending on the subject he's shooting. In this menu he's using manual focus 'for action' that will suddenly appear', almost like predicting the likely point of action. He's gone for a faster shutter speed of 1/3200sec at f/2.8 with ISO of 1000. If action is visible and 'trackable' he deploys Continuous AF and prefers shutter button focusing to back button focusing.



Jonas Borg's kit with his Lumix S5 cameras and some of his lenses

Mountain biking action  
Panasonic Lumix S1, 135mm,  
1/1000sec at f/1.8, ISO 1250



Lara Gut of Switzerland during the FIS Alpine Ski World Championships Women's Downhill, Corina D'Ampezzo, Italy, 12 February 2021.  
Sony A1, 200-600mm, 1/3200sec at f/9, ISO 640



## Francis Bompard: top tips

- Use your camera's electronic shutter to get the max frame/s.
- Use a high shutter speed (over 1/1000sec) when the subject is full face and often a low-speed shutter (1/60sec or less) when the subject is on the side of the frame, to give a real idea of the velocity.
- Use big tele-lenses, with a full aperture, for face shots. It gives power to your shoot, the subject seems to get directly in your face.
- Use your camera in Manual, with Auto ISO set on 100 to 3200, for example (depending on the light), and make the light adjustment with the + or - adjustment ring or button of the camera body. That gives you a very fast responsive way if the light changes. With this method you can always get the speed and aperture that you need.

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## Winter sports

### Francis Bompard Sony



Francis Bompard is a French sports and wildlife photographer who has been working for over 40 years. He is currently a

Sony Ambassador and is arguably best known for his winter sports and skiing imagery. He spends his winters shooting sports and his summers in Africa photographing wildlife. His wildlife pictures have helped to raise money for charities, including the WWF and IFAW. Follow him on Instagram at [@francisbompard](https://www.instagram.com/francisbompard) and check out his work at [www.francisbompard.org](http://www.francisbompard.org)

so much... only when there is only one subject to shoot and you have a clear view on it. For example, no trees or grass for a wildlife photograph. I tend not to use focus tracking, mainly just eye tracking for portrait shots.

I often use the maximum frame rate capacity of my camera for action shoots – that's 30fps with the A1. There are lots of shots to select from afterwards, but you get always a perfect picture, which can be between two frames with a slower frame/s speed.

For sport and wildlife, it's approximately the same in terms of choosing shutter speeds. If you want to freeze

action, then you have to use speeds over 1/1000sec or, for other effects in lower speeds, it's often 1/60sec or even slower. I use my camera's electronic shutter most of the time, but it depends on which camera body I'm using and whether I'm using flash, etc. You can only reach the higher shooting frame/s with the electronic shutter and also you can get silent shooting, which is especially good for wildlife.

I use a custom button accessible with my right thumb on the A1. I save different parameters than my camera's one. That allows me – by pressing the button and the trigger together – to take, for

example, a front shot at a high speed, around 1/2000sec. Then I just have to release this button, push the trigger, and I can take a panning shot with the low speed, around 1/60sec, already selected in my camera. That gives me two different shots of the same subject.

In My Menu I have the raw+JPEG choice, the memory card format and the AF sensibility speed, but you often have to change it, depending on what kind of picture and place you are shooting. I use Compressed raw for wildlife and Compressed raw and JPEG for sport, so I can send the JPEG directly from my camera on the field of play to my editor's office. When one memory card is full the pictures start going on the second one.

I use a monopod, but only in a few situations, when I have to wait a long time with my eye still on the viewfinder. I'd rather shoot without one. I also use a vertical grip with the Sony cameras as it gives me the ability to get power from two batteries instead of one. I prefer shutter button as opposed to back-button focusing. It's just personal, with no real explanation about that. I've always shot like that.

My cameras are a Sony A1, an A9 II and an A7R V. All my lenses are also Sony – a 12-24mm f/2.8, a 24-70mm f/2.8, a 70-200mm f/2.8, a 200-600mm f/5-6.3 and a 400mm f/2.8. My Sony cameras are always in AF Continuous mode. When it's easy to move your AF point with the joystick, you don't need to use Single-shot AF any more.

I don't use subject detection



The Sony Alpha 1 is Francis Bompard's 'go-to' camera for action. It shoots up to 30fps at 50MP resolution

# Metering patterns explained

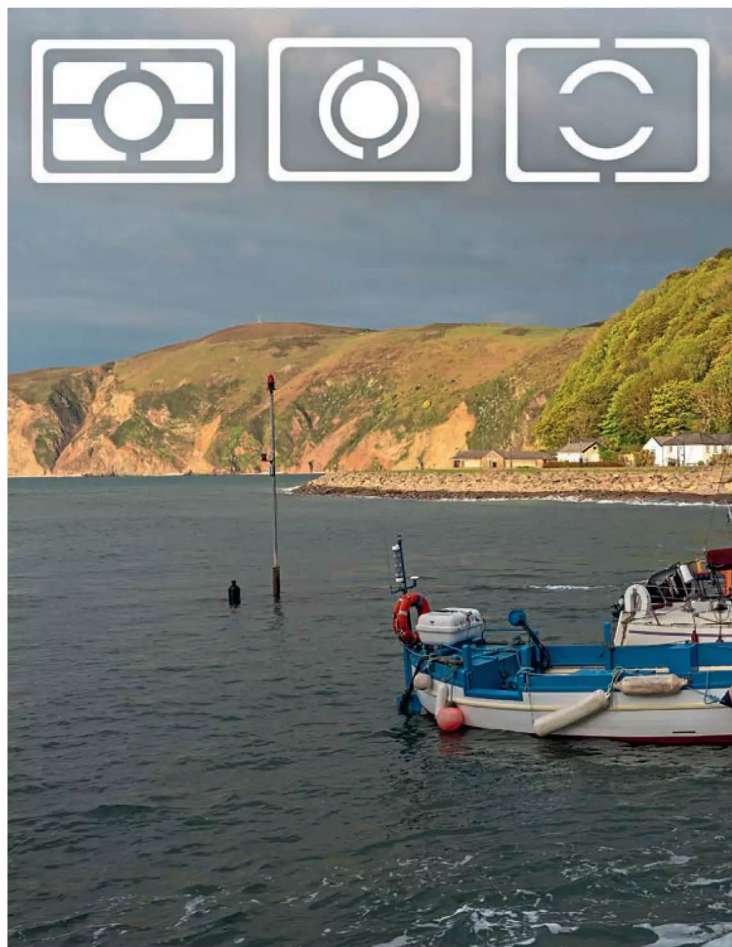
Why do cameras have different metering patterns, and what do they actually do? **Rod Lawton** explains

**G**etting the exposure right is both an art and a science. The art lies in working out how you want your picture to look and the interplay of light and shade, while the science is getting your camera to measure the light in the scene in the way you want.

To help measure and understand the light, cameras come with a variety of metering modes. The default option is multi-pattern metering, and most of us probably use this all the time without even thinking about it.

But while this is the most sophisticated way of measuring the light, it's also the one where the camera's own algorithms play the biggest part. Camera makers have gone to a great deal of trouble to train their cameras to understand and deal with a variety of lighting conditions, so that most of the time they will arrive at a very good outcome.

However, it's not clear how they've done it, and results may vary with even small changes in framing. So while it's very clever, multi-pattern metering is also very difficult to second-guess. It's not always predictable. You can just use regular multi-pattern metering and your camera's EV compensation control to make your pictures look right. But this won't teach you very much

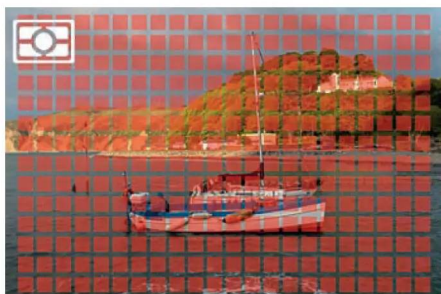


about exposure or what's happening with the light in the scene.

This is why more-experienced photographers often prefer to swap to a simpler or more precise metering mode that puts all the control in the hands of the photographer.

Just about all serious cameras will offer multi-pattern metering as a default, with centre-weighted and spot metering as options.

## METERING PATTERNS EXPLAINED



### 1 Multi-pattern metering

Multi-pattern metering (or 'Evaluative metering' for Canon users) measures the light at multiple points across the scene and then uses algorithms to match the light distribution to a database of typical scenes. This is how Nikon used to do it at least – camera makers are typically quite coy about technical details like this.



### 2 Centre-weighted

The camera averages the light levels across the scene but assigns more prominence to the central area. On many more advanced cameras you can change the size of this central area. Centre-weighted metering is like a blend of average metering and spot metering so that you get some of the advantages of both without the weaknesses.



### 3 Partial metering (Canon)

This one is unique to Canon cameras, and it's similar to spot metering. It measures the exposure from part of the frame only, just like spot metering, but using a much larger area. It's very effective because you still get to narrow down the exposure measurement to specific areas of the scene, but it's more forgiving than true spot metering.



Left: Your DSLR or mirrorless camera will have several different metering modes, each with its own icon to convey its function

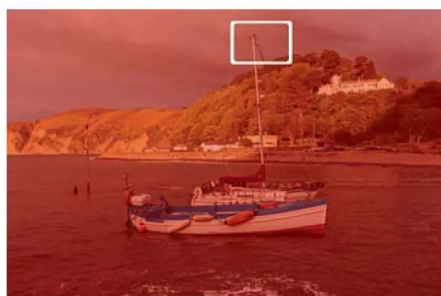
## What makes handheld meters unique?

Given the incredible sophistication of modern camera metering systems, why would anyone still want to use a handheld light meter? That's because many can do something that in-camera meters can't. They can measure the 'reflected' light in the scene just as a camera would, but they can also measure the 'incident' light falling on the subject, which can give a much more accurate rendering of colours and tones that's not affected by intrinsically light or dark-toned objects. This is achieved with a diffuser dome that slides over the meter's sensor. You then stand at the subject position to measure the light falling on it rather than standing at the camera position – the usual approach – to measure the light bouncing off it. Sometimes the old ways are the best!



But these are not the only metering modes you might encounter. Depending on your brand of camera you may get other metering options which are even more useful.

We've shown what these do and how they work below, using generic icons that you'll probably recognise from your camera, though they can vary from one model to another.



### 4 Averaged metering

The simplest method of light measurement and closest to old SLR metering systems where a single photosensitive cell measured the light from the whole scene. Average metering is notoriously susceptible to bright areas but, conversely, it's easy to second-guess its behaviour. It's only available on a few cameras as a 'centre-weighted' option.



### 5 Spot metering

A reading is taken from a small area, which sounds like the perfect way to pinpoint exposure measurements, but in practice it's all too easy to read from a subject with its own intrinsic light or dark tones or, if you're shooting handheld, to accidentally drift off the area you're measuring. Some cameras will link the spot area to the focus point.



### 6 Highlight and Shadow

Unique to Olympus/OM System cameras, this enables you to 'peg' the exposure for shadows and highlight areas, so that they come out dark or light, but with detail. For this shot, for example, we could use the Spot-HI mode and peg the exposure for brightest sky detail (left) or darkest shadow detail (right) we want to record.

# OM System Once-in-a Lifetime

Wildlife and landscape photographer **Andrew Fusek Peters** tests the stunning new AF and Pro Capture capabilities on the new OM-1 Mark II with 150-400mm and 12-100mm IS PRO lenses

[explore.omsystem.com](http://explore.omsystem.com)



I have been having fun with frogs this week and wanted to test the focus stacking and push it to the limit. I began with the 150-400mm PRO lens to get a close-up of a pair of frogs and their eyes. The improved stacking algorithm, allied with the newly updated IBIS (in-body image stabilisation), meant I could get a beautifully detailed result in-camera. Wanting to challenge the OM-1 Mark

II even further I paired it with the incredible 12-100mm PRO lens. So I crawled nearer to the pool the animals were in, until the lens was only a couple of centimetres from another pair of obliging frogs. Again, IBIS was my friend and gave me a wonderfully rendered habitat shot where the frogs and the far buildings were both in focus.

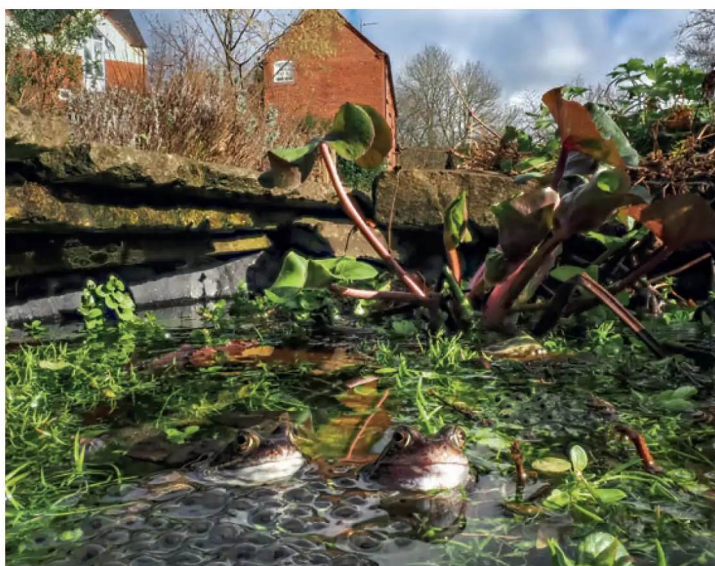
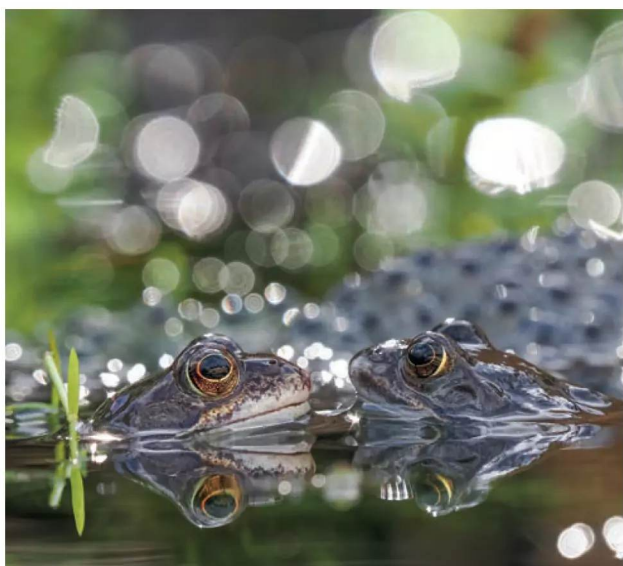
Next up, a bird fight; again in the lovely morning light, a pair of siskins

**Below left: The improved stacking algorithm and the IBIS gives beautifully detailed results using the 150-400mm lens**

**Below: The updated IBIS helped with a habitat shot with the frogs and the far building in focus**

were having a go at each other. My confidence in the new body rises again – the eyes are perfect and the camera I will no doubt be using non-stop for the next few years delivers consistent and beautiful results.

OM System needed to add more memory to the camera to cope with the new AF capabilities and all I can say is that it works: over and over again and is blazingly fast.





When a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity comes along, you don't want your camera to let you down. I have been photographing my garden birds for the past ten years and can count on one hand the number of visits by bramblings. In this instance, two males popped up out of the blue and seemed to like the seeds hidden in a stick taken from a local wood.

I was in my neighbour's garden photographing and when one brambling dropped down to feed, I was ready. The upgraded AF on the new OM-1 Mark II has given me confidence to be able to capture even the fastest of birds. Attached to my 150-400mm lens and with Pro Capture set to SH2 and 50 frames per second with full autofocus, I hoped that when the bird

took off it would capture the moment. Of course, it coped admirably!

This is easily the highlight of my year so far, to get the spread wings at 1/4000th of a second – and of course the eye of the brambling is tack-sharp. I am working on a new book of garden wildlife and this image will be undoubtedly one of my lead shots.

**Top: Male brambling taking flight, captured on the new OM-1 Mark II with the 150-400mm Pro lens**

**Right: Fighting siskins captured with the 150-400mm PRO. The body and the eyes are perfectly captured thanks to the upgraded AF**



## Prices

■ OM-1 Mark II

£2,199 body only

■ M.Zuiko Digital ED 150-400mm F4.5 TC1.25x IS PRO

£6,799 lens

■ M.Zuiko Digital ED 12-100mm F4.0 IS PRO

£1,199 lens



## Andrew Fusek Peters

Andrew is a wildlife and landscape photographer who works on commission for the National Trust. His images regularly appear in the national and specialist photographic media. His books including; *Butterfly Safari*, *Flight, Hill and Dale: My Shropshire Year and Upland*. He is an OM SYSTEM Brand Ambassador.



PHOTO BY KAMERON KINGDALE ON UNSPASH

Do we really need tripods any more?  
They're heavy to carry, they slow us  
down and they get in the way



## Is it time to ditch the tripod?

Tripods are a nuisance. Do we even need them any more? **Rod Lawton** explains when handheld photography can take over but also explains those times when you do still need a tripod

**W**hy do we use tripods at all? Traditionally, it's been to keep the camera steady during the exposure so that we don't get blurry shots. However, over recent years there have been huge improvements in camera sensors and high-ISO image quality that allow much faster shutter speeds in low light. Not only that, many cameras now have in-body stabilisation to reduce the effect of camera

movement, so that camera shake can be eliminated even with slower shutter speeds.

What this means in practice is that there are almost no everyday circumstances in which we can't expect to get a sharp, good-quality handheld shot, even in dimly lit interiors, even after dark. It's a win-win. We can keep shutter speeds up by increasing the ISO and get shake-free shots even at slower shutter speeds.

So, what's the catch? Well, although

high-ISO image quality has come on in leaps and bounds, you do still pay a price in image quality when you shoot at higher ISOs. It might not be enough to matter, and it might even be hard to see, but it's still a consideration.

And while IBIS systems can be very effective at combating camera shake, they are not a guarantee, any more than so-called 'safe' shutter speeds are a guarantee. They certainly increase your chances of getting a sharp shot at much slower shutter speeds than normal.

It's safe to say, though, that for a lot of low light or long-range shooting, modern camera technologies have made tripods look redundant. But that doesn't necessarily mean they are. We might not need tripods to reduce camera shake in the



way that we used to, but there are many areas and styles of photography where they still make a difference.

So, let's take a closer look at how handheld and tripod photography compares for practicality and image quality, and whether we can ditch the tripod once and for all.

### How long an exposure can you do handheld with IBIS?

In-body image stabilisation can be remarkably effective. I remember being present at the launch of the Olympus OM-1 Mark II, where photographers were capturing sharp handheld exposures of 1 second, 2 seconds or longer as darkness fell. Everyone was amazed. The truth is, though, that not everyone is good at steady handholding. I'm pretty poor, so I didn't get the same long-exposure results the other photographers did.

So, when camera makers quote a compensation figure for their own stabilisation systems, think of this as the advantage that you might gain over your own 'safe' shutter speeds and not as any kind of absolute guarantee. For example, my 'safe' shutter speed with a 50mm lens is probably 1/125sec. Meanwhile, other people might say that for them it's 1/60sec – this is the usual way of working out safe shutter speeds, dividing the lens's focal length into 1 to get the nearest equivalent shutter speed.

Now if a camera's in-body stabilisation offers 5 stops of compensation, that means that instead of shooting at 1/125sec, I should be able to get similarly sharp shots at shutter speeds 5 steps slower, which would be 1/4sec. That's impressive!

Not all IBIS systems are equal, however. It's important to remember that while



This was shot at ISO 25,600 and developed in the latest AI noise-reduction software. The image quality and detail is remarkable. It looks more like ISO 200 than ISO 25,600

stabilisation compensation figures are measured by independent testing body CIPA, these will typically be achieved with specific lenses and camera settings. They are a best-case scenario. Others may have a different experience, but whenever I test camera and lens IBIS systems, I rarely get more than about half the claimed compensation reliably.

Reliability is the key word here. Image stabilisation is not an absolute guarantee. While you may be able to get sharp photos with ridiculously long exposures now and again, can you rely on it?

There's also a fundamental difference between faster shutter speeds and in-body stabilisation: subject movement. Stabilisation systems can counteract camera movement, but they can't stop subject movement. If you need to 'freeze' moving subjects at night – in street photography, for example, or an indoor basketball game – a higher shutter speed is required.

### How close are handheld low-light shots to tripod shots?

Can a photo taken handheld in low light

match the quality of a picture taken on a tripod? If you have to shoot at a higher ISO, then technically the answer must be no. But photography is about what's possible, not what's perfect, and is there really enough noticeable difference to worry about it any more?

It's tempting to say no. With modern camera sensors and IBIS, it's now possible to take handheld pictures of city streets at night and magnificent but dimly lit interiors without worrying about image quality. Besides, try taking a tripod into the Doge's Palace in Venice or the British Museum in London and see how far you get with it.

There's a third factor – AI noise-reduction software. DxO PureRAW 4 is just one example of a number of programs that can use deep learning to identify and remove noise during the raw denoising process and 'reconstruct' details and textures that would normally be lost at high ISOs.

However, while you may be able to achieve similar levels of image quality by shooting handheld – or quality so good that the difference doesn't

## TEST YOUR OWN IBIS



Find a subject or a scene with clear fine detail, where you have time to take a series of shots undisturbed and where the light is low enough to allow longer shutter speeds. The idea is to take a series of shots at different shutter speeds, with and without IBIS, to get a proper sense of the 'safe' shutter speeds with that camera and lens.



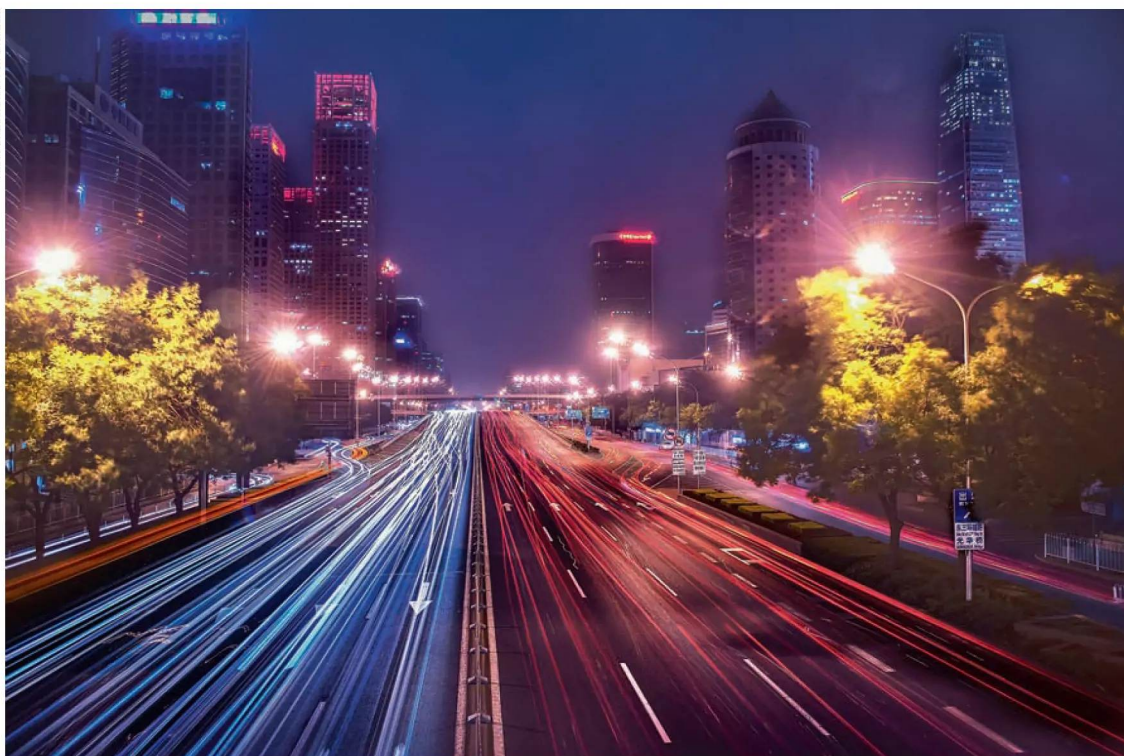
First, with the camera's IBIS disabled, choose a 'safe' handheld shutter speed without IBIS, say 1/125sec for a 50mm lens, and take three shots so that you can get an idea of the 'hit rate' rather than relying on one result. Drop the shutter speed to 1/60sec and take three more shots. Repeat this at 1/30sec, 1/15sec and as far as you want to take it.



Turn on the in-body stabilisation and repeat the experiment. Afterwards you can compare your images to see which are sharp. When all three shots at a specific shutter speed are sharp, you can probably call this 'safe'. If only two are sharp, then that's a marginal shutter speed that might be okay, and if only one is sharp, then that's a pretty poor hit rate.

# Technique HANDHELD SHOOTING VS TRIPODS

PHOTO BY ZHANG KALYV ON UNSPASH



Sometimes the whole point of a night-time shot is to capture movement, like the long, luminous trails of traffic in this shot by Zhang Kalyv. If so, a long exposure and tripod combo is the only answer

➤ matter – you won't necessarily get the same kind of shot.

There's a very obvious example. If you take pictures of a busy city at night, you might be aiming to capture an instantaneous moment in time, in which case high ISOs and image stabilisers are perfect for this.

But you might be capturing the rivers of light created by moving traffic, and you might want to blur pedestrians and passers-by so that they are less distracting. That's a different technique. Long exposures bring their own particular look to night shots, and that's when you need a tripod. We've yet to see an IBIS system that can capture a sharp two-minute exposure.

## Can you use ND and grad filters handheld?

Long exposures are often used as a deliberate creative effect, and not necessarily something you're forced into by low light. How many landscape shots have we seen with impressionistic smoky surf, or silky-smooth waterfalls? It's a 'look' you can only get with long exposures, and that makes a tripod essential. IBIS systems do not look as if they will ever be able to reach this level, and who wants to hold a camera still all that time?

There is perhaps a small 'window' of exposure times where IBIS can make a difference. If you're photographing fast-moving water, you can often get enough blur with an exposure of 1/4sec or

1/2sec, and that's within the range of a good IBIS system. It's worth trying this if you don't have a tripod with you, or if you don't have the time or the room to set one up.

Sometimes an ND filter can help, especially in bright daylight, so there are circumstances where ND filters could be used handheld. Usually, though, ND filters are employed for much longer exposures, which is where IBIS won't help, and a tripod becomes essential.

Other filters work perfectly well handheld. There's no reason why you would need a tripod for a polarising filter, for example. You could even shoot handheld with graduated filters for controlling bright skies. I've done it plenty of times myself. It can be a little more difficult to get the grad transition in the right position and keep it there, but it's perfectly do-able.

Perhaps the point is, though, that a tripod can make it much easier to manage, adjust and swap filters. If you're trying to do this handheld, it constantly feels as if you need another pair of hands. If the camera is on a tripod, then your hands are free for swapping filters.

Using filters involves a certain amount of planning, consideration, and detailed adjustment. This tips it into tripod territory. Tripods aren't just there to prevent wobble – they are part of a more considered approach that gives you time to think about what you're doing and how to compose the shot.

## Can you shoot macro handheld?

Does improved high-ISO image quality and IBIS make handheld macro photography practical? If there's one instance where ditching the tripod really could save a lot of trouble it's here, especially if you're photographing tiny subjects in the wild.

There is a specific issue with macro photography, however, that can make handheld photography more difficult – focus 'drift'. When you're this close to your subject, you are fighting tiny but constant changes in distance just from the natural movement and sway in your body. IBIS can fix a lot of things, but not this. The tiniest of movements can throw your whole subject out of focus, or at least the part you're trying to get sharp.

For pinpoint focus and composition, a tripod is still the best answer. But try it and see. A lot of what we call 'macro' photography is really more like 'close-up' photography which will probably work perfectly well handheld. If handheld macro photography is tricky one shot at a time, it might be hard to see how IBIS can help – but actually it can. If you have a camera that offers in-built focus stacking, you can capture a close-up as a sequence of pictures at different focus points then merge these images into a single image. This neatly gets around the issue of achieving and maintaining precise focus in close-up shots because you're capturing a whole focus range.

Where IBIS comes in is that it will enable

you to use slower shutter speeds in low-light conditions and it could also improve your chances of getting a set of images that align well enough for the camera to merge them effectively.

### Tripods do more than you think

So... can you ditch the tripod? Very probably, but not necessarily. It depends on your style, approach and photography genre. We may no longer need tripods simply to keep the camera steady, but there are still situations where tripods are essential, desirable or just make your life that much easier.



**Above: I took a chance and risked a 1sec exposure handheld for this photo to try to blur the cascading water. I got away with it. The rocks and foliage are sharp, and the water is blurred**



**But for silky-smooth water you really need longer exposures. This one took 15 seconds, and a tripod was essential – there are no IBIS systems to handle exposures this long**

### Here are some other tripod 'values' which may not be obvious

- Photographer Joel Meyerovitz once remarked that 'a tripod remembers your last decision'. That's a very powerful insight right there.
- A tripod leaves your hands free to fetch a filter, drink a coffee, eat a sandwich, make a phone call.
- Tripods allow the kind of precision needed for panning shots, panorama 'stitchers' and video movements.
- Tripods allow precise framing that doesn't 'drift' once you've chosen your framing – and allow framing consistency between shots.
- Tripods can take the weight of heavy gear and make life easier on shoots with lots of waiting
- Tripods aren't just about stability, they are also about time – the time it takes to step back and think.

## IBIS AND MACRO PHOTOGRAPHY



Image stabilisation can certainly help with close-ups, where you often need to stop down the aperture to get enough depth of field. This really slows down the shutter speed so the extra stability from a good IBIS system can make all the difference when you're shooting handheld.



Without focus stacking, it may not be possible to keep subjects at different distances in focus. Focus stacking, and this can be carried out handheld with remarkable success. In-body stabilisation will reduce camera shake and might even keep your focus stack frames better aligned.



Here's the 'stacked' version of our close-up. Handheld focus stacking can work just as well on 'serious' subjects as it does on our novelty astronauts here. We used an Olympus E-M1 Mark III in focus stacking mode. The sequence took a second to shoot and about half a minute to process.

# Black & white made easy

Colour photography is wonderful, but now is the time to start exploring black, white and all the greys in between – and the only kit you need is your digital camera and the help of mono master **Will Cheung**

**D**igital capture has made the journey to black & white photography totally painless. No need for coloured filters, chemicals or even film! All you have to do is select the monochrome picture style for lovely out-of-camera mono pictures, and you don't even have to switch on the computer.

But if shooting awesome monochrome pictures is that easy, you are probably wondering why we have allocated four pages to the subject. Well, it's time to come clean and admit that while shooting monochrome is easy, to make the most of the medium you have to get your brain out of first gear.

## Which format?

Let's kick off with camera format. Set the camera to shoot raw, select monochrome and take a shot. The preview image will be in black & white and when you get the file into the computer it can still look mono depending on the software, but it's a full data

raw so you can go full colour if you want. The only standard cameras that shoot monochrome raws are the dedicated black & white cameras from Leica and Pentax.

Repeat the process with JPEG only set, and the result is black & white, as you'd expect, but now you can't go to colour. All the raw data was discarded when the JPEG was written to the memory card, but the upside is that the file is ready to be printed, shared and stored as a mono image with no further editing work needed.

So, for the ultimate flexibility on your mono journey, set the camera up to shoot both formats. The raw file gives the ultimate editing flexibility especially with white balance, shadow and highlight recovery and you can go colour or mono, while the JPEG is a lovely monochrome ready to share and use out of camera. There is no real downside to this belts and braces approach except that you eat up memory, but there are more upsides. ➤



**Above:** Some scenes look better in black & white than in colour. The Cellarium at Fountains Abbey is a great example  
Nikon Z 8, 28-75mm, 1/30sec at f/11, ISO 400



**Left:** Colour can be a major distraction in street photography, which is why mono is ideal  
Canon EOS R5, 24-105mm, 1/320sec at f/5.6, ISO 400



ALL IMAGES © WILL CHENG



**Left: The sun was low down giving a lovely warm light – perfect for the mono approach**  
Canon EOS R5, 24-240mm, 1/160sec at f/11, ISO 400

# Technique MONOCHROME MODES

## Menu matters

Just selecting monochrome mode and both file formats is the beginning. JPEG files are much smaller and the opportunity to edit is very limited, and that means you have to get it as right as possible at the time of capture. This is imperative in colour but it helps in mono shooting too. This is why you must dig into the camera menu to explore the options on offer and fine-tune the result.

What parameters you have available to tinker with depends on the camera but expect to see settings such as contrast, sharpness, and fineness. Once you find a recipe that produces the look you want, it can usually be saved as a custom preset. You might find one combination that's best for street work and another for scenics, so just keep a note of the various settings unless you have custom modes to call on.

For me, I find the default monochrome setting lacks contrast so I play with the options to give more punch and richer shadows. If your preference is for a more delicate, softer look then lower the contrast and sharpness settings.

The other camera parameter to play with is ISO. Setting a higher ISO gives the usual freedom with camera settings, but there's another benefit too. Film comes with grain and it is quite evident even with medium speed films. That is not the case with digital files which can be very clean at ISO 800 and 1600. Some cameras have a grain option but another way is to shoot at super-high speeds, ISO 6400 and above, depending on the camera. Noise on digital pictures does not look the same as film grain but it's worth trying if you want a gritty, less crisp out-of-camera result.

## Filter it

A common setting in monochrome shoot mode is the option to use virtual filters. In film photography single-coloured contrast filters are used to control what colour light reaches the film. Fitting a yellow filter absorbs blue wavelengths to give a more pronounced sky, while a red filter keeps out blue and green light so a blue sky and grass appear darker.

Of course, you can't add a coloured filter to the lens of a digital camera because the image will come



out the colour of the filter, so digital cameras have virtual filters, usually yellow, orange, red and green. Their effect is not usually as vivid as actual filters on film but they do have an impact, so if the need is for a stronger sky, try the orange and red filters.

Filters that do work for in-camera monochrome are the polariser and neutral density (NDs), graduated and solid. Polarisers cut down glare and help clouds stand out against darker blue skies so

**Creativity on tap. This was taken with the Grainy Film I setting, an art filter available on OM System/Olympus cameras OM-1, 12-40mm, 1/160sec at f/11, ISO 200**

## HOW TO SHOOT SUCCESSFUL BLACK & WHITE IMAGES

**Black & white works successfully with most subjects and scenes, probably more than many photographers expect, so don't hold back when you're out there with the camera and try the mono way.**



### Contrast for impact

The ambient light had almost gone from this scene so the sky and unlit sections of the building were very dark while the illuminated areas were bright. Sunny days also give great conditions and if you expose for the highlights that will make the shadows very deep indeed.



### Use the light

Great lighting is essential. A low evening sun picked out the re-enactor from the background and owing to the angle of the light, it meant the shadows were not too harsh. The crisp light also did a great job bringing out the uniform detail and props.



that increases contrast while graduated ND filters can be used to tone down bright skies. Solid NDs are used to cut down the amount of light reaching the sensor to enable longer shutter speeds so they are equally valid for in-camera mono photography.

Many cameras also let you add colour to your pictures with settings such as sepia, green and purple toning, which is another option to add an individual finishing touch.



## Why it works

The Cambridge American Cemetery and Memorial contains the remains of 3,811 servicemen lost in WWII.

Hoping to capture the mood of the location, I used a Canon EOS R5 in its default monochrome picture mode. The first shot was rather flat and lacked depth and while there was some sky detail on show, it lacked punch. Delving into the monochrome menu, for the next shot the red filter was selected and the Strength and Contrast parameters set to their maximum. The stronger settings and filter darkened the grass so the contrast was greater, with the crosses looking more prominent; and the sky gained depth too.

The difference might not be huge, but it showed that adjusting the monochrome settings was worthwhile to achieve a little more contrast and detail.



### Enjoy textures

Mono works well with textures, especially when the light is hitting the subject obliquely. In this case, the sun was shining and diluted by thin cloud so it gave lovely modelling on the rocks. Dark subjects can fool the camera into overexposing, so meter carefully.



### Shape and form

Bold shapes make for striking images especially if you take an unusual viewpoint. This shot works because the bold struts take the viewer into the picture and there's plenty of detail to explore. The side-lighting and interesting sky play their part too.



### The reportage look

Black & white naturally gives a newsy, reportage feel to your shots, making it the perfect choice for street photography. Using the camera's monochrome picture style with the contrast at a higher level than default gives a little more punch, which also helps.



## Custom **made**

As camera menu systems get deeper and more advanced, so do the possibilities of options that can be added to camera custom buttons.

**Richard Sibley** offers some suggestions for different types of photography

If you aren't changing your camera's custom buttons, are you missing out? Many photographers will leave these extra buttons set to whatever the manufacturer has set them to be by default. Still, regardless of your photography type, there is almost certainly a way to get more out of custom buttons than merely allow them access to an exposure or basic shooting setting.

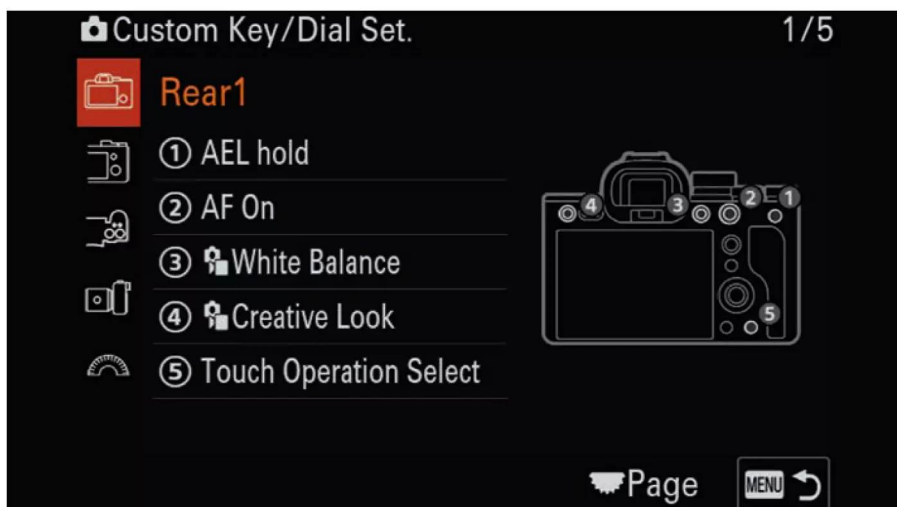
As camera menus have become more

complex and offer many different, often obscure settings, it is possible to tailor a camera to your shooting needs. However, it can be a challenge to find that setting again when you need to change it quickly; this is where custom buttons come into play.

In many cameras, the buttons can be used to change almost any of the settings found in the menu, allowing photographers to assign one or more buttons to their particular type of

photography. Wildlife photographers could quickly change the AF area or shooting rate, so when that lion goes from stalking to attacking, they can react just as speedily. Wedding photographers can quickly switch on eye-detection autofocus, videographers can turn zebra patterning on and off to check exposure settings, and event photographers can switch to a silent, electronic shutter during speeches – there are many possibilities.





Many camera manufacturers allow you to reassign features of certain buttons

### Which button to use

It's impossible to recommend which custom button you should use without going through each camera, but there are some common places on a camera where custom buttons are located.

Usually, you will find one or two on the camera's top plate, possibly one or two on the camera's rear, and some cameras will also have one on the front, close to the handgrip; even the AF button found on

lenses can usually be customised. Many manufacturers will also let you override the default buttons, with things like AF-ON, AEL, and even the cursor control buttons often being customisable – you'll just need to remember that they will no longer operate as indicated on their label.

Logically, you should assign a feature that you need quickly to a button you can access quickly. If you are a wildlife or sports photographer where things can change

rapidly, you want to avoid fumbling around trying to find a button and having to take your eye away from the viewfinder. Put the main custom feature on a button you can find instantly. If you don't shoot video, this could be the video record button, which is often close to the shutter button (you can always assign the shutter button to start video recording when in movie shooting mode). Similarly, the AF button on a telephoto lens is an excellent choice as your finger can be held on the button ready to go.

Put less-often-used functions on buttons that may require you to move your whole hand or may take a fraction of a second longer to find. Most importantly, hold your eye to the viewfinder and practise; know where the buttons are and what they do, so that you won't be struggling to find them when you need them.

Over the following pages, we'll discuss various photography genres and suggest how different custom button options could work for each. However, many of the suggestions in this feature will work across multiple genres. For example, there are obvious similarities between sports and wildlife, or street, wedding and event photography, so it is worthwhile reading them all as they may spark an idea that you may have overlooked.

## Custom shooting modes

Nearly all cameras will allow you to create one or more custom user settings modes. By going into the menu and changing all the settings you need, you can create a custom shooting mode of your choice for a specific style or scenario. A wedding photographer may have a custom mode set with all their flash and portrait settings for taking shots of the bride and groom, a second set for shooting the wedding service itself, and possibly even a third set for the evening festivities. By simply turning the shooting mode dial or selecting the appropriate custom user mode in the menu, the photographer can quickly switch all of their settings to deal with different eventualities.

The same is true for enthusiast photographers. You could save your favourite landscape settings to one mode and then have your portrait settings on another.

Try combining some of the settings you find over the next few pages to not only create your own custom buttons, but your very own shooting mode to suit your style of photography.



Turn the mode dial to access a set of custom shooting settings or head to the camera's menu

Adjusting the AF tracking to your needs means your camera can stay locked on to the subject, even if something else enters the frame



## Sports and action

### Face detection off

This may seem counterintuitive, but bear with me. You are photographing a runner warming up and you're holding your finger down on the shutter to focus. Suddenly, the AF locks on to a different runner or a person in the crowd. I have even known face detection lock onto a still image of someone's face on an advertising hoarding.

Face detection is becoming increasingly powerful with the latest AI algorithms in cameras. It can lock on to a subject and stay locked on, so it is advantageous and accurate in many situations. However, on older cameras, for all the previous reasons there are times when you may want to switch it on or off quickly. It may not be necessary to assign it to the most accessible button but have it somewhere you can access to change it fairly quickly.

### Shooting rate

There are times when shooting sports (and

wildlife) when you don't need to shoot at 10, 20, or even 30fps a second. You can save memory card space and time by shooting at a slower rate or even in single-shot mode.

For example, if you are photographing the 100m sprinters, you may want to shoot a few shots individually whilst they are warming up or waving to the crowd, but when they are crossing the line, you want to capture as many images as your camera is capable of. By using a custom button, you can swap between single shot and continuous shooting speeds in an instant.

### Tracking speed

Different sports, even different moments in a game, may benefit from different tracking sensitivity – the speed at which tracking AF recalibrates the target. For example, suppose you are photographing a team sport such as football or rugby, where players may run in front of the subject of

your shot. In that case, you may want to use a slow tracking mode that allows the focus to be stickier to your initial subject and not switch or, worse still, hunt for another subject.

Where the subject is easily picked out against a solid background – for example, a dancer on a stage or in a studio – you can afford to select a faster tracking speed, knowing that nothing will get in front of the dancer or in the background that will distract from them.

Having access to the tracking speed settings allows photographers to quickly alter the responsiveness of the tracking if they find that it isn't working for them in any given situation.

## Wildlife

### APS-C crop mode

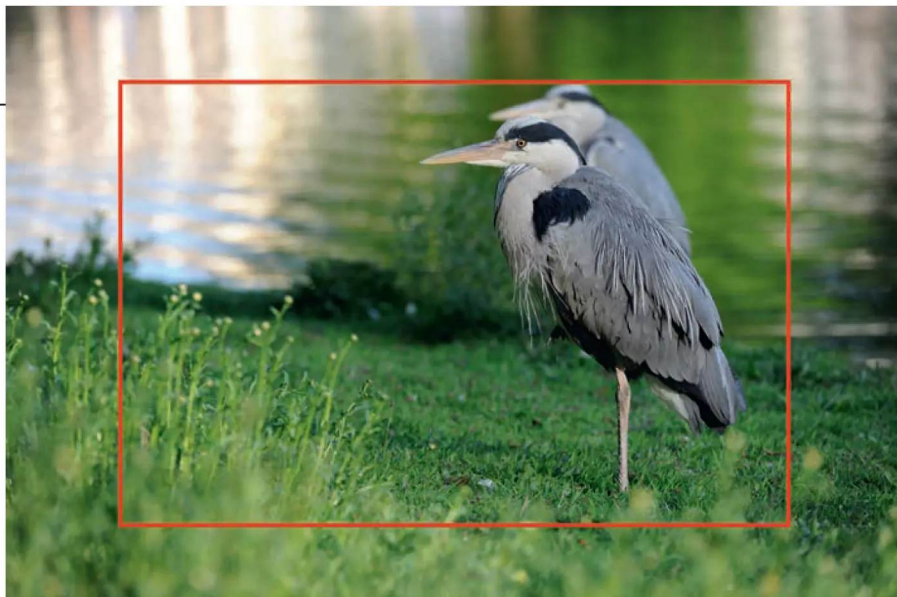
Wildlife (and sports) photographers will want to get as close to their subject as they safely can, but what happens if you still can't get close enough? Most wildlife photographers will use a high-resolution full-frame camera. That means that even when switching to an APS-C crop mode, they will get a 1.5x crop in-camera, and still have a high enough resolution to produce images that can be used in print.

Yes, wildlife photographers can always take the full-resolution image and crop when editing the raw image. But like most photographers there is something more satisfying, and often easier, about composing the shot you want to capture through the viewfinder.

So, find a suitable button on your camera to set to APS-C crop mode to quickly toggle between a cropped mode and full frame. It is a good option for sports photographers too, and can also be used when shooting video, which we will come on to later.

### Expand or change AF area

As wildlife photography is so varied, it is vital to use different autofocus settings depending on the animal being photographed. Quickly changing settings can be the difference between getting the shot and missing it altogether. For precision, many will set their autofocus to autofocus area or point, but when you



© RICHARD SIBLEY

Switching to APS-C crop mode allows wildlife photographers to compose their shots in-camera

need to quickly photograph a bird in flight, these pinpoint precise settings may not be ideal for the situation in hand.

You can solve this problem, and make sure you can adapt to the wildlife around you, by setting a custom button to change the AF to a larger zone or expanded AF area. Then when you notice that the animal you have been photographing is about to sprint, or you spot a rare bird flying overhead, you can press the custom button and give your camera's autofocus a better chance of locking on to the subject so that you get the desired shot.

### Change subject detection

It may seem obvious, but if you are lucky enough to have a camera with advanced subject detection, you can set a custom

button to switch to bird detection, for example, while shooting in a more general animal-detection mode by default.



© ANDY WESTLAKE

Some cameras offer specific animal-detection modes, such as bird detection for accuracy

## Landscape

### Zebra pattering

Preserving highlights can be vital to shooting a good landscape image. Most cameras have a highlight priority metering mode, but one of the features designed for video, zebra pattering, can be useful for helping with manual exposure.

Before setting zebra pattering to a custom button, change its threshold to 100 and assign it a custom button. By pressing the button, you can quickly see any highlights in the image that have become completely blown out and adjust the exposure accordingly. Equally, it allows you to 'shoot to the right' and push the exposure so that the shadow areas have as much detail as possible.

### Focus magnification

Your camera may already have focus magnification set by default so it's activated as soon as you use manual focus and turn



© ANDY WESTLAKE

Zebra pattering shows the highlights in a scene that have become blown out

the lens's focus ring. However, if you have turned this feature off or are using a vintage lens, you can set focus magnification to a

custom button. Being able to magnify the area you wish to focus on enables you to manually focus more accurately.



Left: Set up a custom button to quickly switch to shooting in black & white

## Street photography

### Monochrome

It may not be for everyone, but if you want a more classic street photography look, you can set a custom button to quickly switch to shooting black & white images.

Some cameras may allow you to switch to monochrome or another style directly. However, you may only be able to pull up the image style options menu quickly. Either way, it should save time compared to searching out the option in the menu system. For those who regularly shoot black & white street photography, it may be worth setting a whole custom bank of settings, including black & white, an aperture of  $f/8$  and an appropriate shutter speed, say  $1/250\text{sec}$ , and have the sensitivity set to Auto ISO. When you pull your camera out to shoot all you have to

do is make sure your camera is set to your Custom 1 mode and you will be ready to shoot, regardless of what your camera was previously set to.

### Silent shooting

The last thing you want when taking street photographs (or a wedding or any other type of event) is the beeping sound of autofocus confirmation or a loud shutter firing. Assign a button to switch your camera to silent shooting mode, knowing that you can switch out of it quickly when you want those reassuring sounds or the mechanical shutter.

### Area/zone AF

A lot of street photography requires waiting. Rather than waiting for the light like landscape photographers do, you may be waiting for something to happen. You have found the perfect scene, and now you wait for someone or something to happen within a specific area of it.

In these situations, it can be helpful to quickly select an area of the image that you wish to focus on. Then, when someone walks into that area, the camera won't be distracted by looking for a subject in other parts of the scene.

Set a custom button to select either the AF area menu or even a specific area, if possible, on your camera.

© RICHARD SIBBLEY



Having a button assigned to Eye AF will allow you to quickly lock focus on to the eyes



Assigning a button to switch your camera to silent shooting mode is handy for events

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## Video

### APS-C crop mode

We've already mentioned this as an option for wildlife (and sports) photographers, but it deserves a special mention for those shooting videos. The vast majority of contemporary full-frame sensor cameras can still shoot in 4K in an APS-C crop mode, meaning that you can get a valuable 1.5x crop without any drop in resolution (although there may be other considerations, depending on your camera). This is useful if you are travelling light with limited lens options. A 16-35mm focal length can offer you a 52.5mm equivalent at the longer end, which is an excellent range for many styles of video.

### Manual image stabilisation

If there is one thing filmmakers love, it is shooting with vintage lenses. Without communication between the vintage lens and camera, the camera won't know the focal length of the lens attached, which helps the in-camera stabilisation know how much to compensate.

If you regularly use a vintage prime lens for filming, you can set a manual focal length and, depending on your camera, have a button to select this focal length or



© ANDY WESTLAKE

Set the focal length of a vintage lens with a custom button to improve in-camera stabilisation

switch between auto and manual lens focal lengths for stabilisation.

### Focus peaking

One of the most valuable functions for shooting video is focus peaking. It highlights the edges it believes are in focus and is surprisingly accurate.

Focus magnification is also an option, but depending on where the subject you wish to focus on is in the frame, it can be awkward to use while recording. Focus peaking can be switched on and off while recording, making it an extremely useful tool for manually focusing.



© ANDY WESTLAKE

Focus peaking is very useful for video so it's a good idea to have a button assigned for it

## Other

### Flash

How the camera operates with flashguns depends on which brand you are using and the type of flash. Flash can be very fiddly, with many different options, but you can make things easier by setting a custom button to pull up the flash compensation. This allows you to make quick adjustments to the power of the flash.

Another useful custom button for flash is the ability to fire any compatible wireless flashguns without taking a photo. This allows you to check that everything is



© ANDY WESTLAKE

Set a custom button to adjust flash compensation so you can make quick adjustments

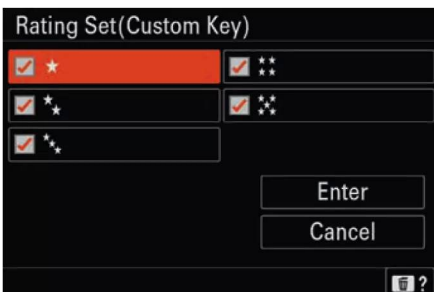
communicating and working without committing to taking a picture.

Have a search through your flash menu and see if any other flash options could save you time.

### Image rating

A handy custom button in Playback mode allows you to add an image rating. While it

is possible to have one button that cycles through various options from 1 to 5 stars, we recommend selecting one rating, let's say 4\*. By pressing the custom button when viewing the image, you can rate it as 4\*. This rating gets embedded in the EXIF for that image, making it easy to find your initial selection of good shots when using your image browser software.



A handy custom button in Playback mode allows you to add an image rating



# Design a book

Many of us have thought about writing a book, but with Affinity Publisher you can design one too – and it's easier than you might think

In our previous Affinity Publisher walkthroughs we've shown how to make a business card, letterhead and compliments slips, a banner for your website and an email signature. We've used the same building blocks and branding to create an exhibition poster and a leaflet describing your business. We'll finish with something which could actually earn some money – an ebook.

In fact, this could be either an ebook or a regular printed book – or both. The document we create in Affinity Publisher can be sold via your website, used as a promotional giveaway, or as training material if you teach photographic courses. But you can also send it to a commercial printer for regular printing – you just need to get proper print and sizing specifications from them first. Be aware, though, that book printing is an expensive business that takes a good deal of cash up front for uncertain returns – that's why ebooks are so popular.

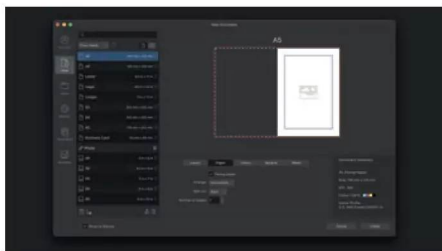
Creating a book in Affinity Publisher is no more difficult than creating some of the documents in our earlier videos. Publisher is perfect for long-form content like books and also has all the tools you need for contemporary and inspiring covers.

To go along with this, we'll introduce two final ideas in this tutorial. One is text auto-flow and the other is text styles.

So far in this series we've been putting text in individual self-contained text frames, but in a book the text runs on from one page to the next, and you want it to reflow automatically if you make text changes. This is easy to do, and we'll show you how. The idea of text styles is important too. You may use them already in word processing documents, but they're even more useful in professional publications, where text styles can dramatically speed up text formatting and also give the consistency of appearance that professional publications need. To get a free trial, see [affinity.serif.com/en-gb/](http://affinity.serif.com/en-gb/)

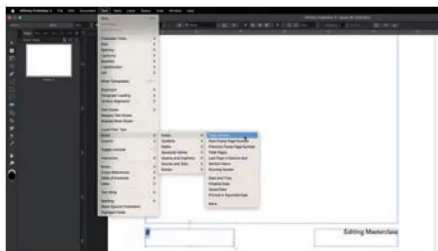


## STEP BY STEP WALKTHROUGH



### 1 Creating a new document

Let's start right from the beginning by creating a new document. We have to choose a size, so let's go for A5. There are some more things to check. There is an A5 option near the top of the list, but we need the pages to be in the vertical format. Next, in the Pages tab, make sure the Facing pages box is checked. We don't need to worry about the Colour, Margin and Bleed tabs right now.



### 2 Items for the Master Page

There's some regular page furniture that we need to think about, such as the page number and the book title, and the logical place for all this is on the Master page. To add the page number, we create a new text frame at the bottom and use the Text>Insert>Fields>Page Number command to insert a special character which will automatically display page numbers in our document.



### 3 Adding our text

So let's go back to our document. Now we just need some text! For this we can start by dragging out a new text frame to match the main margin guides, then use the File>Place command to locate a text file we prepared earlier. Here's the imported text. What you can see straight away is that there's too much text for the box – there's overflow. The text is still there but is not yet visible.





# Reader Portfolio

Spotlight on readers' excellent images and how they captured them



## Andy Compton, Herefordshire



### About Andy

Andy especially enjoys photographing people, but also has four or five mini-projects running at any one time. They vary from church interiors to street art, local characters and cats and dogs. See [www.instagram.com/andycompo](http://www.instagram.com/andycompo).

### How and why did you get into photography?

When I was 15 I watched a film about a photographer who was travelling the world, taking pictures. I thought, 'That looks fun, and I'd get paid!' I then decided I would be a photographer.

### What do you love about photography?

Photography enables me to keep my mind active in a positive way. It gives me focus (pun intended) and helps divert my mind away from the stresses of life. We all have tough times in one way or another. I make a concerted effort to divert my imagination away from stresses to prospective photographs and projects. It also gets me out and about meeting people. In the early days I had to confront my shyness when I approached people to ask to take their picture.

### Favourite photographers

When starting out, I wrote to AP columnist Vic Blackman to ask how to be a press photographer. He advised me to 'Work hard and not to give up!' Other favourites: Martin Parr, David Hurn, Philip Dunn and photographer friend Leslie Jarrett.

### What was your first camera?

I was 15 in 1979. My dad loaned me £54 to buy a Praktica EE2 Camera. I worked on two paper rounds (morning and evening) to pay him back!

### Current camera kit

Sony A7 for studio work. Nikon D300S for press work (I take the occasional picture for my local paper, the *Mid Wales Journal*). Panasonic Lumix GX80 for travel because it is compact and light.

### Favourite lens

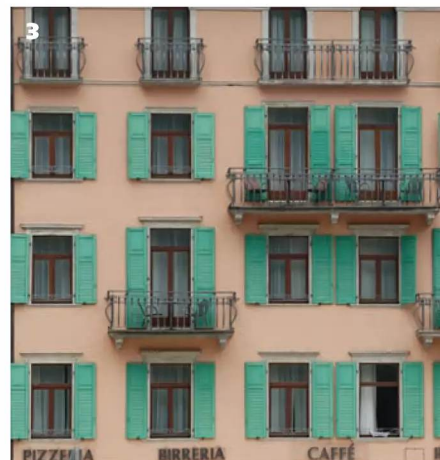
Nikon 80-200mm and Lumix 20mm f/1.7

### About your photos

While on holiday with my wife Karen we were both fascinated with the colourful houses, windows and doors in the villages surrounding Lake Garda in Italy. I like the colours, patterns and simplicity of the designs. I used a long 45-150mm Panasonic zoom lens, which enabled me to stand further back from the buildings to lessen converging verticals. Then I used the perspective correction tool in Corel Paintshop Pro to straighten the vertical lines in some images.

### Favourite tips

Take pictures of what you enjoy, not what you think other people will like or for social media likes. Photographs are like a good meal, it is a matter of taste, if somebody doesn't like your image don't take it to heart. As long as you enjoyed the process of taking it and the result, that is all that matters!



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**Submit your images**

See page 3 for details of how to submit. You could see your photos here in a future issue! Please note: the prize is subject to change.



**A Window, a Lamp and Two Colours**

**1** Taken in Riva Del Garda, northern Italy. All the images on these pages are from my mini-project on windows on Italian buildings.

Panasonic Lumix DMC-GX80, 45-150mm lens, 1/1300sec at f/8, ISO 400

**Six Windows, One Colour**

**2** Taken in Riva Del Garda.

Panasonic Lumix DMC-GX80, 45-150mm lens, 1/640sec at f/9, ISO 400

**Twenty-four Windows, One Colour**

**3** Taken in Riva Del Garda, northern Italy.

Panasonic Lumix DMC-GX80, 45-150mm lens, 1/400sec at f/10, ISO 400

**Two Windows, One Colour**

**4** Taken in Riva Del Garda, northern Italy.

Panasonic Lumix DMC-GX80, 45-150mm lens, 1/160sec at f/7.1, ISO 200

**One Colour, Two Windows**

**5** Location unknown.

Panasonic Lumix DMC-GX80, 45-150mm lens, 1/000sec at f/7.1, ISO 200



## At a glance

£1599

- 40.2MP APS-C X-Trans CMOS 5 HR sensor
- Fixed 35mm equivalent f/2 lens
- In-Body Image Stabilisation
- Hybrid optical / electronic viewfinder
- Two-way tilting touchscreen
- ISO 125-12,800 (standard)
- 6.2K 30p, 4K 60p, and 1080 240p video
- Available in silver or black



# Fujifilm X100VI

**Joshua Waller** reviews the X100VI – successor to the cult-classic X100V – which gains a 40.2MP sensor and, for the first time in an X100-series camera, in-body image stabilisation

## For and against

- ➕ In-body image stabilisation
- ➕ Detailed, crisp images
- ➕ Unique design and handling
- ➕ One-of-a-kind hybrid viewfinder
- ➕ 6.2K video recording
- ➖ Fixed lens will not be for everyone
- ➖ Full weather-sealing costs extra

## Data file

Sensor	40MP X-Trans, 23.5mm x 15.7mm
Output size	6864 x 5152
Lens	35mm equivalent, f/2
Shutter speeds	30 sec - 1/4000sec (mechanical); 30sec - 1/180,000sec electronic
Sensitivity	ISO 125-12,800 (standard); ISO 64-51,200 (extended)
Exposure modes	PASM
Metering	Multi, spot, average, centre weighted
Exposure comp	+/- 5EV in 0.3EV steps
Continuous shooting	11fps; 20fps with electronic shutter and 1.29x crop
Screen	3in, 1.62-dot tilting touchscreen
Viewfinder	Optical or 3.69m-dot, 0.66x EVF
AF points	117 or 425
Video	6K 30p, 4K 60p, or Full HD 240p
External mic	2.5mm stereo
Memory card	UHS-I SD
Power	NP-W125S Li-ion
Battery life	450 shots
Dimensions	128x74.8x55.3mm
Weight	521g

The Fujifilm X100VI, pronounced 'Six', is the firm's latest X100-series camera. The previous X100V was infamous for a multitude of reasons, notably for combining gorgeous retro styling with modern high-spec digital imaging. It's been featured on numerous videos, gone viral on TikTok, and due to high demand, has been incredibly hard to find.

Fujifilm's new X100VI includes several major updates, and importantly, the firm says it has increased manufacturing capacity, which should mean you might actually be able to buy one! The X100V itself has been discontinued.

## Features

With the same 40.2MP X-Trans 5 sensor and X-Processor 5 as in the excellent Fujifilm X-T5, you get

a number of new features in the X100VI. These include subject-recognition autofocus and tracking, with birds, planes, and automobiles all being detected. There's also human face and eye detection, but this is configured using a separate menu setting, which is a shame.

Thanks to that 40MP sensor, you can now use 1.4x and 2.0x digital teleconverter options and still get useful resolution images. The 1.4x teleconverter gives 20MP files at a 50mm equivalent view, whilst the 2.0x teleconverter gives 10MP at 70mm equivalent.

The new processor promises 20% reduced power consumption. However, the new in-body image stabilisation system, which gives up to 6 stops of shake reduction, does take back some of this power. Overall, this means that battery life is slightly improved at




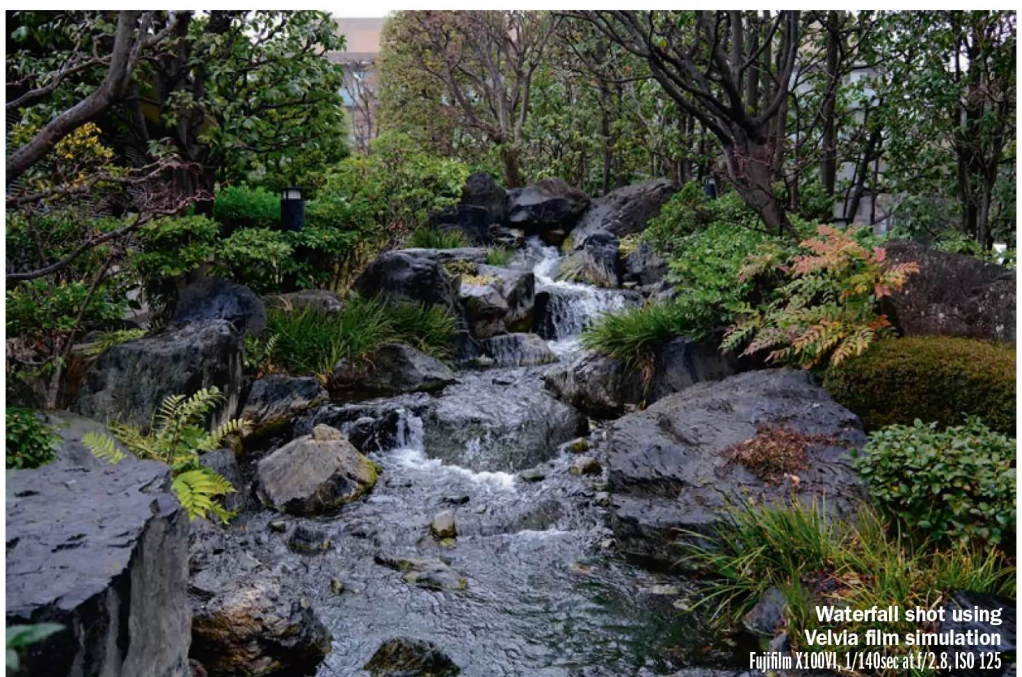


The addition of in-body stabilisation aids handheld shooting in low light  
Fujifilm X100VI, 1/34sec at f/2, ISO 200

450 shots vs 420 shots on the X100V, when using the OVF. However, it's shorter when using the EVF or LCD screen. The same NP-126S battery is employed as in many other Fujifilm models, including the previous two generations of X100.

The new IBIS system adds 48g to the weight, which is now 521g with battery and memory card, compared to 473g for the X100V. The camera is also 2mm thicker overall, with a slightly more prominent lens that's 1.5mm longer at the front. The body is only 0.5mm thicker.

Other dimensions remain the same, and this means that the camera is still compatible with all the same accessories as before, including cases, straps, and so on. It's also compatible with the existing screw-on wideangle and teleconverters. 



Waterfall shot using Velvia film simulation  
Fujifilm X100VI, 1/140sec at f/2.8, ISO 125



**The fixed 35mm equivalent lens delivers impressive levels of detail**  
Fujifilm X100VI, 1/160sec at f/3.2, ISO 125

➤ The camera body retains the same level of weather-sealing as the X100V, which means it's still necessary to add a lens adapter or filter kit for complete protection.

You can shoot at 11fps using the mechanical leaf shutter, or up to 20fps with the electronic

shutter. The fastest shutter speed is an incredible 1/180,000sec when using the electronic shutter.

Like the X-T5, the camera features AI Auto White Balance, which uses AI deep learning to give you improved colour reproduction. You also get the

option of Warm, Auto and Cool auto white balance to suit the mood of the scene, or simply your preferred look. There are now 20 Film Simulation colour modes available, with REALA ACE being the latest to join the line-up.

### Design and handling

Externally, the X100VI uses much the same classic styling and layout as before. It has dials on top for shutter speed, ISO and exposure compensation, plus aperture and manual focus rings around the lens. There's a small joystick on the back to move the focus point and change settings, and a fairly minimal array of other buttons.

As with the X100V, you can either use the dedicated dials to change shutter speed, ISO, and exposure compensation, or alternatively you can control these settings with the front and rear command wheels as needed. The top-right button

can be customised.

The shutter speed dial is found on top, with timed settings from 1/4000sec to 1 with A (automatic) as well as T/B. With this set to T, you can adjust the shutter speed using the command wheel.

The exposure compensation dial is not locking, and therefore can potentially be knocked accidentally. However I didn't find this a huge problem. Set the dial to its C position, and you can change exposure compensation using a control dial.

To adjust the ISO speed, you pull the shutter speed dial up, and the window shows you the setting. You can leave this set to A for automatic, or C to control the ISO speed using the command wheel. As you need to pull up the dial to adjust the ISO, this means that when it's down, it's locked into place. If you do use the shutter speed dial to set the shutter speed,



**Cherry blossom close-up**  
Fujifilm X100VI, 1/160sec at f/3.2, ISO 125

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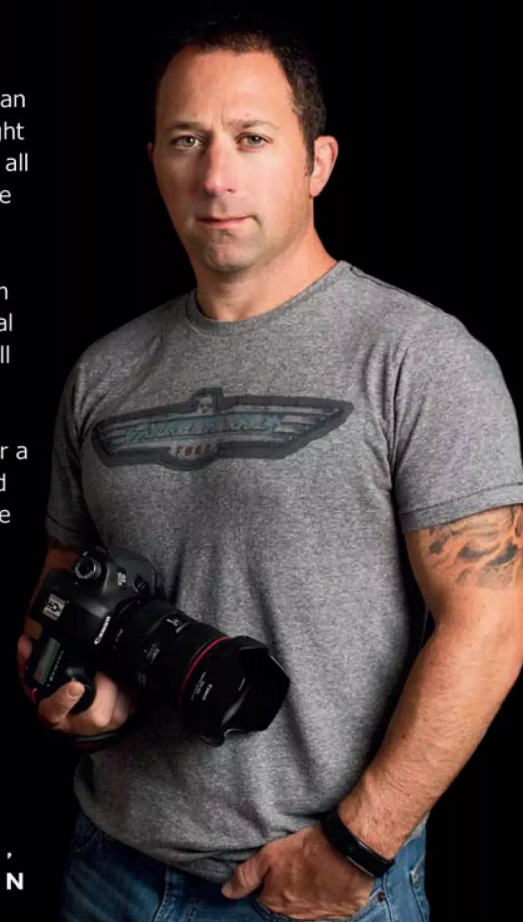
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➤ then the window can end up in the wrong place, making it harder to read this setting.

When taking pictures, the camera gives a pleasingly quiet and sophisticated shutter release sound, thanks to the leaf shutter. You can also choose from three electronic shutter noises, and adjust the volume level.

The aperture ring gives direct markings from f/2.0 to f/16, with one-third steps in-between, and at the end of this is the A (for automatic) setting. When both the aperture and shutter speed are set to A, you can adjust the shutter speed/aperture setting with a command dial.

The manual focus ring can be customised to your own tastes, as needed, so you can set it to adjust the film simulation mode, or the digital zoom/crop setting, for example. This is an electronic focus-by-wire control, so when using it for manual focus, there is no physical stop at the end of each focus point.

The Q/Quick menu button is quite small, but something you soon get used to. When you press this, you bring up the quick menu, and this gives fast access to a number of different settings. As the camera has direct access to the main shooting controls, you shouldn't need to use this too much, but if you do then you can quickly navigate using the joystick and command wheel to change settings. You can also use the touchscreen to select and adjust settings, however, this feels a little bit slower.

The menus are relatively clear, but can take a while to navigate. There's some slowness when

switching from the photo menus to the setup menus, as the camera will pause for a split second to close the shutter and OVf. There's also an even longer delay when switching into the video resolution settings. This was the same on the X100V, and it seems strange that these parts of the camera still feel slow and not as polished. Like other cameras, there's a 'MyMenu' section where you can add your favourite settings, for quicker access. However, it's a shame there's no search function.

### Viewfinder and screen

Probably the X100 line's most distinctive feature is its unique hybrid viewfinder, which can be switched between electronic and optical views. The latter gives an experience much like a classic rangefinder camera, but with the latest AF features.

The optical / electronic viewfinder is a truly unique experience, letting you choose between a great optical viewfinder or a great electronic viewfinder, with the added bonus of an electronic overlay over the optical view if you want. You can even have a small digital EVF in the corner of the optical viewfinder showing a magnified view of the focus area. The switch on the front of the camera lets you select between the different viewfinder modes and displays, and its central button can also be customised.

In comparison there are very few current digital cameras with any kind of optical viewfinder outside of DSLRs and digital rangefinders. This means

## Focal points

In terms of design, the X100VI closely resembles its predecessor, but is fractionally thicker

### IBIS

5-axis in-body image stabilisation has been added with very little change in size, and only a slight increase in weight.

### Sensor

The camera gets a boost in resolution thanks to the same 40.2MP sensor as used in the X-T5 and the X-H2.

### Viewfinder

The hybrid optical / electronic viewfinder continues to offer a unique shooting experience.



### Classic design

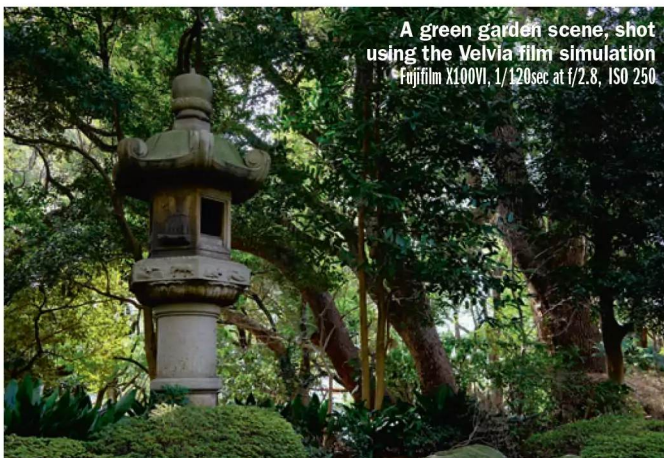
The X100VI has the same sensor and processor as the X-T5, but with the analogue soul that's the hallmark of the X100 series.

### Connectors

On the side there are 2.5mm mic/remote, USB-C, and mini-HDMI ports. The shutter button accepts a screw-in cable release.

### Power

Fujifilm has used the same NP-W126S battery as before, with a 450-shot rating.



A green garden scene, shot using the Velvia film simulation  
 • Fujifilm X100VI, 1/120sec at f/2.8, ISO 250





A photoshoot in Tokyo  
Fujifilm X100VI, 1/240sec at f/4, ISO 125

your choices tend to be at the very budget end of the market, with the charming Camp Snap Camera, or at the very top of the budget, with the somewhat eye-wateringly expensive Leica cameras.

Below the viewfinder is a super-slim and flush-fitting tilting screen, which is great for discreet shooting. This makes the X100VI an absolute delight to use.

## Performance

With in-body image stabilisation (IBIS), the camera moves the sensor to compensate for any camera movement. I was able to get sharp shots when shooting handheld at shutter speeds as slow as 1/8 or 1/4sec. At slower speeds than this, images were blurred for me. However, your own results may differ depending on how steadily you can hold the camera.

It's impossible to talk about Fujifilm colour without mentioning the film simulation modes, of which there are now 20, with REALA ACE joining the collection. You also have black & white filters, for the vintage look.

However, the film simulations are just part of the conversation, as you can go beyond this and adjust a whole host of other settings that affect the colour and look of images, with options to add grain, etc.

If this sounds like a daunting task, then you can look up film 'recipes' online, where you'll find the settings to change, in order to recreate your favourites from film days from other film companies, and beyond.

I was wondering whether the Fujinon 23mm f/2.0 II lens would be able to work well with a 40MP sensor, as the higher resolution sensor is likely to make any lens weaknesses all the more obvious. However, my concerns were very quickly gone, and I can confirm that the lens is capable of resolving an impressive level of detail across the entire frame. When viewing close-up onscreen, fine details remain crisp and clear even into the corners.

If you do view images at 100%, then you can see some signs of chromatic aberration, with purple fringing becoming visible towards the corners of the frame.

However, this was not a huge problem, and is easily corrected if needed in image-editing software.

You can focus on subjects that are 10cm away from the front of the lens, and this gives some pleasing results. The background blur/bokeh looks very pleasing as well, helping to separate the subject.

There's a 4-stop ND filter built in, and this can be used when needed to reduce the shutter speed for both stills and video.

When using this, there does appear to be a slight colour shift, with the photo produced having a cooler tone.

Exposure is reliable, with very little need to adjust the exposure compensation except for your own personal preferences. Dynamic range captured in JPEG images straight out of the camera is good. But if you do want to capture more highlight detail, then you can adjust the DR settings with DR100, DR200 and DR400 options available.

## Video recording

You can record 6.2K video at 30fps, and you can also record 4K 30fps video downsampled from 6.2K for maximum detail. Alternatively you can shoot in 4K up to 60fps, if you want regular 4K, not downsampled from 6.2K. The stabilisation system works fairly well, but for best results you do need steady hands, and it does not appear to match other camera systems. An additional electronic stabilisation can be switched on which helps.

Without a mode dial on the camera, to switch to the video mode you use the drive mode button and scroll to the video mode. It's not the most elegant way to switch to a video mode, and it feels like the X100VI's primary aim is to be a stills photography camera.

## Verdict



THE FUJIFILM X100VI is, without doubt, a gorgeous and highly desirable camera, and one that remains up there with one of the most beautiful digital cameras ever made. But with the new model, you also get Fujifilm's latest technological advancements, including advanced subject-detection autofocus tracking.

The X100 series has already reached cult status with the four-year-old X100V, and it's difficult to see how this will change with the X100VI. It's an enjoyable camera to look at, an enjoyable camera to hold, and an enjoyable camera to shoot photos with. The photos you get back look great too, although whether you need 40MP rather than 'just' 26MP will be up to you.

With Fujifilm's track record of beautiful colour science, via its Film Simulation modes, this will be a camera that's capable of delivering the goods, time and time again. If you are looking for a stylish and high-performing fixed-lens compact, then there's very little to dislike here, and a whole lot to love.

Whilst the compact 35mm equivalent f/2 lens isn't the fastest in the world in terms of focusing speeds, it is plenty quick enough for the majority of shots, and gives an improvement over the X100V's focusing speeds.

If you are happy with a fixed lens, then you'll be rewarded with something special. If you've been turned cold by cameras that have no soul, then this is one hell of a camera.





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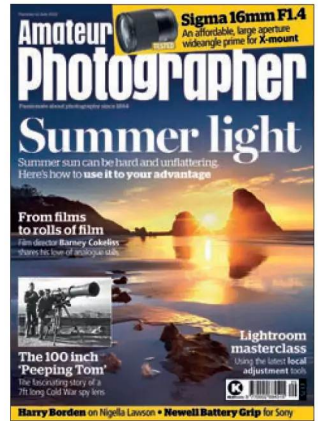
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The ultra-wideangle camera gives pleasing images  
Samsung Galaxy S24 Ultra, 1/1200sec at f/2.2, ISO 50



# Samsung Galaxy S24 Ultra

Samsung's latest flagship promises to be the ultimate camera phone, but how does it stack up?

**Joshua Waller** investigates

Replacing the S23 Ultra, the Galaxy S24 Ultra is the flagship camera phone from Samsung. This smartphone adds a vast array of AI photography features, which is likely to make it one of the best phones for photography ever released. But how does it perform?

## New AI features

When introducing the new S24 series, Samsung was very keen to explain that we are now entering the 'Era of AI' – with AI becoming a part of every new smartphone announced. In fact, it's been in many phones for a while, for example subject detection AI has featured on



## At a glance

From £1249 (256GB)

- 200MP 23mm equivalent f/1.7 main camera, OIS
- 12MP 13mm equiv. f/2.2 ultra-wideangle
- 10MP 69mm equiv. f/2.4 telephoto, OIS
- 50MP 115mm equiv. f/3.4 5x telephoto, OIS
- 12MP f/2.2 selfie camera with PDAF
- 8K 30fps video, 4K 120/60/30fps
- 6.8in screen, 1-120Hz, 2600nits
- Snapdragon 8 Gen 3 processor



## Pros and Cons

- + Slightly improved image quality
- + Massively improved screen
- + Added AI features
- + Useful reflection removal
- Macro mode lags others
- Shutter lag with fast-moving subjects
- 45W charging is looking slow



Images shot using 10x zoom include good amounts of detail  
Samsung Galaxy S24 Ultra, 1/170sec at f/3.4, ISO 32

➤ Samsung phones for years. The new generation of AI, introduced with the S24 series, is being used for both photography when you take the photo, and when you edit the photos. It employs both on-phone AI technology when shooting, and a mix of on-device and cloud-based AI features when editing.

Photography features are now improved with an 'AI ProVisual engine' which is said to improve night photography, noise performance, zoom quality, colour reproduction, as well as HDR (High Dynamic Range) imaging.

On this note, Samsung's latest SuperHDR feature now includes a real-time preview so you can see what it'll look like before you take the photo. There's also support for HDR shooting in third-party apps like Instagram and Snapchat, as well as an improved HDR gallery.

The S24 Ultra also uses AI tools with its 50MP 5x telephoto camera to improve the image quality when shooting at 10x zoom. The sensor in this camera is not only a higher resolution than the 10MP sensor in the previous phone, but it's also

larger, which Samsung says will give improved low-light performance.

One AI feature that particularly stands out as useful is the new 'Reflection removal (AI)' feature. Other on-device AI photo-editing features include Portrait effect, Background blur, and Remaster photo. The options available will differ depending on what subjects the phone detects. In-cloud AI based features include removing, moving, and resizing objects (just like Google's Magic Editor). There's also generative fill – for example if you want to rotate an image, it can then fill in the missing bits.

Samsung says that the metadata will include whether AI features have been used in editing, to ensure that there is clarity and transparency around these features. A watermark will also be added to the image, that can't be removed with Samsung's own AI tools.

AI can also be used to generate intermediate frames in video. For example, letting you create slow-motion footage from your videos, after you've recorded

them. The phone can record 8K video at normal frame rates (up to 30fps), as well as 4K video at up to 120fps.

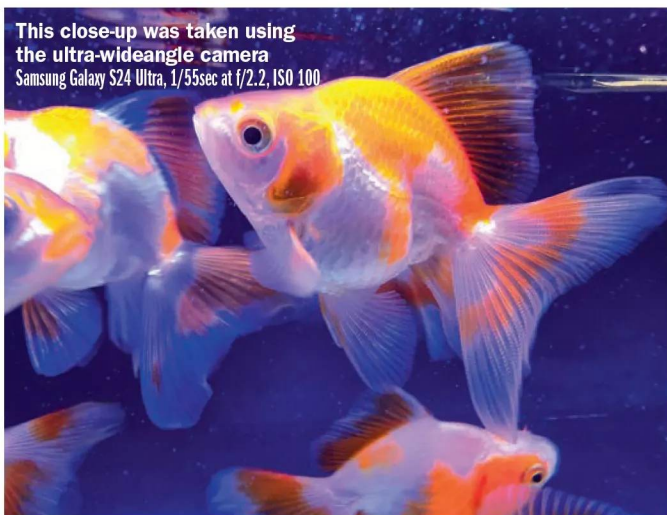
AI features aren't just limited to photography, either. They're also available for search, translation, transcribing and more.

### Build and design

The S24 Ultra design may, at first glance, look remarkably like the S22 and S23 Ultra. But the screen, and back, are no longer curved, and this gives the phone a slightly more business-like appearance. The cameras also take up a bit more space on the back. Samsung is promising an impressive seven years of software and security updates.

The screen uses Corning Gorilla Glass Armor, which is said to have 4x stronger scratch protection while reducing glare by 75%. Gorilla Glass Victus 2 is used on the back, and the frame is made from titanium. The screen also offers a brightness of up to 2600nits, which is seriously bright, although not quite as bright as that offered by the OnePlus 12. The reduction in

This close-up was taken using the ultra-wideangle camera  
Samsung Galaxy S24 Ultra, 1/55sec at f/2.2, ISO 100





Images are bright and colourful  
Samsung Galaxy S24 Ultra, 1/240sec at f/3.4, ISO 40

glare and reflections is really noticeable, and impressive, especially when you see this next to another phone.

### Camera app

The camera app is very similar to those seen on previous Samsung phones like the S22 and S23 series. If you've kept your phone up to date, then you shouldn't see much difference between the models except for the new AI features. These should be coming to the S23 series later.

One instantly visible change is that instead of just four default zoom options, there are now five, with a choice of 0.6x, 1x, 3x, 5x and 10x. The options available in the Portrait mode have likewise been updated. So instead of just 1x and 3x (on the S22 Ultra), you now have 1, 2, 3 and 5x options available, giving a really extensive range of portrait lenses. You can adjust the blur as well as other options, including the backdrop, as well as using the night mode for night portraits.

### AI editing

Using the generative fill to straighten an image, and expand the image, does a reasonable job if there isn't much noteworthy in the edges of the frame. However,

if there are houses or things with detail, then you can expect these to be smudged out. It's a shame that the camera doesn't simply use a second photo taken using the ultra-wideangle camera to expand the photo when using the normal or telephoto cameras.

You can also use the tool to remove objects from the frame. However, I had mixed results when trying to remove a car from the image. The phone replaced the car with a different AI-generated car, just in a different colour. We expect, and hope, that this will be improved with future updates, as it doesn't quite match the experience on Google phones.

### Performance

The Samsung Galaxy S24 Ultra gives bright, colourful images, with good levels of saturation. Exposure and dynamic range are very good, and most of the time you get consistent results without any focus issues. However, it's when you start pushing the cameras to the limit that your image quality might drop. More on this later.

First let's look at the ultra-wide-angle camera. This is a 12MP f/2.2 camera that gives a 13mm equivalent. Importantly, this

camera features autofocus, which means it can be used for close-up photos. The results from this camera are good, although, as with most ultra-wideangles, there is noticeable distortion towards the corners, and the image does get a little bit softer. Overall though, the results are really pleasing, with image quality only really dropping in low light, or when taking close-up photos.

The main camera employs a 200MP sensor, with 16-in-1 pixel binning to give 12.5MP images. For most people leaving the camera on the default resolution

is likely to be the best option, but if you want, you can also shoot at 50MP or 200MP. However, you'll need to be prepared to have much larger, and therefore, slower to process images.

The camera can struggle with moving subjects, and it seems like a missed opportunity that the camera's AI technology doesn't detect moving subjects and increase the shutter speed accordingly. For example, when photographing animals I missed a large number of shots due to the shutter speed being too slow.

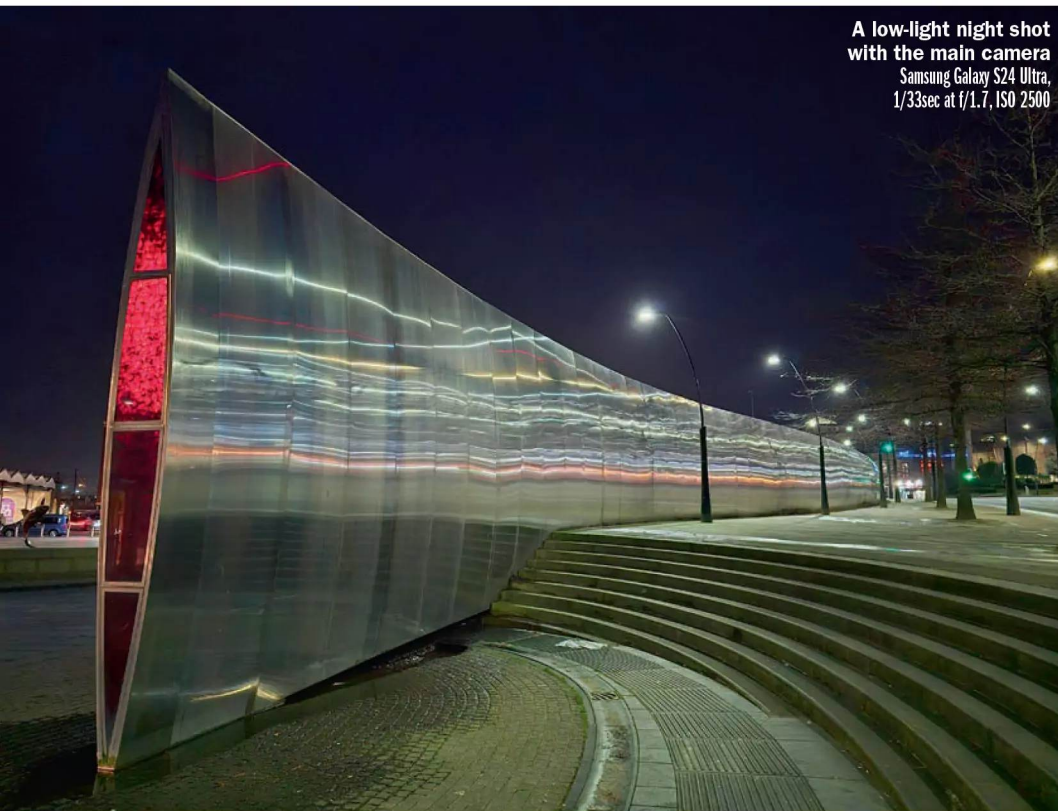
For low-light photography, there's an improvement over the S22 Ultra. But the difference is quite subtle, with a tendency for reds to be over-exposed. You can use the 3x and 5x cameras for low-light, but noise is quite high.

The 10MP f/2.4 3x telephoto camera gives a 69mm equivalent view. It's great for distant shots, with very good results in good lighting conditions. But if you want to try to take photos of close-up subjects, such as cats, then unfortunately the device will decide to crop from the main camera, even in good light, giving you a much lower quality image.

Compared to previous Samsung 'Ultra' flagships, the big difference is the replacement of the older 10x telephoto with a 5x lens, and 10x via AI-assisted digital zoom. In good lighting conditions, the S22 Ultra's 10x telephoto camera provides a little bit more fine detail, when compared to the 10x zoom on the S24 Ultra. But there's really very little in it, unless



The new 5x telephoto lens gives pretty sharp results  
Samsung Galaxy S24 Ultra, 1/50s at f/3.4, ISO 400



A low-light night shot with the main camera  
Samsung Galaxy S24 Ultra,  
1/33sec at f/1.7, ISO 2500

## Verdict



THE SAMSUNG Galaxy S24 Ultra gains some interesting updates, notably in style and design. In terms of photography, it brings improvements in the general image quality. Beyond this, new AI tools can help improve photos further, with reflection reduction being particularly welcome. There are now Google/Adobe style AI editing tools, including generative fill and moving or deleting objects, but with mixed results.

One area where I'd like to see more photographic tools is in the shooting experience. For example, where are the slow-motion/long-exposure shooting modes? These can be found on competitors like Google, Vivo, Xiaomi, etc. The macro shooting experience and results could be better, too. I'd also really love to see an improvement in shutter speeds and shutter lag.

Having said all this, for those that simply want the best camera phone from a mainstream brand, the S24 Ultra is without doubt one of the top contenders. There are other Android brands too, but often, their flagship models are only available in select markets. Until that changes, the S24 Ultra is the best Android phone you can buy right now.

## Specifications

<b>Main camera</b> 200MP f/1.7 main camera, with OIS, 1/1.3in, 23mm	<b>Video</b> 8K 30fps video, 4K 120/60/30fps
<b>Ultra-wideangle camera</b> 12MP f/2.2 ultra-wide-angle camera (0.6x), 13mm	<b>Screen</b> 6.8in, 1-120Hz, 2,600nits, with Corning Gorilla Glass Armor
<b>Telephoto cameras</b> 10MP f/2.4 3x telephoto camera, with OIS, 69mm	<b>Battery</b> Titanium frame, 5000mAh battery
<b>Selfie camera</b> 12MP f/2.2 PDAF	<b>Dimensions</b> 162.3x79x8.6mm
	<b>Weight</b> 232g

➤ you spend all your time pixel-peeping on a computer screen.

In low light, the S24 Ultra's telephoto camera does a significantly better job. But it isn't as good as the main camera with its much larger sensor. Ultimately most people are going to find having a 3x and a 5x zoom (along with a 10x) a better option than having to jump from 3x to 10x zoom (as on the S22/S23 Ultra previously).

When it comes to macro shooting, things can get a little bit frustrating. By default, if you point the phone at a close-up object, it will switch from the main camera to the ultra-wide-angle camera and give you a cropped (and distorted-looking) photo, as well as lower quality in low light. Switch to the 3x setting, and the phone will crop from the 1x camera – giving a pixellated, but relatively pleasing-looking, image. Switch to the 5x or 10x settings, and the phone will again crop, this time from the 3x camera, giving a pixellated image.

It's quite frustrating, and it doesn't advise you what's going on until you look at the EXIF data

after you've taken the shot. Overall, the 5x option looks to give the best results. But with some other phones, you can use the telephoto camera for gorgeous-looking close-ups. The Vivo X100 Pro's 4.3x telephoto periscope camera is particularly impressive.

Like its predecessors, the S24 Ultra has a 12MP f/2.2 selfie camera with autofocus. This will help with selfies and group portraits as the camera can focus on the correct area, rather than having fixed focus like many other phones. It'll also give benefits to video and vlogging, with the camera being capable of 4K recording.

I found results were pleasing, with good colours, good exposure, and reliable focus. Background blur can be applied when taking the photo, or afterwards in editing, and the results are very good, even with a lot of fine detail.

The 4K video mode gives you the choice of 60fps or 30fps. Results look very good, and you can switch between the different cameras, whilst filming, with 0.6, 1, 3, 5 and 10x options available. If you use these

on-screen options the zoom jumps quickly between the zooms. However you can also use your finger and slide smoothly from 0.6x all the way to 20x, and this gives a really good amount of zoom, and smooth-looking video with fairly minimal 'jump' between the cameras.

### Value for money

The obvious alternatives in the flagship sector are the Google Pixel 8 Pro and iPhone 15 Pro Max. But with just three cameras on the back, do they really compete with the S24 Ultra? Well, if you want a 5x telephoto camera and a 3x telephoto camera, then the S24 Ultra clearly wins.

In terms of pricing, the S24 Ultra is priced at £1,249 (256GB), whereas the Google Pixel 8 Pro is cheaper, at £999/£1,059 (128/256GB) and the iPhone 15 Pro Max is slightly cheaper at £1,199 (256GB). If you go outside of these choices, last year's S23 Ultra can be found for much less, and will also be getting AI features as an update. It offers a 3x telephoto camera along with a 10x telephoto camera.





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# Billingham 445 MKII

**Andy Westlake** examines this updated top-quality British-made camera bag

● £474 ● [billingham.co.uk](http://billingham.co.uk)

Billingham's premium British-made camera bags have long been favoured by photographers in need of hard-wearing protection for their kit. The firm has now updated its long-running 5-series shoulder bags to 'MKII' versions, mainly by adding a trolley strap on the back and including a 'V-Bridge' divider. Here we're looking at the second largest in the line-up – the Billingham 445 MKII.

Measuring 43x25x30cm externally, this is pretty large as shoulder bags go, which means it can hold a considerable amount of kit. This is the main difference compared to Billingham's popular Hadley models, which are slimmer and more discreet. So where Hadleys are perfect for walking around and shooting, the 5-series are arguably better seen as bags for carrying bigger outfits to a location or event – especially the two larger models.

Internally, the 445 MKII's main compartment is 40cm wide, 25cm tall, and 15cm deep front-to-back. This means it's ideal for holding relatively large items such as pro cameras with vertical grips attached, or longer lenses up to the size of a 100-400mm telezoom. Unsurprisingly, if you fill the bag right up, it can get very heavy, although the large shoulder pad helps alleviate the load.

Billingham's Superflex partitions are used to organise your kit. These are essentially rectangular padded boxes split into two sections, with the aim of holding different size lenses and accessories. My main gripe with the 445 MKII is that the two supplied are relatively short – one is 18cm tall, but the other only 15cm – which makes it difficult to exploit the bag's full height. You can buy additional ones in a wide range of sizes to suit your needs, but this adds to the already high price.

A large pocket at the front will hold a 16in laptop. However it's mostly unpadded, so you'll probably want to use a protective sleeve. There are two additional front 'dump' pockets for accessories, plus a flat zipped pocket on the back that's ideal for documents. A large flap covers the top of the bag for protection against bad weather.

As usual with Billingham, the quality of materials and construction is exceptional. The firm's unique 3-layer canvas, with its waterproof butyl-rubber middle layer, is joined by full-grain leather and brass fittings. This goes a long way to justifying the cost.

## Verdict

There's no doubting the sheer quality of the Billingham 445 MKII – it's a superb bag that should last for decades. However, I think many users may need to buy another Superflex partition or two to make best use of its space.



### Trolley strap

On the back, the MKII bag gains a strap for attaching the bag onto wheeled luggage.

### Extras

Optional add-ons include end pockets, tripod straps, and a stabilising waist strap.



### Superflex

Two partition units are supplied. Additional ones are available in 16 different sizes for £22 each.

### V-Bridge

Now included as standard, this unique divider supports the lens on a camera stored flat (see right).



## At a glance

- Holds a camera, 2-6 lenses, and 16in laptop
- 43x25x30cm (W x D x H)
- 40x15x25cm internal
- 2.32kg weight
- Three colour combinations: khaki/tan, black/black, and sage / chocolate

## BILLINGHAM'S 5-SERIES MKII RANGE

The 5-series MKII range comprises four bags of widely different sizes. The smallest 225 MKII (£425, right) measures 32x22x23cm and holds a camera, 1-3 lenses, and an 11in tablet. The largest 555 MKII (£542) is 47x25x32cm and takes 2 or 3 cameras and 2-6 lenses, plus 16in laptop.





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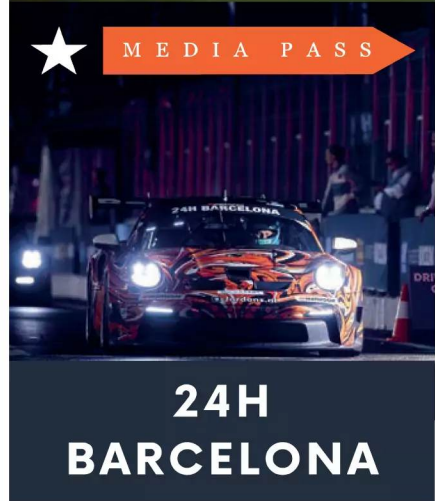
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## Tony Kemplen on the ... Contarex Bullseye

A true system SLR from 1959, the Bullseye was the first Contarex to be made



My dad would have been 100 this year, so for my annual camera project I've decided to use one of his favourite cameras each month. He lived to a ripe old age of 91, so had plenty of time to accumulate photographic bits and bobs. He had a particular soft spot for Zeiss Ikon, with the Contarex Bullseye being one of its more recognisable offerings.

For much of the 20th century, Zeiss and Leitz were the giant rivals of German camera making, the former with the Contax range and the latter with Leica. The Contarex range was introduced in 1959 and was a true system SLR with a host of lenses and accessories. They were large, mechanically complex and expensive; and while capable of superb performance, the rise of Japanese cameras, particularly the Nikons, pushed the Contarex into the margins. The Nikons were smaller and more user-friendly, and dare I say it, more reliable. The fact that Contarexes used a proprietary lens mount, incompatible with lenses made by other firms, didn't help either.



Bollards guard the entrance to a long and gloomy foot tunnel

This is the first Contarex to be made, and is popularly referred to as the Bullseye or Cyclops, the nickname coming from the large Selenium cell smack bang in the middle of the camera's forehead. Four more models followed, minus this magic eye. There was also a fixed-lens ultra-wideangle version and a microscope camera. The last camera to bear the name was made in 1972. Around a dozen lenses were available, but I only have the 50mm f/2.0 Planar.

In the instruction manual, Zeiss speaks of the automatic exposure system, but in 1959 this didn't mean what it does today. Many cameras had built-in exposure meters, but generally they weren't coupled to the shutter and aperture controls, and you had to transfer the readings manually. Automatic in this context means that when you twiddle the knobs to line up an indicator needle, this also adjusts the settings. You decide for

yourself whether to go for aperture or shutter priority, and having made the desired setting, you adjust the other one until the needle lines up in the viewfinder showing that the correct exposure has been set. Unsurprisingly the 60-year-old electronics only work intermittently, so I used a metering app on my phone.

New Year's Day is as good a time as any to kick off a new project, so I loaded up the Contarex with black & white film and went for an urban ramble on the near-deserted streets of Sheffield's Neepsend district, still home to many small factories, but once a much busier manufacturing area. Even in broad daylight I always feel a little nervous going into this long and gloomy foot tunnel under the now-disused Cross-Pennine railway. In the event there was no need to worry, but at the back of my mind was the thought that at 1.2kg the Bullseye itself might be of use in fending off a potential assailant!



Large, complex and expensive: the classic Contarex Bullseye

Tony Kemplen's love of photography began as a teenager and ever since he has been collecting cameras with a view to testing as many as he can. You can follow his progress on his 52 Cameras blog at [52cameras.blogspot.co.uk](http://52cameras.blogspot.co.uk).

See more photos from the Contarex Bullseye at [www.flickr.com/photos/tony\\_kemplen/albums/72177720314325536](http://www.flickr.com/photos/tony_kemplen/albums/72177720314325536).

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# Buying Guide

100 cameras listed & rated

Our comprehensive listing of key camera specifications

## Cameras

Cameras come in three types: DSLRs with optical viewfinders, mirrorless models with electronic viewing, and compact cameras with non-interchangeable lenses

### Controls

Entry-level cameras tend to have simple, easy-to-understand controls, while more expensive models add lots of buttons and dials to give quick access to settings.

### Viewfinder

The biggest difference between DSLRs and mirrorless cameras is that the latter use electronic, rather than optical, viewfinders. Some advanced compact cameras also have built-in electronic viewfinders to complement their rear LCD screens.

### Compact cameras

These range from small, pocketable models to large bridge-type cameras with long zoom lenses and SLR-style designs. In this guide, we're only including those with relatively large sensors for high image quality, raw format recording and manual controls.



### Handgrip

DSLRs traditionally have relatively large handgrips, while many mirrorless models have much smaller grips to keep the size down. However, some can accept accessory grips to improve handling with larger lenses.

### Lens mount

Each camera brand uses its own lens mount, and mirrorless cameras use different lenses to DSLRs even from the same brand. However, mirrorless models can often use DSLR lenses via a mount adapter.

ALMOST all serious photographers prefer to use cameras with interchangeable lenses, as this gives the greatest degree of creative flexibility. At one time, this meant digital single-lens-reflex (DSLR) cameras, but these have now been joined by mirrorless cameras that use electronic viewfinders. The latest models are true alternatives to DSLRs, offering the same image quality and creative options. Camera

manufacturers offer a range of options, from simple, relatively inexpensive beginner-friendly designs, to sophisticated professional models. In the middle of the range you'll find enthusiast cameras with more-advanced control layouts. Meanwhile the term 'compact' refers to cameras with built-in lenses, regardless of their size. Many offer excellent image quality and full manual control.

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# Mirrorless cameras

NAME & MODEL	RRP	SCORE	SUMMARY	SENSOR SIZE	RESOLUTION (MP)	LENS MOUNT	MAX ISO	VIDEO	MIC INPUT	SHOOTING				SCREEN			DIMENSIONS					
										AF POINTS	BURST MODE (FPS)	VIEWFINDER	BUILT-IN W/L-F	FLASH	SCREEN SIZE (IN)	ARTICULATED LCD	TOUCHSCREEN	BATTERY LIFE (SHOTS)	WIDTH (MM)	HEIGHT (MM)	DEPTH (MM)	WEIGHT (G)
Canon EOS RP	£1400	4★	Compact and affordable but over-simplified full-frame camera	FF	26.2	Canon RF	102,400	3840	•	4779	5	•	•	•	3	•	•	250	132.5	85	70	485
Canon EOS R3	£5880	5★	High-speed, pro-spec flagship model that's packed full of clever technology	FF	24.1	Canon RF	204,800	6000	•	4779	30	•	•	•	3.2	•	•	860	150	142.6	87.2	1015
Canon EOS R5	£4200	4.5★	Remarkable 45MP powerhouse capable of internal 8K video recording	FF	45	Canon RF	102,400	4096	•	5940	12	•	•	•	3.2	•	•	320	135.8	97.5	88	738
Canon EOS R6 Mark II	£2780	5★	Updated model gains 24MP sensor and AI subject-recognition AF	FF	24.2	Canon RF	204,800	3840	•	4897	12	•	•	•	3	•	•	450	138.4	98.4	88.4	670
Canon EOS R7	£1350	4.5★	Fast APS-C RF-mount model with sophisticated autofocus from the EOS R3	APS-C	32.5	Canon RF	51,200	3840	•	651	15	•	•	•	3	•	•	770	132	90.4	91.7	530
Canon EOS R8	£1700	4.5★	Lightweight full-frame camera that offers great image quality and autofocus	FF	24.2	Canon RF	204,800	3840	•	4897	6	•	•	•	3	•	•	220	132.5	86.1	70	461
Canon EOS R10	£900	4★	Compact, lightweight yet highly specified RF-mount APS-C mirrorless model	APS-C	24.2	Canon RF	51,200	3840	•	651	15	•	•	•	3	•	•	430	122.5	87.8	83.4	429
Canon EOS R50	£790	4★	Small entry-level APS-C model with subject detection autofocus	APS-C	24.2	Canon RF	51,200	3840	•	651	12	•	•	•	3	•	•	310	116.3	85.5	68.8	375
Canon EOS R100	£670	3★	Entry-level APS-C model that's designed to be a simple family camera	APS-C	24.2	Canon RF	25,600	3840	•	143	6.5	•	•	•	3	•	•	340	116.3	85.5	68.8	356
Fujifilm X-H2	£1899	5★	High-resolution pro flagship model with same design as X-H2S	APS-C	40	Fujifilm X	51,200	7680	•	425	15	•	•	•	3	•	•	540	136.3	92.9	84.6	660
Fujifilm X-H2S	£2499	5★	Extremely impressive pro-spec high-speed flagship model	APS-C	26.1	Fujifilm X	51,200	6240	•	425	40	•	•	•	3	•	•	580	136.3	92.9	84.6	660
Fujifilm X-S10	£949	5★	Fine SLR-styled model with in-body image stabilisation and large handgrip	APS-C	26.1	Fujifilm X	51,200	3840	•	425	20	•	•	•	3	•	•	325	126	85.1	65.4	465
Fujifilm X-S20	£1249	5★	Excellent 26MP still/video hybrid camera that includes 6.2K video recording	APS-C	26.1	Fujifilm X	51,200	6240	•	425	20	•	•	•	3	•	•	750	127.7	85.1	65.4	491
Fujifilm X-T30 II	£769	5★	Superb mid-range model that's a joy to use and gives lovely output	APS-C	26.1	Fujifilm X	51,200	4096	•	425	8	•	•	•	3	•	•	390	118.4	82.8	46.8	378
Fujifilm X-T5	£1699	5★	Retro-styled enthusiast model with 40MP sensor and subject-detection AF	APS-C	40.2	Fujifilm X	51,200	4096	•	425	15	•	•	•	3	•	•	580	129.5	91	63.8	557
Leica SL2	£5300	4★	Sports 47.3MP full-frame sensor, in-body stabilisation and 5K video	FF	47.3	Leica L	50,000	5120	•	225	20	•	•	•	3.2	•	•	370	147	107	83	916
Leica SL2-S	£3975	4★	More affordable 24MP version of the SL2 with pro video features	FF	24.6	Leica L	100,000	4096	•	225	25	•	•	•	3.2	•	•	510	146	107	83	931
<b>NEW</b> Leica SL-3	£5920		High-end full-frame model gains phase detection AF and tilting screen	FF	60.1	Leica L	100,000	8192	•	215	15	•	•	•	3.2	•	•	260	141.2	108.1	84.6	850
Nikon Z 5	£1719	4★	Simplified version of the Z 6, comes with compact 24-50mm f/4-6.3 zoom	FF	24.3	Nikon Z	102,400	3840	•	273	4.5	•	•	•	3.2	•	•	470	134	100.5	69.5	675
Nikon Z 6II	£1999	4.5★	Second-generation full-frame mirrorless model with useful updates	FF	24.5	Nikon Z	204,800	3840	•	273	14	•	•	•	3.2	•	•	410	134	100.5	69.5	705
Nikon Z 7II	£2999	4.5★	Gains dual card slots, faster shooting, 4K 60p video and vertical grip option	FF	45.7	Nikon Z	102,400	3840	•	493	10	•	•	•	3.2	•	•	420	134	100.5	69.5	705
Nikon Z 8	£3999	5★	Sensational all-rounder with all the Z 9's features in a smaller body	FF	45.7	Nikon Z	102,400	7680	•	493	20	•	•	•	3.2	•	•	340	144	118.5	83	910
Nikon Z 9	£5299	5★	Stunning high-speed, high-resolution flagship with pro build and connectivity	FF	45.7	Nikon Z	102,400	7680	•	493	20	•	•	•	3.2	•	•	700	149	149.5	90.5	1340
Nikon Z f	£2299	4.5★	Lovely retro-styled full-frame mirrorless with all the latest technology	FF	24.5	Nikon Z	204,800	3840	•	273	14	•	•	•	3.2	•	•	380	144	103	49	710
Nikon Z 30	£699	4★	Designed for vloggers, with articulated screen but no viewfinder	DX	20.9	Nikon Z	204,800	3840	•	209	11	•	•	•	3	•	•	330	128	73.5	59.5	405
Nikon Z 50	£849	5★	Well-specified APS-C mirrorless model boasts excellent handling	DX	20.9	Nikon Z	204,800	3840	•	209	11	•	•	•	3.2	•	•	320	126.5	93.5	60	450
Nikon Z fc	£899	4★	Lovely-looking retro-styled model with fully articulated touchscreen	DX	20.9	Nikon Z	204,800	3840	•	209	11	•	•	•	3	•	•	300	134.5	93.5	43.5	445
Olympus OM-D E-M10 IV	£699	4.5★	Compact, lightweight, enjoyable to use and takes great-looking pictures	4/3	20.2	Mic4/3	25,600	3840	•	121	15	•	•	•	3	•	•	360	121.7	84.4	49	383
OM System OM-1	£2000	5★	Excellent flagship model includes 120fps shooting and subject-detection AF	4/3	20.4	Mic4/3	102,400	4096	•	1053	120	•	•	•	3	•	•	520	134.8	91.6	72.7	599
OM System OM-1 Mark II	£2200	5★	Updated with larger buffer, improved AF, and extra computational features	4/3	20.4	Mic4/3	102,400	4096	•	1053	120	•	•	•	3	•	•	520	134.8	91.6	72.7	599
OM System OM-5	£1199	5★	Small, lightweight and weather-sealed camera gives great output	4/3	20.4	Mic4/3	25,600	4096	•	121	10	•	•	•	3	•	•	310	125.3	85.2	49.7	414

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# Mirrorless cameras

NAME & MODEL	RRP	SCORE	SUMMARY	SENSOR SIZE	RESOLUTION (MP)	LENS MOUNT	MAX ISO	VIDEO	MIC INPUT	AF POINTS	BURST MODE (FPS)	VIEWFINDER	BUILT-IN Wi-Fi	FLASH	SCREEN SIZE (IN)	ARTICULATED LCD	TOUCHSCREEN	ANTENNAE (SLOTS)	WIDTH (MM)	HEIGHT (MM)	DEPTH (MM)	WEIGHT (G)
				SHOOTING				SCREEN				DIMENSIONS										
Panasonic Lumix G9	£1499	4.5★	High-speed, rugged photo-centric flagship camera with in-body IS	4/3	20.3	Mic4/3	25,600	3840	• 225	9	•	•	•	3	•	•	•	890	136.9	97.3	91.6	658
Panasonic Lumix G9II	£1699	5★	High-end Micro Four Thirds model with phase-detection autofocus	4/3	25.2	Mic4/3	25,600	5760	• 779	14	•	•	•	3	•	•	•	390	134.3	102.3	90.1	658
Panasonic Lumix G100	£590	4★	Small SLR-shaped camera specifically designed for vloggers	4/3	20.3	Mic4/3	25,600	3840	• 49	10	•	•	•	3	•	•	•	270	115.6	82.5	54.2	345
Panasonic Lumix GH5 II	£1499	4.5★	Video-focused high-end model with in-body stabilisation and 4K video	4/3	20.2	Mic4/3	25,600	4096	• 225	12	•	•	•	3	•	•	•	410	138.5	98.1	87.4	727
Panasonic Lumix GH6	£1999	5★	Impressive high-end video model with new 25MP sensor and 5.7K recording	4/3	25.2	Mic4/3	25,600	5728	•	14	•	•	•	3	•	•	•	330	138.4	100.3	99.6	823
Panasonic Lumix S1	£2199	4.5★	24MP full-frame mirrorless with exceptional viewfinder	FF	24.2	Leica L	204,800	3840	• 225	9	•	•	•	3.2	•	•	•	380	148.9	110	96.7	899
Panasonic Lumix S1H	£3600		Specialist full-frame mirrorless model designed for pro-level video	FF	24.2	Leica L	204,800	4096	• 225	9	•	•	•	3.2	•	•	•	380	151	114.2	110.4	1164
Panasonic Lumix S5	£1800	4.5★	Compact-bodied, enthusiast-focused model designed for both stills and video	FF	24.2	Leica L	204,800	3840	• 225	7	•	•	•	3	•	•	•	440	132.6	97.1	81.9	714
Panasonic Lumix S5II	£2000	4.5★	Compact model with phase detect autofocus and unlimited video recording	FF	24.2	Leica L	204,800	5952	• 779	9	•	•	•	3	•	•	•	370	134.3	102.3	90.1	740
Panasonic Lumix S5IIX	£2300	5★	Video-specialist version of the S5II boasts higher-quality recording options	FF	24.2	Leica L	204,800	5952	• 779	9	•	•	•	3	•	•	•	370	134.3	102.3	90.1	740
Sigma fp	£1999	4★	Smallest full-frame mirrorless, but compromised features and handling	FF	24.6	Leica L	102,400	3840	• 49	18	•	•	•	3.2	•	•	•	280	112.6	69.9	45.3	422
Sigma fp L	£1999	4★	High-resolution version of the fp with 61MP full-frame sensor	FF	61.0	Leica L	102,400	3840	• 49	10	•	•	•	3.2	•	•	•	240	112.6	69.9	45.3	427
Sony Alpha 6100	£830		Entry-level APS-C model with Sony's latest AF technology and 4K video	APS-C	24.2	Sony E	51,200	3840	• 425	11	•	•	•	3	•	•	•	380	120	66.9	59.4	396
Sony Alpha 6400	£1000	4★	Extraordinary new autofocus system, but in an outdated body design	APS-C	24.2	Sony E	102,400	3840	• 425	11	•	•	•	3	•	•	•	360	120	66.9	49.9	403
Sony Alpha 6600	£1450	4★	In-body stabilisation and impressive autofocus, but frustrating body design	APS-C	24.2	Sony E	102,400	3840	• 425	11	•	•	•	3	•	•	•	720	120	66.9	59	503
Sony Alpha 6700	£1450	4.5★	Boasts a 26MP sensor in a much-improved body compared to the A6600	APS-C	26	Sony E	102,400	3840	• 759	11	•	•	•	3	•	•	•	570	122	69	75.1	493
Sony Alpha 1	£6500	5★	Flagship model with an unprecedented combination of resolution and speed	FF	50.1	Sony E	102,400	7680	• 759	30	•	•	•	3	•	•	•	530	128.9	96.9	80.8	737
Sony Alpha 7 II	£1498	5★	The full-frame Alpha 7 II includes in-body image stabilisation	FF	24.3	Sony E	25,600	1080	• 117	5	•	•	•	3	•	•	•	350	126.9	95.7	59.7	556
Sony Alpha 7 III	£1999	5★	Fine camera with 10fps shooting and 4K video recording	FF	24.2	Sony E	204,800	3840	• 693	10	•	•	•	3	•	•	•	610	126.9	95.6	73.7	650
Sony Alpha 7 IV	£2400	5★	Excellent all-rounder with 33MP sensor and fully articulated screen	FF	33.0	Sony E	204,800	3840	• 759	10	•	•	•	3	•	•	•	610	131	96.4	79.8	658
Sony Alpha 7C	£1900	3.5★	Compact full-frame design let down by poor handling and tiny EVF	FF	24.2	Sony E	204,800	3840	• 693	10	•	•	•	3	•	•	•	680	124	71.1	59.7	509
Sony Alpha 7C II	£2100	4★	Much-improved compact model, but still compromised in certain respects	FF	33.0	Sony E	204,800	3840	• 759	10	•	•	•	3	•	•	•	530	124	71.1	63.4	525
Sony Alpha 7CR	£3200	4★	High-resolution twin of the A7C II, with a 60MP sensor	FF	61.0	Sony E	102,400	3840	• 693	8	•	•	•	3	•	•	•	490	124	71.1	63.4	525
Sony Alpha 7R III	£3200	5★	Impressive image quality and handling, but starting to look a little dated	FF	42.4	Sony E	102,400	3840	• 399	10	•	•	•	3	•	•	•	650	126.9	95.6	73.7	657
Sony Alpha 7R IV	£3500	5★	Superb high-resolution, full-frame mirrorless with new 61MP sensor	FF	61.0	Sony E	102,400	3840	• 567	10	•	•	•	3	•	•	•	670	128.9	96.4	77.5	665
Sony Alpha 7R V	£4000	5★	61MP model gains subject detection, 8K video and 4-way articulated screen	FF	61.0	Sony E	102,400	7680	• 693	10	•	•	•	3.2	•	•	•	530	131.3	96.9	82.4	723
Sony Alpha 7S III	£3800	4.5★	Huge update gains fully articulated screen and new touch interface	FF	12.1	Sony E	409,600	3840	• 759	10	•	•	•	3	•	•	•	600	128.9	96.9	80.8	600
Sony Alpha 9 II	£4800		A9 gains professional connectivity options and an improved body design	FF	24.2	Sony E	204,800	3840	• 693	20	•	•	•	3	•	•	•	500	128.9	96.4	77.5	678
Sony Alpha A9 III	£6100	4.5★	World's first global shutter brings breathtaking speed - but at a price	FF	24.6	Sony E	51,200	3840	• 759	120	•	•	•	3.2	•	•	•	400	136.1	96.9	82.9	702
Sony ZV-E1	£2350	4★	Small full-frame vlogging camera, with articulated screen but no viewfinder	FF	12.1	Sony E	204,800	3840	• 759	10	•	•	•	3	•	•	•	570	121	71.9	54.3	483
Sony ZV-E10	£680	4★	Designed for vlogging, with high-end microphone and fully articulated screen	APS-C	24.2	Sony E	51,200	3840	• 425	11	•	•	•	3	•	•	•	440	113	64.2	44.7	343

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# DSLR cameras

NAME & MODEL	RRP	SCORE	SUMMARY	SENSOR SIZE	RESOLUTION (MP)	LENS MOUNT	MAX ISO	VIDEO	AVC INPUT	AF POINTS	BURST MODE (FPS)	VF COVERAGE (%)	BUILD-IN Wi-Fi	FLASH	SCREEN SIZE (IN)	ARTICULATED LCD	TOUCHSCREEN	BATTERY LIFE (SHOTS)	WIDTH (MM)	HEIGHT (MM)	DEPTH (MM)	WEIGHT (G)
										SHOOTING			SCREEN			DIMENSIONS						
Canon EOS 2000D	£469	3★	Minor update to EOS 1300D gains 24.1MP sensor	APS-C	24.1	Canon EF	12,800	1080		9	3	95	-	-	3	-	-	500	129	101.3	77.6	475
Canon EOS 250D	£530	4★	Very compact entry-level DSLR with fully articulated screen and 4K video	APS-C	24.1	Canon EF	51,200	3840		9	5	95	-	-	3	-	-	1070	122.4	92.6	69.8	449
Canon EOS 850D	£820	4★	Fully featured upper entry-level DSLR includes 4K video recording	APS-C	24.1	Canon EF	51,200	3840		45	7	95	-	-	3	-	-	800	131	102.6	76.2	515
Canon EOS 90D	£1210	4★	Mid-range DSLR boasts 32.5MP sensor, 10fps shooting and 4K video	APS-C	32.5	Canon EF	51,200	3840		45	10	100	-	-	3	-	-	1300	140.7	104.8	76.8	701
Canon EOS 6D Mark II	£1999	4.5★	Includes 26.2MP full-frame sensor and fully articulated screen	FF	26.2	Canon EF	102,400	1080		45	6.5	98	-	-	3	-	-	1,200	144	110.5	74.8	765
Canon EOS 5D Mark IV	£3599	4.5★	Hugely accomplished workhorse model, but pricey	FF	30.4	Canon EF	102,400	3840		61	7	100	-	-	3.2	-	-	900	151	116	76	890
Canon EOS-1D X Mark III	£6499		Super-fast pro model for sports and action photographers	FF	20.1	Canon EF	819,200	5496		191	16	100	-	-	3.2	-	-	2,850	158	167.6	82.6	1440
Nikon D780	£2199	5★	Superb all-rounder blends the best of DSLR and mirrorless technology	FX	24.5	Nikon F	204,800	3840		51	7	100	-	-	3.2	-	-	2,060	143.5	115.5	76	840
Nikon D850	£3499	5★	High speed and superb image quality make this the best DSLR yet	FX	45.7	Nikon F	102,400	3840		153	7	100	-	-	3.2	-	-	1,840	146	124	78.5	1005
Nikon D6	£6299		Latest pro-level high-speed sports camera boasts high-tech AF system	FX	20.8	Nikon F	3,280,000	3840		105	14	100	-	-	3.2	-	-	3,580	160	163	92	1450
Pentax KF	£849		Solid spec including fully articulated screen and in-body stabilisation	APS-C	24.2	Pentax K	102,400	1080		11	6	100	-	-	3	-	-	460	125.5	93	74	684
Pentax K-3 III	£1899	4★	Highly specified but pricey APS-C DSLR that boasts a large viewfinder	APS-C	25.7	Pentax K	1,600,000	3840		101	12	100	-	-	3.2	-	-	800	134.5	103.5	73.5	820
Pentax K-3 III Monochrome	£2249	4★	Specialist version of the K-3 III that only shoots in black & white	APS-C	25.7	Pentax K	1,600,000	3840		101	12	100	-	-	3.2	-	-	800	134.5	103.5	73.5	820
Pentax K-1 II	£1799	4.5★	Well-featured full-frame DSLR that's excellent value for money	FF	36	Pentax K	819,200	1080		33	4.4	100	-	-	3.2	-	-	670	136.5	110	85.5	1010

ALL PRICES ARE RRP'S. STREET PRICES MAY VARY

We've tried our hardest to ensure that the information in this guide is as complete and accurate as possible. However, some errors will inevitably have crept in along the way: if you spot one, please let us know by emailing [ap.ed@kelsey.co.uk](mailto:ap.ed@kelsey.co.uk). Unfortunately we don't have space to list every single product on the market, so we don't include the most expensive speciality items. **Before making a purchase we advise you to check prices, along with any crucial specifications or requirements, with either a reputable retailer or the manufacturer's website.**

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# Compact cameras

NAME & MODEL	RRP	SCORE	SUMMARY	SENSOR SIZE	RESOLUTION (MP)	LENS RANGE (MM EQV)	MAX ISO	VIDEO	MIC INPUT	SHOOTING			SCREEN		DIMENSIONS						
									BURST MODE (FPS)	VIEWFINDER	BUILT-IN W-LFI	FLASH	SCREEN SIZE (IN)	ARTICULATED LCD	TOUCHSCREEN	BATTERY LIFE (SHOTS)	WIDTH (MM)	HEIGHT (MM)	DEPTH (MM)	WEIGHT (G)	
Canon G1 X Mark III	£1149	5★	Rewrites the rule book by fitting an APS-C sensor in a compact body	APS-C	24.2	24-72	25,600	1080		9	•	•	•	3in	•	•	200	115	77.9	51.4	399
Canon G5 X Mark II	£849	4★	Handles well and gives great image quality, but sluggish AF in low light	1in	20.2	24-120	25,600	3840		30	•	•	•	3in	•	•	230	110.9	60.9	46	340
Canon G7 X Mark II	£549	4.5★	Pocketable body that handles well, with really useful zoom range	1in	20.1	24-100	12,800	1080		8	•	•	•	3in	•	•	265	105.5	60.9	42	319
Canon G7 X Mark III	£699	4★	Lovely pocket camera that includes 4K video and YouTube live streaming	1in	20.1	24-100	25,600	3840	•	30	•	•	•	3in	•	•	265	105.5	60.9	41.4	304
Canon G9 X Mark II	£449	4★	Slim, stylish, pocketable camera gives great image quality	1in	20.2	28-84	12,800	1080		8.2	•	•	•	3in	•	•	235	98	57.9	30.8	206
Canon V10	£429	3.5★	Unusual camera designed for vlogging, but has some significant limitations	1in	15.2	19	12,800	3840	•	na	•	•	•	2in	•	•	290	63.8	90.0	34.3	211
Fujifilm X100VI	£1599	5★	Superb classically styled camera gains 40MP sensor and image stabilisation	APS-C	40.2	35	51,200	6240	•	20	•	•	•	3in	•	•	450	128	74.8	55.3	521
Leica V-Lux 5	£1049		Customised, re-badged version of the Panasonic FZ1000 II	1in	20.1	25-400	25,000	3840	•	12	•	•	•	3in	•	•	440	136.7	97.2	131.5	812
Leica Q2 Monochrom	£4995	5★	Variant of the Q2 with a modified sensor that only shoots in black & white	FF	47.3	28	100,000	4096		20	•	•	•	3in	•	•	350	130	80	91.9	734
Leica Q3	£5300	5★	Lovely top-end compact with 60MP full-frame sensor and 28mm f/1.7 lens	FF	60.3	28	100,000	8192		15	•	•	•	3in	•	•	350	130	80.3	92.6	743
Panasonic FZ1000 II	£700	4★	Updates FZ1000 with higher-resolution, touch-sensitive screen	1in	20.1	25-400	25,600	3840	•	12	•	•	•	3in	•	•	440	136.2	97.2	131.5	810
Panasonic FZ2000	£600	4.5★	Sophisticated bridge camera with strong focus on 4K video	1in	20.1	24-480	25,600	3840	•	12	•	•	•	3in	•	•	350	137.6	101.9	134.7	966
Panasonic LX15	£370	4.5★	Likeable advanced compact with ultra-fast f/1.4-2.8 zoom lens	1in	20.1	24-72	25,600	3840		10	•	•	•	3in	•	•	260	105.5	60	42	310
Panasonic TZ200	£500	4.5★	Huge zoom range for a pocket camera, but telephoto images lack detail	1in	20.1	24-360	25,600	3840		10	•	•	•	3in	•	•	370	111.2	66.4	45.2	340
Ricoh GR III	£799	4★	Slimline, lightweight advanced compact with in-body image stabilisation	APS-C	24.2	28	102,400	1920		4	•	•	•	3in	•	•	200	109.4	61.9	33.2	257
Ricoh GR IIIx	£899	4★	Variant of the GR III with new 40mm-equivalent f/2.8 lens	APS-C	24.2	40	102,400	1920		4	•	•	•	3in	•	•	200	109.4	61.9	35.2	262
Sony RX10 IV	£1800	5★	Update to RX10 III with vastly improved shooting speed and autofocus	1in	20.1	24-600	12,800	3840	•	24	•	•	•	3in	•	•	400	132.5	94	144	1095
Sony RX100 III	£810	5★	Features fast f/1.8-2.8 zoom lens and pop-up electronic viewfinder	1in	20.1	24-70	12,800	1920		10	•	•	•	3in	•	•	320	101.6	58.1	41	290
Sony RX100 V	£900	4.5★	Includes super-fast 24fps shooting and slow-motion video up to 960fps	1in	20.1	24-70	12,800	3840		24	•	•	•	3in	•	•	220	101.6	58.1	41	299
Sony RX100 VII	£1200	4.5★	Gains Sony's latest AI-based autofocus tech, including real-time eye AF	1in	20.1	24-200	12,800	3840	•	20	•	•	•	3in	•	•	260	101.6	58.1	42.8	302
Sony ZV-1	£700	4★	Designed for vloggers, with high-spec mic and fully articulated screen	1in	20.1	25-70	12,800	3840	•	24	•	•	•	3in	•	•	260	105.5	60	43.5	294
Sony ZV-1 Mark II	£870	4.5★	Updated vlog camera gains ultra-wideangle zoom and touchscreen interface	1in	20.1	18-50	12,800	3840	•	24	•	•	•	3in	•	•	290	105.5	60	46.7	292
Sony ZV-1F	£550		Simplified version of the ZV-1 with fixed 20mm equivalent prime lens	1in	20.1	20	12,800	3840	•	16	•	•	•	3in	•	•	360	105.5	60	46.4	256

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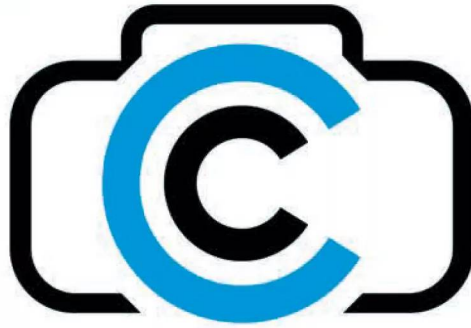
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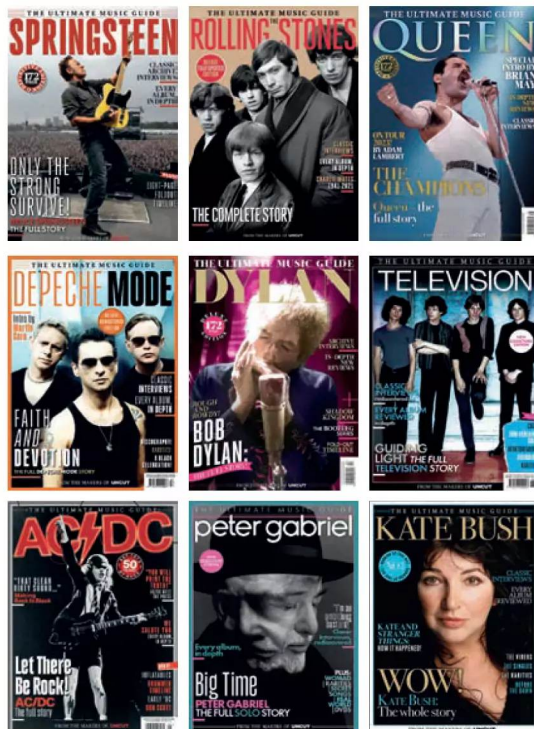
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# Final Analysis

**Damien Demolder considers...**

**Ukrainian soldiers take rest by Bulent Kilic**

A lot of things make war difficult to cover as a photographer. Being shot at would probably be top of the list, as well as living in trenches, not getting much sleep and perhaps not having many opportunities to charge a camera battery. I'm guessing, of course – but I'd imagine those would be the primary concerns.

The other issue, that mightn't occur to me before I got there, is how that war, and the people fighting it, should be portrayed. However conscious of it we are, a lot of what we shoot is based on what we've shot or seen before. My visual experience of war boils down to movies, news reels and history books. If I didn't think too hard, I might just automatically attempt to recreate what was in my head rather than seeing what was going on and factually representing the situation as it is. Shaking off influences and preconceptions would need to be a deliberate process for a rookie like me.

I might also find it hard to prioritise recording information and reality over making pictures that are visually striking in their own right. Ideally, the pictures would be both informative and visually crafted, but I'd need to



be careful to keep my purpose forefront.

## Human struggle

All this came to mind when I saw Bulent Kilic's picture of a Ukrainian soldier on a rest break a few months into the Russian invasion. Bulent is a seasoned Turkish news photographer who specialises in conflict. He focuses on human struggles, and is active in highlighting oppression and rights abuses in his country and abroad.

The smoke, the green, the shirt-off and the dog tags shown here took me straight to 1960s Vietnam – or at least to a Hollywood

**'The smoke, the green, the shirt-off and the dog tags shown here took me straight to 1960s Vietnam'**

movie set. It's a striking and engaging image, and that eye contact gets our attention and corners us with its gaze. It feels a bit theatrical, and as if the smoke was blown out to order, or blown out by the subject in anticipation of its dramatic effect. His comrades watch on, perhaps raising an eyebrow at his attention-seeking behaviour.

As much as I was drawn to the picture, it also felt a bit false, a bit set up, staged, as though trying to achieve

something it can't. But then I realised perhaps the theatre is the responsibility of the soldier who's trying to be a Rambo, a cool dude from the Bronx, a poster boy like all those he'd seen in films before the war. The theatrics are of his own making, and Kilic is recording the ambitions and fantasies of the subject just as they were displayed. He's a lad hamming it up for the camera, taking on the macho characters he's seen on the TV – unconsciously conscious

of how images can be formative to impressions 'back home' in a way soldiers in Vietnam at first weren't. It shows how things have come full circle – how real soldiers influenced the movies, and how the movies have influenced real soldiers – life imitating art. Maybe, when we look with our eyes open, the camera really is incapable of telling lies, whichever way it's pointing.

To see more of Bulent Kilic's work see [twitter.com/Kilicbil](https://twitter.com/Kilicbil)

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Photographer and journalist Damien Demolder has worked in the photographic publishing industry since 1997 and is the former editor of *Amateur Photographer*. He writes regularly about photography for a number of leading publications and has also been a judge on a number of prestigious international photo competitions. See his website at [www.damiendemolder.com](http://www.damiendemolder.com).



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