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Digital

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Photographer

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Issue 278

CREATIVE COMPOSITIONS

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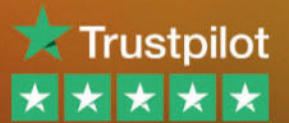
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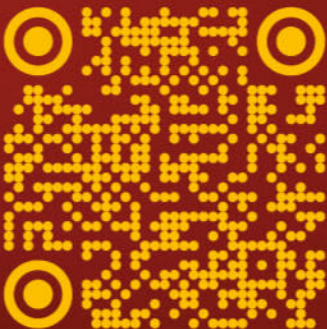
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“Often the best art is the result of us following our hearts and seeing where our instincts take us”



Sometimes in photography, as in life, intricate planning can be the route to success. However, in many cases, spontaneity is what yields the most inspirational results. Take composition, for example.

You can follow the rules set out in all the photo textbooks but often we press the shutter button when the image feels right. In the moment, improvisation produces the most unexpected successes. To that end, explore our special cover feature starting on p36 of the magazine, where you'll learn how to identify unusual framing opportunities for professional-looking shots that go beyond the obvious.

Next, turn to p24 for our refresher feature on using your camera's mode selector dial. As a pro, you might think you know your modes well, however,

rethinking the way you put each to work can reveal surprising new opportunities for easy images.

Finally, make sure you check out our interview with wildlife photographer Guadalupe Laiz, who recounts how a trip to Iceland inspired her to make an unexpected career change and opened up a new chapter in her personal and professional life.

While you're here, be certain to read our review of the new Leica SL3 (p104) and explore our popular new Kit Leaderboard (p96) to see if your perfect camera and lens combination appears on our list.

As creative people, we like structure in our lives, but often the best art is the result of us following our hearts and seeing where our instincts take us. Until the next issue, have a fantastic month of photography and enjoy your magazine!

Peter Fenech, Editor
peter.fenech@futurenet.com

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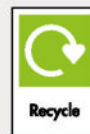
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© Jay Birmingham

Our contributors



KIM BUNERMANN

Kim is the technique editor on the magazine, working in-house to create a wide range of features

and tutorials. This issue, she has put together a special feature on shooting creative compositions, starting on p36. She has also written an essential white balance shooting tutorial, which you can find on p56 of the magazine.

Website: digitalcameraworld.com



AJUAN SONG

Last month, we featured the work of Ajuan's artistic partner in crime, Kuzma Vostrikov. This

month, Ajuan explains her creative inspirations and recounts her journey in abstract photography. Learn how she developed her unique style in our Photo CV pages on p70 and the main shooting kit she uses for her work.

Instagram: @songajuan



LAUREN SCOTT

Lauren is an expert in many genres of photography. This month, she has compiled

a refresher guide to mastering the myriad of camera mode choices. Even as a pro photographer, it is good practice to get to know what each mode does and where best to use them. Find this feature on p24.

Website: laurenscttphotography.com



MARK BRION

Mark is a landscape photographer and respected workshop leader, making him the

ideal pro to write our career feature this month, detailing how to plan, structure and host a photo workshop. Learn to choose a location, work out an itinerary and keep your students both engaged and, importantly, safe.

Website: markbrion.com



KAV DADFAR

Seasoned travel photographer, Kav is used to working in challenging light. For our Creative

Project feature this month, Kav explains the shooting and editing steps you need to know to produce high-quality, handheld shots in low-light conditions. Turn to p50 to read about these essential skills.

Website: dalfarphotography.com

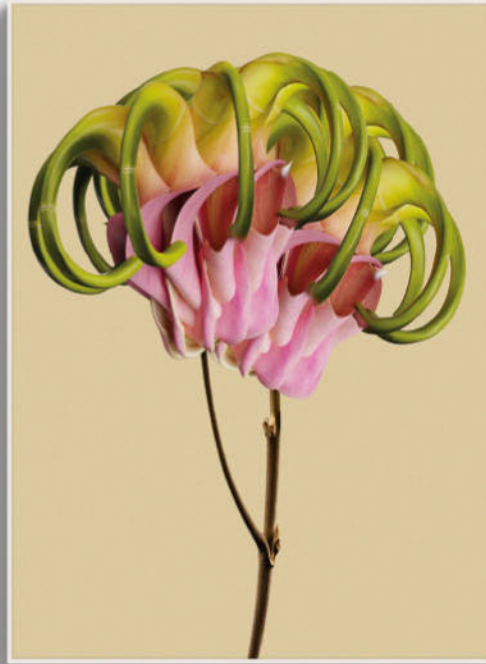


GUADALUPE LAIZ

Guadalupe is a conservation advocate and expert wildlife photographer, but her journey

in this genre wasn't always a direct one. In our interview, starting on p76 of the magazine, she breaks down her career and tells the fascinating story of what it takes to be a pro wildlife specialist.

Website: guadalupelaiz.com



Vincent Fournier

"Flora Incognita"

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Photography is full of confusing jargon. Dive into our brand new digital photography glossary to demystify the most commonly used scientific terms and technology to make informed buying and shooting choices



© Esteban Frey

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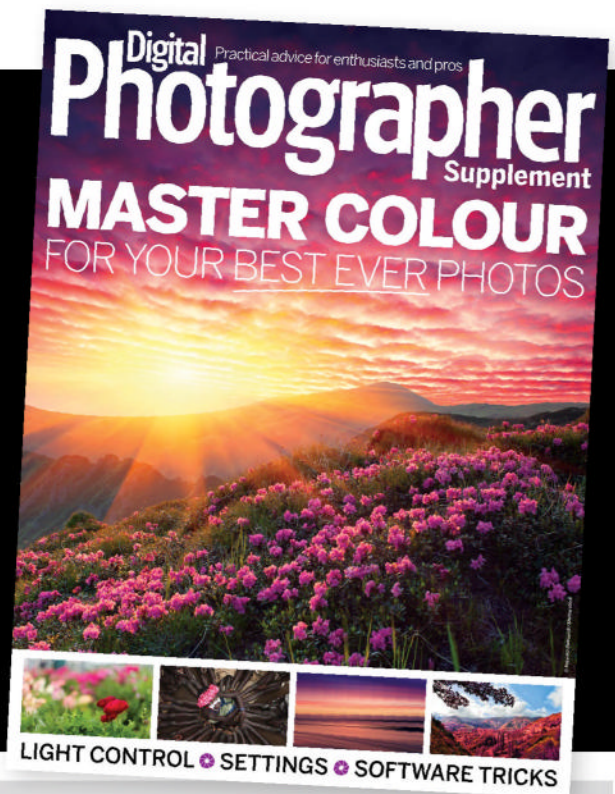
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Free ebook to download Master colour for your best ever shots

Colour is the spice of a photographer's life. There are endless combinations of colours, some contrasting with each other, others working in perfect harmony. Managing all of these interactions can be a challenge, even for the most experienced pros. In this ebook, we'll explore the key steps to working with different colour interactions, controlling lighting, selecting the best settings and complementing your camera work in software.

To claim your free ebook, visit <https://bit.ly/DPH278>



Enter our Photocrowd contests online to win Affinity prizes

Every month, we team up with Photocrowd – the world's leading photography competition platform – to offer you the chance to win an Affinity Photo editing software licence (worth £60 for Mac or Windows) and have your images printed in *Digital Photographer*. Affinity Photo is a toolset engineered for modern photography professionals. Whether you're editing and retouching images or creating full-blown multi-layered compositions, it has all the power and performance you'll need. For a chance to win, go to Photocrowd and discover our latest contest. It's easy, free and fun – we love seeing your entries!

Visit: www.photocrowd.com/digitalphotographer

Review test shots

We think test shots are important when it comes to reviewing and comparing the latest kit, but we know it's hard to tell the difference between test images when they are printed in the magazine. You can open, view and compare test shots from our kit reviews anywhere you see the download icon, pictured on the right.



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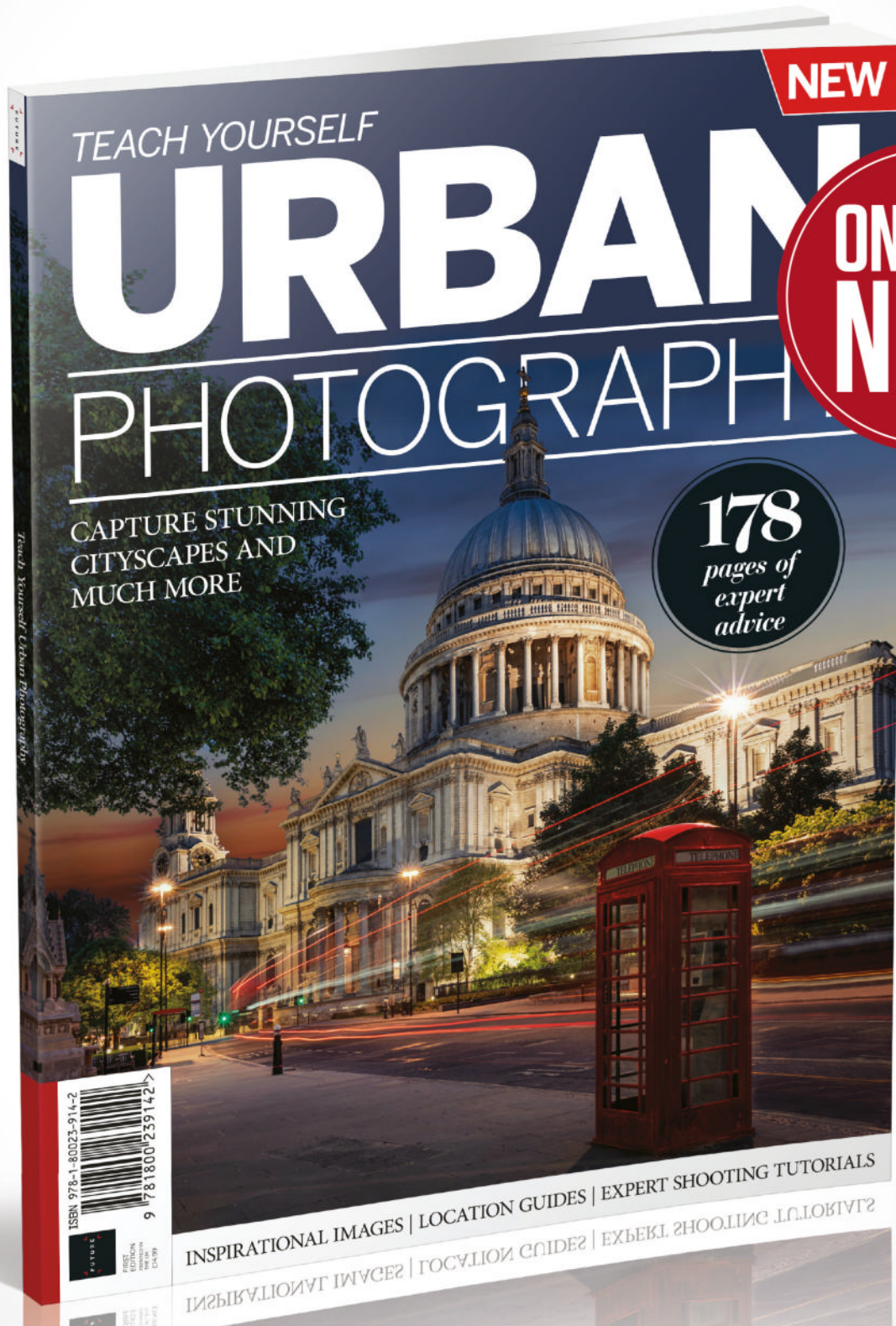
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HAS LEICA JUST MADE ITS BEST-EVER CAMERA? WELCOME TO THE NEW SL3

© Leica

Style meets substance in the full-frame mirrorless SL3, which features a raft of upgrades, including 60.3MP sensor and hybrid phase-detection AF



Leica has announced the SL3, a powerhouse full-frame camera with a 60MP sensor, 8K 30p video, phase-detect autofocus and an app that downloads images to your phone in just seconds. Its predecessor, the Leica SL2, was a tough sell; while it was a beautiful camera, it had an uncomfortable amount in common with the Panasonic Lumix S1R – not least the sluggish contrast-based autofocus system.

However, the new SL3 remedies both of those points by being technologically unique and introducing hybrid phase-detect AF – so the substance now matches its style.

Its triple-resolution sensor offers 60.3MP, 36.4MP or 18.5MP shooting to accommodate your workflow and output needs, with a Dual Basis ISO that covers ISO 50 to 100,000. That sensor resolution is also good for 8K and C8K (uncropped, unlike the Sony A7R V) up to 30p, offering H.265, ProRes, L-Log, timecode interface and a full-size HDMI port.

The body is fully weather-sealed with IP54 certification and works in temperatures between -10°C and 40°C – making it a legitimate professional tool. Again, it features the L-mount compatible with Leica, Sigma and Panasonic L-mount alliance lenses.

There are plenty of improvements over the previous SL2 model, including the addition of a tilting screen and a CFexpress Type B slot to complement the SD card. The buttons have also been shifted from the left of the rear LCD to the right for easier one-handed operation.

The Leica Fotos app has been radically improved and now offers ridiculous speeds – it can transfer a 60MB DNG file via WiFi in two seconds and via cable in under a second. The Leica SL3 is available now, but make sure you're sitting down, as it's priced at £5,920 – and that's just for the body!

leica-camera.com

Panasonic claims another 'world first' with its compact superzoom lens



Hot on the heels of making the compact Lumix S 100mm Macro lens, Panasonic is shrinking down another lens to create the world's smallest and lightest 7x zoom full frame lens – the Lumix S 28-200mm f/4-7.1 Macro O.I.S.

The new lens weighs just 413g and has a total size of 77.3 x 93.4mm. It also shares the same 67mm filter thread so filters are easier to swap out. Interestingly, while Panasonic managed to make some big space savings in the Lumix S 100mm macro lens with its newly developed Dual Phase Linear Motor, this motor has been omitted from the new lens.

The new 28-200mm lens has half-size 0.5x macro capabilities, with an impressive close focus distance of 14cm from the sensor and just 3cm from the front of the lens at its widest focal length of 28mm.

The design features 17 elements in 13 groups and the lens has nine aperture blades. It's also weather-sealed – an essential feature as this will undoubtedly be a popular travel lens. It comes complete with a petal lens hood in the box

The Panasonic Lumix S 28-200mm f/4-7.1 Macro O.I.S will be available from April 2024 and costs £899. panasonic.com



© Panasonic

Sony launches new 24-50mm f/2.8 G zoom lens

The Sony 24-50mm f/2.8 G aims to address an issue with full-frame mirrorless lenses that are too big for compact full-frame bodies



Sony's 24-50mm f/2.8 G lens is a souped-up version of its FE 28-60mm f/4-5.6 lens, sacrificing a little reach for a constant f/2.8 maximum aperture, more manageable dimensions and a lower price. It follows a trend towards compact lenses with smaller zoom ranges but top-level features.

Optically, the Sony 24-50mm f/2.8 G incorporates four aspherical elements to minimise aberrations and two ED (extra-low dispersion) glass elements to suppress chromatic aberration. It relies on digital corrections, as Sony notes that images are corrected by default in-camera but RAW files (and raw video) will require a correction profile in software.

The autofocus specifications are similarly advanced, incorporating dual Linear Motors for fast, quiet AF with what Sony claims will be high tracking performance. Sony says that the new lens will be able to keep up with the 120fps burst mode of the Sony A9 III. As usual with new Sony lenses, this one has been designed with video in mind as well as



© Sony

still photography. It supports Sony's Dynamic/Active Stabilization modes and also focus breathing compensation on those cameras that have this feature. It has focus and zoom rings and a de-clickable aperture ring, plus a programmable Focus Hold button and an

AF/MF switch. The Sony 24-50mm f/2.8 G is dust- and moisture-resistant and has a fluorine-coated front element to repel oil, grease and water droplets.

The Sony 24-50mm f/2.8 G will be available from April, priced £1,150. sony.co.uk

New Lensbaby lens hits the 'sweet spot'

Lensbaby launches its most portable optic so far – a new compact 22mm pancake lens



Lensbaby manufactures lenses that offer users a wide variety of artistic options, including blurring and tilt-shifting effects. Its latest release, the Lensbaby Sweet 22, pushes this further, with the 'smallest sweet spot with the most blur outside the sweet spot of any Lensbaby lens'.

The lens creates a pin-sharp area of focus vignettted by a smooth blur effect and is compatible with full-frame and APS-C cameras available for Canon RF, Nikon Z, Fujifilm X, Sony E, and L mounts.

The new lens is a 22mm pancake lens and therefore extremely compact. It's surprisingly small considering it is constructed of four elements in two groups, but despite its small form, its all-metal body makes it robust. It's a manual focus lens and provides a small focusing ring for precise accuracy. Lensbaby describes this lens as a "sea of impressionistic blur, gradually transitioning to a precise, tack-sharp sweet spot that gives photographers the chance to create imagery more dramatic than previous selective focus lenses".

The Lensbaby Sweet 22 is available now priced £179 or as part of the Sweet 22 Kit including a Zippered Clamshell Case, Lens Cloth, and 3-stop ND Filter, priced £222. Read our review on page 111.

lensbaby.com



© Lensbaby

In other news

More snippets of photography news from around the world

NIKON BUYS RED

Nikon has made the shock decision to buy cinema specialists RED. The move will immediately propel Nikon into the growing cine camera world, putting it up against Canon, which has seen great success with its Cinema EOS line. RED will become a wholly-owned subsidiary of Nikon Corporation, with Nikon saying it will leverage the acquisition to expand into the fast-growing professional digital cinema camera market.


SONY'S NEW CARDS

Sony has announced two new CFexpress Type B cards, with faster performance than the company's first-gen cards. The new CEB-G480T (480GB) and CEB-G240T (240GB) boast an 1850MB/s max read speed and write speeds of 1750MB/s and 1600MB/s respectively so they should be ideal for 4K60 video. Sony says the new cards have 5x greater drop strength and 3x greater bendability. They are available now for £340 and £220 respectively.

STORY BEHIND THE STILL



Photographer: Maud Chalard

 @maudchalard

Website: maudchalard.com

Image location: Vancouver, Canada

Type of commission: Commercial

Shot details Camera: Nikon Z f.

Lens: Nikkor Z 24-70mm f/2.8 S.

Settings: 1/400sec, f/4.5, ISO 320

About the shot: "For the release of Nikon's new full-frame mirrorless camera, the Z f, Nikon challenged me to take photos based on the theme of 'standing the test of time'. The idea was to take photos that appear timeless so that the viewer wouldn't know whether they were taken in 1913 or 2023. While I was on a boat on my way to Vancouver Island, I was immediately inspired by the vintage-style leather seats. It was almost as if I had taken the picture in my head before I even pulled out the camera. I asked my friend to be part of the frame. Luckily, he was dressed in what appears to be a 'timeless' outfit, so it all just clicked into place.

"I asked him to look out the window to convey the journey and the emotion that a boat crossing can evoke – the hope of a new beginning or the melancholy of a life left behind. I wanted everyone to see themselves in the photo and what their own journey might look like. Travelling leaves no one indifferent, we all go through emotions when we leave or return and this is the message I wanted my final image to depict.

"The biggest challenge was to take the photo without anyone else in the field of view. It's a popular public transport route that fills up quickly, so as soon as I saw the potential, I ran and asked my friend to sit down so I could take the photo. I knew if anyone else sat down the image would be ruined. It must have taken me two minutes to take the photo and was worth every second."

Right

The Traveller

"I added grain to accentuate the feeling of nostalgia and I also erased the name of a boat in the background as I didn't want to leave a clue as to when it was taken."





SHOOT LIKE A PRO

THE MOOR, THE MERRIER

Matt Holland



Matt specialises in long-exposure photography and astrophotography, whether it's in the mountains or on the coast and in whatever weather. Based near the Dartmoor National Park in England, Matt is a committed lover of the great outdoors and is a long-term user of Olympus (now OM System) cameras. matthollandphoto.com

Niall Hampton joins Matt Holland for some fun with infrared and filters on a wild and windswept Dartmoor

All main images © Matt Holland



As the legendary photojournalist Sir Don McCullin once said, there's little point in shooting landscapes in the summer – the skies aren't dramatic enough and the trees aren't naked. So what does an outdoor photographer do in the warmer months? Matt Holland has a good way of preventing his camera kit from gathering dust in a drawer – he thought he'd give infrared photography a go and he hasn't looked back since. Based near Dartmoor, Holland has on his doorstep

one of the best locations to immortalise in this other-worldly style. In simple terms, infrared photography renders foliage as white and blue skies as black, therefore allowing its practitioners to capture familiar views in a different way.

This photographic style requires special kit so it's not every day we can shoot infrared. Naturally, as soon as Matt invited us to spend a morning with him to see it in practice, we were there quicker than a Dartmoor pony bolting from some noisy rambles.





Stream test
Matt composes the shot on his smartphone, so he can spend more time finessing the shooting settings in-camera



Micro Four Thirds format

Matt believes compact is the perfect outdoor tool

“When you’re lugging a load of camping kit up the side of a mountain, the last thing you want to do is add 2kg of camera equipment to it,” says Matt. “My E-M1 Mark III weighs 580g and my 12-100mm lens weighs no more than the camera.

“My favourite feature of the camera is its High-Res Shot Mode, particularly the Tripod High-Res Shot Mode: you’re taking a 20MP sensor and turning it into a medium-format body – the raw files it produces are 80MP, which makes editing interesting, but getting such high-quality files from a camera of this size makes it the perfect outdoor tool for me.

“Are there limitations with the small sensor? Once you bump up the ISO to a certain level, you start to see drawbacks, but there are workarounds: when I shoot astro, stacking low-ISO and wide-aperture multiple exposures from my 17mm f/1.2, you wouldn’t be able to tell if the file hadn’t come from a Canon or a Sony.”



After making our rendezvous in Exeter, Matt drives to one of his favourite locations, Fatherford Wood near Okehampton. A popular spot on the northern fringes of Dartmoor, it’s a gem of a location, thickly wooded with the East Okement River bubbling away along the valley floor.

A lover of the great outdoors since childhood and now a member of the North Dartmoor Search and Rescue Team, Matt looks more like a walker than a photographer. His rainproof jacket has a kangaroo-esque pouch at the front, so he can keep his filters within easy reach, and he hangs his camera from his rucksack strap using a Peak Design camera clip.

This arrangement certainly feels more liberating than having a camera bobbing away on a neck strap while you’re walking, and when the rain inevitably falls,

Matt can simply pop on his Peak Design camera cover.

Matt’s choice of camera certainly helps: his Olympus OM-D E-M1 Mark III and a compact 12-100mm zoom is far more svelte than a chunky DSLR and matching lens.

Before reaching for his camera, though, Matt tries out potential compositions on his phone.

“I’ll try wide-angle and zoomed-in views on my phone. It’s 4:3 aspect, which is the same as the camera’s Micro Four Thirds sensor,” he says. “So if it works perfectly on the phone, it will work on my camera. It means that I can take less time framing and spend more time getting the shot settings perfect on the camera.”

Having identified a promising scene, Matt plants his tripod in the river and sets up. Using magnetic filters, starting with a polariser and adding a three-stop

“If a composition works on the phone, it’ll work on my camera. That means I can spend more time getting the settings right”

THE MOOR, THE MERRIER



BEFORE



AFTER

SHOOT LIKE A PRO



Rock solid
A sturdy outdoor tripod with a levelling base and a magnetic filter system are his go-to accessories



Matt's kit bag for infrared

A compact, lightweight system that fits in a backpack

1 Olympus OM-D E-M1 Mark III "It's hard-wearing but also small and light, with built-in ND filters, High Res Shot Mode and one of the best in-body stabilisation systems."

2 Olympus M.Zuiko Digital ED 12-100mm f/4 S Pro "Offers me 24-200mm in full-frame terms – a versatile lens that I never leave the house without."

3 Olympus M.Zuiko Digital ED 17 f/1.2 Pro "This is a favourite focal length of mine, and this is a fantastic little do-it-all prime."

4 Kase Armour 100x150 BK03 "I recently returned to using 100 x 150mm filters, like these Kase double graduated ones: I have a soft/hard grad and a medium reverse."

5 Kase Wolverine Magnetic IR720 "Shooting in the 670 or 720nm range gives rich contrast, and you can go to pure black and white in the 820 to 960nm range."

6 Kingjoy SolidRock C85 & T30X head "At full extension, it puts the camera right at my eye level (6ft 2in). It weighs 2.4kg and is superb in rough terrain."

neutral density filter for a 0.5sec exposure, Matt then attaches an infrared filter, sets his white balance and increases the exposure to six seconds.

While he waits for the camera to record the scene, Matt points out some Old Man's Beard, a moss that grows off lichen in the trees: "It's a sign of clean air and is a really positive thing to see here around Dartmoor. When we're travelling up and down busy motorways, to see something that's thousands of years old still growing in such abundance is rewarding. You've got the old twisted oaks winding around the granite lumps, which is quintessential Dartmoor, and the rivers coming down off the moor, which makes these woods quite special; it's one of those local gems that anyone outside a 30-mile radius won't know about."

Our next location is Belstone Common. Arriving at the village just to the east, we start the ascent to the main ridge, which offers fantastic panoramic views. Before meeting up earlier on, Matt had impressed on me the importance of dressing appropriately for walking on Dartmoor, including suitable footwear and waterproof trousers, just in case the weather conditions change. And by the time we reach the summit of the ridge, they certainly have.

"The weather might be good when you rock up and park your car – when we were in Fatherford Woods, we could have been wearing T-shirts and shorts," says Matt. "But now we've climbed 200m to the ridge, we're wrapped up like it's the winter because the wind has really come in and it's quite bitter."

"When you come up here, there's no phone signal, no internet, nothing... just silence"



Matt points out what we can see from here: “A number of tors make up the main ridge, which offers a fantastic 360° view, not only of the rooftop of Dartmoor to the west, with High Willhays and Yes Tor, but also to Steeperton Tor, Fernworthy Reservoir and Fur Tor, the most remote tor on Dartmoor.

“You can see just how wild and empty it is here: there are jaw-dropping views whether it’s sunrise, the middle of the day, sunset or even raining – it just brings a smile to your face because it’s so quiet and peaceful. When you’ve had a hectic day at

work and all you’ve been doing is looking at a computer, you come up here and there’s no phone signal, no internet, nothing... just silence, swallows singing and ring ouzels tweeting. It takes you back.”

On the uneven ground of the ridge, Matt’s Kingjoy SolidRock carbon fibre tripod comes into its own. Quick to deploy, with no centre column to adjust, its half-bowl levelling base and spirit level allow him to achieve perfect horizontal alignment with the legs set at different heights. All that remains is to attach the T30X ball head and fine-tune the camera.

Insights for shooting infrared

Words of wisdom from a professional practitioner

- “When considering whether to get into infrared photography, some people think that you just slap a filter on and the camera does the rest of the work. That’s not the case, though – there’s a bit more of a science to it.”
- “It’s not about the filter you use, it’s about certain lenses, understanding hot spots and the flares that come off particular lenses. So the first challenge is finding which lenses work in IR photography and on which camera.”
- “The Olympus E-M1 Mark III sensor doesn’t have a very strong heat shield, which makes it fantastic for shooting IR. In contrast, the heat shield on a Sony Alpha sensor is so strong that it blocks out all infrared light and makes it impossible to use unless you have it converted.”
- “Using a 720nm range filter, I can get one- or two-second exposures on the E-M1 Mark III – I don’t need 20- or 30-second exposures. This is fantastic and, with the eight stops of IBIS, I can still shoot handheld.”
- “There are certain technicalities you need to learn before you can shoot this kind of photography well. But once you have them, together with the right filter on the lens and setting the correct White Balance on the camera (see next page), you will have done half of the required work.”



Get creative by swapping channels

Here, Matt has reinterpreted the infrared image by swapping the colour channels to create the colour (blue) variant – this effect can also be achieved by adjusting the hue and saturation. For a mono version, just discard all of the colour information.



Attaching his stack of filters – polariser, ND grad and infrared – Matt gets to work, capturing a range of views from our vantage point. Something I've noticed today is that he doesn't tend to take many images. One of the main reasons for this is that Matt combines hiking, mountaineering and camping with photography and not the other way around.

"I enjoy immersing myself in the outdoors more than thinking that I have to capture every moment with a camera," he says. "I feel that we need to step away from the camera and social media and get immersed in the silence of the landscape instead."

Matt explains that one of his five- or six-hour walks might only produce a handful of photos and, although he tries to get as much right in-camera as possible, his longest spells at the computer are when he's creating panoramics or stacking astrophotography images.

As the shoot draws to an end, I ask Matt for one of his top landscape photography tips.

"Stay local – okay, I do enjoy having a proper mountain day every now and again, and there is something really rewarding about that. However, some of the photographers I look up to, including Simon Baxter, Nick Livesey and Mike Prince, are known for the locations they photograph, and that's mainly because they know those locations so well," he says.

"So enjoy what you have on your doorstep, take the time to research it and really appreciate what you have rather than trying to outdo everyone else. People say, 'I've been to Glencoe, I've done that...' Fantastic, but so have hundreds of others too – it's just another photo to put on another hard drive among thousands of other photos. You should have a connection with the landscape you're shooting," he adds.

"I'm finding that as my photography develops, having a connection and affinity with my local landscape is giving me more drive and is making my photography more rewarding."

"Having an affinity with the local landscape helps make my photography more rewarding"

How to set White Balance for infrared photos

Once Matt has composed for a promising scene, he goes through this series of steps before shooting



1 "When using an Infrared filter, such as the Kase Filters 720nm strength filter that I had today, you will need to set a custom White Balance in-camera. Otherwise, all the photos you take will be bright red."

set a custom White Balance based on the scene. In an ideal situation, you should set a new White Balance in every change of light or filter strength – including when you are using neutral density filters."

in-camera, this will dramatically cool down the photo, in turn allowing the photographer to shoot in colour when using Infrared filters."

in Lightroom or Photoshop. As you will have reached the minimum Colour Balance in-camera already, this will extend it, allowing you to shoot black and white or colour infrared images with lots of contrast. A 720nm IR filter can be equivalent to a 10-stop ND, so using a tripod is a must!"

2 "Most modern digital cameras allow the user to

3 "Once a custom White Balance has been set

4 "You can also use Adobe's DNG Profile Editor to create a Custom Profile to further cool down the image

COLOUR



MONO



Shoot like Isobel

Always respect the great outdoors

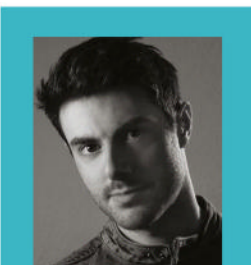
As a committed walker and hiker and also a search and rescue volunteer on Dartmoor, Matt is all too aware of the potential dangers. "Wherever you're going, across any of our wonderful national parks or natural beauty locations in the UK, take the time to do some research," he says. "Google Maps is fantastic for finding out where you want to go but once you get there, you'll need the likes of Ordnance Survey and FATMAP, which are cheap and easy to get hold of. All it takes is five minutes – you can plan out a route, put up safety cards and make sure that people know where you're going."



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TECHNIQUES

MASTER THE MODE DIAL

Learn how and when to use every exposure mode on your camera for pro results

Words by Lauren Scott





The mode dial is one of the most important and underused parts of any advanced camera. Usually found on top of the body as a physical dial or selector, it allows photographers to quickly switch between different shooting modes and adapt to varied conditions, subjects, and even creative preferences.

PASM is an acronym referring to the four main exposure modes found on most DSLR and mirrorless cameras. In Program mode (P), which is semi-automatic, the camera selects the aperture and shutter

speed but leaves you to adjust settings like ISO, exposure compensation and white balance. In Aperture Priority Mode (A or Av), you choose the aperture, and the camera adjusts the shutter speed to achieve the 'correct' exposure. Similarly in Shutter Priority Mode (S, Tv, or T), you set the shutter speed, and the camera adjusts everything else. Manual Mode (M) provides creative control over all the parameters, which can be both a blessing and a curse.

Over the next few pages, we'll explore how the camera behaves in each mode and explain how you can get more reliable results – in both consistent and

changeable light. There's always more to learn about the humble mode dial, even for professionals, and doing so can unleash the full potential of your photography equipment (not to mention make your workflow quicker and easier). Let's find out how to make the mode dial work for you.

Pictured
Shingle Street, Suffolk

Like many pros, Michael Clarke uses manual mode for greater control. "When shooting landscapes, the camera is on a tripod so I can keep to base ISO and play with aperture and shutter speed to get the correct exposure."

© Michael Clarke (michaelclarkephotography.co.uk)



When to work in Manual mode

M mode gives you greater control over your settings but be aware of the drawbacks

Working in manual mode demands a thorough knowledge of exposure principles, which can be a hindrance when your subject is fleeting. Changing settings manually can be time-consuming and cause missed opportunities in fast-paced action or spontaneous moments. In changeable light, relying on manual mode can yield poorly exposed images.

So when should you use manual? When the light isn't going to change suddenly and you have time to consider your settings. Also, when you're working with high-contrast

scenes containing extreme light and shadow contrasts, such as landscapes with dark foregrounds and bright skies, manual mode allows you to balance exposure and preserve details in the highlights and shadows.

If you're out in the middle of the day, or working under constant lighting in the studio, it's more precise. There are creative applications too; mesmerising long-exposure imagery – including astrophotography – when you want to mix a delicate balance of ISO sensitivity, exposure time and aperture.

Studio photography

Under consistent lighting or flash, your exposure can be fine-tuned

One of the downsides of manual mode is that it takes longer to adapt – something that isn't a problem in a controlled studio environment or when you're using flash. In complex lighting conditions, aperture or shutter priority will make a best guess at the situation, rather than capturing the exposure that matches your artistic intentions. Instead, choosing to shoot in Manual mode gives you consistent exposures.

Here, professional Jade Keshia Gordon (jkgphotography.co.uk) used Manual mode with the lowest ISO setting to maximise the flash without introducing noise. "Controlling exposure precisely ensured a clean, focused image," she says.



Pictured
Intentional camera movement
 "For shooting ICM, manual is the only option", says pro Andrew S Gray, as he needs to set the exposure for the change of light and subject position. "I can't let the camera control anything as I use it in a way it isn't designed for."

© Andrew S Gray (andrewsgrayphotography)



© Jade Kesthia Gordon



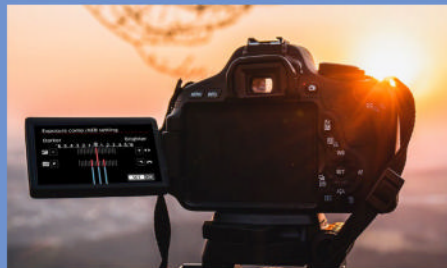
Pictured
On top of the world
 Macro photographer Geraint Radford uses Manual mode when focus stacking. "I can adjust the flash power to ensure the subject is well-lit."

© Geraint Radford

Manual exposure bracketing

Customise your bracketing based on the scene

Manual exposure bracketing can be used to capture greater tonal detail in scenes with high dynamic range – think sunrises and sunsets where the sky is much brighter than the foreground. In manual mode with the camera on a tripod, set up everything for a



balanced exposure, shoot at the 'correct' metered exposure, then deliberately over and underexpose by enough increments to avoid clipping. Blending these frames when editing provides more highlight and shadow data than just one single shot.

Many modern cameras offer automatic exposure bracketing, but manual mode lets you adapt to any lighting by choosing how you bracket.

© Jürgen Poile

Measure exposure differences

Discover the brightness difference between two subjects

There are several reasons to measure the exposure difference between two subjects in the frame. One is to ensure they're both properly exposed (one isn't significantly brighter or darker), or you might compose your shot more effectively by balancing the exposure between them. To measure the exposure difference, the easiest approach is in manual mode with spot metering selected.

First, aim the lens over one subject, depress the shutter halfway to take a reading, and then use exposure lock, which allows you to reframe the scene, but maintain the current exposure settings, to focus on the second subject. You can also measure the reflected light by

observing the stop difference on the exposure scale at the bottom of the viewfinder and use this information to select an appropriate ND Grad filter, for example.



© Future/Matthew Richards

Whatever the weather

"I like shutter speed priority mode when shooting at night," says Andres McNeill. "I keep my shutter locked in when wanting to freeze snow, show rain in motion or when I'm less worried about my aperture and ISO."



When to use Shutter Priority

Master exposure times for motion blur or freezing action

Shutter Priority mode (or 'Tv' on some cameras) is incredibly valuable for controlling motion – either freezing fast-moving subjects or creating an abstract, blurred effect by deliberately engineering slower shutter speeds. Shutter priority mode can accommodate varying motion speeds and give you consistent exposures

across a burst of high-speed frames, even where the light changes rapidly.

As it doesn't let you control the depth of field, this does limit your creative options. Depending solely on shutter speed adjustments can also result in under or overexposed images if the camera's metering system misinterprets

the brightness of the scene. So, to set up your camera for Shutter Priority mode, dial the mode selector to 'S' or 'Tv' and use the control dials to adjust the desired shutter speed. If you're using variable aperture lenses, be mindful that the available shutter speed range may be affected by the aperture setting that you have dialled in.



Pictured
Self-drive safari

"I was in Kruger National Park and spotted an elephant and birds flying around," says Esteban Frey. "Shutter priority mode allowed me to focus solely on adjusting the shutter speed to capture the bird's movement."

© Esteban Frey (www.estebanfrey.com)

Link exposure to the AF point

Shoot in changeable light where exposure is the priority

A key reason photographers choose shutter priority mode is for the quickest reactivity with active targets. By linking your chosen autofocus point to Spot metering mode, as the focus point moves – to make your subject sharp – the metering point moves with it. Ideally, this means you'll get the perfect exposure on your subject, every time. Some cameras have the metering point linked to your chosen AF point automatically. If not, check the AF/MF settings in your menu.



Beware of background detail

With varying depth of fields, be mindful of the backdrop

When you lose aperture control, you may end up with a greater depth of field than you anticipated. It's important to keep an eye on your backdrop and consider recomposing the frame to avoid clutter or unsightly elements – no one wants a branch or piece of litter ruining their otherwise perfect composition, even if it is possible to remove it in post-production. Conversely, if you end up with a shallower depth of field but want to incorporate certain elements behind your main subject, you may need to move closer or, if possible, reposition them.

Limit your ISO

Set the ISO values to avoid unwanted noise

In shutter priority mode, your camera sets the ISO as high as it needs to for a 'proper exposure'. Set the ISO range you're comfortable with – you'll find the minimum and maximum ISO range settings in your camera's menu – to ensure the camera

doesn't leave you with grainy results. Every camera handles ISO differently; ISO 800 will look much noisier on an ageing DSLR than a new mirrorless one with up-to-date processing algorithms, so experiment on non-crucial shots to find the usable range.



© Esteban Frey



Pictured
Motorsports movement
 Instead of relying on shutter priority to freeze motorsport subjects, Michael Clarke often switches to aperture priority "particularly if the light is constantly changing."

© Michael Clarke



When to use Aperture Priority

Control the depth of field for smooth or sharp background detail

Aperture Priority is used in situations when controlling the depth of field is crucial. It's popular with professionals who value the aesthetic quality of their images but want to make quick adjustments in changing lighting conditions. Think wildlife or portrait photographers who want to isolate a subject with a shallow depth of field or landscape

pros setting a smaller aperture to ensure maximum sharpness throughout the frame.

To set up your camera for Aperture Priority mode, turn the mode dial to 'A' or 'Av' and use the control dials to select your desired aperture value. The camera will meter the scene and automatically adjust the shutter speed accordingly.

While Aperture Priority is versatile and widely used, it isn't suited to fast-moving subjects or in low light, as there's a danger that the shutter speed might dip too low for a sharp result. It can lead to exposure variations, so avoid it for panoramas, stitched shots or any application where you need a series of consistent exposures.

Shoot in burst mode

Continuous shooting maintains sharpness in variable lighting conditions

On days when the lighting is changing quickly, such as sunlight passing behind fast-moving clouds, capturing multiple frames rapidly with burst mode increases your chances of a sharp image.

This is especially helpful in aperture priority mode, where the shutter speed

isn't the most important part of the equation. For wildlife, burst mode combined with aperture priority can freeze the action and keep motion blur to a minimum but it relies on having a fast camera buffer and plenty of storage. Simply fire off a burst at the peak of the action.



Set minimum shutter

Ensure your exposure isn't too slow

In aperture priority mode, setting a minimum shutter speed range allows you to prioritise the shutter speed as a variable in exposure control. This way, you still benefit from the semi-automatic exposure adjustments, but the shutter speed won't fall too low for optimal sharpness.

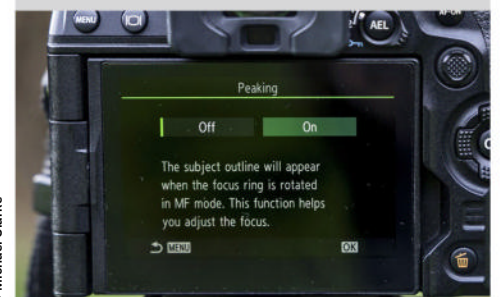
In lower light, setting a minimum shutter speed range can prevent motion blur. Some lenses have image stabilisation built-in, while others need faster minimum shutter speeds to avoid camera shake. Set the minimum shutter speed from your camera menu and experiment with your gear's limitations.



Check results live

Use depth of field preview on mirrorless for real-time results

One of the benefits of mirrorless cameras is that you can preview the effects of your chosen aperture settings through the electronic viewfinder or the camera's LCD screen. This real-time visualisation helps you gauge how much of the scene is in focus at any given aperture setting – and review its creative potential – before taking the shot. Similarly, if your camera features manual focus peaking (an on-screen visual aid), enable it to check that the right parts of the scene are in focus.



Pictured
Rapidly changing environment

"With street photography, aperture priority is the go-to," says Clarke. "I set the aperture to f/8, ISO to auto and shutter speed to 1/250."

UNDERGROUND

© Michael Clarke



Customise your camera

Set up and use custom modes to access preconfigured settings



Pictured
Hummingbird, Costa Rica
Nature photographer Esteban Frey frequently uses Manual mode and custom preset modes "for situations where specific settings are needed unexpectedly, such as capturing a fast-flying bird."

© Esteban Frey

Most advanced modern cameras have custom modes that allow you to preconfigure settings tailored to different shooting scenarios, subjects, locations or lighting setups. That way, you can quickly access your favourite setting combinations with just one twist of the mode dial. Custom modes are often overlooked, even by pros, but they're easy to configure, speed up your workflow, and help to maintain consistency across shoots.

Wedding photographers might configure one custom mode for indoor ceremonies with controlled lighting and another for outdoor portraits with changing conditions, saving time during a fast-paced event. If you work in the same studio with controlled lighting setups, storing your preferred settings will give you the same results across sessions. Even landscape pros, who often encounter varying weather, can benefit from using custom modes. They might set aperture priority and a narrow aperture for maximum depth of field and use specific ISO settings and white balance adjustments for the environment.

Set custom modes

Using the custom mode dial

To set up custom modes, find the custom section of the camera menu. Select the parameters, such as aperture, shutter speed, ISO, white balance and autofocus, and save them to one of the available custom mode positions. To activate the mode, turn the dial to the assigned position. These differ between cameras – on Canon's EOS R6 Mark II, they are C1, C2 and C3, while the Nikon Z7 II labels custom modes U1.



Pictured Adapt to the day

If you have settings you often use or switch between, custom modes are convenient and easy to set up. At a wedding, you might use different custom modes for the ceremony, static portraits and candid party shots

© Lauren Scott

What about video?

Where to set the mode dial for video

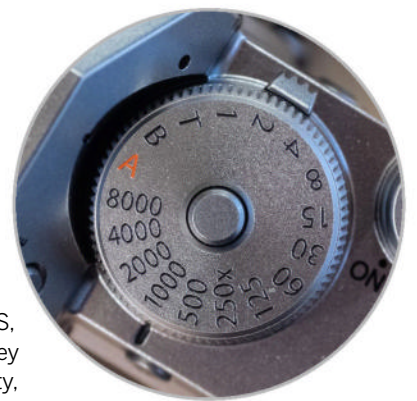
Many pro hybrid cameras have a dedicated video mode, such as Panasonic's 'Manual Video mode', where you can manually set the shutter speed, aperture value and ISO for recording. A general rule is to use a specific shutter speed around double the frame rate you're filming at; for example, 1/50th second at 25fps. If your camera doesn't have a video-specific mode, use Manual mode for the most control. Manual white balance will also keep your content consistent, and make any colour grading while editing smoother.



No mode dial? No problem

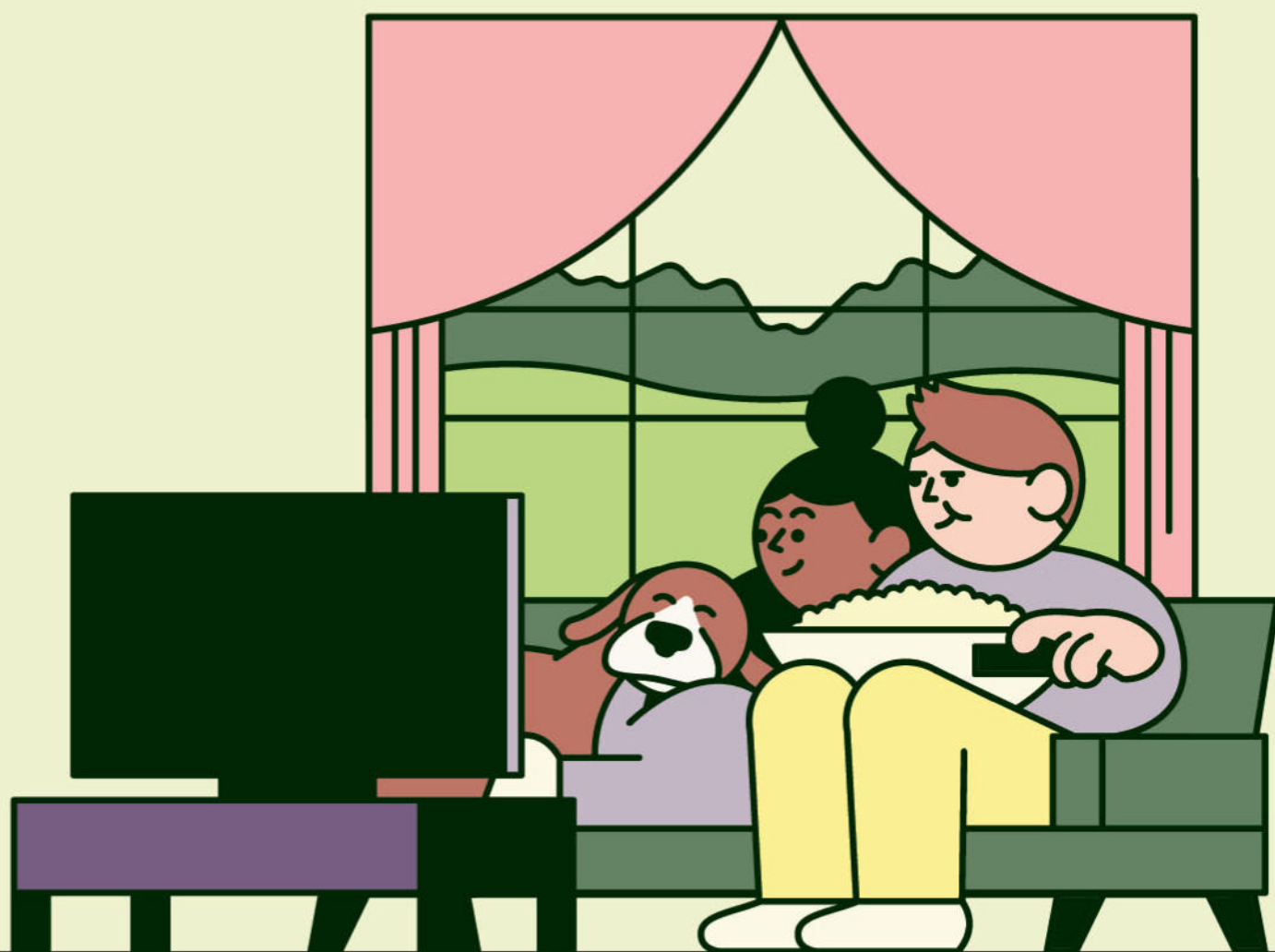
How to use cameras without a mode dial

Classically styled cameras, such as the Fujifilm X-T5 and Nikon Z fc don't have a dedicated dial to change between the standard P, S, A and M exposure modes, but they still offer them. For shutter priority, you rotate the shutter speed dial for the right value and set the aperture ring to A, while for aperture priority mode, the shutter should be set to A with the lens aperture mode set to infinity. Manual mode is more obvious; rotate the shutter dial to choose a speed and the lens aperture ring to choose the f/stop.



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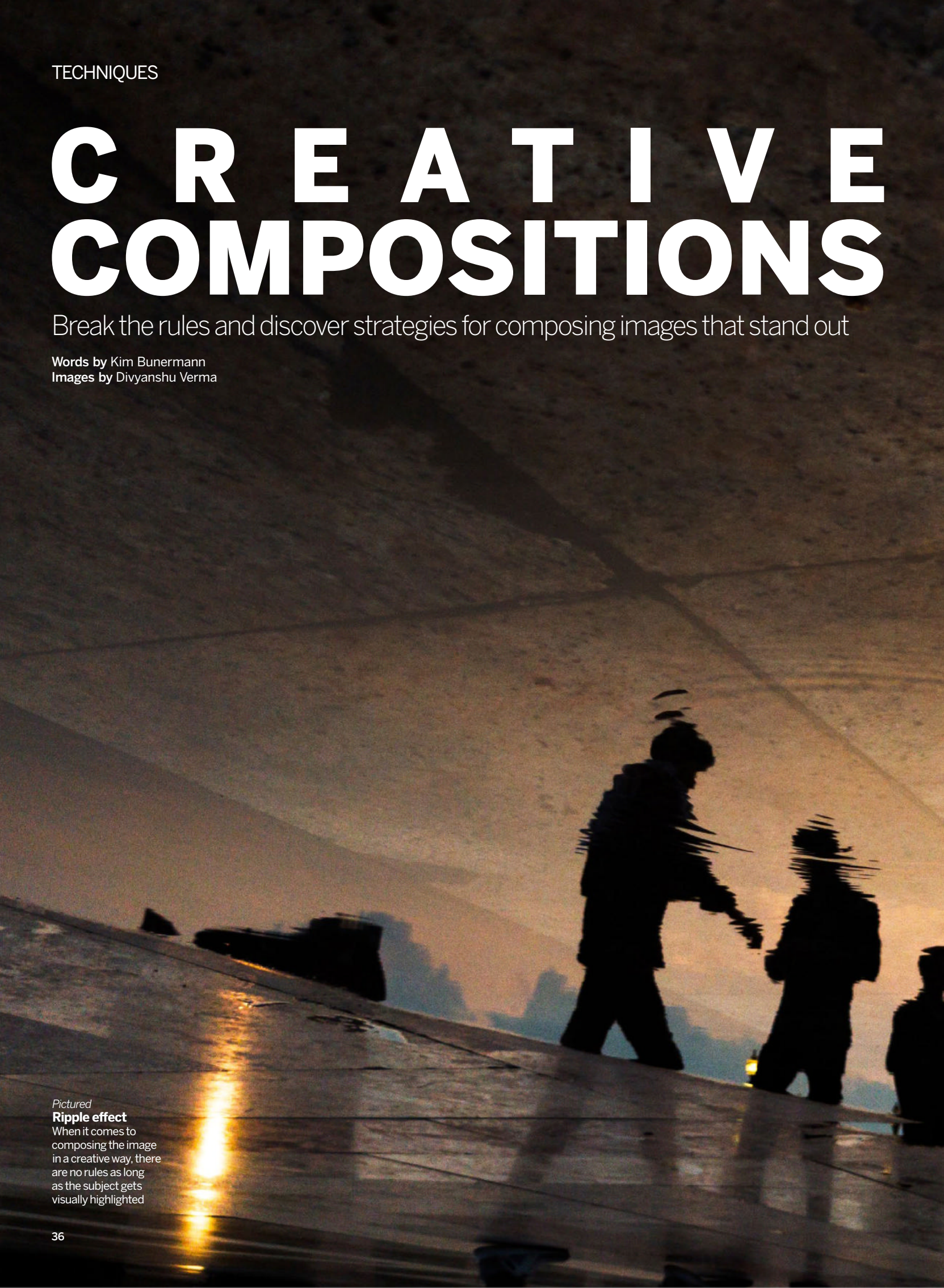
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CREATIVE COMPOSITIONS

Break the rules and discover strategies for composing images that stand out

Words by Kim Bunermann
Images by Divyanshu Verma

Pictured
Ripple effect
When it comes to composing the image in a creative way, there are no rules as long as the subject gets visually highlighted



Have you ever wondered why some photos stand out from the rest? Of course, there are plenty of aspects that may catch our eye but it's most likely to have something to do with the composition.

With the rise of social media platforms, we've all seen countless shots that apply common composition strategies; but here's the thing, however impressive or technically correct they are, these shots tend to get lost in a sea of similar-looking images.

This is hardly surprising, as when we are first introduced to photography, the use of classic framing methods is high on the

list of things we are taught. Straying from this path of tried-and-tested rules is not considered an option although, in reality, not every interesting scene can be captured at its fullest potential by applying these traditional approaches. Sometimes, to create unique and extraordinary frames, it is necessary to come up with an alternative way to consider the visual potential.

So, it's time to put the tried-and-tested strategies, such as the golden ratio or the rule of thirds, on hold and learn from compositions of other mediums that can help us cut loose from the familiar. Exploring the diversity of framing in photography starts with analysing

juxtapositions and new visual possibilities that are waiting to be put into action. However, not every scene will benefit from creative compositions, so it's crucial not to use them as framing tools and, instead, see them as a way of considering the possibilities when capturing the subject.

In this feature, we will look at the importance of captivating framing and discuss why tried-and-tested techniques may work against us and restrict our creativity as image creators. Over the next few pages, you will discover various creative ways to compose a frame. By doing so, you will surprise the viewer, force them to look closer and create a lasting impression.



TECHNIQUES

Pictured

Shadow layer

By including shadows of all kinds, the scene gains individuality and an extra layer of interest



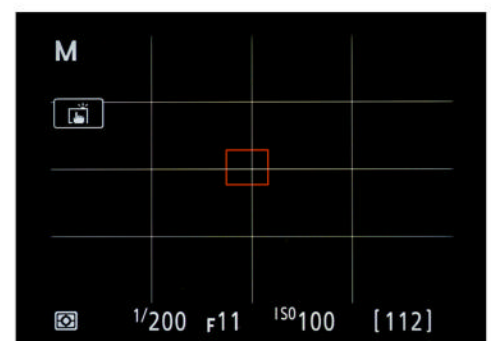
Break the rules

Use traditional composition rules as a guide, adapting them in a way that benefits your subject

Following a different approach is a good way to break free from the traditional rules of photography and experiment with compositions that go a little further. The rule of thirds is one of these well-established compositional methods – it involves dividing the frame into two horizontal and vertical lines, creating four connection points where key elements should ideally be placed for a harmonic and balanced frame. As viewers are accustomed to classic compositions like

this, intentionally breaking these patterns can be a smart move. By deviating from the norm, you create an unusual image balance and dynamic. However, you should still activate the rule of thirds grid lines in your camera menu. This will help you cut loose from old patterns as you can now identify where not to place the key features of the scene.

Breaking this composition approach is particularly useful to emphasise the main subject when distracting elements



or so-called 'dead' space is evident in the scene. The latter can be understood as 'empty' space which does not contribute to

Experiment with different formats

Exploring different ratios is a game-changer when it comes to creating creative compositions

Switching the image orientation is a common technique that can give your scene a different look. For example, a portrait orientation shifts the focus onto the foreground details while a landscape orientation is best suited to highlight frames with strong horizontal lines. On the other hand, aspect ratios are often overlooked, even though they can potentially play a significant role in image composition and have an impact on the relationship between the different elements in the photo.

Social media platforms each have their own favoured ratio for displaying images online but when it comes to switching formats, there are no limits. Here, non-standard ratios offer the best base for eye-catching compositions. Many of us rely on cropping adjustments in post-processing, but something that

isn't often taken into account is that most modern cameras can produce various ratios in-camera, instead. Nevertheless, it is best to decide on a specific ratio while shooting the scene as it allows you to target and create a composition that favours your subject. Go to the camera's menu to see what aspect ratios are available. After selecting one, a box with the chosen ratio will become visible on your camera screen, meaning that everything outside of the box will be cut off.

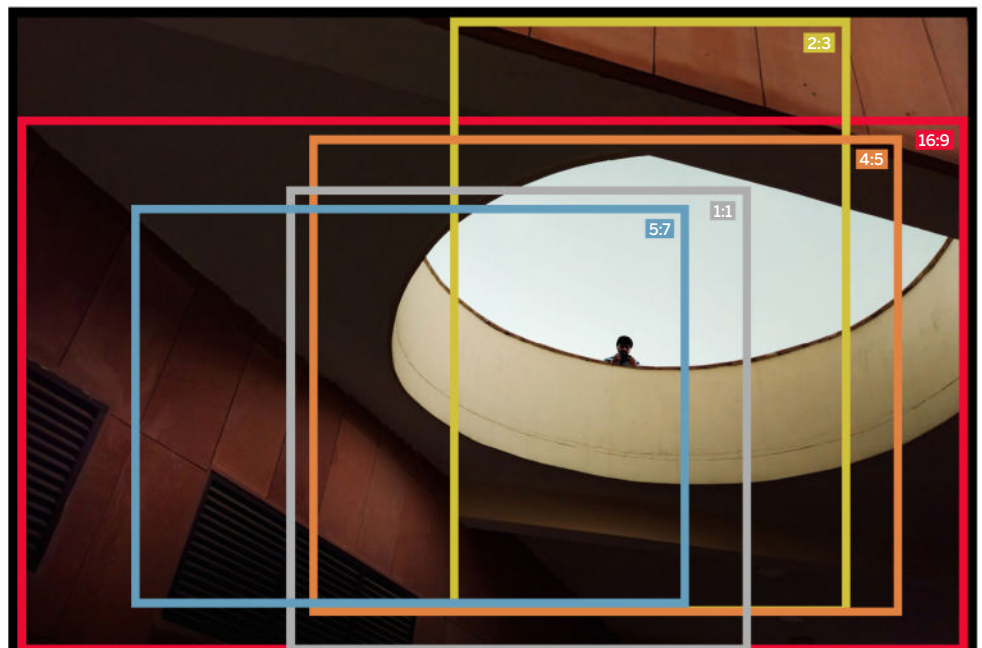
If you want to work with ratios that your camera doesn't offer, add a few strips of tape over the rear LCD screen protector to give you a view of your desired aspect ratio. Bear in mind that different aspect ratios have different effects on the frame and may be suited to certain applications or purposes.

FIND YOUR PERSPECTIVE

Using a tripod is a great way to slow down and refine the process of composition. Adjust the height of the camera to avoid the common eye-level perspective and change the ratio of the foreground and background. Experiment with different focal lengths as these will affect the compression within a scene. For example, using a longer focal length will bring elements of the scene closer together.

showcasing the subject. To create a more focused composition, adjust the subject's position up or down. For example, if the main subject is a dramatic sky, shift the focus there to give it more space in the frame.

Additionally, you could experiment by including unexpected elements in your composition, such as a thin strip of land at the bottom of the frame. Another possible approach is to fill the entire frame with just one subject. This is especially effective when the subject is positioned in the foreground. This way, colour, and structure will take on further importance, creating a bold and impactful composition.



1:1

Simplifies images and accentuates minimalist scenes. Evokes a sense of nostalgia as the format is similar to classic Polaroid prints and was the first standard format of Instagram.

2:3

The vast majority of images have this standard ratio, which is equivalent to the classic 4x6in photo, the default format of 35mm cameras.

4:5

Commonly used by micro four thirds cameras and social media platforms such as Instagram, which adopted this aspect ratio for vertical portraits.

5:7

Provides a harmonious and visually pleasing ratio to the human eye. More elongated than 4:5, it offers better scope for wide landscapes.

16:9

This panoramic format, known as a storytelling ratio, has become popular in film and cinematography since the introduction of 'widescreen' TVs and computer monitors.

Shoot off-level

Create dynamic compositions using the Dutch angle and cutting out some elements

Capturing the horizon line straight is a classic approach in photography of all genres. By doing this, the composition gains a sense of balance and harmony, which is beneficial for subjects such as the sea, but can also result in a standard frame that lacks dynamism.

In this case, the so-called 'Dutch angle' is a clever approach to convey the mood of a scene further. To apply this technique, tilt the camera to one side (either left or right) so that the horizon or other leading lines aren't straight. The number one rule here is to make it an obvious choice, otherwise, the composition will appear unintentional, risking the impression of a low-quality image.

This approach is especially powerful when you have a subject that's moving in front of your lens and even better when the subject is interacting with you. The Dutch angle is often seen in travel photography to convey



the feeling of movement and adventure. When travelling, some scenes typically will only be available to photograph on the go, for example from a moving train or car. To keep the subject sharp, you need to take some

camera settings into account. Nevertheless, those compositions do not have to be as clean as those you may be used to creating. Cut out elements, such as part of the streets or a lamppost, to add interest to the frame

Change your settings Use your camera's settings to help you get the best compositions

1 Prioritise settings Shoot in M mode to control focus and blur. To improve the overall sharpness, work with apertures around f/8. This aperture is known to be the sharpest of most lenses. To reduce the risk that your subject gets affected by motion blur, choose a shutter speed of 1/500 second. This setting depends on how fast the vehicle in which you are sitting is going and might need to be adapted to your situation. As we selected a fast shutter speed, the amount of light reaching the sensor is reduced. Compensate the exposure with higher ISO settings – here, modern cameras perform well to a greater extent without creating any distracting image noise.



2 Ensure stability and sharpness When you are on the go, it's natural that the camera will shake from time to time. So it is important to activate settings that support your stability. Go into your camera's menu and enable the vibration reduction (VR) feature. Because of the movement, another challenge is to master the subject's focus. To do so, avoid manual focusing as this will take too much time and won't deliver accurate results. Instead, select to shoot in continuous focus (CF mode). Now, the camera continuously tracks the subject through the frame and automatically adapts the focus. This focus mode is often used for sports or wildlife scenes.



Pictured
Going Dutch

When travelling through a city by car or train, make use of viewpoints that add fresh dynamism to your frames



BE EXPERIMENTAL

When it comes to creating engaging compositions, the key is to let go of basic tried-and-tested strategies. By doing so, you will explore the full range of possibilities the scene offers. A good exercise is to limit yourself to one subject and to shoot it with different framing approaches. By analysing the images, you can train your compositional skills and gain experience for the next scene you capture.

and convey the mood.

Additionally, having those elements out of focus contributes to the travel character of the photograph.

Pictured
Look up

Discover the potential of architectural features to create compositions with a unique character



Go extreme

Leave the common eye-level perspective and explore further composition possibilities

When photographing a subject, the most natural perspective is usually from a standing position, which gives a well-known and realistic view of the subject. However, this view may limit composition possibilities and the hidden qualities of the scene.

To create a different kind of composition, vary the camera's level to avoid missing out on engaging perspectives. By lowering or raising the camera, you can provide a fresh view of well-known scenes and gain composition possibilities that the eye-level perspective simply can't offer.

When going down low or looking up, use your camera's tilted screen to make the process easier. By placing the camera on the ground, leading lines are created while structures of the elements gain importance, giving the frame more depth. For instance, when shooting from a low perspective in the city, road lines turn into leading lines, directing the viewer's gaze while adding dynamism to the composition.

Another technique is to involve foreground elements such as high grass in the composition to add layers and

colour. Here, it is essential not to overload the frame, which can distract attention from the main subject. Instead, work with maximum open apertures (low f-stop numbers) and position the camera close to the foreground element to be able to shoot through it. This approach adds colour and depth to the composition, offering the viewer an atmospheric glimpse of the scene while still keeping the focus on the main subject. Lowering the camera also gives the foreground and background further significance within the composition, as the middle ground becomes less visible.

Pointing the camera 90° degrees up highlights the scene's structure and form. This is particularly effective when capturing architecture or indoor features. By doing so, the scene gains abstract characteristics. To create a balanced composition, keep an eye on how the lines come together. Positioning yourself directly under the main feature ensures that the symmetries are showcased best. Here, it is helpful to activate in-camera grid lines and to correct any lens distortion in post-processing.

Release mode
Continuous H



? Back OK

3 Shoot, shoot, shoot For the best results, activate the burst mode or continuous shooting mode. With this setting, your camera automatically records a series of pictures as long as you keep the shutter button pressed. This way, you will have a wider selection to choose from later including more options to show your client. Some practical tips for a drive-by shoot are to use the side windows of the car and to clear your view by lowering the window, if possible, so that you can avoid including dirt or light reflections from the glass in your composition. Bear in mind that having the seatbelt on might limit your movement, but staying safe is more important.



Search for sequences

Concentrate on integrating patterns to create powerful graphic compositions

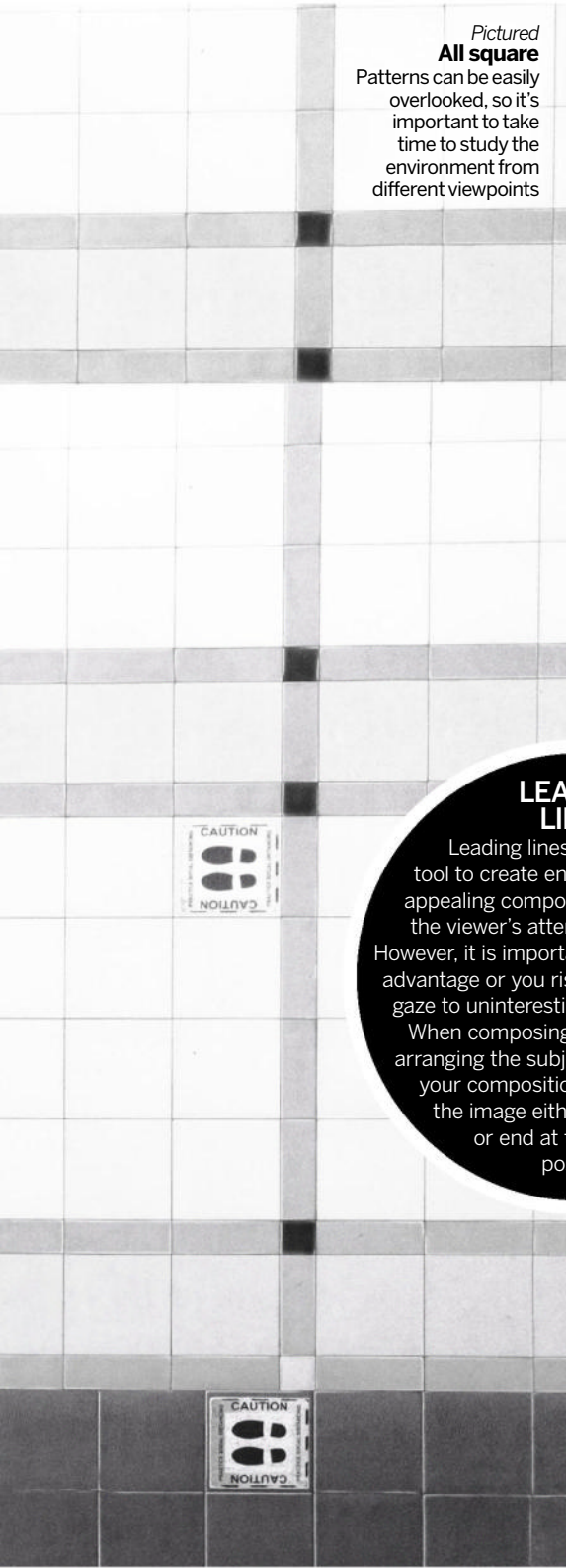
To create a striking composition, consider whether your scene contains elements that appear in the form of patterns. Such sequences are harmonic to the human eye but are often overlooked in busy daily situations. There is a theory that involving even numbers of elements can have the effect of distracting the viewer. On the other hand, odd numbers are thought to contribute to getting the viewer's attention as these

are visually appealing and more natural to the human eye. Also, integrating objects in different colours or shapes breaks the composition's pattern and adds interest.

To create eye-catching graphical compositions, experiment with the angle and framing. For example, photographing from an elevated viewpoint captures the scene in a so-called bird's-eye view to reveal patterns most people won't notice in their daily lives.

Next, look for interaction between elements: Do they create a repetitive pattern or do they supplement each other in size and colour? If the scene offers a pattern, for example in the form of tiles or windows, it is recommended to extend the sequence beyond the frame. If there is no obvious pattern evident, crop the frame tightly so that objects of similar colour or form align. To capture the pattern straight, dive into your camera menu and activate

Pictured
All square
 Patterns can be easily overlooked, so it's important to take time to study the environment from different viewpoints



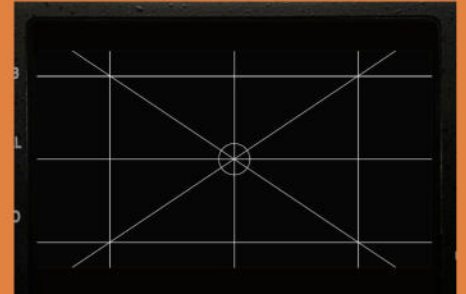
Throw some shade

Use the sun's power to create high-contrast compositions and partially hide your subject

Facial impressions can contribute to the effect of a photograph but often distract the viewer. To prevent this artistically, shoot around lunchtime to make use of hard shadows that can hide people in the composition. This can be achieved by placing the shadows at the height of the person's face.

For a more abstract approach, integrate the person's shadow into the frame. This creates an interesting composition where the subject is not physically present in the shot.

This technique is not restricted to people as shadows of other subjects also add



another layer to the composition. To have further control over the scene, work with your own shadow. This works best by facing the camera downwards with a non-cluttered ground. To add interest and depth, choose sand or stones to reveal extra texture.

LEADING LINES

Leading lines are a powerful tool to create engaging and visually appealing compositions as they draw the viewer's attention to the subject. However, it is important to use them to your advantage or you risk leading the viewer's gaze to uninteresting parts of the frame. When composing the photo, start by arranging the subject first. Then, adjust your compositions so that lines in the image either originate from or end at the subject's position.

SHADOW FACE

When taking a closer look, certain facial shapes are discernible. Due to the shadow placement the subject's identity is a mystery and doesn't distract the viewer from the image

DEFINED SHADOW

The shape of the shadow is almost perfect, except for a slight loss of definition on the left side, indicating it was present in the scene and not edited, making the frame real

FRAME DIVISION

The image was split diagonally into two parts by the hard shadow, adding a sense of dynamism and interest while drawing the viewer's eyes toward the centre of the frame



the grid lines. This way, you can level the composition to perfection without the need to spend time on corrections in editing.

To underline the graphical effect, there is always the possibility of transforming the colour scheme into black and white in post-processing. The absence of colour enhances the detail in the patterns. When doing so, focus on enhancing the overall contrast as with greater contrast, the image elements gain new visual aspects and importance, letting the daily scene appear unnatural and generated. Instead of setting the image Mode to Grayscale, add a Black & White adjustment layer. That way, you won't lose the control over tonal adjustments.

Frame the frame

Watch out for man-made or natural surroundings that border the scene

Including a sub-frame in the composition offers the viewer a window to explore the subject in a more targeted way. This technique adds a layer of storytelling and context, allowing the viewer to explore the subject more intimately. It is also effective for controlling compositions on wider aspect ratios as it is ideal for filling unwanted space or obscure distracting elements. Any object that creates a second frame at the edges of the image can be used as a framing tool.

The more unique the shape of the sub-frame, the more visually striking the composition can be. Overhanging branches, arches, and tunnels can be used to direct the viewer's gaze toward the subject. Even nearby elements, such as fencing can act as a frame tool when positioning yourself close to struts, integrating them to the left and right image side.

When creating a frame-in-frame composition, it's important to consider the symmetries between the different elements of the image. If this is not taken into account, the composition will take attention away from the subject. To create a harmonious scene, pay attention to your point of view. Position yourself parallel to the subject so that the scene's form and shapes are equally involved. It is worth experimenting with the camera height, for example, lowering the position adds depth and creates leading lines that guide the viewer towards the subject of interest.

A common challenge when using this composition strategy is getting the exposure right. If the sun is not directly

behind you, the sub-frame may appear darker than the subject. One way to deal with those high-contrast scenes is to expose for the highlights or the mid-tones. This way, lighter image elements aren't overexposed and they display some details while the darker elements lose all the detail. By doing so, any people passing by in your frame will also appear as a dark element, close to a silhouette.

A second approach is to apply the HDR technique to blend multiple frames with different exposures, enhancing the dynamic range and allowing for both bright and dark elements to be captured with more detail. This technique will usually require using a tripod so that you can ensure a smooth blending process. However, if you can't use a tripod and have to capture those scenes on the go, the camera has a range of features that will help you.

THINK TWICE

Although there might be creative composition strategies you want to finally put into action, don't make the common mistake of applying these to a scene that will not benefit from it. A framing tool is not a subject, so following a subject-first approach is key to ensuring that frames have a purpose while highlighting the subject.

Pictured Think monochrome

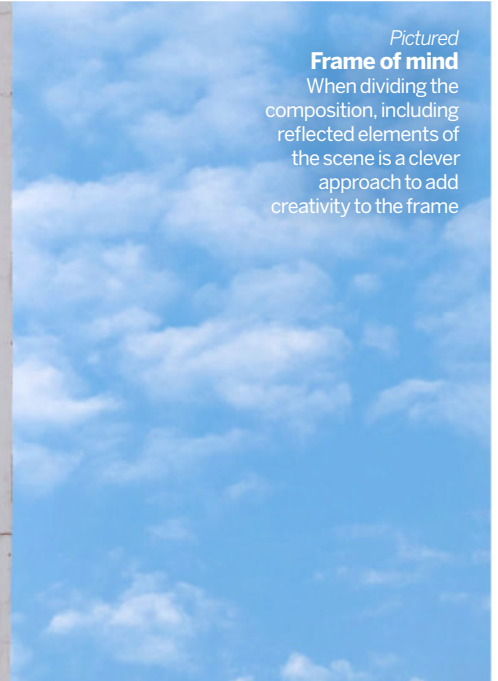
When capturing high-contrast scenes, enable the black and white preview in your camera settings to visualise the scene without colours

Divide the shot

Draw a line to break up your composition

Splitting the composition into parts is a simple yet clever way to create an eye-catching composition. The most straightforward approach to achieving this is to work with two sides of the scene. As this technique presents the scene in a more structured way and slows down the pace of the composition the scene appears more appealing to the viewer.

To further enhance the visual impact of the composition and prevent it from appearing overloaded and cluttered, it is essential to integrate some negative space into the frame. This allows the separate parts to breathe, creating a more balanced look. To achieve the maximum effect, the single parts of the composition should work well on their own but also reinforce each other. To determine whether a scene offers potential for implementing this technique, analyse the



Pictured
Frame of mind
When dividing the composition, including reflected elements of the scene is a clever approach to add creativity to the frame

subject's lines and change your viewpoint, allowing you to find the most advantageous angles and perspectives.

Dividing tools do not only have to be physical elements; shadows are also great to integrate. Capturing well-defined and hard

shadows adds further elements to the scene that can be used creatively to divide the composition. For instance, shooting the scene around midday when the sun is at its highest point helps capture these shadows to create a more interesting and dynamic division.

Shoot handheld HDR Can't set up a tripod? Here are some tips for shooting handheld



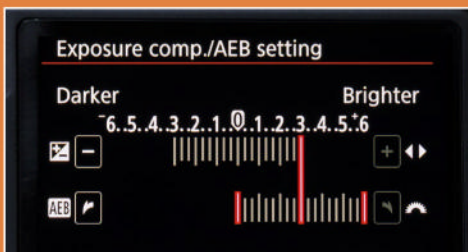
1 Shoot in AV To ensure the sharpness and depth of field aren't affected by auto changes in aperture values, set your camera to aperture priority (Av) mode. It is best with wider apertures such as f/8 so that a decent amount of light can reach the camera sensor.



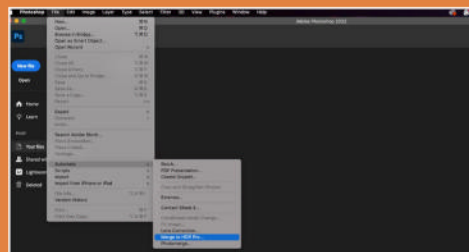
2 Increase ISO To reduce ghosts, increase the ISO values. This enables the camera to work with faster shutter speeds and supports a close series of handheld frames, resulting in fewer frame deviations for a smooth blending process in HDR software.



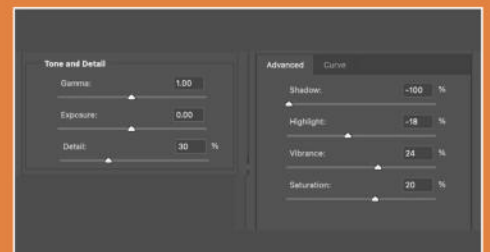
3 Stay steady Enable Image Stabilisation in the camera menu and lens and check whether the scene offers any extra support, for example, walls that you can lean against to help reduce camera shake. For greater stability, choose the viewfinder over the LCD.



4 Activate bracketing Go into the camera menu and select the auto exposure bracketing feature, found in the Drive shooting menu. Now, select the number of frames and the exposure values. Selecting 2.0EV and three shots is suitable for most scenes.



5 Merge HDR Upload the images from your SD card to your editing device. Merging an HDR image is possible in most advanced editing programs. You can locate this function in Photoshop under File > Automate > Merge to HDR Pro... and select the frames.



6 Fine-tune exposure First, concentrate on Basic sliders. Adjust settings to your liking and avoid increasing the Detail slider to achieve a natural result. Under the Advanced sliders, adapt Shadow, Highlight, Vibrance and Saturation settings.

Play with proportions

Challenge the viewer by placing subjects in a targeted way

When capturing large subjects, such as architecture, one commonly used technique is to include a person in the frame to highlight the actual size and scale of the building. This person can also act as an indicator of reality because when you are capturing architecture with long exposures or an overcast sky, the natural element of the horizon can come across as surreal and animated.

To extend this composition technique further, you can also integrate elements in such a way that they don't give any clues as to the actual scale of the scene. Using this approach, play with the subject's proportions,

making the subjects appear larger or smaller than they really are. This strategy is popular used in travel shots where tourists creatively integrate themselves into well-known landmark scenes such as the Eiffel Tower or the Leaning Tower of Pisa.

To apply this composition, it's best to work with two subjects in the frame. One subject needs to be physically more distant from the lens, while the other one is positioned close to your optic. To bring creative ideas to life, it is helpful if at least one subject can be controlled by yourself. This way you can actively direct and arrange the subject to your

vision. This approach also can add a layer of humour when mismatched elements are brought together, for instance. Subjects that at first glance don't have much connection to each other can make a powerful combination to force the viewer to think about the image.

As the distance between both subjects is significant, keeping both sharp is a challenge to master. To widen the depth of field (focus area) work with smaller apertures of greater than $f/11$. If you struggle with achieving uniform sharpness, adapt the differences between both subjects by changing focal length or consider focus stacking.

LIMIT YOURSELF

Limitations are great to push yourself and enhance creativity to improve your composition skills. One example of this is by limiting your lens's focal length. If you don't have a prime lens, manually fix a specific focal length on your zoom lens with a piece of duct tape. This will encourage you to think outside the box and explore different angles while discovering new possibilities.



Pictured
Dog days
Incorporate multiple layers of interest to engage the viewer on a deeper level

**FRAMING ELEMENTS**

By integrating the branches in the upper part of the frame, the dead space was reduced and interest and colour added

MYSTERY SUBJECTS

Although only the reflection of the subjects is visible in the frame, their outlines hint at the appearance of these people without distracting from the image

STILL SURFACE

The surface of the water is calm though its true nature is visible on the bottom right. Reflections from the sky add a smooth gradient throughout the frame

Add layers

Create a story by combining fragments of scenes in one frame

When it comes to telling a story in your image, the composition plays an essential part. Here, working with reflections is an effective way to add a layer to the frame, which contributes to enhancing the mood while providing the viewer with the context of the scene.

Mixing reality and reflection in the composition leaves the viewer with a lasting impression. This can be water reflections of the subject of interest, as it opens up possibilities to include other elements in the frame. When doing so, keep an eye on the weather and speed of the water flow. Calm surfaces work best to capture clear reflections of the subject.

Windows are another reflective surface that offer great possibilities. Here, shop or restaurant displays offer great possibilities as those windows usually extend over a large area. This way, you can integrate the elements found behind the windows with opposite scene elements like trees, shops and people outside. Car windows are also a great tool to bring this composition strategy to life. To enhance the possibilities of windows, change the viewpoint and shoot through them. Raindrops on the surface, for example, will leave you with an interesting additional element, enhancing the frame's mood. To take this further, experiment with

shifting the focus. Go to your camera menu and select a flexible focus point, which you can either direct through touch or buttons to the specific element. To have the raindrops appear sharp while letting the background appear blurred, work with maximum aperture settings and longer focal lengths. When zooming into the raindrops, you will notice a sharp reflection of background elements.

There are endless possibilities when it comes to using reflections in compositions. Being creative and experimental will open up new opportunities to enhance the visual storytelling experience.

Pro advice

Divyanshu Verma on how he brings his compositions to life

Hey Divyanshu, what role does image composition play in your work?

As photographers, we all know that composition is vital. It plays an important role when it comes to creating an eye-pleasing frame. In my work, the most important role it has is to create simplicity and to balance the scene; because the simpler the scene is composed, the more pleasing it usually looks. I always aim to highlight the main subjects so that distracting objects seem to be negligible.

The most important aspect is the essence of the composition, like the arrangement of elements in the frame. Here the well-known 'rule of thirds' comes into play. It is one of my favourite compositions that I learned when starting my photography journey. This classic rule clearly highlights what to add to the frames to create simplicity and an attractive composition. Placing the subject at one of the intersecting points supports dividing the image both horizontally and vertically and it also helps to create balanced detail.

How do you decide on your final composition?

When I choose the compositions for my images, I keep the 'rule of thirds' in mind. However, to create the perfect composition, I sometimes break this rule, depending on the message I want to convey. Next to this, perspective is vital in my work. It has the power to create a magic touch, so experimenting with different angles helps to create perfect compositions with a sense of depth. In some of my images, I use leading lines to lead the viewer's eyes directly towards the subject. To add extra depth and interest, I include shapes and textures in the scene.

There are three key things I keep in mind when I compose an image. First, I decide how much background I want to integrate into my frame. This way, I can avoid creating distractions and exclude any unnecessary elements. Second, I always avoid my subject becoming merged with the background and third, I try to change my angle to add an artistic touch to my images. It also helps me to separate my subject from the background.

Do you have any tips for aspiring photographers on how to create captivating compositions?

I've seen many beginners facing the problem of how to compose their subject within the frame. It also challenged me in the earlier

days of my career but I practised a lot and that helped me to compose better photos over time. So my advice is to keep practising and experimenting. Secondly, always go for an interesting subject or incorporate your subject in an interesting place. My third tip is to use different and creative perspectives to make the scene look interesting. Also, try to fill your frames to create extra depth but avoid cutting off important image elements. Lastly, play with different lighting to create a powerful mood and feel to underline the composition.

Divyanshu Verma



A self-taught photographer based in Uttar Pradesh, India, Divyanshu Verma has a passion for finding moments around him that help him see the world from a different perspective.

His work has been recognised by various platforms both nationally and internationally. With his positive attitude, Divyanshu strives to create his own style and identity in this competitive world.
divyanshuverma.net
 @street_ash



Pictured Mist opportunities

Divyanshu captured his hometown of Prayagrah during the winter. "Due to the fog, the mood and the feeling was special that day," he says

HOPE AND HOMES FOR CHILDREN



URGENT APPEAL



Russia's brutal invasion of Ukraine is not just a humanitarian crisis for the Ukrainian people; it's a child protection emergency.

Up to 100,000 children warehoused in Ukraine's vast orphanage system – a network of over 700 buildings – risk being forgotten. Left to face the dangers of war alone as staff flee. As families are torn apart or forced from their homes, many more children are at risk of being separated from the love and protection they desperately need. Worse still, they are at risk of trafficking, or being placed in overcrowded, understaffed and poorly resourced orphanages in border countries.

We must act now.

Born out of the Balkans conflict 30 years ago, we've championed the vital importance of family and community-based care of children and our teams are on the ground in Ukraine, Moldova and Romania to ensure this war does not rob children of the love and protection they need now more than ever. Across all three countries, we're directly supporting displaced families and unaccompanied children with material and emotional

support. We're working closely with authorities to keep families together when they are at their most vulnerable and to fight for the safe tracking, monitoring and care for children without parental care. And we won't stop when the fighting stops.

Will you help us by donating?

With your help, we can avert a child protection crisis of epic proportions and ensure children are protected and kept in families. Never orphanages.

To help protect vulnerable children, donate online at: www.hopeandhomes.org/donate. Or call **01722 790 111** Monday – Friday 9am – 5pm.

Please quote **FP22 - P&D** when making your donation.

In the event that funds raised exceed what is needed to deliver Hope and Homes for Children immediate and longer-term response to this crisis, we will use donations where the need is greatest.

HOPE AND HOMES
FOR CHILDREN



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Tel	Email

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from my credit/debit card (details below)

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Name of taxpayer	Today's date
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Please let us know if you would like to hear from us:

by phone by email

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Please make cheques payable to 'Hope and Homes for Children' and send to Hope and Homes for Children, FREEPOST RTKX-TYLS-JHHB, East Clyffe Farm Barn, Salisbury Road, Steeple Langford, Salisbury SP3 4BF.

You can view our privacy policy here www.hopeandhomes.org/privacy.

Registered charity (No. 1089490) FP22 - P&D


LIGHT TOUCH

No tripod? No problem. Capture high-quality handheld images in any lighting conditions

Words and images by: Kav Dadfar

Difficulty level: Intermediate

Time taken: 1.5 hours

 Many photographers will know the importance of using tripods for capturing sharp images in low-light conditions. But while tripods are a must when shooting long-exposure images outdoors, in places where there are restrictions on their use, for example, in churches, cathedrals and museums or at events such as live shows, this can pose challenges. Even if tripods are allowed, sometimes it isn't practical to use them, for example, when shooting in crowded areas.

Not being able to use a tripod becomes particularly problematic in low-light conditions where longer shutter speeds increase the susceptibility to camera shake. Despite the many advancements in camera technology that have helped low-light photography, achieving sharp photos in these conditions is difficult. Without the necessary knowledge and practice, you may end up with a collection of blurry images.

By using the tips shared within this article, you can enhance your photography skills and boost your chances of producing high-quality, well-defined images when faced with challenging lighting environments.

Pictured
Seeing the light

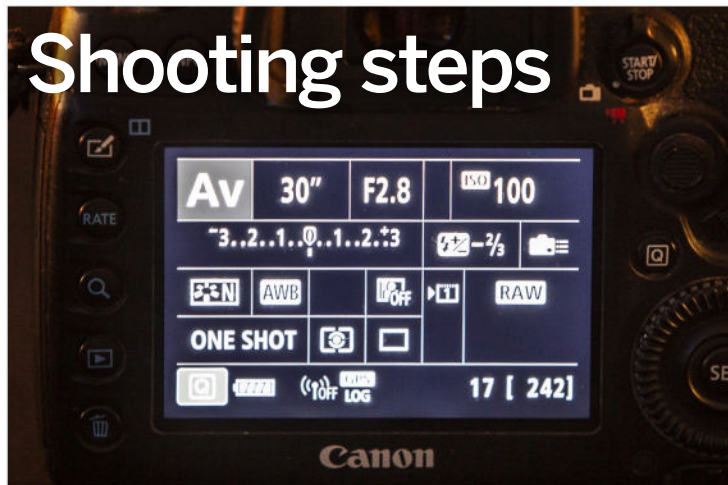
Even in places where the use of tripods is prohibited, there are tricks you can use to overcome challenging lighting conditions

What you'll need

- Mirrorless or DSLR camera
- Fully charged battery
- Spare memory cards
- Image editing software

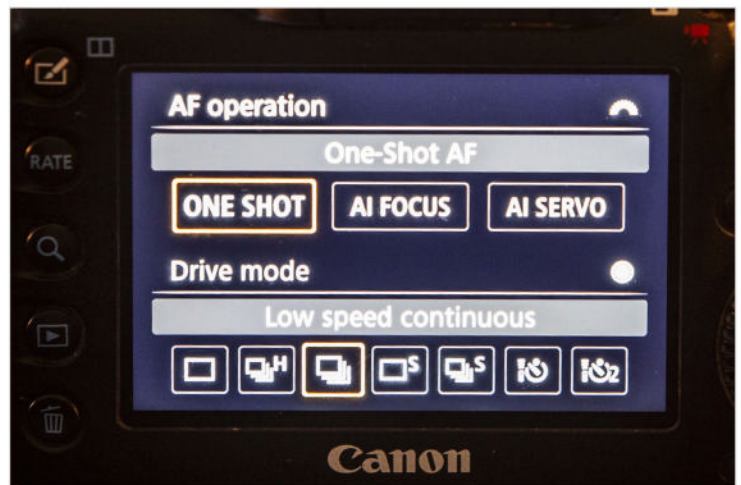
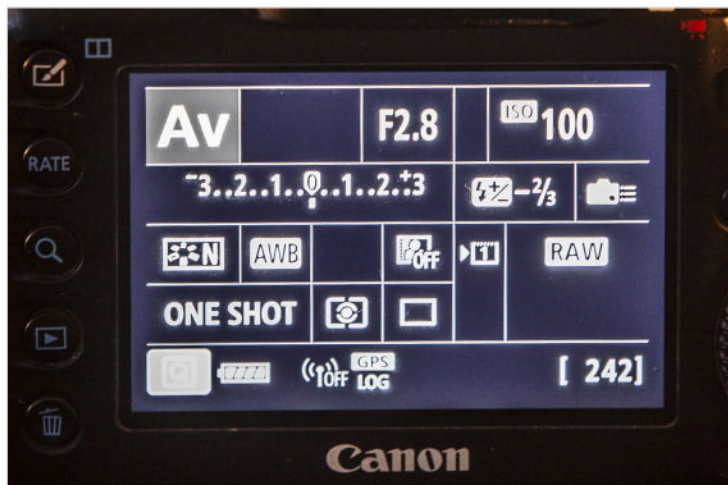






1 Shutter speed In low-light conditions, achieving a steady handheld shot is challenging due to the slow shutter speeds. Follow the '1/focal length' rule – for example, with a 50mm lens, use 1/50s or faster to avoid blurred photos caused by camera shake in low light.

2 Raise your ISO To ensure that your shutter speed is going to be fast enough to shoot handheld, you will need to raise your ISO. Don't push the ISO too far, or your image will start to display noise – increase it just enough to achieve your minimum required shutter speed.



3 Select a wide aperture In these conditions, you should aim to get as much light into the camera as possible. Along with raising your ISO, selecting a wide aperture, such as f/4.5 or wider, will also allow you to be able to select a faster shutter speed.

4 Burst mode To maximise your chances of getting a sharp image that you are happy with, set your camera to shoot in burst mode. In a sequence of fast burst shots, the images in the middle of the sequence will usually be the sharpest ones.



5 Choose live view mode On a DSLR camera, it can be difficult to see the scene through your viewfinder, especially in low-lit conditions. You might also find that by shooting in live view mode, you can get away with your shutter speed being a couple of stops slower.

6 Steady yourself Before shooting, make sure your stance is correct and that you are as steady as possible. Leaning against a wall, sitting down and even lying down with your elbows resting on the ground will make you much more secure, reducing the chance of camera shake.

The setup

MEMORY CARD

You will take a lot of photos in burst mode, so make sure you have plenty of memory cards for your shoot

BATTERIES

Shooting in live view mode will use up batteries much quicker so make sure you have fully charged spares

FAST LENS

Your shutter speed is the most important component in low light photography. So a fast lens (f/2.8 or less) will make things easier



Tips for shooting in low light

- 1** Try practising this type of photography at home to help you become more accustomed to what you need to do when required.
- 2** Test your camera at different ISO levels to get an understanding of how high you can set your ISO before your images show unacceptable levels of noise.
- 3** If you have set your camera on auto ISO, make

sure that you have also set the maximum limit.

- 4** Look for ledges and shelves or even use your camera bag to place your camera on as an alternative to handheld photography in these conditions.

- 5** Be aware of any potential movement in the scene. If someone is moving, even slightly, you will likely need a faster shutter speed.





1 Brighten up Naturally, when shooting in low-light conditions, you will find that your images will be slightly underexposed. So in your preferred editing software, start by brightening the whole image as well as lightening up the shadows, which are too dark.



2 Add contrast Here, I wanted to ensure that I maintained the general ambience of the scene, so I slightly increased the contrast using the Tone Curve. I also boosted the Clarity slider a little so that it added some more definition to the edges.



3 Adjust the white balance Whenever you are photographing in these conditions with any sort of artificial light, you will need to check your white balance settings. Here, I added a magenta tint to the image, which also benefits from being slightly warmer.



4 Check the saturation The candlelight and the striking red robes dominated the scene, so I decided to reduce the overall saturation and vibrancy. This gives the scene a more natural look rather than the bright reds that were a little overwhelming.



5 Crop the photo On reflection, there was too much dead space around the main subjects (the monks) in the frame. So I cropped in slightly to remove the dead space at the top. I also checked whether the image was perfectly level and straightened it up.



6 Add vignette For this type of image, where the viewer's attention should be focused on the subjects in the centre of the frame, it can sometimes be a good idea to add a vignette. This darkens the edges and helps the viewer to navigate to the middle of the photo.



Pictured
Reading the room
By applying a few shooting techniques, this low-light image has come out sharp and in focus. However, we can still make a few improvements

BEFORE




Pictured
Silent treatment
After some post-processing, the final image looks warmer and more vibrant, with a vignette highlighting the two centrally positioned subjects

AFTER

Control white balance

Achieve 'pure' whites or get creative by giving your image an unnatural hue

 When it comes to capturing images, either still or moving, white balance is crucial. This setting helps to regulate the colour temperature of an image, ensuring the most accurate representation of colour, which can vary depending on the light source used and whether it's artificial or natural.

When the white balance is set to the optimum, any white areas in the scene are rendered as 'pure' white and any colour casts that may affect the overall quality of the image are eliminated. Most modern cameras feature an automatic white balance setting, which

can adjust the camera's colour temperature between a range of approximately 3,000 and 7,000 Kelvin. This feature is particularly useful when taking photographs under changing light conditions or varying light sources. For instance, the colour temperature during sunrise is around 2,000K (warm spectrum), while it rises to about 10,000K (cold spectrum) when capturing a subject under a clear blue sky.

However, adjusting the white balance manually gives you control over the image and often leads to better results. There are

a few tricks you can use to achieve an accurate white balance. It's important to note that white balance settings only work to their optimum if they were specifically calculated for the scene. Also, bear in mind that when light sources change, you will have to adjust the settings again to achieve the best results.

However, there is also the possibility of experimenting with different white balance settings. Here the aim is not to achieve the 'pure' whites, but to modify the colours of the scene in an unnatural way to bring your creative visions to life.



1 Get started Shoot in M mode for greater control over settings. Select the aperture and adjust the shutter speed and ISO to your scene's lighting conditions until a balanced exposure is created. Consider mounting the camera on a tripod to leave both hands free.



2 Set the scene To demonstrate the power of white balance settings, having a white object or background in your set is ideal. This way, the impact of those settings becomes clearer when experimenting with different white balance presets on your camera.



3 Experiment with presets Now it is time to dial in your white balance settings. On most cameras, this adjustment can be found under Exposure > Colours. Select this and you will have access to different presets created for various lighting scenarios.



4 Select and compare Select the different white balance options and try out each mode. It should be clear how the settings influence the colours. Here, we chose 'Daylight' to add warmth (left) and 'Incandescent' (right), which introduces a cool colour cast.



5 Include grey tool If your goal is to create natural colours and 'pure' white elements, you need a supporting tool, such as a grey card. These have an 18 per cent grey tone and come in handy credit card sizes. You can also use Sony lens caps, which are pure grey.



6 Start WB reading Place the grey card or lens cap into the scene and zoom into it. Find the Custom White Balance function in the presets. Push the centre button to start an individual white balance reading. This process may differ depending on your camera brand.

AFTER



Inset

Auto-generated

The camera's automatic white balance settings weren't quite accurate, showing the subject with a slightly cool colour cast

Main

Adjusted WB

By enabling an individual white balance reading, the whites were rendered as 'pure' white, for a technically optimised frame



Make foliage glow in mono

Meet the editing pro



James Abbott is a professional photographer and photography journalist specialising in shooting and editing techniques. His first book was recently released and covers professional image editing skills in both Adobe Photoshop and Affinity Photo. [@jamesaphoto](https://www.instagram.com/jamesaphoto) jamesaphoto.co.uk

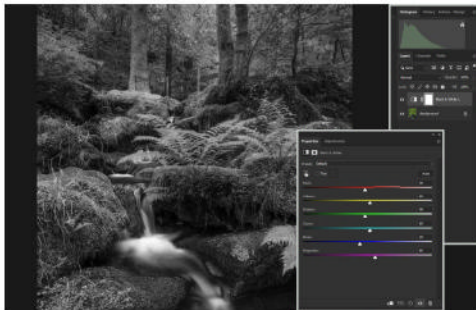
Transform your summer landscapes into high-contrast pseudo infrared in Photoshop



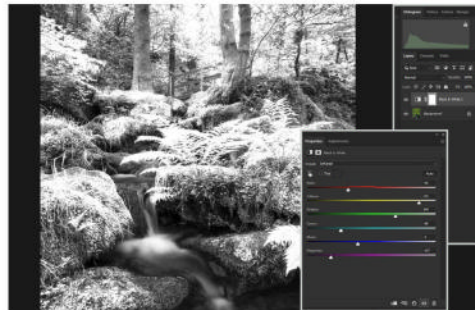
Infrared photography with digital cameras is best achieved with a converted camera, which is something of a luxury for many photographers. The good news is that creating pseudo-infrared images from standard summer landscapes is incredibly easy and the results are reasonably close to the real thing; it's not a substitute but does open up the effect to everyone.

What you'll be using

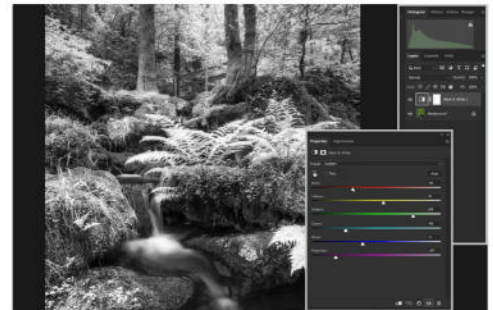
- Black & White Adjustment Layer
- Black & White Presets
- Levels
- Camera Raw Filter
- Grain controls



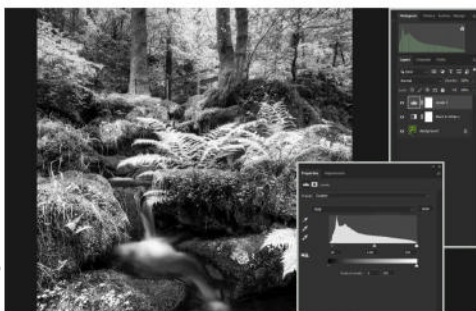
1 Convert to black & white Click on the Create new fill or adjustment layer icon at the bottom of the Layers panel and select Black & White. At this stage, the conversion will be using the default settings so the image may look dark and dull, so to fix this we'll use a Preset, which will be manually adjusted.



2 Use the Infrared Preset Left-click on the Preset drop-down menu and select Infrared from the list. The default settings are too strong for the Yellows and Greens channels, so we can manually adjust the sliders for a more pleasing and, ultimately, realistic result where burnout is avoided.



3 Manually adjust sliders With the conversion of the foliage essentially burning out, we need to tone down the Yellows and Greens since these are the two channels that control how foliage converts to greyscale. Drag the Yellows slider left to around 78 and the Greens slider to the right to around 184.



4 Deepen blacks Infrared photography creates high-contrast black-and-white images, so we can mimic this using Levels. Create a Levels Adjustment Layer, and when the dialogue box opens, drag the black point to the right to at least 10. Increase the black point further, depending on what looks best.



5 Add Grain Hold Ctrl/Cmd+Alt/Option+Shift+E to merge all visible Layers into a New Layer. With this Layer active, go to Filter > Camera Raw Filter and when the dialogue opens, expand the Effects tab and zoom into the image. Set Grain to 60, Size to 10 and Roughness to 35 for a fine yet prominent grain.

KEY TIP

THINK ABOUT BLUE SKIES

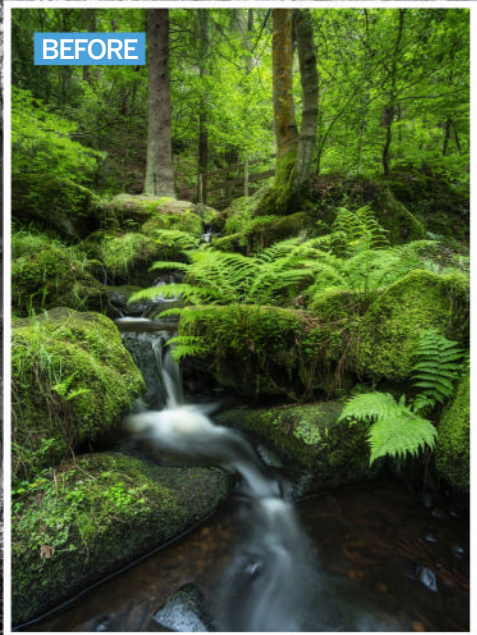
Although there is no sky in the image we used for the tutorial, blue skies look amazing in infrared photography because blue is represented as black. The Infrared Preset does a good job of darkening skies, but you can manually adjust the Blues slider as we did with Yellows and Greens.

Insert Bright green

With an abundance of green foliage in the scene, this image is a perfect candidate for a software-based infrared conversion using Adjustment Layers in Photoshop

Main Glowing foliage

After the manually adjusted preset-based Black & White Adjustment Layer has been applied alongside other adjustments, the result is bright white foliage




AFTER



Apply a split-tone effect in Lightroom

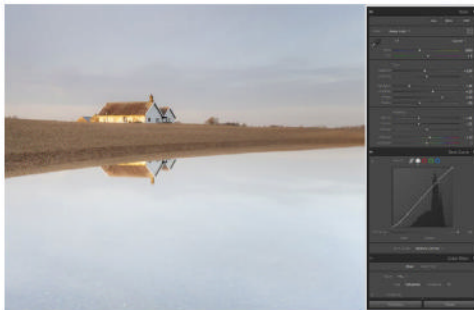
Use Lightroom's Color Grading controls to add mood and enhance sunset colours

 Split-toning is an effect that's traditionally applied to black-and-white images but when applied to colour photos, the result is colour grading. With colour especially, it's a great way to

enhance the mood while accentuating existing colours. Plus, with the right combination of colours in the shadows and highlights, the result can resemble analogue photography when paired with the right adjustments.

What you'll be using

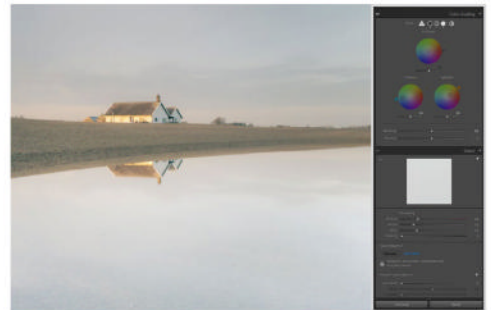
- Basic adjustments
- Lens Corrections
- Tone & Parametric Curve
- Color Grading
- Grain



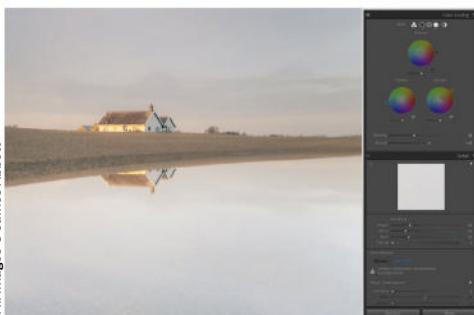
1 Process the image Process your image as usual using the controls in the Basic tab, the Tone Curve and Lens Corrections. Make sure it's a 'complete' image before moving on to the next steps. For this photo, Texture and Clarity were also both set to -25 to add a soft haziness that's like the Orton Effect.



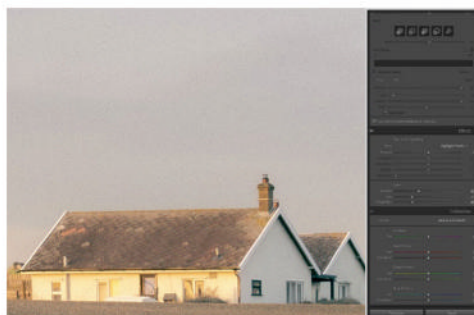
2 Add a matte haze On the Tone Curve, click on the Parametric Curve option that brings up the slider controls. Set Highlights and Light to -3 to hold the curve straight at the top, then set Darks to +20 and Shadows to +43 to lift the darker areas of the image and add haziness in the shadow areas.



3 Apply the split-tone Scroll to the Color Grading tab where we can apply colours to the shadows and highlights individually. Here, we've gone for a classic orange and teal, which works well with this golden-hour photo. Teal was applied to the Shadows and a lesser amount of orange was added to the Highlights.



4 Adjust the blend The Balance slider controls the dominance of the shadows and highlights, while the Blending slider adjusts how the two blend in the mid-tones. With this in mind, set the Blending slider to 35 to add warmth, while the balance was set to +15 to also add warmth in the mid-tones.



5 Add a subtle grain Analogue photography, even shot on ISO 100 film exhibited grain, so we will add this for an authentic analogue look. Scroll to the Effects tab and zoom into the image so you can see the effect. Set the Grain slider to 35. Size to 25 and Roughness to 25 as a starting point.

KEY TIP

TRY WITH BLACK & WHITE IMAGES

We applied the split-tone effect to a colour image using Color Grading controls but it can also be applied to mono images if you convert them to B&W in Lightroom; the difference is that it's less colour grading and more creative colourisation.

Insert Cool and crisp

This photo was taken just before sunset and although the colours were warm, it was captured with quite a cool tone. The image is also crisp and sharp with a digital look

Main Warm and soft

After processing the photo with analogue photography in mind, the processing and split-toning effect alongside grain has produced a much softer and warmer image

AFTER



BEFORE





Transform hues with colour grading

Apply any colour grading style with just a few clicks

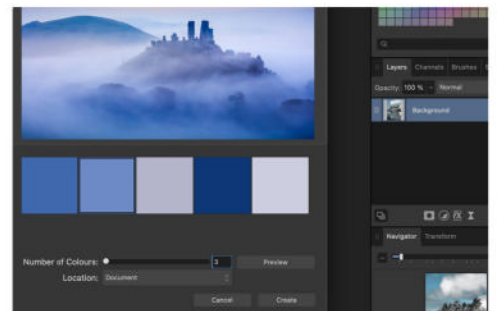
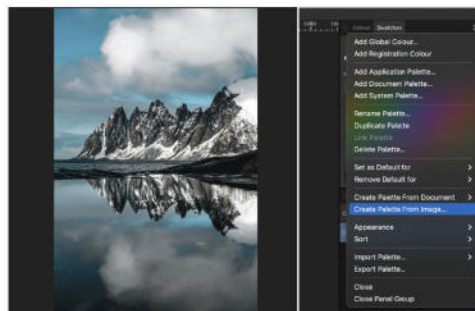
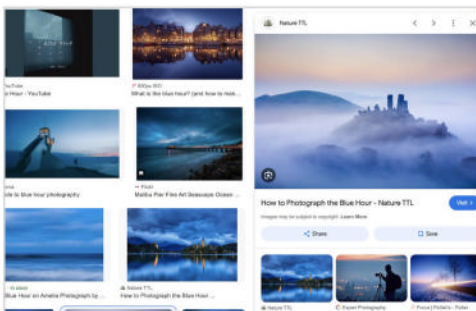


Colour grading is a powerful technique used in photography and videography to enhance the mood of a scene. However, it can be challenging for beginners to apply colour grading effectively.

Affinity provides a range of features that allow us to apply colour-grading styles to our own images. This is helpful when first learning this editing technique, as the settings can be easily adjusted to create your own unique style.

What you'll be using

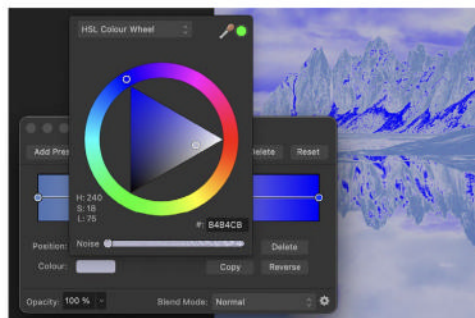
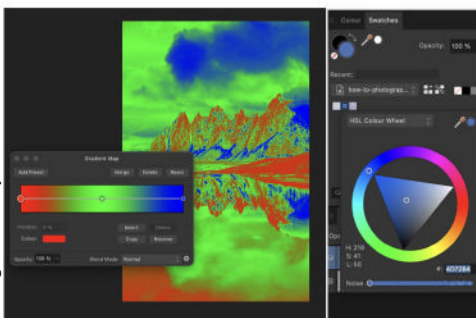
- Create Palette From Image option
- Gradient Map Adjustment
- Colour codes
- Blend Modes



1 Add images If you don't already have a reference image with colour grading applied, then search for a suitable frame online. Here, consider what types of hues could enhance the mood of your photo. Popular colour schemes from movies or a scheme from the blue or golden hours could work.

2 Start the process Upload your own image to Affinity Photo 2.0. Open the Swatches panel, found under Window > Swatches. The panel pops up next to the Colour panel and then, in the Swatches menu, click on Create Palette From Image... when the window opens, click on Select to upload your image.

3 Sample Colours Now Affinity samples five colours from the reference frame. Change the Number of Colours from five to three then press Preview to see the three colours Affinity chooses. Click Create to add this colour palette to the Swatches panel. Go back to the Layer panel and add a Gradient Map Adjustment.



4 Start colour grading To transform the shadows and darkest colour elements, double click the darkest colour in the Swatches panel and copy the colour code at the bottom right. Go back to the Gradient Map and select the left dot to transform the shadows. Click on Colour and paste the copied colour code.

5 Repeat and blend Repeat step 4 for the mid-tones by selecting the mid-tone colour palette in the Swatches panel and selecting the middle dot in the Gradient Map. For highlights, select the lightest tone and right dot in Gradient Map. Close the Gradient Map window and change the blend mode to Overlay or Soft Light.

KEY TIP

BUILD YOUR OWN COLLECTION

After applying the colour grading style, don't forget to save it as a preset. That way, you can go back and apply the same colour scheme to other images without having to redo the process. You can also experiment and see what type of colour grading benefits your subjects the most.

Insert

Standard frame

This coastal mountain scene is fine, but the lack of a distinctive colour scheme detracts from the overall effect of the photograph

Main

Atmospheric colours

The mood of the scene has been enhanced due to the adjustment of the colour grading that underlines the atmosphere of the frame



BEFORE



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Issue 277

What's inside: Discover the core editing skills for stunning landscape images, shoot abstract photos like never before, get essential pro advice on switching cameras and kickstart your photo career. Plus, don't miss our Fujifilm GFX 100 II review.



Issue 276

What's inside: Get the most from your camera kit by applying our secret steps to improving image quality. Next, learn to shoot incredible street scenes, capture panoramas and read our Canon EOS R3 vs Nikon Z9 head-to-head test.



Issue 275

What's inside: With exclusive advice from the winners of the Photographer of The Year competition, discover the essential techniques you need to know right now. We also round up the best kit of 2023 in our annual Gear Of The Year Awards feature.



Issue 274

What's inside: Shoot golden-hour colours in our dazzling sunset landscape Creative Project, capture wildlife shots in challenging conditions and, in our main feature, you can dive into our complete 10-page guide to landscape photography composition.



Issue 273

What's inside: Portrait photography needn't be complex. Find out how to capture top-tier images with ease. Plus, we have a special feature on becoming a photo-editing maestro, a cityscape shooting tutorial and a full review of the Lumix G9 II.



Issue 272

What's inside: Filters still have a place in the landscape photographer's kitbag, so we cover the ones you should own and how to use them. In our regular Shoot Like a Pro feature, we shadow a photographer on a magazine editorial shoot for key tips.



Issue 271

What's inside: Autumn is a popular time for landscape photography. Our cover feature explores how best to capture this colourful season. If you love black and white photography, don't miss our tutorial on shooting and editing film-noir scenes.



Issue 270

What's inside: Demystify video in our behind-the-scenes guide to working as a pro videographer. Get the best quality from your RAW files, both at the shooting and processing stages. Shoot amazing architectural images with our pro advice.



Issue 269

What's inside: Read Ross Hoddinott's top tips for mesmerising macro photography. We also review the awesome Nikon Z 8 full-frame mirrorless camera to see whether it takes the crown as the best model in its class and price bracket.



Issue 268

What's inside: Astro photos can inspire like no other genre. Find out how to shoot nightscapes like a pro. Delve into our career advice pages to learn how to take your first steps towards your dream photo job. Plus, shoot and edit summer landscapes.



Issue 267

What's inside: As part of our ongoing Masterclass series, seasoned pro photographer, Jeremy Flint explains how to master exposure. We also round up the best photo-editing apps today and explain how to get incredible shots from your smartphone.



Issue 266

What's inside: Shoot great images at the most popular times of day – sunrise and sunset. Go behind the scenes with a luxury car photographer. Learn how to capture impossible macro photos and shoot emotive weddings like an expert.



Issue 265

What's inside: Who doesn't love shooting at the coast? Overcome the challenges of capturing stunning seaside masterpieces. And, if you think you know your camera, think again! Read our hidden camera features guide and get the most from your gear.



Issue 264

What's inside: Master the art of fine black and white photography with expert Kav Dadfar. In our career guide, learn how to widen the audience for your photos and discover the latest features you will need when buying your next telephoto lens.




Issue 263

What's inside: You don't have to travel far to capture stunning wildlife – read how in our urban wildlife cover feature. Also, capture cinematic landscapes and check our reviews of the Fujifilm X-T5 and monster Nikon Z 600mm f/4 lens.

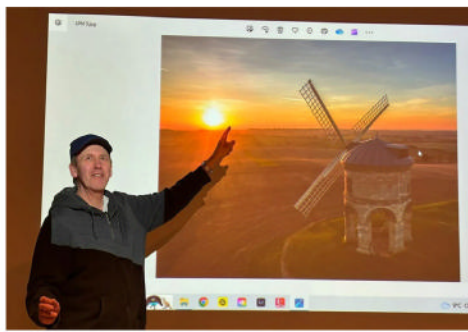
HOST A WORKSHOP

Considering running a photography workshop? Experienced workshop leader **Mark Brion** explains what you'll need to know before getting started

 After several years of preparation, I started leading independent photography workshops in 2018 and have since conducted over 20 courses, spanning the landscape and wildlife genres, both in the UK and overseas. Sharing my passion for photography while guiding others in honing their skills is a rewarding experience. Encouraging aspiring photographers through independent workshops, promoting creativity, skills advancement and personalised learning experiences has proven to be a gratifying mix of both personal and professional growth.

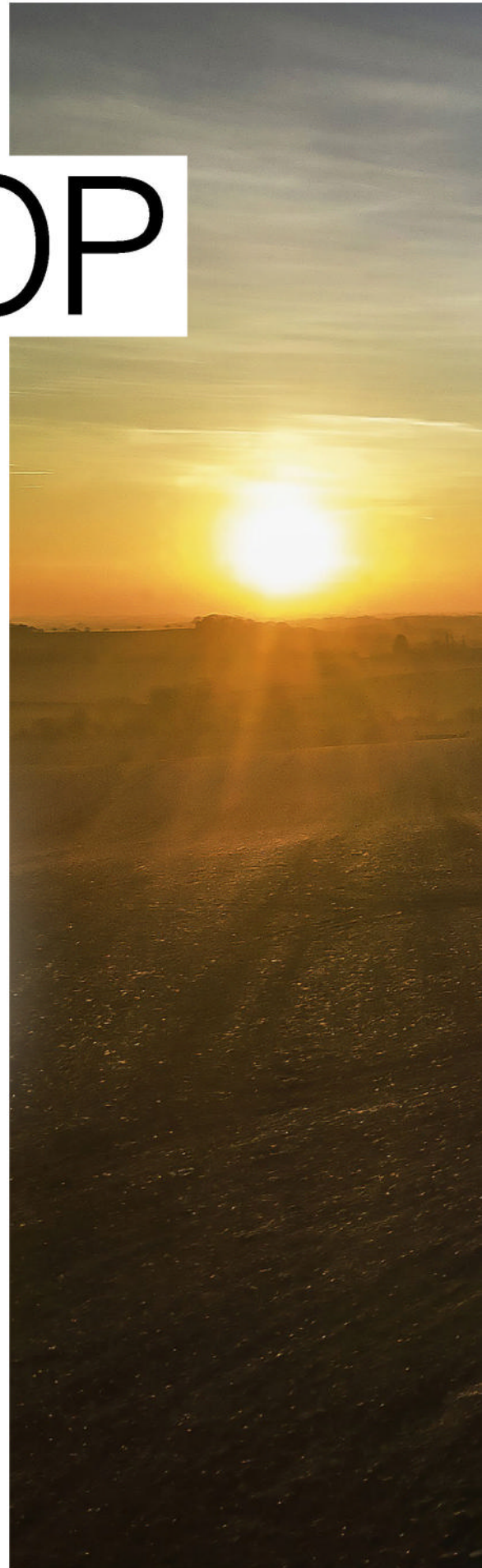
However, leading a photography workshop is never easy. Successful workshops demand thorough preparation and this venture was only possible through years of hard work and self-teaching, giving me the confidence to cater to enthusiasts of varying abilities.

Begin by defining your niche, whether it's landscape, wildlife, portrait photography or another specialised area. Clarify your workshop goals by setting achievable objectives that participants can accomplish, such as mastering different techniques or refining post-processing skills. These goals



will serve as a measure of success, while also guiding your teaching methods and structure and will help you approach the organising of a workshop realistically.

You need to be aware of the key challenges inherent in organising and ensuring the safety of a diverse group of photography enthusiasts. Safety is paramount and, as the workshop leader, you bear the responsibility for the well-being of the participants. You will need to carry out risk assessments, especially for outdoor shoots. Despite these obstacles, the reward of empowering others in their photographic journey makes all the effort worthwhile.



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Planning a photography workshop

Planning a photography workshop demands meticulous consideration of key elements. Crafting a comprehensive itinerary is essential; detail each session's focal points to guide participants seamlessly through the workshop. Always aim to offer workshops for smaller groups, ideally four to six individuals. This enables more personalised instruction and a more conducive learning environment where you can address people's queries.

Selecting an appropriate venue is crucial; ensure that it accommodates both theoretical and practical aspects of photography. Assess the facilities at the venue, from classrooms to outdoor spaces for hands-on shooting. Additionally, timing is paramount, especially for outdoor shoots. Evaluate the best season or weather conditions that align with your workshop's objectives.

By thoughtfully addressing these factors, including the itinerary, group size, venue and timing, you will be able to lay the foundations for a successful and more enriching photography workshop.

January 1 Monday	January 2 Tuesday	January 3 Wednesday
↑ BREAKFAST	↑ BREAKFAST	↑ BREAKFAST
↓ TRANSPORT	↓ TRANSPORT	↓ TRANSPORT
↑ HERDEN BRIDGE	↑ BUTTERMERE	↑ RYDA
↓ LONG EXPOSURE	↓ + FRAMING	↓ WATER
↑ LUNCH	↑ LUNCH	↑ LUNCH
↓ LANADALES	↓ LOW BRIDGE	↓ FELL
↑ COMPOSITION	↑ COMPOSITION	↑ B+W
↓ EVENING MEAL	↓ EVENING MEAL	↓ EVENING MEAL
↑ POST	↑ CRITIQUE	↑ + POST
↓ PRODUCTION	↓ + POST	↓ PRODUCT

Preparing for your workshop

There are several crucial steps towards ensuring a seamless experience. Streamline the process by setting up online registration and payment options to enhance accessibility. Prioritise insurance, securing valid coverage in case of unforeseen circumstances, such as injury or damage to people's equipment.

Weather conditions play a pivotal role, so you need to research seasonal forecasts at the workshop location. You can address the transport requirements of your group by hiring a suitable vehicle that is capable of accommodating the participants, their luggage and photography gear. Evaluate the fitness levels of the group. Consider the workshop's terrain and the potential physical exertion required to reach your locations.

Apart from that, promotion is key to the business so use your social media channels, your website and photography forums to attract participants. And lastly, plan for practicalities, such as tea stops, cafes, shops and toilet facilities. By preparing meticulously, you will lay the groundwork for a well-executed and enjoyable workshop.

Mastering your equipment

Mastering photography requires an intimate knowledge of all your equipment, so you will need to familiarise yourself with the various brands of camera bodies and lenses to ensure that you have a comprehensive understanding of them and can teach effectively. Always bear in mind that you might need to provide individual guidance to participants with their own camera models.

You should invest wisely in equipment, securing the necessary tools for both instructional sessions and practical demonstrations. This may encompass cameras, tripods, lighting equipment and computers essential for post-processing sessions.

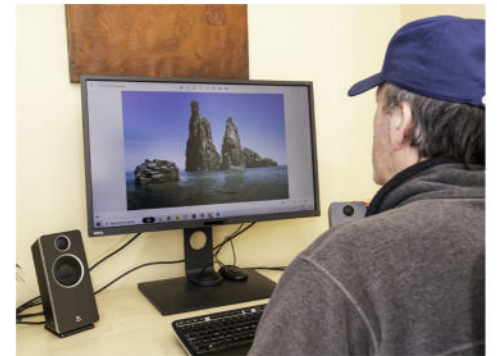
A thorough understanding of your gear will enhance your ability to convey concepts to participants and enable seamless execution of hands-on activities. By prioritising equipment knowledge, you can elevate the overall quality of your photography workshops, providing participants with valuable insights and practical skills for their own individual photographic journeys.

Assessing the pros and cons

Hosting a photography workshop offers numerous advantages but also plenty of challenges and balancing these pros and cons is essential to ensure a rewarding and successful photography workshop.

On the positive side, workshops provide a platform to share your expertise with a community of like-minded enthusiasts. The exchange of ideas and techniques can be mutually enriching for all concerned. Workshops also offer financial benefits, generating income through participant fees, and hosting workshops can also enhance your professional reputation within the photography community.

However, there are plenty of challenges too. Organising workshops requires meticulous planning and places demands on your time while you are managing all the other logistics. Meeting expectations can be daunting and there may be some unforeseen disruption to the itinerary. Gathering feedback after the event will help you to refine future workshops and enhance their overall quality and impact.



Provide excellent customer service

Achieving the best possible customer service for your photography workshop involves meticulous planning and attention to detail. Prioritise accommodation and meals by searching for the best prices and availability, ensuring top-notch service. Of course, booking these ahead of time and as early as possible is crucial so you can secure quality options.

Competitive pricing is essential. Set your workshop fees in line with industry standards. Research the flights and airport transfers, designating the outgoing airport as the meeting point for convenience. Consider opting for smaller groups to enhance the quality of instruction and personalised attention, this way you will be able to engage participants in all questions, discussions and hands-on photographic activities. After the shooting sessions, offer post-production guidance to elevate the participants' final images and their ongoing improvement.

It's a competitive marketplace, so providing exceptional customer experience will make your workshop stand out from the rest.



Photo CV

We profile an expert photographer's career journey for insight on becoming established in the industry



Ajuan Song

Location: New York City, USA

Specialisms

- Creative ● Abstract

To see more of Ajuan's work: [@songajuan](#)

Ajuan Song's artistic practice includes analogue and digital photography and multimedia works. In addition to her classical Chinese education, from which she gained an interest in Confucianism, the ancient Chinese philosophy that focuses on ethics and morality, Song spent some time in Africa. Song holds a degree in physics from Anqing University, China and also studied fine art and photography at the International Center of Photography in New York.



Style guide

Ajuan describes her photographic and general artistic style as 'lyrical', often shooting using analogue film



Working together

Ajuan works closely with her partner, Kuzma Vostrikov, (see Photo CV, issue 277) on a range of artistic projects



Fine art

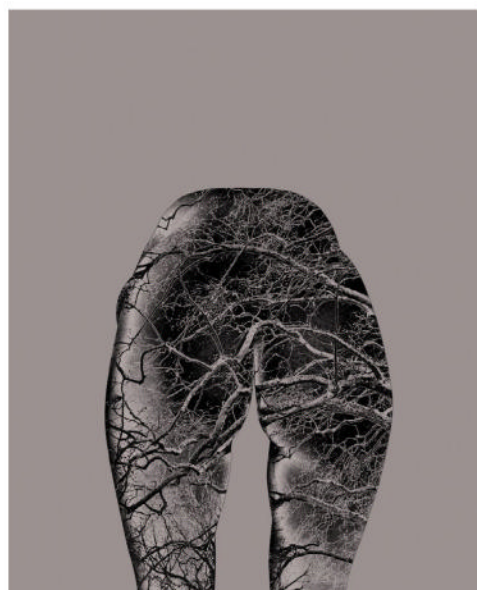
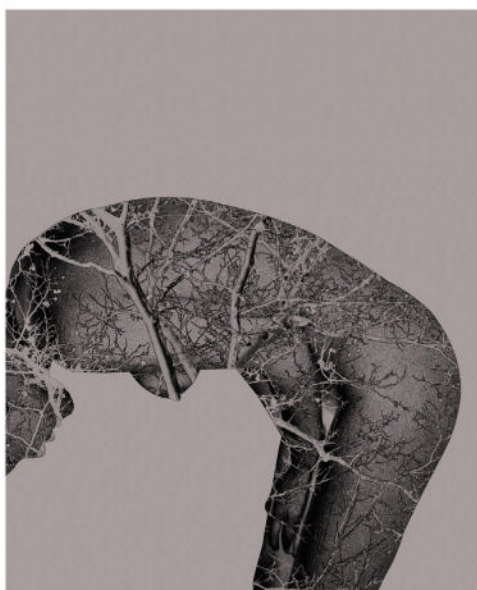
Collaborating with Kuzma, Ajuan's work has a pop art aesthetic, though they also focus on fine art portraiture



Left
Experimental
 Ajuan says she likes to experiment with various photographic processes to create abstract views of her chosen subject

Below left
New opportunities
 She also believes that modern technology offers artists a fresh perspective on photography

Below
Project planning
 When planning her book projects "ideas emerge bit by bit, accumulating into a mosaic of thoughts," she says



x6 © Ajuan Song

Ajuan's photo kit

The essential gear items used for this type of professional work



CANON EOS 6D
 This is handy in terms of digital shooting. The layout is simple to use and the optical viewfinder gives me a more connected feeling when framing the subject



SIGMA 50MM ART LENS
 This relatively soft lens gives a little softness to the image detail, creating a dreamy effect. The wide aperture also allows background control



CANON 100MM LENS
 This optic is sharp and particularly good for details. The focal length is also ideal for portraiture, offering a subtly compressed perspective



ROLLEIFLEX
 I use this Twin Lens Reflex (TLR) camera for most of my analogue projects because of its unique form. The waist-level viewfinder offers a refreshing way to work

Career Path

When did you start in your current genre?

I delved into camera-less photo creation at the start of my art career. In 2013, my path intersected with Kuzma Vostrikov, whose influence shaped my photography. My portraiture took on a more colourful, pop art aesthetic but I continue to engage in lyrical photography. My work can be categorised into two genres – collaborative endeavours with Kuzma, focused on fine art portraiture, and my solo projects with a more lyrical style, occasionally using camera-less techniques.

What are your creative inspirations?

Inspiration can come from everywhere – from nature in the trees, the oceans, sunset and sunrise, but also from people on the streets, even graffiti. New York City is a potent source of inspiration, full of energetic people. I also draw influences from observing old masters in museums and new art from galleries.

What key skills are needed for your line of professional work?

In collaborative work, it's communication, problem-solving and time management. Many of the projects we undertake are large and intense, making effective management crucial. Proper coordination is essential too.

Which social platforms are you on and how do you use each for your business?

I'm active on Instagram and Facebook. Instagram, in particular, is a valuable tool for sharing images and discovering talent. I often reach out to makeup artists or models on Instagram for photo shoots, which has proven effective. It's a direct and intuitive platform where people can see your work and connect directly. I also receive inquiries about shooting projects or business through direct messages so maintaining a presence on Instagram is essential for building visibility.

Are there other genres you'd like to try?

I'm currently immersed in a cyanotype project, blending digital photos with analogue processes and incorporating drawings. I embrace the full spectrum of possibilities afforded by the current technology. It's a fresh perspective on photography, an innovative approach to artistic exploration and a means to broaden our visual horizons.

How do you turn your ideas and images into a cohesive, published book?

Ideas emerge and accumulate into a mosaic of thoughts. Once a collection takes shape, it's time to organise, fill the gaps and allow a stream of ideas to pour in. Initiating the process is crucial as it helps refine ideas, especially in a book project. Take *Just to Land in Tokyo*, where we worked with a large image, integrating it with improvisation. As the pieces came together, the book took its final form.

Career advice

As the wedding season approaches, **Claire Gillo** shares her tips for running a wedding photography business

Image sharing

I've shot a couple of weddings for friends and family, and I'm hoping to do more in the future. In the past, I've simply transferred their images over to them via Dropbox but is there a better way to do this? What do other wedding photographers do?

Andrea Green

There are many different and creative ways you can present your images to your clients. The first (and a popular option amongst photographers) is to share them through a digital gallery. Platforms like Pixieset (pixieset.com), Pass (passgallery.com), ShootProof

(shootproof.com) and Pic-Time (pic-time.com), to name just a few, are all free to set up and run in a similar way. If you need additional storage space, you can upgrade to a paid plan. They vary in price and features but start at around £10 per month.

Another option is to upload the images onto a memory stick and put that in a keepsake box. Etsy is a great place to look for affordable personal engraved boxes. From experience, the engraved memory sticks sold alongside them are slow so we'd recommend using a more reliable memory stick brand such as Sandisk or Samsung (though they don't look as nice).

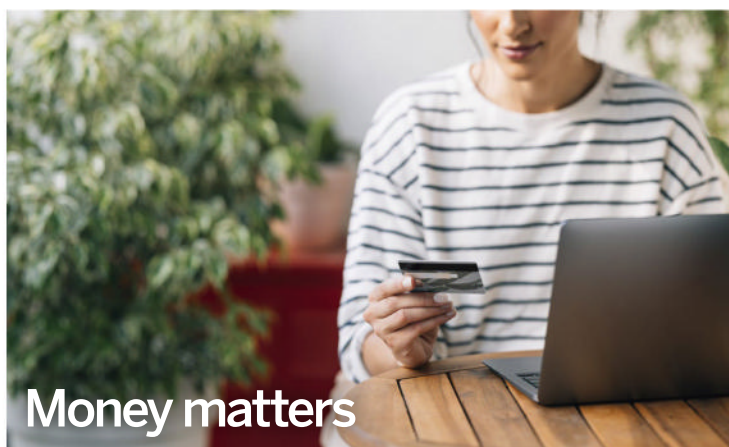


How you present your images to your client is an important aspect of the job

You could also print a few final images as part of your image handover and consider additional extras, such as using tissue paper to wrap images or

memory sticks and tying them with string or ribbon for that extra personal touch. Above all, try to make your presentation style unique and special.

© Claire Gillo



Money matters

I am a wedding photographer and for as long as I can remember my clients have paid me via Bacs. However, I have recently been asked whether I could switch to a more secure service. What options are there and how much do they cost?

Anonymous

It is not unusual for wedding photographers to be paid via Bacs, however, some clients may not feel comfortable doing this as there are lots of untrustworthy

people out there. Your best option is to use a payment system such as PayPal or Stripe. Both are free to set up but you pay a percentage charge on any transactions. On Stripe, you pay 1.5% plus 20p for standard UK cards and Paypal takes a fee of 2.9% plus 30p per transaction. So, for example, if your fee is £1,000, Stripe will cost £15.20, so you may want to factor this into your cost.

For clients who don't want to use Bacs, you could use Stripe or PayPal instead

Double shooter

I have upgraded my camera and plan on using both my new and old cameras to shoot weddings but it's come to the point where I need a dual harness. What's the best sort of harness I could get around the £100 mark?

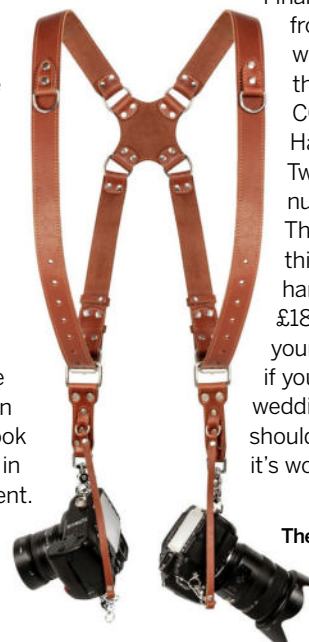
Liam Grey

Two cameras at a wedding is a great idea as you can have two different lens setups, meaning you can quickly switch between them to cover all angles of the event.

The Coiro Dual Harness Strap costs £92 on Amazon and is a great choice. The fully adjustable brown leather straps also look smart, which is ideal in a wedding environment. If the leather Coiro isn't your bag though, then look

at the BlackRapid Hybrid Breathe Double Camera Sling/Strap, which retails at £110. This is a simple black adjustable harness that can be used with one or two camera bodies and is good for those who want something neutral-looking.

Finally, if you do suffer from carrying weighted equipment, the Cotton Carrier CCS G3 Camera Harness System for Two Cameras is your number one option. The only issue with this body-designed harness is that it costs £186 so it's way above your budget. However, if you shoot lots of weddings and suffer from shoulder or back pain, it's worth the investment.



The Coiro Dual is a good choice for wedding photographers



Alasdair's documentary style of shooting shows people's personalities and tells the story of their day

What is it like to be a wedding photographer?

Devon-based wedding photographer **Alasdair Hooper** explains why he got into the wedding game and how he makes sure that his clients are happy



Why did you start photographing weddings and what do you like most about them?

I first shot a wedding when I was at university studying photography 20 years ago.

I have to confess that being young and feeling out of my depth wasn't the most positive introduction to wedding photography. However, I love weddings now! When I first opened my photography business, I shot different subject matter for various jobs. My brother-in-law asked me whether I would shoot their wedding and so I did as a gift. I thoroughly enjoyed the day and had plenty of shots that I was really pleased with, so the rest is history.

How would you describe your style of wedding photography?

My style of photography at weddings is primarily documentary, capturing the moments that show people's personalities and telling the story of their day. I am happy to shoot more traditional posed portraits, but I prefer the natural candid moments.

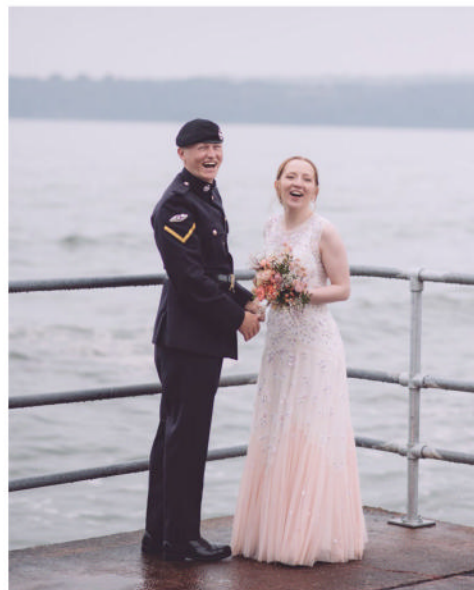
How much preparation work do you do before each wedding?

In terms of prep for weddings, I employ the theory that the more I know, the better I can perform. I meet with the couple before the day and have a detailed form and list of questions that I go through. I then write up notes and

produce a timeline for the day, which gets emailed to the couple and signed off. I will then visit the venue, if I haven't been before, and familiarise myself with specific places.

What are the key things you cover on the day?

In terms of the images I aim to get on the day, there are obvious moments, such as the first kiss and the first dance. But the other key pictures I always want to get in the bag are linking images, the pictures that help to give a flow to the story we are recording.



How do you share images with your clients after the event?

Once the wedding has been photographed, I offer the chance to the couple for a small set of images to be sent to them the following day, so they have something to publish on social media or send to family and friends.

Then, once edited, I will put the images in an online gallery, so they can see them all. I will also meet with my couple and deliver a presentation box with a walnut USB stick, with large images for printing and smaller resolution images for online use. In this presentation box, I will select 20 or so images to print at 7x5 so there are some physical pictures for them to enjoy on delivery.

What top tips would you give to anyone starting out in wedding photography?

The most important thing isn't photography-related, but rather that you have to be comfortable dealing with the public and strangers. This will help your clients relax as well as give you an easier ride.

Secondly, know your kit! You should be able to control your camera as if it's an extension of your body. One other major consideration is about charging – never underestimate the time editing can take, make sure the money you make covers the time for shooting and editing. And lastly, don't undersell yourself or under-appreciate the skill required to shoot weddings. As photographers, we are more than just an eye, a finger and a shutter button!

To find out more about Alasdair go to ahooperphotography.com and follow on social media @a_hooper_photography

WHY SHOTS WORK

Place: Moravia, Czech Republic

Date: April 2023

Kit:

- Sony A7RIII
- Sigma 70-200mm f/2.8 EX DG OS HSM
- Focal length: 180mm



"I specialise in long exposure and landscape photography. Photography empowers me to travel and spend time in the wild, which is one of the many positive aspects of being a photographer, at least from my perspective."

Vivid colours

Landscapes undergo significant transformations throughout the year, influenced by the weather and the season, but Ryszard decided to capture this scene in spring. "I planned to capture this scene at this time of year as I really wanted to show nature coming to life," he explains. "The lushness of the spring greenery is crucial in this photo." Ryszard skilfully captured the light and shadow to highlight the different hues of green. This has resulted in a vibrant but harmonious frame that mesmerises with its vivid colours. Furthermore, this all-green colour scheme allows the tiny Chapel of St Barbara, found on the right of the frame, to stand out.

Leading lines

"The main challenge I faced when shooting in this location was the distance from the Chapel of St Barbara. Capturing the frame as I intended meant that I had to adjust the position of the tripod to align with the desired composition," Ryszard explains. He opted to include leading lines in his composition, with the trees creating lines that lead towards the chapel, naturally guiding the viewer's gaze towards it. "By placing the chapel in a strong point, the leading lines combined with the undulations of the terrain highlighted by the rays of the setting sun, result in a more interesting image overall," he adds.

Ryszard Lomnicki



Ryszard Lomnicki is an award-winning photographer based in Galway, Ireland.

He specialises in long exposure and

landscape photography and is also the official co-photographer of Haida Filters and a brand ambassador for Leofoto, Shimoda and Blackrapid.

ryszardlomnicki.com

@rx70

© Ryszard Lomnicki

Excluded horizon

When creating a balanced composition, the horizon is usually placed in the frame and often adheres to the classic rule of thirds. However, Ryszard intentionally chose to break with convention here by filling the frame with the landscape instead. "I decided to isolate the scene with the fields, the trees and a chapel to focus the eye on the most important elements of this scene," he explains. "Including the horizon and sky might have unnecessarily disturbed the clean composition." By doing so, he has showcased the landscape to its fullest potential.

Light fall-off

By darkening the edges of the frame using a vignette, Ryszard achieved a visual spotlight on the subject. "The vignetting effect was used specifically to focus the eye on the most important elements of this photo," he explains. With the reduction of brightness, a visual leading part was created that skilfully draws the viewer into the frame while enhancing the narrative of the photograph.



Pictured
Glen
Masai Mara,
Kenya, 2021

“ WILDLIFE CHOSE ME ”

Photographer **Guadalupe Laiz** gets up close with amazing animals to raise awareness of the urgent need for conservation

Words by: Kim Bunermann
All images © Guadalupe Laiz



Pictured
Holland Road
This image is part of
Guadalupe's new book,
showcasing the elephant
in the golden hour glow





Wildlife photography is considered one of the most challenging genres, and not only from a technical point of view. It requires extensive research, long-distance travel to often remote locations and the ability to adapt to different climates. Most importantly, it also means taking adequate safety measures when tracking down the animals. Capturing the essence of wild creatures and conveying a sense of proximity in one frame is what brings exotic wildlife close to the viewer. This can only be achieved by respecting your subjects' boundaries. However, this brings many challenges.

Argentinian wildlife photographer Guadalupe Laiz aims to strike a balance between getting close enough to shoot the perfect image and respect for the animals she works with. She spends months in the wildlife's natural habitat, allowing her to take the viewer on an intense journey that not only reveals the beauty of these animals but also the difficulties they face in the modern world.

Guadalupe is passionate about educating and partnering with non-profit organisations. While raising awareness, she worked on her latest publication 'Among the Living'. In our conversation, she explains how she unexpectedly became an award-winning wildlife photographer and, more recently, an educator.

Guadalupe Laiz



Guadalupe Laiz is an internationally recognised artist, photographer, and explorer. Originally from Argentina, Guadalupe moved to the United States at

the age of 20 to pursue her passion for photography. Guadalupe captured the beauty and character of Iceland's unique native horses, a project that led to her first book *Horses of Iceland*, published in 2019. The book has been exhibited globally and has received widespread acclaim. In her latest book, *Among the Living: Where You Belong*, Guadalupe showcases some of Africa's rarest and most impressive wildlife.

guadalupe-laiz.com
@guadalupe-laiz

Pictured
Trusty and true
Guadalupe visited gorilla families at the Volcanoes National Park in Rwanda (shown) and the Bwindi Impenetrable Forest in Uganda

INTERVIEW

Hey Guadalupe, what motivated you to pursue a career in wildlife photography?

To be honest, the wildlife chose me rather than the other way around. It wasn't a conscious decision; it just happened. I was in commercial and editorial work in fashion, very different from the work I do now. My introduction to wildlife photography wasn't with wildlife, it was through the Icelandic horses. Although they aren't wild, they do have a wild side to them. Whenever you see a horse in Iceland, it won't be like any other farm that has horses. They roam freely in the stunning Icelandic landscapes. Initially, I travelled to Iceland to shoot those landscapes but on my first day, I came across the horses. It was an instinctive decision to follow that path and from there, I got curious about what it would be like to photograph other animals. That's how I ended up going to Africa and discovering all the wildlife that the continent has to offer.

Your projects often extend over long periods of time, how do you go about establishing relationships with the local communities and the people who share the animals' habitat while you're there?

No matter how many times you visit Africa, you are always a visitor, unless you move and start your life there, so it's crucial to be respectful to the locals as it's their home. While I was in Iceland, I took my time and got to know the farmers, living with them for a while, like two or three months at a time. I got to know them and their lives, which also helped me to understand the relationship they have with the animals. I did the same thing in Africa, where I got to know the people first, built relationships, met their families and learned about their lives. They are the ones who know the animals better than anyone else. They take me off the beaten path and do things a little bit differently than tourists would. And, importantly, they respect the animals.

Pictured
Colour me in III
By framing the scene wide, Guadalupe highlights the huge scale of the giraffes



“I have an obsession with proximity. I don't like using camera traps too much, so the best moments are when I have the chance to get close to the more docile wild animals”

I refuse to work with anyone who makes animals nervous or gets in their way. I need to collaborate with people who share my values. I want to get involved with and support conservation projects, for example. That is not only valuable work but it also shows my appreciation towards the locals.

Tell us more about the Umubano gorilla family that's featured in your latest book...

The Umubano family holds a special place in my heart. It's a family group of 13 members

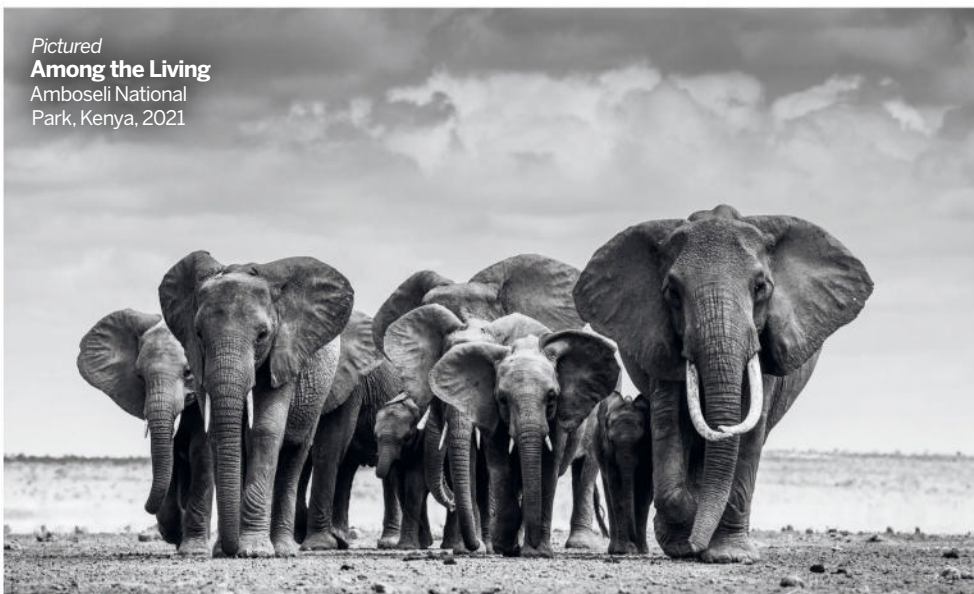
living in Rwanda and they were the first family I visited. I was lucky to be able to do so, thanks to the people and relationships I built there.

When I photographed the family, I decided to go by myself, instead of being part of a group, so that I could move slowly around the gorillas. A guide was there to ensure my safety because Silverbacks can get very territorial. When I am in situations like this, I stay focused on doing the best I can. It was an incredible experience, and sometimes I feel like I haven't had enough time to process how lucky I am to be in situations like this. After photographing gorillas over and over again, I realised that I had become attached to them. They are so similar to humans.

Among the Living took six years to come together. What were the things you most enjoyed about this project?

I have an obsession with proximity. I don't like using camera traps, so the best moments are when I have the chance to get close to the more docile wild animals. It was special to see 'Big Craig', one of the biggest 'Big Tuskers' [elephants with tusks that almost scrape the floor] left in the world. When I met him for the first time in the Amboseli National Park in Kenya, I realised how big he was. He was right in front of me and I could have touched him if I'd reached out my hand – of course, I didn't though! On another trip, I was sitting next to him all afternoon when he was taking a nap.

Pictured
Among the Living
Amboseli National
Park, Kenya, 2021



Pictured
Flannery's brotherhood
Guadalupe gets close to the wild creatures in front of her lens, forging an intimate connection with the viewer

**AMONG
THE LIVING**

Guadalupe Laiz has spent six years travelling across Africa capturing stunning images of wildlife for her book *Among the Living: Where You Belong*. The book, published by The Images Publishing Group, features 429 images of rare and impressive wildlife, including Big Craig, the biggest tusker elephant in Kenya, and the famous Susa gorilla family in Rwanda. *Among the Living* is available now, priced £100/\$125.



INTERVIEW



Above
Angel Morning
Namiri Plains, Tanzania

Right
Rich
During her work, Guadalupe had the chance to meet the founders of Save Giraffes Now (SGN)



Getting that close isn't easy to achieve but I have a few tricks up my sleeve. For example, when I'm capturing cheetahs preparing for a hunt, they go high and climb to the top of the nearest mountain to survey the area. It's important to not get in their way during the actual hunt, so I seize the opportunity to capture them when they are observing the area. We were able to get close by positioning ourselves in a car on another mountain nearby. Sometimes, there was a cheetah right in front of us, which was an unforgettable experience.

Over the years, I've been able to work with the same guides, so we know each other well and have built up a friendship. They know me well enough to trust that I won't react poorly in situations like these. I remain calm and move slowly. But any time I can get out of the car, I do. I drag my body around and get full of ticks that may require a visit to the emergency room. But it's important because you are on another level to document the animals, and you can see that in the photographs.

...and what were the biggest challenges?

It can be very chaotic because when things happen they happen quickly. If you aren't focused, you'll miss these moments. Being prepared is key as you have to make decisions

as quickly as the action happens. The main thing about working with wildlife is that you think you are as ready as you can be but everything happens differently. Even if you've done your research and are in the location at the specific time of the year to see the animal. Working with the best guides and people helps but you still need to improvise 24/7. Things just happen the way they are happening.

I believe the reason there aren't more wildlife photographers out there is the amount of patience required. It can be really boring and so my approach has always been to pick one animal and stay still until I have it in front of my lens. I don't move around all day. You just have to trust that the time you spend waiting will eventually reveal a magnificent moment. Sometimes, I've spent an entire day, waiting for over eight hours to capture an animal, while hearing about some incredible sightings elsewhere. However, I don't have FOMO (the fear of missing out). I'm aware other things are happening that could potentially be more interesting... but that's part of the job. I stay focused and dedicated.

So what type of animals do you usually have to wait a long time for?

Lions – you often have to wait all day until

Pictured
Perfect Darkness
By converting the image to black and white, the focus falls solely on the wildlife



they make an appearance. If I'm shooting in a group, some of the other photographers go back to the lodge if the lions haven't shown their faces in the morning hours, when the light is best. But I don't head back, I wait.

Your work includes lots of black-and-white images. Why is that? Do you prefer shooting in monochrome?

I choose to remove the colour from my images because it puts the focus on the animal as the main subject of my photographs. By eliminating the distraction of colourful landscapes in the backgrounds, I can better highlight the individuality and beauty of each animal. In my opinion, black-and-white photography creates a different kind of visual impact that helps draw attention to the subject in a more powerful way.



Below
I see you
 Guadalupe's new book showcases African wildlife, including gorillas, elephants, lions, giraffes and rhinos, encouraging action to preserve them

Bottom
Before I Leave
 Namiri Plains, Tanzania, 2022

You mentioned your partnerships with non-profit organisations focusing on environmental issues, such as animal abuse, what's the benefit of this?

Animal abuse and trafficking are major problems that impact wildlife all around the world, so for me personally, it would be impossible not to partner with organisations like this. It's a sensitive topic for me and I tend to get very passionate about it. We could have a 10-hour conversation about this topic if you have the time...

We take so many things for granted, including threatened wildlife, and I think we have forgotten how we actually should see them. Habitat loss is a significant threat and the number of some types of animals left in the world is shockingly low. Society is not going to change from one day to the next and

we're going to continue to advance and take up more and more space with urbanisation and farming. So I'm proud to support non-profit organisations such as 'Big Life Foundation' and others.

I worked with scientists together and learned. I try to spread awareness among the people I meet and raise funds for specific projects through silent actions. Here, education is the number one thing for me. We are not giving people new information, the idea is to relearn how we see the animals again intending to change the mindset of people to make clear that we are responsible. Educating people and building a connection to far away wildlife is a huge gap... I think it's important to gain some perspective, and that is the message in the book. I hope people read the book and reflect on this message.



THE GALLERY

The Gallery

International Garden Photographer of the Year 17

International Garden Photographer of the Year 17

With a panel of judges including the former editor of our sister magazine, *Digital Camera* and Lady Henrietta Spencer-Churchill, the International Garden Photographer of The Year is a staple in the photography competition calendar. Launched in 2007 by five members of the Professional Garden Photographers Association, it attracts entries from all over the globe and culminates in a prestigious exhibition at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. For information on how to enter next year's contest, visit igpoty.com



Pictured
Autumn Sunset
Annie Green-Armytage took the winning shot in the Beautiful Gardens category at a private garden in Suffolk, England

© Annie Green-Armytage

Pictured
Mycena on Pine Cone
Wareham Forest in Dorset,
UK, was the setting for
Jay Birmingham's image
of a Mycena mushroom
emerging from a pine cone





Pictured
In the Centre of Spider Art
 Katarzyna Zaluźna captured this image in the morning light using a vintage lens to create a dreamy glow and bokeh

© Katarzyna Zaluźna



Pictured
Ethereal Nigella
 This first-place image in the Beauty of Plants category was taken in Tyne and Wear by Angi Wallace, using a Sigma 180mm macro lens

© Angi Wallace



Above
The Lone Tree
 Andrea Graham captured this famous tree at Llyn Padarn, Snowdonia, at sunrise with a Canon EOS R5 and RF 14-35mm lens

© Andrea Graham



Left
Fading Beauties
 Captured in Powys, Wales, Marlene Finlayson placed these fading Agapanthus flowers on a light pad

© Marlene Finlayson

THE GALLERY



Above
Fire and Rain

Jocelyn Horsfall used the ICM (Intentional Camera Movement) technique to create this abstract shot in Richmond Park, London

Right
Tasty

Fernando Avanka captured this snacking squirrel in Colombo, Sri Lanka, winning the Wildlife in the Garden round

Farright
Tuscan Poppies

Julian Elliott achieved second place in the Wildflower Landscapes category with his shot of poppies in Val d'Orcia, Italy



© Fernando Avanka



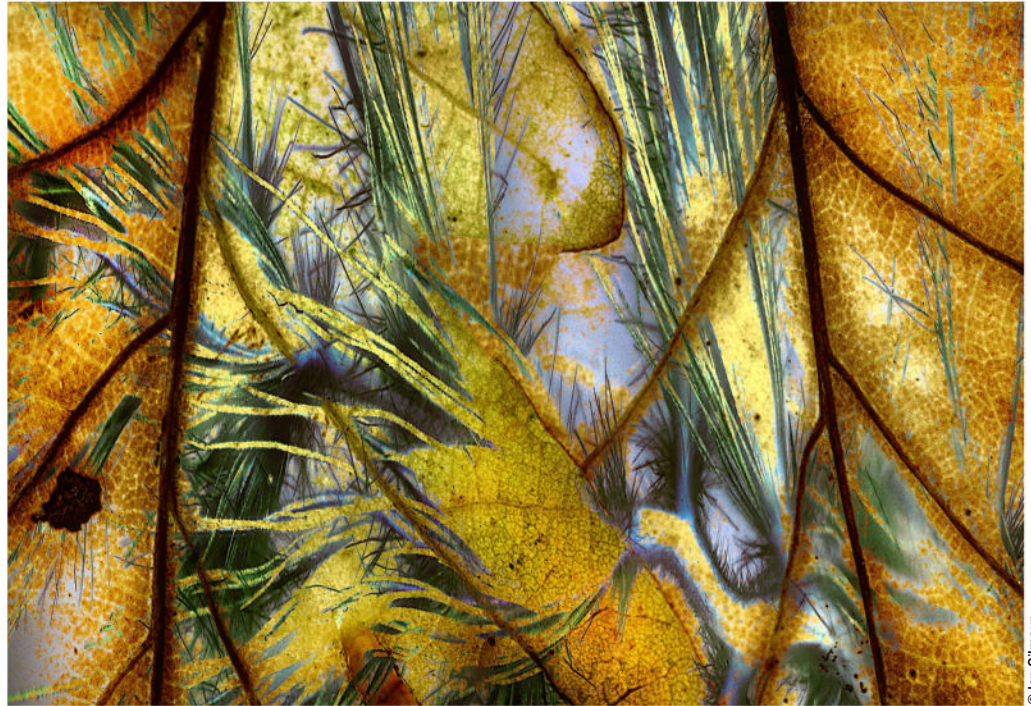
© Jocelyn Horstall



Left
Baobab Road
John Seager captured the unmistakable shapes of these Baobab trees in Madagascar

Below
Torn Curtain
This colourful shot won Ian Gilmour a runners-up spot in the Abstract Views section of the contest

© John Seager



© Ian Gilmour



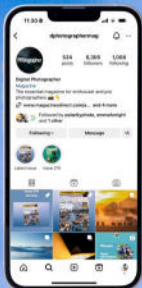
© Julian Elliott

SHOT OF THE MONTH



Photographer: Teresa Molinaro
Title: Waning Gibbous at midday
Location: Palermo, Sicily, Italia
teresamolinaro.it
📷 @teresa.fotografia_astronomia

About the shot: "I'm an astrophotographer and the moon is one of my favourite subjects but I don't limit myself to shooting it at night or when there's a full moon. I always strive for a unique and original shot and, in this scene, the moon is in its waning phase at midday in broad daylight in the skies above Sicily. The shot was challenging since the sunlight dazzles the sky at that time of the day so the moon isn't so evident. There were also different reflections and sparkles from the clouds but I decided to make them the focal point so I waited for them to get closer to the moon to add a smoky, dancing effect. The shot turned out exactly as I wanted and it now forms part of my photographic exhibition project called 'La Poetica del Cielo' (The Poetics of the Sky). Many of my images have been published on scientific and photographic websites, as well as in magazines and books in Italy and worldwide."



Tag us **@dphotographermag**
for a chance to feature here

Every issue, we'll be sharing the best images from our Instagram community. Tag us on @dphotographermag



**WIN! SAMSUNG
256GB PRO PLUS
MICRO SDXC MEMORY
CARD WITH SD ADAPTER**

Every issue, one *Digital Photographer* reader wins a Samsung 256GB PRO Plus MicroSDXC memory card with SD adapter.

Boasting up to 160MB/s and 120MB/s read/write speeds, the card is perfect for high-res stills and Ultra HD video. It is the go-to card for the modern content creator using mirrorless, smartphone, action cam and drone cameras. Find out more at samsung.com/uk/memory-storage



THE BEST OF **CAPTURE COLOUR**

The winners of our latest contest with Photocrowd have been revealed

For our latest competition in association with Photocrowd, we challenged you to submit your best creative colour images. After working through all the entries, the winners have been selected. As a prize, the expert winners will receive a licence for Affinity Photo professional editing software. Congratulations to all of the winners – as usual, the standard of submitted images was extremely high and it was a difficult task to select the best ones.

1ST PLACE WINNER

Abstract Flag

Photographer guentherja

This a highly creative shot! We love the concept and it has been brilliantly executed. The basic alignment of colours is interesting in itself, but the idea to recreate the US flag in a stylised format is inspired. The focal length choice, exposure and framing all work together in a well-spotted clever shot. Nice work!

WIN! Prizes from Affinity

Enter our Still-life Magic contest before 30th April for a chance to win Affinity Photo

Still-life scenes have been a significant topic for centuries – before the invention of photography, the artists of the times painted them but we want you to show us your still-life photos! Enter at photocrowd.com/digitalphotographer from 16th April for a chance to win a licence to Affinity Photo editing software (worth £49 for Mac or Windows), a toolset for photography professionals.

Whether you're editing and retouching or creating multi-layered compositions, Affinity Photo has non-destructive editing, RAW processing, real-time edits and colour management as standard. Winners will be notified by email and can choose between Mac, Windows or iPad versions. The winners will be revealed in issue 280 of *Digital Photographer*, on sale from 7th June.





2ND PLACE

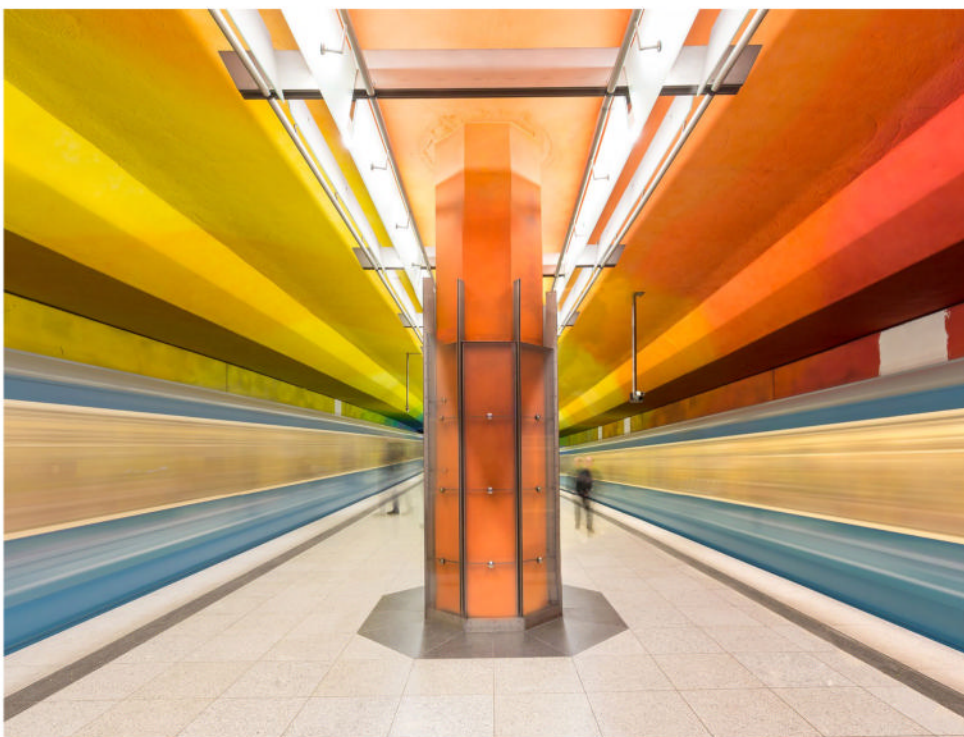
Rainbow Blue Tit

Photographer Rainbow wings
Some shots just come together and this frame represents the ideal alignment of lighting, composition and angle. We saw many wildlife shots entered into this round, mostly of colourful creatures, but the bird is in silhouette so the only colour here is the light reflected through the wings. A technically excellent and perfectly timed shot. Well done!

3RD PLACE

Candid

Photographer Hendrik Fuchs
Many architectural images found their way into this round but this one jumped out for its vibrant energy. The long exposure blurs most of the hard textures, allowing us to focus on the colour alone – almost an inverse technique to a gritty black-and-white image. Well done on seeing the potential in this scene.





RUNNER UP

Friends (top)

Photographer Mustafa Ali

This is a fun shot that combines colourful artwork with real-world elements. We received many art images but this shot has a three-dimensionality that many others lacked. The boys give the shot context and depth, while the abstract artwork and window add colour.

RUNNER UP

Little Steps (left)

Photographer Sirsendu Gayen

The colour contrast drew us to this image, while the intriguing composition focuses our attention on the subject through the classic frame-within-a-frame device. Simple but aesthetically pleasing, this shot proves that colour images can be minimalist too.

RUNNER UP

Cakes (above left)

Photographer VeraM

Sometimes simple is best as this image shows. The girls' outfits stand out against the background and work off each other to fill out the colour palette. Each area of the frame furthers the theme, making the whole shot more about the colour interactions. Well done.

RUNNER UP

Stripes (above)

Photographer Yvonne Warriner

Lines and shapes featured heavily in this round. The minimalism of the surrounding detail ensures the colours at the bottom don't overwhelm the scene but allow the abstract nature of the shot to shine through. The human figure breaks it up nicely too.



104 Leica SL3
 This might be the best mirrorless camera Leica has ever made, says *James Artaius*, but has it lost some of the soul of its predecessors?



106 Canon Speedlite EL-5
 Canon's latest Speedlite is the first to feature its new multi-function foot. *Matthew Richards* tries it out

Kit intro

The expert and independent reviews of gear we've bagged this issue



96 Photo Kit Leaderboard

Check out our exciting new Photo Kit Leaderboard feature – a real-time guide to all the best cameras, lenses and other photography accessories on the market.

104 Leica SL3

This could be Leica's best-ever mirrorless camera, but *James Artaius* wonders whether it lacks the soul of its rangefinder siblings.

108 Lenses

Every month, we take two professional optics out into the field. This issue, we put the Sony FE 24-50mm f/2.8 G and the Sigma 500mm f/5.6 DG DN OS Sport lenses to the test.

110 Accessories

It's the little things that can enhance your photography, so we've rounded up the best photo gadgets and gifts to add to your kitbag.

Our ratings

Our team of trusted and expert reviewers score gear thoroughly to help you make better buying choices.

- Don't go there ★★★★★
- Could be better ★★★★★
- Solid performer ★★★★★
- Excellent bit of kit ★★★★★
- Best on the market ★★★★★

Product awards

Digital Photographer's awards are given out when a product really catches our attention. Here are our three most used accolades.



Lab testing

Some of our product reviews also have in-depth lab data, graphs and scores. This means that the kit has been subjected to more rigorous testing. Lens tests are carried out using Imatest, and cameras are tested in our laboratory using DxO Analyzer hardware and software to check the image noise and dynamic range.

Leaderboard 2024

Our real-time report on the very best gear available for you right now



Welcome to the *Digital Photographer Photo Kit*

Leaderboard! The digital world moves fast and photo kit comes and goes in no time at all. The continuous march of development and progress means there can be a confusing array of potential cameras, lenses, software and accessories to choose from. Some products see yearly updates and replacements while others stick around

for longer, a testament to their quality, usefulness, value and popularity.

We review a huge variety of items, but these summaries are often time-specific to the tech generation in which the products were launched. A five-star review might be awarded for ingenuity, marking something that is ahead of its time, but several months later, the competition has caught up. Conversely, as a product's price drops over

time, its value proposition may render it eligible for a bump up in our ratings.

This Leaderboard does not replace our in-depth reviews, instead, it provides a real-time snapshot of the photography industry, helping you decide which gear is right for you, right now. The longer a piece of kit is ranked, the more points it will accrue – and that means the better it performs in our annual Gear of the Year Awards!

KEY SPECS

What features should you expect as standard in a camera today?



IMAGE STABILISATION

In-body Image Stabilisation (IBIS) now commonly offers five to eight stops of compensation for camera shake, when combined with lens-based IS. Note, that maximum compensation is sometimes available with only certain lenses.



ARTICULATED SCREEN

Older cameras offered two or three-way LCD rotation but today, the best camera models have fully articulated main screens for awkward compositions and difficult angles.



BURST RATE

Electronic shutters enable incredible burst rates of up to 120 frames per second but look for at least 12fps when a mechanical shutter is used in High Speed Continuous mode



ISO RANGE

The new arms race focuses on maximum sensitivity instead of resolution. Use a top ISO of 12,800 as a starting point but don't let unusable values like 102,400 sway your potential buying decisions.



Sony Alpha 9 III

The world's first full-frame global shutter camera retains its crown as our Camera of the Month

New features always get a lot of hype in the photo industry, but few have as much potential to change cameras forever in the same way as a global shutter. Headlining an all-round excellent specification, this feature opens doors to an incredible top shutter speed of 1/80,000sec and renders flash sync speeds a thing of the past. Other cameras might have more pixels, but the A9 III really is the most advanced camera on the market



right now, so top marks to Sony. It's for this reason that the A9 III retains the top spot in this month's Leaderboard. Will it manage a third?

■ [Read our review in Issue 276](#)



SPECIFICATION Resolution 24.6MP **Sensor** Full-frame EXMOR RS CMOS (35.6mmx23.8mm) **ISO range** ISO 250-25,600 (native), ISO125-51,200 (expanded) **Frame rate** 120fps max **Storage** 1x SD UHS-II, 1x CFexpress Type A **Battery** NP-FZ100 **LCD** 3.2in TFT (2,095,104 dots) **Viewfinder** 0.64in Quad-VGA OLED (9,437,184 dots) 0.9x **Weight** 702g (inc battery and card) **Dimensions** 136.1x96.9x82.9mm

BEST FULL-FRAME CAMERA

If you're after maximum quality images, its larger pixels mean that a full-frame camera is the best place to start

NEW ENTRY **1 Leica SL3**

A departure from Leica's rangefinder classics, but one of the company's best cameras

Leica is a prestige brand with a unique appeal. It supplies a generally niche market and this is reflected in its prices. However, while still expensive by most people's standards, the SL3 has plenty of mainstream pro features. Its 60.3MP full-frame sensor is a studio photographer's dream while its autofocus

features have taken a step up in speed and accuracy. The build quality is also top-notch. It won't be for everyone but we think it's currently the most impressive full-frame camera to enter the market. Don't miss our expert review of the SL3 in this issue.

■ **Read our review: see page 104**

SPECIFICATION Resolution 60.3MP **Sensor** Full-frame CMOS (36mm x 24mm) **ISO range** ISO 50-100,000 **Frame rate** Max 15fps (electronic), 7fps (mechanical) **Storage** 1x SD UHS-II, 1x CFexpress Type B (recommended) **Battery** Leica BP-SCL6 **LCD** 3.2in 2,100,000 dots **Viewfinder** EVF 5,760,000 dots **Weight** 769g (body only) **Dimensions** 141.2 x 108 x 84.6mm



↓ **2 Nikon Z8**

The Nikon D850 took the world by storm offering an almost perfect blend of resolution and speed – and the Z 8 is Nikon's answer for the mirrorless age. With a high-resolution 45.7MP full-frame sensor and 20fps burst shooting, it matches its Z 9 sibling but has

a more affordable price. Handling is DSLR-like, which will please D850 users, while the dual card slots offer SD and XQD/ CFexpress compatibility. The Z 8 is built like a tank and offers excellent value for pro photographers.

■ **Read our review in Issue 269**

SPECIFICATION Resolution 45.7MP **Sensor** Full-frame (FX) CMOS (35.9mm x 23.9mm) **ISO range** ISO 64-25,600 **Frame rate** 20fps (RAW) 30fps (jpeg) **Storage** 1x SD UHS-II, 1x XQD/CFexpress Type B **Battery** EN-EL15c **LCD** 3.2in (2,100,000 dots) **Viewfinder** 0.5in OLED (3,690,000 dots) **Weight** 820g (body only) **Dimensions** 144 x 118.5 x 83mm

↓ **3 Canon EOS R3**

Until the EOS R1 makes an appearance, the R3 remains Canon's top-of-the-line mirrorless model. Building on the technology found in the EOS 1DX III DSLR, which sits just above it,

a 24.1MP sensor, blistering 30fps electronic burst rate and futuristic Eye-Control autofocus make this a star performer.

■ **Read our review in Issue 249**

SPECIFICATION Resolution 24.1MP **Sensor** Full-frame CMOS (36mm x 24mm) **ISO range** ISO 100-102,400 (native) 50-204,800 (expanded) **Frame rate** 30fps (electronic) **Storage** 1x SD, 1x CFexpress **Battery** LP-E19 **LCD** 3.2in (4,150,000 dots) **Viewfinder** 0.5in (5,760,000 dots) **Weight** 822g (body only) **Dimensions** 150 x 142.6 x 87.2mm

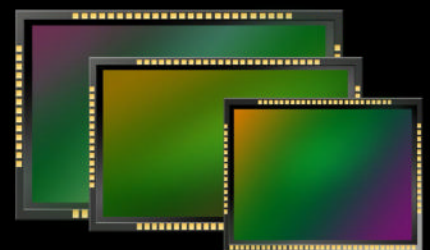


SENSOR SIZES AND CROP FACTORS

Get to grips with the variety of sensor formats available

The range of sensor sizes can be confusing when gauging lens system versatility. As sensor size decreases, crop factor increases as less of the frame

areas is captured compared to full-frame. However, it is important to remember that the exact size and crop factor can differ between camera brands.



Type	Medium Format (Fujifilm GFX)	Full-frame	APS-H	APS-C	APS-C (Canon)	Micro 4/3
Sensor area	43.9mm x 32.9mm	36 mm x 24mm	27.9 x 18.6mm	23.6 x 15.7mm	22.2 x 14.8mm	17.3 x 13.0mm
Crop factor	0.79x	1x	1.3x	1.5x	1.6x	2x
Comparison (50mm)	39.5mm	50mm	65mm	75mm	80mm	100mm

BEST APS-C CAMERA A lighter and more compact body

1 Fujifilm X-T5

Retro power is the order of the day with this APS-C modern classic from Fujifilm

The single-digit Fujifilm X-series cameras have settled into a niche of their own, catering not only to high-level photographers but also to video shooters. The latest version took things up a notch with the introduction of a new 40.2MP sensor, making it one of the highest-resolution APS-C models around while maintaining an electronic frame rate of 20fps. Fuji controls take some getting used to, but the compact, high build quality, 7-stop stabiliser and 1/180,000 top shutter speed make this the perfect travel and documentary camera. It also has the bonus of 6K advanced video.

■ [Read our review in Issue 263](#)



SPECIFICATION Resolution 40.2MP Sensor APS-C X-Trans CMOS 5 HR (23.5mm x 15.6mm) ISO range ISO 125-12,800 (native), ISO 64-51,200 (expanded) Frame rate 15fps (mechanical), 20fps (electronic) Storage 2x SD/SDHC/SDXC UHS-II Battery NP-W235 LCD 3in (1,840,000 dots) Viewfinder 0.5-inch, 3,690,000-dot OLED EVF, 100fps refresh Weight 476g (body only) Dimensions 130 x 91 x 64mm

2 Canon EOS R7

With a 32.5MP sensor and rapid 30fps burst rate, the EOS R7 easily steps into the mirrorless shoes of the hugely popular EOS 7D line of DSLRs. It's a great introduction to the RF mount and offers advanced features galore, more than enough to satisfy enthusiasts and semi-pros.

■ [Read our review in Issue 271](#)



SPECIFICATION Resolution 32.5MP Sensor APS-C CMOS (22.3mm x 14.8mm) ISO range ISO 100-32,000 (native) 100-51,200 (expanded) Frame rate 15fps (mechanical) 30fps (electronic) Storage 2x SD/SDHC/SDXC UHS-II Battery LP-E6NH LCD 2.95in (1,620,000-dots) Viewfinder 0.39in OLED EVF (2,360,000-dots) Weight 612g (body only) Dimensions 132 x 90 x 92mm

NEW ENTRY 3 Fujifilm X100VI

The X-T5 was our first top-place APS-C camera of this Leaderboard, and this new entry has most of the same specs crammed into a pocketable body, including the 40MP sensor and 6K video. It won't be everyone's cup of tea, but this kind of feature list in a compact makes it one of the most sought-after models.

■ [Read our review next month](#)



SPECIFICATION Resolution 40.2MP Sensor APS-C X-Trans CMOS 5 HR (23.5mm x 15.6mm) ISO range ISO 125-12,800 (native), ISO 64-51,200 (expanded) Frame rate 11fps (mechanical), 20fps (electronic) Storage 1x SD UHS-I Battery NP-W126S LCD 3in 1,620,000-dot tilt LCD Viewfinder 3,690,000-dot EVF Weight 521g Dimensions 126 x 74.8 x 55.3mm

BEST MICRO 4/3 CAMERA

Panasonic Lumix G 9II

The latest flagship for the M4/3 format has plenty of features

If you thought Micro Four Thirds was a dead format, think again. The Lumix G 9 II reinvigorates the system and demonstrates Panasonic's dedication to maintaining it, despite the burgeoning L-Mount alliance. The G 9 II features a 25.2MP sensor, which allows excellent telephoto images, especially when combined with the 2x crop mode of the format.

Also pushing the camera to the top of the tree is 5.8K 30p video, 60fps shooting with AF (75fps with AF locked) and

excellent ergonomics. Furthermore, coming in at less than £2000, it offers superlative value for money, too.

■ [Read our review in Issue 273](#)



SPECIFICATION Resolution 25.2MP Sensor Micro Four Thirds Live MOS (17.3 x 13mm) ISO range 100-25,600 Frame rate 14fps/10fps (mechanical) 75fps/60fps (electronic) Storage 2x SD UHS-II Battery DMW-BLK22 LCD 3in (1,840,000-dot) Viewfinder OLED (3,680,400-dot) Weight 658g (with battery and card) Dimensions 134.3 x 102.3 x 90.1mm

ESSENTIAL VIDEO FEATURES

Consider these key features for shooting video



RESOLUTION

While 8K is becoming more common, for most users 4K (3840 x 2160 pixels) is enough. Full HD (1920 x 1080) is fine for social media use.

FRAME RATE

A 24/30p (fps) rate is the most common and useful for everyday videography. 120p or 240p are great for slow-motion work but check this is available at full resolution.



CROP

On some lower-end cameras, 4K resolution is available but only in a cropped aspect, which doesn't make full use of the lens coverage. This means you will need to use a wider lens.

BEST MEDIUM FORMAT CAMERA

Fujifilm GFX 100 II

The latest GF-mount camera furthers Fujifilm's quest to make medium format accessible to all

Fujifilm reinvented the wheel with the introduction of its larger-than-full-frame GFX cameras. While it's still more expensive than consumer mirrorless cameras, the GFX 100 II and its siblings bring the higher resolutions associated with monster cameras like those from Hasselblad and Phase One and squash them into DSLR-like bodies. The GFX 100 II provides 8fps continuous shooting, which is astonishing for a 102MP camera, while the processor enables



+10
POINTS

8K video. It's certainly not cheap, and although it only builds on its predecessor's work, this recent model represents the most well-rounded, medium-format camera on the market right now.

■ [Read our review in Issue 277](#)

SPECIFICATION Resolution 102MP Sensor GFX CMOS II HS (43.8 x 32.9mm) ISO range ISO 80 - 12800 (native) 40 - 102,400 (expanded) Frame rate 8fps (mechanical, AF-C) Storage 1x SD UHS-II, 1x CF express Type B Battery NP-W235 LCD 3.2in (2,360,000-dots) Viewfinder 0.64in OLED (9,440,000-dot approx) Weight 867g (body only) Dimensions 152.4 x 117.4 x 98.6mm

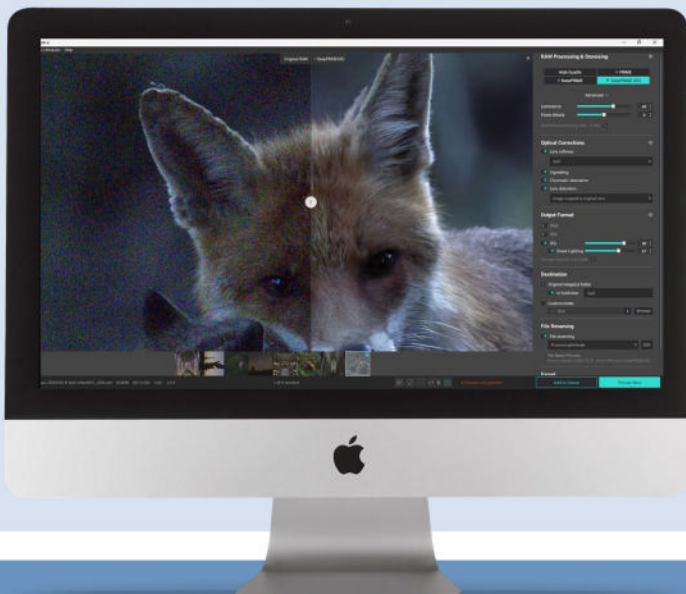
BEST EDITING SOFTWARE

NEW ENTRY DxO PureRAW 4

The latest update can extract incredible levels of detail

While most of the major image editing tools can now process RAW files, DxO PureRAW 4 uses a unique Linear DNG file format so that it can apply DxO's DeepPRIME noise reduction process, essential lens corrections and demosaicing right from the start. It has an extensive set of features and even files from older cameras can be given a new lease of life in what represents a powerful editing package for pro photographers.

■ [Read our review next month](#)



BEST DSLR CAMERA

Old-school tech has life in it yet

1 Nikon D850

Arguably the finest DSLR ever built for enthusiasts and semi-professionals



+3
POINTS

While Nikon's own D6 and Canon's EOS 1DX Mark III sit at the top of the DSLR tree, the D850 is far more accessible to the masses and is the better choice for enthusiasts and semi-pros. For a long time, photographers had to choose between pixels and frame rate, but despite having a 45.7MP FX-format sensor, the D850 manages to rattle off 7fps or 9fps with the optional battery grip. This is rapid in DSLR terms and the result is a camera that is simply untouchable for all-round performance. Launched in 2017, its AF system, noise performance and video features still hold their own against newer tech.

■ [Read our review in Issue 193](#)

SPECIFICATION Resolution 45.7MP Sensor FX-format CMOS (35.9 x 23.9mm) ISO range ISO 64-25,600 (native) 32-102,400 (expanded) Frame rate 7fps, 9fps (with MB-D18 grip) Storage 1x SD/SDHC/SDXC UHS-II, 1x XQD Battery EN-EL18c LCD 3.2in touchscreen (2,359,000-dots) Viewfinder Optical pentaprism, 100% coverage Weight 1,005g (w/ battery and card) Dimensions 146 x 124 x 78.5mm

2 Canon EOS 90D

Cameras like the EOS 20D, 30D and 40D set new precedents for specification versus price. The EOS 90D was the last model in that line before Canon shifted focus to the R system, so you'll find much of the same tech and image standards but at a bargain price.



■ [Read our review in Issue 219](#)

SPECIFICATION Resolution 32.5MP Sensor APS-C CMOS (22.3 x 14.8mm) ISO range ISO 100 - 25,600 (native), 100 - 51,200 (expanded) Frame rate 10fps Storage SD / SDHC / SDXC (UHS-II) Battery LP-E6NH LCD 3in (1,040,000-dots) Viewfinder Optical pentaprism, 100% coverage Weight 701g (w/ battery and card) Dimensions 140.7 x 104.8 x 76.8mm

3 Canon EOS 1DX Mark III

Technically, this is Canon's flagship, sitting just above the mirrorless EOS R3. Therefore, this is the best camera money can buy as a Canon user, with a price to match. The Nikon D6 has similar specifications but the 1DX III beats that with 5.5K video and 20fps, to the D6's 4K and 14fps.



■ [Read our review in Issue 227](#)

SPECIFICATION Resolution 20.1MP Sensor Full-frame CMOS (36 x 24mm) ISO range ISO 100-102,400 (native) 50-819,200 (expanded) Frame rate 16fps (mechanical) 20fps (in Live View, AF-C) Storage 2x CF express Type B Battery LP-E19 LCD 3.2in (2,100,000-dots) Viewfinder Optical Pentaprism (100%) Weight 1,250g (body only) Dimensions 158.0 x 167.6 x 82.6mm

BEST WIDE-ANGLE LENS For even greater frame width

Prime lenses



NEW ENTRY **1 Laowa 10mm f/2.8 Zero-D**

Currently the widest full-frame rectilinear lens on the market. We got our hands on it at The Photography and Video Show in March and were blown away by it.

■ Review: TBA

SPECIFICATION Price £839/\$799 Max aperture f/2.8 Min aperture f/22 Closest focusing distance 0.12m Elements/groups 15/9 Mount Canon RF, Leica L, Nikon Z, Sony E



2 Sigma 14mm f/1.4 DG DN Art

■ Review: Issue 268

SPECIFICATION Price £1,399/\$1,599 Max aperture f/1.4 Min aperture f/16 Closest focusing distance 0.30m Elements/groups 19/15 Mount Sony E, Leica L



3 Laowa Argus 28mm f/1.2 FF

■ Review: Issue 272

SPECIFICATION Price £699/\$599 Max aperture f/1.2 Min aperture f/16 Closest focusing distance 0.5m Elements/groups 13/7 Mount Canon RF, Leica L, Nikon Z, Sony E



4 Viltrox AF 27mm f/1.2 Pro

■ Review: Issue 276

SPECIFICATION Price £444/\$545 Max aperture f/1.2 Min aperture f/16 Closest focusing distance 0.28m Elements/groups 15/11 Mount Nikon Z (DX), Fujifilm X, Sony E



5 Fujifilm XF18mm f/1.4 R LM WR

■ Review: Issue 254

SPECIFICATION Price £849/\$999 Max aperture f/1.4 Min aperture f/16 Closest focusing distance 0.2m Elements/groups 15/9 Mount Fujifilm X

Zoom lenses



1 Sigma 14-24mm f/2.8 DG HSM | A

The 14-24mm f/2.8 is a key trinity zoom and this Sigma offers great value for money and image quality for multiple lens mounts.

■ Review: TBA

SPECIFICATION Price £1,269/\$1,299 Max aperture f/2.8 Min aperture f/22 Closest focusing distance 0.26m Elements/groups 17/11 Mount Sigma SA, Canon EF, Nikon F



2 Canon RF 14-35mm f/4L IS USM

■ Review: Issue 249

SPECIFICATION Price £1,599/\$1,299 Max aperture f/4 Min aperture f/22 Closest focusing distance 0.20m Elements/groups 16/12 Mount Canon RF



3 Sony FE 12-24mm f/2.8 G Master

■ Review: Issue 231

SPECIFICATION Price £2,699/\$2,898 Max aperture f/2.8 Min aperture f/22 Closest focusing distance 0.28m Elements/groups 17/14 Mount Sony E



4 Tamron SP 15-30mm f/2.8 DI VC USD G2

■ Review: Issue 236

SPECIFICATION Price £1,099/\$1,149 Max aperture f/2.8 Min aperture f/22 Closest focusing distance 0.28m Elements/groups 18/13 Mount Canon EF, Nikon F



5 Sony FE 16-35mm f/2.8 GM II

■ Review: Issue 271

SPECIFICATION Price £2,299/\$2,298 Max aperture f/2.8 Min aperture f/22 Closest focusing distance 0.22m Elements/groups 15/12 Mount Sony E

IS MODES

Get steady shots with stabilisation for any occasion

Many high-end lenses feature multiple stabilisation modes. Standard (or Mode 1 as it's commonly known) is for everyday work when you are stationary and holding the camera. Tripod mode avoids introducing vibration when support-mounted and Hybrid mode (Canon's terminology) reduces rotational movements when close-up. Active mode (Nikon's terminology) should be used when shooting from a moving vehicle. Note: similar modes exist for each brand.



CONTROL RINGS

Assign your lens a custom handling experience

Most mirrorless lenses feature control rings that can be assigned specific roles. From your camera menu, allocate the function (eg. aperture control, shutter speed, ISO) and how you want the rings to work (direction, torque sensitivity). These can be amended at any time, so try altering the assignment to discover what works best for your shoots.



BEST STANDARD LENS

Essential for all-round use

Prime lenses



1 Canon RF 50mm f/1.2L USM

For many years, Canon was the only DSLR brand to have a 50mm f/1.2 and now this heritage is brought to the RF system.

■ Review: Issue 218

SPECIFICATION Price £2,449/\$2,199 Max aperture f/1.2 Min aperture f/16 Closest focusing distance 0.40m Elements/groups 15/9 Mount Canon RF



2 Nikon Z 85mm f/1.2 S

■ Review: Issue 267

SPECIFICATION Price £2,999/\$2,597 Max aperture f/1.2 Min aperture f/16 Closest focusing distance 0.85m Elements/groups 15/10 Mount Nikon Z



3 Sony FE 50mm f/1.4 GM

■ Review: Issue 265

SPECIFICATION Price £1,499/\$1,298 Max aperture f/1.4 Min aperture f/16 Closest focusing distance 0.41m Elements/groups 14/11 Mount Sony E

Zoom lenses



1 Sigma 24-70mm f/2.8 DG OS HSM | Art

The 24-70mm f/2.8 is a kitbag essential and this Sigma is arguably the best value model around, offering great sharpness, build and AF.

■ Review: Issue 239

SPECIFICATION Price £1,149/\$1,249 Max aperture f/2.8 Min aperture f/22 Closest focusing distance 0.37m Elements/groups 19/14 Mount Canon EF, Nikon F, Sigma SA



2 Canon RF 24-105mm f/2.8L IS USM Z

■ Review: Issue 275

SPECIFICATION Price £3,439/\$2,999 Max aperture f/2.8 Min aperture f/22 Closest focusing distance 0.45m Elements/groups 23/18 Mount Canon RF



3 Fujinon XF16-55mm f/2.8 R LM WR

■ Review: Issue 231

SPECIFICATION Price £979/\$1,199 Max aperture f/2.8 Min aperture f/22 Closest focusing distance 0.60m Elements/groups 17/12 Mount Fujifilm X

BEST SPECIALIST LENS

For something a little different

Prime lenses

NEW ENTRY

1 Canon RF 5.2mm f/2.8L Dual Fisheye



At TPS 2024, Canon indicated that VR is an area of significant interest and this dual fisheye optic truly rocks the boat.

■ Review: TBA

SPECIFICATION Price £2,099/\$1,999 Max aperture f/2.8 Min aperture f/16 Closest focusing distance 0.20m Elements/groups 12/10 Mount Canon RF



2 Fujinon GF30mm f/5.6 T/S

■ Review: TBA

SPECIFICATION Price £3,899/\$3,999 Max aperture f/5.6 Min aperture f/32 Closest focusing distance 0.30m Elements/groups 16/11 Mount Fujifilm GF



3 TTArtisan Tilt 50mm f/1.4

■ Review: Issue 262

SPECIFICATION Price £249/\$199 Max aperture f/1.4 Min aperture f/16 Closest focusing distance 0.50m Elements/groups 7/6 Mount Sony E, Canon RF, Fujifilm X, Nikon Z, Leica L, M43

Zoom lenses



1 Canon RF 24-240mm f/4-6.3 IS USM

Redefining the superzoom lens, this 10x zoom optic is the perfect choice for travel photography, offering versatility and quality.

■ Review: Issue 243

SPECIFICATION Price £909/\$899 Max aperture f/4-6.3 Min aperture f/36 Closest focusing distance 0.50m Elements/groups 21/15 Mount Canon RF



2 Nikkor Z 24-200mm f/4-6.3 VR

■ Review: Issue 246

SPECIFICATION Price £949/\$797 Max aperture f/4-6.3 Min aperture f/36 Closest focusing distance 0.50m Elements/groups 19/15 Mount Nikon Z



3 Tamron 18-400mm f/3.5-6.3 Di II VC HLD


■ Review: Issue 248

SPECIFICATION Price £699/\$699 Max aperture f/3.5-6.3 Min aperture f/40 Closest focusing distance 0.45m Elements/groups 16/11 Mount Canon EF, Nikon F

BEST TELEPHOTO LENS Zoom in closer to the action

Prime lenses

Zoom lenses



1 Sony FE 300mm f/2.8 GM OSS

The 300mm f/2.8 sets standards for portability. Its fast AF and superb sharpness are pro grade.

■ Review: Issue 275

SPECIFICATION Price £5,799/\$5,998 Max aperture f/2.8
Min aperture f/22 Closest focusing distance 2.0m
Elements/groups 20/16 Mount Sony E




1 Sigma 60-600mm f/4.5-6.3 DG DN OS | S

Offering a huge 10x zoom, this super telephoto is a perfect choice for sports and wildlife photographers.

■ Review: Issue 271


SPECIFICATION Price £2,099/\$1,999 Max aperture f/4.5-6.3
Min aperture f/22-32 Closest focusing distance 0.45m
Elements/groups 27/19 Mount Sony E, Leica L



2 Nikon Z 135mm f/1.8 S Plena

■ Review: TBA

SPECIFICATION Price £2,649/\$2,497 Max aperture f/1.8
Min aperture f/16 Closest focusing distance 0.82m
Elements/groups 16/14 Mount Nikon Z



2 Nikkor Z 70-180 f/2.8

■ Review: Issue 273


SPECIFICATION Price £1,299/\$1,247 Max aperture f/2.8
Min aperture f/22 Closest focusing distance 0.27m
Elements/groups 19/14 Mount Nikon Z



3 Canon RF 600mm f/11 IS STM

■ Review: Issue 240

SPECIFICATION Price £829/\$799 Max aperture f/11
Min aperture f/11 Closest focusing distance 4.5m
Elements/groups 10/7 Mount Canon RF



3 Sony FE 70-200mm f/2.8 GM OSS II

■ Review: Issue 258


SPECIFICATION Price £2,479/\$2,798 Max aperture f/2.8
Min aperture f/22 Closest focusing distance 0.40m
Elements/groups 17/14 Mount Sony E



4 Canon RF 135mm f/1.8L IS USM

■ Review: TBA

SPECIFICATION Price £2,599/\$2,099 Max aperture f/1.8
Min aperture f/22 Closest focusing distance 0.70m
Elements/groups 17/12 Mount Canon RF



4 OM System M.ZUIKO Digital ED 40-150mm f/4 Pro

■ Review: Issue 258

SPECIFICATION Price £749/\$899 Max aperture f/4
Min aperture f/22 Closest focusing distance 0.70m
Elements/groups 15/9 Mount M4/3



5 Nikon Z 600mm f/4 TC VR S

■ Review: Issue 263

SPECIFICATION Price £15,499/\$15,497 Max aperture f/4
Min aperture f/22 Closest focusing distance 4.3m
Elements/groups 26/20 Mount Nikon Z



5 Sigma 70-200mm f/2.8 DG OS HSM | S

■ Review: TBA

SPECIFICATION Price £1,199/\$1,499 Max aperture f/2.8
Min aperture f/22 Closest focusing distance 1.2m
Elements/groups 24/22 Mount Canon EF, Nikon F, Sigma SA

BEST LIGHTING Take full control of the lighting conditions

1 Godox VING V860III

SPECIFICATION Price £223/\$229

Type Speedlight Compatibility Canon, Nikon, Sony, Fujifilm, Olympus, Panasonic, Pentax

Output Gn 60/197 (ISO 100 m/ft, 200mm)

Power source Internal (rechargeable)

Weight 530g (inc battery)



2 Canon Speedlite 430EX III-RT

SPECIFICATION Price £279/\$299

Type Speedlight Compatibility Canon

Output Gn 43/141 (ISO 100 m/ft, 105mm)

Power source 4x AA batteries

Weight 295g



3 Rotolight AEOS 2

SPECIFICATION Price £1,099/\$1,399

Type Portable continuous

Compatibility N/A

Output 11,500 Lux at 3 feet (continuous)

Power source V-lock 24V 150W

Weight 1.400g



4 Hahnel Modus 600RT Mk II

SPECIFICATION Price £249/\$283

Type Speedlight Compatibility Canon, Nikon, Sony, Fujifilm, Olympus, Panasonic

Output Gn 60/197 (ISO 100 m/ft, 200mm)

Power source Internal (rechargeable)

Weight 540g (inc battery)



BEST FILTERS

1 Hoya Variable Density II

SPECIFICATION
Price £99-190/\$80-160
Exposure increase: +1.67 - +8.67 stops
Sizes 52-82mm



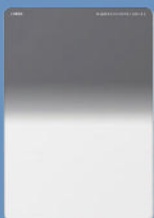
2 H&Y Revoring Variable ND & Circular Polariser

SPECIFICATION Price £170/\$189 (46-62mm)
Exposure increase: +1.5 to +10 stops Sizes 67-82, 46-62, 37-49mm



3 Cokin Nuances Extreme Z-Pro Soft Grad ND

SPECIFICATION
Price £148/\$150 (3-stop)
Construction Glass
Sizes 84x100mm, 100x150mm, 130x170mm



4 Hoya HD Nano Mk II CIR-PL

SPECIFICATION
Price £69-221/\$85-200
Construction Glass/PL film
Sizes 49-82mm



BEST MACRO LENS

For capturing the world up close

1 Nikon Z MC 105mm f/2.8 VR S



In our initial review, we called this 'one of the best macro lenses we'd used'. The quality, build and weight make this a fantastic macro optic.

■ Review: Issue 245

SPECIFICATION Price £1,049/\$947 Max aperture f/2.8
Min aperture f/32 Closest focusing distance 0.29m
Elements/groups 16/11 Mount Nikon Z



2 OM System M.Zuiko Digital ED 90mm f/3.5 Macro IS PRO

■ Review TBA

SPECIFICATION Price £1,299/\$1,500 Max aperture f/3.5
Min aperture f/22 Closest focusing distance 0.22m
Elements/groups 18/13 Mount M43



3 Canon RF100mm f/2.8L Macro IS USM

■ Review: Issue 254

SPECIFICATION Price £1,369/\$1,099 Max aperture f/2.8
Min aperture f/32 Closest focusing distance 0.26m
Elements/groups 17/13 Mount Canon RF



4 Sigma 105mm f/2.8 DG DN Macro Art

■ Review: TBA

SPECIFICATION Price £729/\$799 Max aperture f/2.8
Min aperture f/22 Closest focusing distance 0.30m
Elements/groups 12/7 Mount Sony E, Leica L



5 Nikon Z 50mm f/2.8 Macro

■ Review: Issue 248

SPECIFICATION Price £679/\$647 Max aperture f/2.8
Min aperture f/22 Closest focusing distance 0.16m
Elements/groups 10/7 Mount Nikon Z



6 Laowa 90mm f/2.8 2x Ultra Macro

■ Review: Issue 264

SPECIFICATION Price £529/\$499 Max aperture f/2.8
Min aperture f/22 Closest focusing distance 0.21m
Elements/groups 13/10 Mount Canon RF, Nikon Z, Sony E, Leica L



7 Canon RF 85mm f/2 Macro IS STM

■ Review: Issue 242

SPECIFICATION Price £619/\$599 Max aperture f/2
Min aperture f/29 Closest focusing distance 0.35m
Elements/groups 12/11 Mount Canon RF

BEST TRIPOD

Using a tripod is the key to sharper shots

1 Benro MeFoto RoadTrip Pro

SPECIFICATION Price £240/\$296
Construction Carbon Fibre
Leg sections 5



2 3 Legged Thing Leo 2.0

SPECIFICATION Price £203/\$267
Construction Carbon Fibre
Leg sections 5

3 Gitzo Légende Tripod

SPECIFICATION Price £549/\$549 (w/ball head)
Construction Carbon Fibre
Leg sections 4



4 Peak Design Travel Tripod

SPECIFICATION Price £349/\$380
Construction Aluminium
Leg sections 5

5 Benro Cyanbird

SPECIFICATION Price £235/\$190 (w/N00P Ball Head)
Construction Carbon Fibre/
Aluminium
Leg sections 5





Price: £5,920/\$6,995

Website: leica-camera.com

Leica SL3

This could be the best mirrorless camera Leica has ever made, says **James Artaius** – even if it lacks some of the soul of its rangefinder siblings



The Leica SL3 is the first mirrorless camera from Leica that I've fallen in love with. I love using the M and Q cameras, but the SL series just never did it for me – and the fact they were similar to Panasonic's S cameras, apart from the price tags, certainly didn't help either.

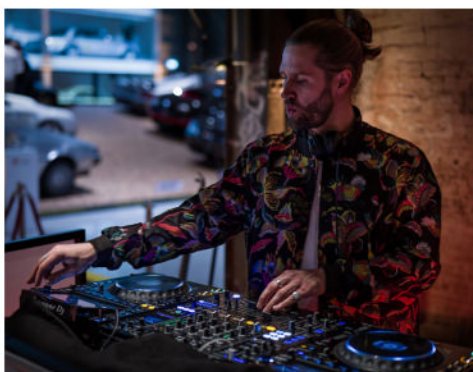
However, the Leica SL3 absolutely knocks things out of the park in ways that its predecessors never managed. While it might lack the soul of a Leica M11 or even the Leica Q3, this beautiful slab of sculpted black metal is a straight-up spectacular imaging machine. The Leica SL3 takes a number of technological

cues from the Leica Q3, namely its triple resolution 60.3MP image sensor and phase detect autofocus – the latter being nothing short of transformative for the SL series.

Depending on your resolution and workflow needs, you can set the camera to capture a large, medium or small image, clocking in at 60.3MP (9520 x 6336), 36.4MP (7392 x 4928) or 18.5MP (5280 x 3504). The resolution makes the SL3 capable of 8K video up to 30p, with all the trimmings such as H.265 and ProRes protocols, timecode interface, Log mode and full-size HDMI port. The sensor is Dual Basis ISO, too, with a Low setting of ISO 50-280 (ISO 200-560 in Log) and a High of ISO 320-100,000 (ISO 640-100,000 in Log), adding to the overall video-friendly functionality of this camera.

Accordingly, the Leica SL3 introduces support for the CFexpress Type B format to facilitate the fast transfer speeds needed for such high-resolution imaging. It features a CFexpress card slot along with a slot for UHS-II SD cards. Some might prefer an all-in approach with dual CFexpress cards, to deliver the highest possible speed and buffering,





rather than there being a performance difference with the slower SD format, though many workflows will appreciate the ability to keep using the still-dominant SD cards.

Despite the faster memory format, Continuous shooting has taken a bit of a hit from the Leica SL2, down from a maximum burst of 20fps to a top speed of 15fps – and without autofocus. If you want AF while shooting, the burst speed is limited to 5fps. Arguably a resolution-oriented camera isn't designed for fast action, but the Sony A7R V manages 10fps with full autofocus.

Speaking of AF, the introduction of phase detection is an absolute revelation. The old contrast-based system could be glacially slow and was frequently inaccurate in challenging light, drastically reducing its practicality. The new system, however, instantly springboards the SL3 up the leaderboard when it comes to AF performance – particularly with the promise of the new subject recognition algorithms.

The Leica SL3 is a beautiful camera, yet its mesmerising combination of curves and hard lines aren't just pretty to look at;

they sit effortlessly in the hand and provide comfortable ergonomics. The SL3 is both lighter and subtly smaller than the SL2, but for me personally, the biggest improvements come in the form of two particular physical redesigns. First off, the SL3 replaces its predecessor's fixed screen with a tilting touchscreen – which turns the camera from a viewfinder-only device to one that's instantly more formidable and versatile for low- and high-angle shooting.

The weather-sealing deserves a particular shoutout. Not only is the Leica SL3 certified to the IP54 standard (offering protection from dust ingress and water splashing from any direction), but it is also guaranteed to work in temperatures from -10°C (14°F) to 40°C (104°F). More than that, though, Leica explained that the camera has actually been tested to tolerances of -40°C (-40°F) to 70°C (158°F) and it still works.

The Leica SL3 is not without a few foibles – the battery life is pretty miserly and the AF isn't quite as loyal as I'd like – but it's so good that this is the first Leica camera I would personally buy.

Image quality

Does the SL3 provide the classic Leica performance?

The 60.3MP sensor is a thing of beauty. Of course, it gives you big, fat resolution, but it also delivers colour depth and dynamic range that is more in line with Medium Format. Working with similar files from the Sony A7R V or Sigma fp L gives you chunky images, but the 14-bit RAW files out of the SL3 have a special kind of dimension and detail. Files straight out of the camera are pristine, including jpegs – particularly when using the Leica Looks filters, downloaded from the Fotos app. Personally, I'm happiest when shooting in the gorgeous black-and-white mode and the unedited jpegs are stunning.

Summary

Ease of use	★★★★★
Value for money	★★★★★
Features	★★★★★
Quality of results	★★★★★

Overall




With a 60.3MP sensor that delivers truly gorgeous stills and supports 8K 30p video, it's the best mirrorless Leica ever made. It packs so much firepower that it's become the ultimate realisation of the L-Mount system



Price: £499/\$299 • **Website:** canon.co.uk

Canon Speedlite EL-5

The Speedlite EL-5 is the first flashgun to feature Canon's new-fangled 'multi-function foot' with a touch of gold. **Matthew Richards** tries it out

 On the face of it, the Canon Speedlite EL-5 looks like something of a bargain. It shoehorns most of the features of the flagship Canon Speedlite EL-1 into a more compact, lightweight build, including a 24-200mm motorised zoom head with a hefty Gn 60 maximum power rating, a secondary twin LED lamp for constant lighting, modelling and AF-assist, and advanced flash modes, such as high-speed sync, rear-curtain sync and programmable strobe.

The EL-5 also runs on the same Canon LP-EL rechargeable Lithium-ion battery pack, boosting stamina and recycling speed between flashes. And compared with the Speedlite EL-1, the EL-5 costs less than half as much to buy.

The EL-5 is the first Canon Speedlite to feature the new 21-pin 'multi-function foot', but that's both good and bad news. On the plus side, it can take full advantage of the companion multi-function shoe built into most of the latest EOS R-system cameras, including the EOS R3, R6 Mark II, R7, R8, R10 and R50 (but not the EOS R100). The bad news is that, without any of the conventional array of connection pins in the foot, the EL-5 can't be used in the hot shoe of other Canon cameras, whether they are DSLRs or M-system and R-system mirrorless bodies.

All of the key features you'd hope for in an upmarket flashgun are present. Dedicated functions for compatible Canon EOS R-system cameras include E-TTL (Electronic-Through

The Lens) flash metering and a full range of flash modes. Going beyond basic front and rear curtain flash options, you get HSS (High Speed Sync) and programmable strobe, the latter firing the flash in bursts at frequencies from 1Hz to 500Hz, which is handy for repeat flash during long exposures.

There's a full range of bounce and swivel on hand, with -7 degrees (slightly downward) to 120 degrees (slightly rear-facing) vertical bounce, plus a full 180-degree lateral swivel to both the left and the right. The automatic, motorised zoom range is similarly generous, stretching from 24-200mm in full-frame terms, with auto-sensing for APS-C format cameras. For extra wide-angle coverage, there's the usual flip-down 14mm diffusion panel built into



the flash tube, as well as a catchlight reflector. Mirrorless cameras can't use the red AF-assist lamps featured in conventional flashguns, so the EL-5's secondary dual LED lamp is useful.

Like many recent flashguns, including Canon's flagship Speedlite EL-1, the EL-5 features a rechargeable Li-ion battery instead of running on four AA batteries. The upsides include longer life between recharging, equating to around 350 full-power flashes and faster recycle speeds between high-power flashes, at around 1.2 seconds or less. The flip side is that additional LP-EL batteries are pricey (if you feel the need for one) at £160/\$109. More frustratingly, the EL-5 is sold without a battery charger.

The build quality feels mostly good. The casing of the EL-5 is made from high-quality plastic and feels well-built and durable. The same goes for the switches and all moving parts. The construction includes weather-seals, which stretch to a shroud on the mounting foot. We're less convinced about the durability of the mounting foot itself. Although most of the foot is metal, the 21-pin connector that extends at its front is made from plastic, and the tiny gold-plated pins themselves look particularly exposed and fragile.

True to Canon's claims, we found that recycle speeds based on the Li-ion battery were extremely fast indeed and, in fact, virtually instantaneous at output settings from the minimum 1/1024 up to one-quarter of maximum power. Maximum power itself is respectable but falls slightly short of the Canon Speedlite EL-1 in our tests, despite both flashguns having the same quoted maximum Gn (Guide number). However, as expected, E-TTL flash metering proved consistently accurate in our tests, producing well-exposed images in most conditions.

Summary

- Ease of use ★★★★★
- Value for money ★★★★★
- Features ★★★★★
- Quality of results ★★★★★

Overall



This Speedlite certainly isn't lacking in power and versatility. It has a powerful maximum output, a full range of advanced flash modes, a secondary twin LED lamp and wireless RF master and slave connectivity.

Connectivity

There's no input socket for using an external battery pack, nor a PC sync terminal, so connectivity on the Canon Speedlite EL-5 is rather limited in these respects. However, one upside for connectivity is that the EL-5 is compatible with the Canon Camera Connect app, allowing you to make setting adjustments from a smartphone.

You can also operate the camera's shutter from the Speedlite in wireless RF remote mode, over a range of up to 30m. Wireless master/slave connection in multi-flashgun setups has the same range. We've heard reports from some users that the wireless RF link for master/slave connection tends to drop out after a few minutes, but we didn't experience this throughout prolonged testing with the EL-5 and EL-1 being used in wireless master/slave configuration.



PRICE:
£1,149/\$1,999

FOCUS DISTANCE:
0.18-0.29m (MF)

WEIGHT:
440g

Sony FE 24-50mm f/2.8 G

It aims to shrink the size of a 'trinity' standard zoom but there's a compromise, says **Matthew Richards**

Build and handling

So-called 'trinity' wide-angle, standard and telephoto zooms with a constant f/2.8 aperture are highly popular but they're often bulky, heavy lenses. The FE 24-50mm f/2.8 G is refreshingly lightweight – while the new lens weighs 440g, the full-size Sony FE 24-70mm f/2.8 GM II weighs in at 695g – but comes with a compromise in the outright zoom range.

It certainly has plenty of wide-angle potential, matching the more usual 24-70mm f/2.8 zooms, but doesn't stretch to anything beyond a standard focal length, which makes it far less versatile. The lens also has an extending inner barrel, so while it's compact at the 50mm mark, there's a noticeable physical extension as you zoom out towards the 24mm wide-angle setting.

Performance

Everybody likes sharp lenses but with f/2.8 zooms, the quality of bokeh is also an important factor. This lens delivers a fairly tight depth of field, especially for close-ups. The quality of bokeh when stopping down a little is helped by a well-rounded 11-blade aperture diaphragm. In terms of outright sharpness, the lens is really impressive throughout its entire zoom range, even when shooting wide-open and axial chromatic aberration or 'bokeh fringing' is well controlled.

Verdict

For everyday shooting, this lens comes up trumps. I love the handling, with its click/de-click aperture ring and customisable AF-hold button too. I just miss the range of a 24-70mm.

Technical specs

Manufacturer	Sony
Model	FE 24-50mm f/2.8 G
Web	sony.com
Elements/construction	16 elements in 13 groups
Angle of view	84-87°
Max aperture	f/2.8
Min aperture	f/22
Min focus distance	0.18-0.29m (MF)
Mount	Sony E
Filter size	67mm
Length	92mm
Diameter	75mm
Weight	440g

BUILD QUALITY ★★★★★

IMAGE QUALITY ★★★★★

VALUE FOR MONEY ★★★★★

FEATURES ★★★★★

Overall ★★★★★

- + Lightweight build
- + Constant f/2.8 aperture
- + Refined handling
- Relatively limited zoom range
- Pricier than Tamron alternatives



Above
Crisp detail
Levels of sharpness are excellent, as revealed in this cropped close-up shot of a 1:12 scale model motorbike. Taken at 1/125 sec, f/8, ISO 200 on a Sony A7R III



Above
Uncorrected curves
Taken at 25mm, this uncorrected RAW file shows high levels of barrel distortion. Automatic corrections are recommended for out-of-camera use

Images by Matthew Richards



DOWNLOAD TEST SHOTS
<https://bit.ly/DPH278>

PRICE:
 £2,779/\$2,999
FOCUS DISTANCE:
 3.20m
WEIGHT:
 1,370g

Sigma 500mm f/5.6 DG DN OS Sports

Matthew Richards discovers that this relatively lightweight lens packs a load of upmarket features

Technical specs

Manufacturer	Sigma
Model	500mmf/5.6 DG DN OS S
Web	sigma-global.com
Elements/construction	20 elements in 14 groups
Angle of view (diagonal)	5°
Max aperture	f/5.6
Min aperture	f/32
Min focus distance	3.20m
Mounts	Leica L, Sony E (FE)
Filter size	95mm
Length	235mm
Diameter	108mm
Weight	1,370g

BUILD QUALITY	★★★★★
IMAGE QUALITY	★★★★★
VALUE FOR MONEY	★★★★★
FEATURES	★★★★★

Overall ★★★★★

- +** Relatively compact and lightweight
- +** Superb image quality
- +** Excellent handling
- Limited mounts
- No teleconverters for E-mount

Build and handling

This latest Sports-series lens aims to combine high-end handling and performance with a relatively manageable size and weight. The lens tips the scales at just 1,370g – less than many 70-200mm f/2.8 ‘trinity’ zooms. It’s reasonably compact as well, measuring 108x235mm, partly thanks to the f/5.6 rather than f/4 aperture rating, although it still has an oversized filter thread of 95mm. Even so, there’s no need to resort to drop-in filters, as featured in many super-telephoto lenses.

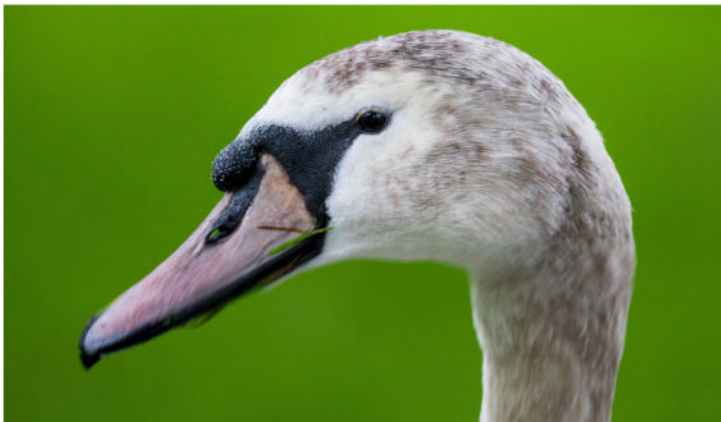
Performance

In keeping with the lens’s ‘Sports’ aspirations, it features a rapid HLA (High-response Linear Actuator) autofocus system, ideal for tracking the action in sports and wildlife photography. I found that autofocus was quick to lock on

to subjects and highly effective at tracking moving objects. The 5-stop optical stabiliser also earned its keep. As for pictorial quality, my dull-day images had plenty of bite, with excellent sharpness, contrast and clarity. I’m impressed that levels of sharpness are both satisfying and extremely consistent from the widest aperture of f/5.6 down to f/11. Both axial and lateral chromatic aberrations are minimal, the latter being barely noticeable even at the edges and corners. And, unlike many mirrorless optics, this Sigma is a virtually zero-distortion lens, requiring no automatic in-camera correction.

Verdict

It’s a great buy at the price, offering quality and portability. I just wish it was available in a wider range of mount options.



Above
Up close and personal
 The 500mm focal length allows tight framing of distant subjects and a nicely compressed perspective, although no Sigma teleconverters are available



Above
Quality control
 The optics are sharp and colour fidelity is excellent, providing punchy images. This quality is maintained right across the frame and aperture range

Images by Matthew Richards

ACCESSORIES

A collection of the best fun-yet-functional products out there for photographers

The Heat Company Shell mittens

Price £133/\$163 • **Website** theheatcompany.com

The Heat Company's Shell mittens are designed for use in seriously cold conditions, making them ideal for photographic trips to places like Iceland and Norway. They can be worn by themselves or over a liner for extra warmth and there's a zip-close pocket for holding a hand warmer over your fingers should you need one.

The Shell mittens are available in five different colours and four sizes, and are made from breathable microfibre with PrimaLoft insulation, plus goat leather over the palm and thumb for extra durability. Importantly for photographers, there's a weatherproof zipper across the palm that can be opened to allow the top of the mitten to be folded back to allow your fingers to have direct access to your camera.

There are also fold-back caps over the thumbs but these are held in place by velcro that can be tricky to open with the mitten tops in place. Both types of cap can be held back

in place by magnets, which work effectively to ensure that the fabric doesn't get in your way while you're shooting.

As they are well-insulated, the mittens are bulky but elasticated loops allow you to hang them from your wrist so you don't need to stuff them in a pocket. They also come with a carabiner to keep them

together and clipped to a bag when they aren't in use. The mittens do a great job of keeping your hands warm, even at -10°C with aggressive windchill, but they become wet with prolonged exposure to rain.



3 Legged Thing LevelHed

Price £130/\$140 • Website 3leggedthing.com

The 3 Legged Thing LevelHed transforms a traditional tripod into a levelling base tripod that enables the horizon to be kept level without fiddling with leg locks. That's extremely useful for photography and videography, particularly when panning.

Constructed from magnesium alloy, the LevelHed is lightweight (375g) yet durable and it can support a weight of up to 30kg. It features a tilt range of 10 degrees and has a 1/4in-20 mount but comes with a 3/8in-16 adapter, making it suitable for a wide array of camera setups. Installation is simple, offering the flexibility to mount the camera directly on the LevelHed or via a tripod head.

The bubble level is essential for getting the camera level and the rotatable ring for the bubble level is an upgrade on 3LT's original levelling head as it makes the bubble easier to see. While precision engineering ensures smooth operation of the levelling and panning mechanisms and allows for quick adjustments, it can take a few moments to get everything perfectly level.

3 Legged Thing offers the LevelHed in Metallic Slate Grey with Copper accents and Darkness (matte black), which both look smart.



Lensbaby Sweet 22

Price £179 or £222 / \$180 or \$223

• Website lensbaby.com

Although it has a similar name to some of Lensbaby's Optic Swap optics, the Sweet 22 is a standalone lens. It's a full-frame lens with a focal length of 22mm and is available in Canon RF, Fujifilm X, Nikon Z, Sony E and L-Mount. Like the Sweet optics, the Sweet 22 produces a central area of sharp focus surrounded by stretched blur that looks especially dramatic when there are small highlights towards the edges of the frame.

Like all Lensbaby lenses, the Sweet 22 is manual focus only and there are no electrical contacts, so the camera must be set to shoot without a lens before it can be used. With that done, it's best to set the camera to aperture priority or manual exposure mode as the aperture is fixed at f/3.5. The focus is adjusted using the smooth-running lens ring and it can be helpful to activate the camera's focus peaking or use a magnified view to ensure you have the subject sharp.

The Sweet 22 produces an extreme effect that won't be for everyone or every situation, but it's great fun to use and an easy way of giving your images a different look.



Hahnel UniPal Plus

Price £55/\$39 • Website hahnel.ie

If you've lost your current charger or have lots of different battery types from various makes and models, all with their own unique chargers, a universal charger such as the UniPal Plus from Hahnel may help. It is capable of charging 3.6/3.7 or 7.2/7.4v Lithium-Ion batteries and over 300 different camera batteries.

This is done by using the two thumb wheels to adjust the positive and negative terminals until correctly spaced to fit your battery. This makes it ideal for someone with lots of different battery types from various camera bodies and manufacturers, and could be a good replacement if you've misplaced your original battery dock.

The UniPal Plus has more tricks up its sleeve as it is also capable of charging either two AA or AAA batteries. It has a USB type-A socket so you can charge devices such as a smartphone or tablet at the same time. An LCD panel shows the current charge level and it comes with a variety of wall port adapters for US, UK, EU and AUS, as well as a 12v cigarette lighter adapter for in-car charging.




The unit feels well-designed and robust and, as a universal charger, it does pretty much everything it says on the packaging. Our only gripes were that it can't charge different battery types simultaneously, so you have to charge up your Li-Ion cells, AA or AAA and phone separately, which is a slower way of working than we'd like. Another issue is that if you load up the UniPal Plus with a set of AA batteries as well as a Li-Ion or plug in your smartphone, it won't automatically switch between them once one has finished, so you'll need to remove the charged cells before charging a different battery type.



DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY GLOSSARY

We explain the essential jargon you need to demystify modern photo technology

 Photography is both an art and a science and, as such, there are a plethora of confusing technical terms to get to grips with. Luckily, we don't often need to think about this jargon, except perhaps when buying a new lens or investing in new tech. However, understanding how your camera works and what these terms mean can improve your appreciation of the medium, help you make better buying decisions and shoot better images as you progress. Here are some of the ones we wish we had known from the beginning.

Aspect ratio

The shape of an image frame, defined by the proportional relationship between the width and the height of the image sensor.

Aspherical element

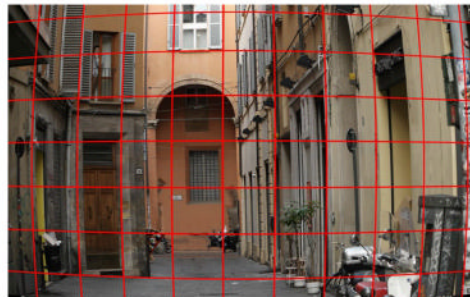
Any lens element, the surface profile of which does not form part of a sphere. Used to reduce aberrations, especially in wide-angle lenses.

Acutance

The subjective perception of the sharpness of a photographic image, as defined by the contrast between edges, independent of pixel resolution.

Additive colour

Colour created by mixing light from different light sources, starting with black, red, green and blue light, which produces the visible spectrum of light that is captured by our eyes.



Barrel distortion

A common lens distortion that results in horizontal and vertical lines appearing to arc outwards from the centre of the image frame.

Bit depth

The pixel capacity for storage of bits (digital storage units created per captured photon of light). Greater bit depth means more colour information is captured.



Kelvin scale

A measurement of the colour temperature of light. A high value (10,000) indicates blue/cyan tint and a low value (3000) means yellow/red bias. The inverse of White Balance.

Chrominance

The characteristic of light that causes the perception of colour when compared with a reference of the same brightness, but different hue and saturation.

Coma

The distortion of points of light within an image, usually into a conical shape at the edges of the frame and often at its strongest at the maximum aperture.

CMOS

Complementary Metal-Oxide Semiconductor. This is the preferred sensor type used in the majority of modern digital cameras and replaced the Charge Coupled Devices (CCD) of older models.

Circle of Confusion (COC)

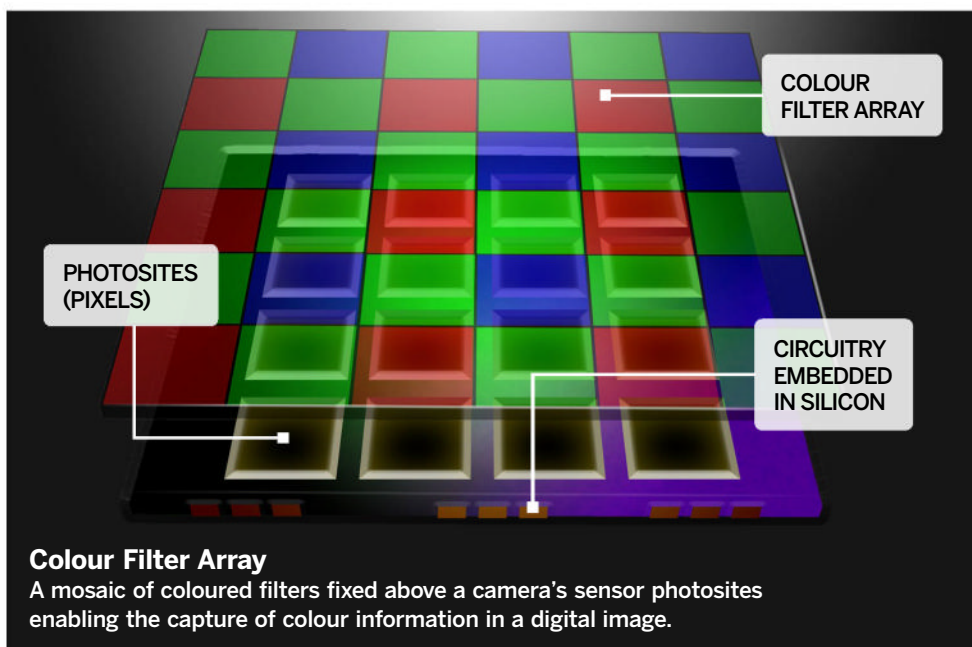
A disc around a point caused by a cone of light created due to imperfect focusing at a specific location. Across a whole image, a wider COC manifests as blurriness.

Demosaic

A digital image processing algorithmic process by which digital cameras create full-colour images using the incomplete data collected by the sensor and Colour Filter Array.

Diffraction

The blurring effect introduced by the



Colour Filter Array

A mosaic of coloured filters fixed above a camera's sensor photosites enabling the capture of colour information in a digital image.

Hot and cold

Yellows are mistaken as high kelvin colours and blues as low. White balance is the inverse, so you need 9000K to neutralise strong blue



Pincushion distortion

A common lens distortion that results in horizontal and vertical lines appearing to arc inwards to the centre of the frame from the edges.

interference of light travelling through a lens aperture by the diaphragm blades. Diffraction is worse at small apertures, eg. f/16 or f/22.

Focus breathing

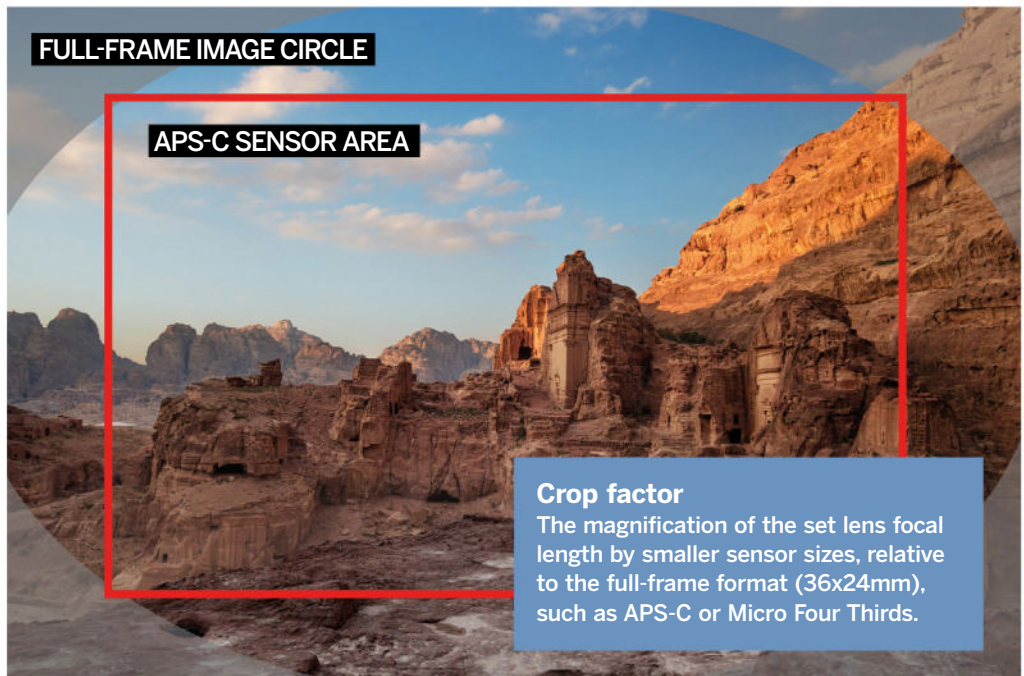
A noticeable shift in the field-of-view of a lens when changing focus position, even if focal length remains constant. This is problematic for videography or when focus-stacking.

Focal plane

The position of the light-sensitive surface within the camera body which, for digital cameras, is the photosite-containing CMOS sensor surface.

FULL-FRAME IMAGE CIRCLE

APS-C SENSOR AREA



Crop factor

The magnification of the set lens focal length by smaller sensor sizes, relative to the full-frame format (36x24mm), such as APS-C or Micro Four Thirds.

Flange depth

The distance between the lens mount of a camera body and the sensor plane. This can vary between mounts, sensor-lens designs and camera brands.

Ghosting

Flare or haze effects in the image frame that are often caused by internal reflections within the optical system contacting the sensor multiple times.

Gobo

From 'go-between'. A light modifier, usually black or opaque, that is placed between the light source and subject to alter the properties of the emitted light.

HEIF

High-Efficiency Image File format. An emerging file format used to contain image data that is smaller than a jpeg format file but offers superior image quality.

Hyperfocal distance

The focus distance at a set aperture that provides the widest depth of field, using the equation $\text{Hyperfocal Distance} = \frac{\text{Focal Length}^2}{\text{Aperture} \times \text{COC}}$.

IBIS

In-Body Image Stabilisation. A system of compensation for camera movements, achieved by shifting the position of the image sensor mounted on a gyro.

Luminance

The apparent brightness of a light source or surface as measured by the intensity (amount of units) of light emitted from (or reflected by) an object.

Moiré

An aberration caused by a digital sensor failing to correctly resolve ultra-finely detailed repeating and overlapping patterns. Manifests as wavy patterns that don't exist in the scene.

MTF chart

Modular Transfer Function. A graphical representation of the optical performance of a lens, plotting the resolution and contrast from the frame centre to the edges.

Resolution

The ability of a camera and lens to render two points or lines in an image as separate, influencing apparent sharpness and detail.

Subtractive colour

The creation of visible colour through the selective removal of wavelengths from white light, often through absorption by pigments printed on a physical surface.

Signal gain

The amplification of a signal generated by the sensor on contact with light. As ISO is increased, the gain is turned up to simulate an equivalent sensitivity at a given exposure.

Specular highlights

A spot of light on a reflective surface that provides a strong visual cue for the shape of an object. These are often encountered as eye catchlights in portraiture.

TTL metering

Through-the-lens metering is a method of calculating exposure in flash photography by measuring the ambient light and adjusting flash output for a correct subject exposure.

Ultrasonic motor

A type of fast and quiet piezoelectric autofocus motor that makes use of ultrasonic waves to vibrate a stator ring, pressed against a rotor.

Zone System

A standardised numerical system for calculating exposure in any lighting conditions. Created by Ansel Adams and Fred Archer, the system ranges from Zone 0 (pure black) to Zone 10 (pure white).



THE MASTER OF REFLECTIONS

Given the title by legendary street photographer Phil Penman, **Emma F Wright** reflects on the influence of water in her work

All images © Emma F Wright

Armed with my iPhone, I am always looking for ways to take my photography to the next level. It is lightweight and always in my hand, which gives me the opportunity to capture images at a moment's notice and share them online. The iPhone also allows you to enjoy the convenience of doing everything with one device, including shooting, editing and sharing to social media. However, I personally try to keep editing to a minimum as I want my images to be as close to reality as possible.

It was by the riverside where I rediscovered my passion for photography. One day, while walking a dog called Alfie for a friend, I took a photograph of him and sent it to her – and this became the first of many. As I started to notice my surroundings more, I began to photograph other subjects too.

Growing up, I spent my summer holidays with my grandmother by the sea in Norway. She gave me an appreciation of nature. There

I gained a love of being by water, which is why I think it appears in so many different forms in my photographs.

Water has been a great influence and I enjoy using it as a reflective surface in my photography. However, because the weather determines whether water is a viable part of the image, I have introduced other reflective surfaces into my work, whether that's windows, cars, buildings or mirrors.

I decided to focus my attention on shooting in black and white as, in my opinion, this produces a classic image that's clean, uncluttered and creates fewer distractions. It also allows you to focus on the subject matter, emotions, lines and forms, and light and shade.



PRO BIO

Emma F Wright is a British photographer based in Nottingham and known for her captivating iPhone street and reflection photographs. Emma's work mainly covers architecture and interactions between people and animals, and she credits a background in fine art for helping her find beauty in mundane subjects.
emmafwright.com
[@emmafwright](https://www.instagram.com/emmafwright)

I am based in Nottingham, UK and can usually be spotted crouching by puddles around the city, as they are what I predominantly use to capture my reflection shots. I have had many people walking by and giving me strange looks as they wonder what I am doing.

These days, as I have become better known, I get a few people asking me 'Are you Emma Wright?' However, on the odd occasion, I get people asking me if I'm okay. This one time, an elderly lady stopped and asked me whether I needed a hand-up... she thought I'd fallen over! Through my work, I've gained a large

following on my Instagram account and it makes a wonderful creative community for getting feedback and exchanging ideas.



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