

THE WORLD'S BEST-SELLING DIGITAL PHOTO MAGAZINE

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# Photography Week



INSPIRATION | IDEAS | IN-DEPTH REVIEWS



**REVIEW: LEICA M11-P**  
A BREAKTHROUGH IN  
THE BATTLE AGAINST  
AI FAKERY?

# AFFORDABLE INSPIRATION

EXPERT TIPS FOR CAPTURING STUNNING  
IMAGES WITHOUT SPENDING BIG ON KIT







W E L C O M E

# Photography Week



## JOIN THE CLUB...



Welcome to the world's No.1 weekly digital photography magazine. If you're already a reader, thanks for your continued support and involvement; if you're new to *Photography Week*, you've come to the right place! In addition to expert advice, brilliant tips and step-by-step tutorials, every issue features interactive galleries of brilliant photos, how-to videos on

essential shooting and editing techniques, and in-depth reviews of the latest camera kit.

But that's not the whole story. *Photography Week* is more than a magazine – it's a community of like-minded people who are passionate about photography. To get involved, just follow any of the links below and share your shots and comments.

**Jeff Meyer, Editor**

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We're more than just a magazine – read on and discover the many ways you can interact with and enjoy *Photography Week*





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Cover image © Getty

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## WHAT'S HOT

THE WEEK'S TOP HEADLINES IN PHOTOGRAPHY

# OM-1 MARK II UNVEILED WITH LIVE GND FILTERS

OM's new flagship camera brings few upgrades, but a clever new feature



© OM Digital Solutions

**O**M Digital Solutions has unveiled its new flagship Micro Four Thirds mirrorless camera, the OM System OM-1 Mark II, an AI-powered all-rounder that's the first camera to offer live GND (graduated neutral density) filters.

From the outside, the differences from the OM System OM-1 – the last camera to carry the Olympus branding – might be difficult to spot, but under the

hood the OM-1 Mark II offers more than double the buffer size for burst shooting, an industry-best 8.5 stops of in-body image stabilisation, improved autofocus performance, and what might be the most exciting new feature on a flagship camera that we've seen in a long time: AI-based GND filters.

While the software and artificial intelligence have seen some welcome upgrades, in terms of core technology

this is essentially the same camera at the OM-1. The body is identical except for new rubberised dials for a more tactile, responsive feel, and at its heart is the same stacked 20.4MP sensor and quad core TruePic X processor.

Of course, that means all the other things people loved about the OM-1 – like the 120fps burst shooting and IP53-certified weather sealing – are also present in the new model.





## THE WEEK'S TOP HEADLINES IN PHOTOGRAPHY

### Live GND filters

Let's start with what will be the most exciting addition for most: Live GND filters. An extension of the Live ND wizardry that Olympus introduced with the OM-D E-M1X, Live GND filters provide an AI-powered, software-based solution for situations where you might normally need a classic ND grad.

It sounds like a gimmick, but from what we've seen – including how effective Live NDs are – it looks like a serious bit of technological magic. As you can see in the launch video (<https://bit.ly/3SERtEfw>), let's say you want to shoot a dark mountain against a bright sky. Simply select the angle of the graduation you want and drag the line across your screen – a bit like selecting gradients in Lightroom – to control where the filter will take effect.

We're going to need to test this to be completely convinced, but this is exactly the kind of innovation that we want to see in flagship cameras. Anyone can just stuff more megapixels on a sensor, but OM Digital looks for innovative ways to transform the shooting experience.

Speaking of Live NDs, OM has added an extra stop to that feature in the OM-1 Mark II, so the filter simulations



© OM Digital Solutions

come in ND2, ND4, ND8, ND16, ND32, ND64 and now ND128. Anyone who's used this feature knows how useful it is, but is it really going to replace your filter kit outright? For serious shooters, no. However, for enthusiasts who have never tried using NDs – or for those of us who either forget to pack them, or who are traveling light – it's an amazing way to capture a shot that may otherwise have been impossible.

### Improved autofocus

The autofocus gets a boost overall, being generally stickier and offering human detection, but the most

significant improvement is when it comes to birding. Here the AF has been beefed up when it comes to detecting fast-moving birds in the first place, but also keeping track of them in flight. It can also detect up to eight subjects, and you can select which one to focus on and keep track of.

When shooting bursts of those birds, you can now enjoy a buffer that's over twice as deep as the OM-1 – something that comes in response to users of the original camera. This will make a particular difference to those shooting at fast frame-rates, using Pro Capture, or even taking macro stacks. Speaking of stacking, the algorithm for in-camera focus stacking is now faster as well.

Away from rapid-fire shooting, fans of Hi Res Shot – which enables the camera to capture 80MP raw files on a tripod or 50MP raws handheld – will now enjoy 14-bit images for improved dynamic range.

The OM-1 Mark II is now the most rock-solid camera you can buy, with 8.5 stops of stabilisation – something that's music to the ears of anyone using long lenses, such as the also just-announced M.Zuiko 150-600mm lens.

The OM System OM-1 Mark II is available to buy now, priced at £2,199.99 / \$2,399.99 body-only.



© OM Digital Solutions





© Getty

# PHOTOGRAPHY ON A BUDGET

10 creative ways to capture professional-quality pictures with basic photo kit

Words by: Dan Mold

**W**ith modern cameras often costing upwards of a couple of thousand pounds or dollars, and many top-flight optics costing the same again, photography can often feel like a pursuit for the well-off. However, in this budget photography feature, we'll show you that this need not be the case.

While many expensive pieces of camera equipment will undoubtedly be worth the asking price for working

professionals, where any edge over the competition is vital, this is not something the everyday amateur or enthusiast photographer should feel restricted by.

Casual shooters might be surprised by how capable even entry-level modern digital cameras are. Over the next few pages, we've assembled 10 projects that can be tackled using an entry-level DSLR or mirrorless camera

with a kit lens or budget-friendly optics, such as a 'nifty fifty' 50mm f/1.8, which generally cost around £100/\$100 rather than thousands.

You'll also learn how to get the most out of your current camera kit, how to shoot macro shots without the need to fork out for a pricey macro lens, take top bird portraits in your local area and change up your portraits without having to break the bank balance.





# FEATURE

## 1 SHARP SCENICS WITH A KIT LENS

These optics are often razor-sharp at middle apertures, making them a fantastic choice for stunning vistas



Kit lenses are surprisingly sharp at medium aperture values, so you should be able to capture as much detail as in this long-exposure shot

© Dan Mod / Future

**A** kit lens is an optic that comes bundled with cameras that have interchangeable lenses, such as a DSLR or mirrorless model. A typical kit lens is an 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6, which most brands offer for bodies with a cropped APS-C sensor. The focal length of kit lenses will change depending on the sensor size; for example Panasonic offers a 12-60mm f/3.5-5.6 kit lens for its Micro Four Thirds bodies.

The purpose of a kit lens is to provide versatility, with a zoom range covering wide-angle to short telephoto. While a kit lens is a jack-of-all-trades, it is a master of just one – sharp shots, as the aperture rating of a kit lens is quite restrictive when it comes capturing a shallow to depth of field. This makes kit lenses best suited to landscapes and street scenes, or other scenarios where a deep depth of field is preferred.

You can bolster sharpness further by shooting from a tripod and enabling the camera's two-second self-timer to eliminate shake. While image stabilisation is great for handheld shots,

switch this off when using a tripod.

If you've already upgraded your kit lens, then you can use the replacement optic, but if you are still using the kit lens

that was bundled with your camera, you might be surprised at how effective this basic but versatile lens can be when used in the field to shoot scenic photos.



For sharp shots, close the aperture down to f/11 and focus about one-third of the way into the scene. A tripod and 10-stop ND filter are essential accessories that won't break the bank; they allow long exposures for blurring moving elements like clouds and water





# 2 SHOOT FOR THE STARS

Wait for sundown and shoot starry skies









**J**ust because the sun has set doesn't mean the fun has to end... there are plenty of possibilities in low light, and these days even entry-level digital cameras are highly capable in low-light situations.

While you can use a kit lens, an optic with a wider maximum aperture, such as a 50mm f/1.8 or a 35mm f/1.8, will help draw in even more light. Ideally, your lens will have a fairly wide-angle focal length too, as this will help you squeeze in loads of foreground as well as the starry skies above. If you have access to a lens such as a 16-35mm f/2.8 (full-frame) or a 10-20mm f/2.8 (APS-C), it will work even better. Once in place, set your camera up on a tripod and frame up. To focus, switch to Live View and use the magnify button to zoom in so you can see the stars clearly, then manually focus on the stars until they are sharp pin-pricks of light. To start, use the Manual exposure mode and open the aperture as wide as it will go. Now, set the ISO to 3200 and the shutter speed to 15 secs.

Take a test shot, and check your image on the LCD screen. If it's too dark boost the ISO a little, or if it's too bright lower the ISO or close down the aperture, then take further test shots until you nail the exposure.



## PRO ADVICE HIRE EQUIPMENT

|   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|
|  <p>Canon EF 85mm f/1.4L IS USM<br/>From £33.00 per day<br/><a href="#">View More</a></p>  |  <p>Canon EF 100mm f/2.8L Macro IS USM<br/>From £24.00 per day<br/><a href="#">View More</a></p> |  <p>Canon EF 200mm f/2.8L II USM<br/>From £22.00 per day<br/><a href="#">View More</a></p>     |  <p>Canon EF 200mm f/2L IS USM<br/>From £32.00 per day<br/><a href="#">View More</a></p>       |
|  <p>Canon EF 300mm f/2.8L IS USM<br/>From £71.00 per day<br/><a href="#">View More</a></p> |  <p>Canon EF 300mm f/2.8L IS II USM<br/>From £110.00 per day<br/><a href="#">View More</a></p>   |  <p>Canon EF 400mm f/2.8L IS II USM<br/>From £148.00 per day<br/><a href="#">View More</a></p> |  <p>Canon EF 400mm f/4 DO IS II USM<br/>From £116.00 per day<br/><a href="#">View More</a></p> |

30 products found

Not owning professional equipment doesn't mean you have to miss out. Hiring a specific lens or camera body can be cost-effective, and is a great option if you need a particular piece of equipment for a shoot – whether it's recording a rare celestial event in the night sky and needing an astro-converted camera, such as the Canon EOS Ra, or going on a wildlife safari in Africa where a longer lens will be required; Canon's EF 400mm F4 DO IS II USM, for example, costs £6,729 / \$6,500 new, but can be rented for as little as £110 per day in the UK, via [hirecamera.com](http://hirecamera.com)





# F E A T U R E

## 3 COST-EFFECTIVE CLOSE-UPS

You don't need an expensive macro lens to capture fantastic close-up shots – here's how to shoot macro on a budget



Using a wide aperture and bouncing light onto your subject with a reflector brings much needed light into your image. A wide aperture will also make your subject stand out against a blurred depth of field

### PRO SHOT MAGIC MUSHROOMS

Depth of field becomes much shallower the closer your focus. Even with a narrow aperture like  $f/22$  you'll struggle to render the whole scene sharp, so it's sometimes best to lean into the shallow depth of field and create beautiful blurry background bokeh.

### PRO ADVICE HOME-MADE REFLECTOR

Macro photography can often benefit from a reflector to bounce light back onto your subject and fill in the shadows. If you don't have one you can make a small reflector yourself, by taping a sheet of aluminium foil to a stiff piece of card or even using a small mirror.

### TOP TIP EXTENSION TUBES



Extension tubes increase the distance between the camera and the lens – the more distance between them, the closer any attached optic will be able to focus, therefore enhancing its macro capabilities. Extension tubes come in manual or autofocus varieties, and the MF tubes are cost-effective. Extension tubes will even work with the reversing ring method shown here, too.

**S**pecialist optics designed for specific tasks, such as macro photography, can command a high price. Sony's FE 90mm  $f/2.8$  Macro G OSS lens costs £849, for example, while Canon's RF 100mm F2.8L Macro IS USM costs an eye-watering £1,379. While they are undoubtedly brilliant lenses, it isn't essential to spend such a large amount to capture amazing

close-up photos. In this project, I'll introduce you to reversing rings – inexpensive adapters that fit any lens with a front filter thread. Old prime lenses, such as a 50mm, will also work well and, once attached to your camera body in reverse, will allow you to focus much closer, making macro photography much more accessible. Here's how to use a reversing ring...





# 3 COST-EFFECTIVE CLOSE-UPS CONTINUED



## USE A REVERSING RING

### 1 OLD PRIME LENS

Older lenses with manual rings for both the aperture and focus can be handy when using a reversing ring. Most modern lenses don't have an aperture ring, so the aperture either opens or closes fully when detached, giving you little control over depth of field. Here, we're using an Olympus 50mm f/1.8 Zuiko lens that cost £10 from a charity shop.



### 2 REVERSING RING

Buy a reversing ring with the correct mount for your camera, as well as the corresponding filter thread of the lens you wish to use it with. Screw it into the front filter thread and attach it to your camera. Reversing rings can be found online from as little as £13/\$13 – a fraction of the price of a macro lens.

### 3 SET THE APERTURE

The next step is to set the aperture on the lens ring. A wide aperture setting, such as f/1.8, will produce a shallow depth of field, so if you need a deep zone of focus, be sure to close the aperture down to f/8 or f/11. Some old lenses have a depth-of-field preview button, which makes it easier to see the depth of field in real time.



### 4 MANUAL SETTINGS

With lens connections to the camera severed, you'll need to expose and focus manually. Enter Manual mode on your camera and dial in ISO 800. Shoot from a tripod to help with focusing manually and reduce camera shake. Use your camera's built-in light meter to hone your shutter speed and take a test shot.

## MAKE YOUR OWN MINI TRIPOD FOR LOW-ANGLE CLOSE-UP PHOTOGRAPHS

A miniature tripod is tremendously helpful for low-level close-up shots, but they don't come cheap. Professional miniature tripods can cost into the hundreds, so we made big savings by crafting our own from an old tripod with a few basic tools. Here's how to do it...



### 1 CHOP IT DOWN TO SIZE

An old unused tripod was gathering dust, so we decided to give it a second lease of life as a miniature tripod. The first step was to mark out around 10cm (4 inches) for the top leg sections and cut them down to size with a hacksaw.



### 2 SHORTEN THE CENTRE COLUMN

Next, we need to modify the centre column of the tripod so that it doesn't get in the way when we're shooting close to the ground. If your tripod has a longer centre column, then simply cut it down to size with the hacksaw.



### 3 PUT IT ALL TOGETHER

Now bond everything together. We used superglue, as the join wouldn't be load-bearing and it's ideal for adhering the metal pipes. Finally, we need a suitably compact tripod head. We used a ball head from a Vanguard travel tripod, which worked perfectly for our needs.





# F E A T U R E

## 4 CAST SHADE FOR DRAMA

Block light sources to get distinctive-looking photos



A lace parasol with a floral pattern casts wonderful shadows onto a model in the midday sun, but you could use some cheap netted fabric instead.

**T**aking something away from your image often has more impact than adding it. This is the case with portraiture, as you can get creative by blocking your light source using everyday items you have around the house – from netted curtains with an interesting pattern to the colander in your kitchen cabinet.

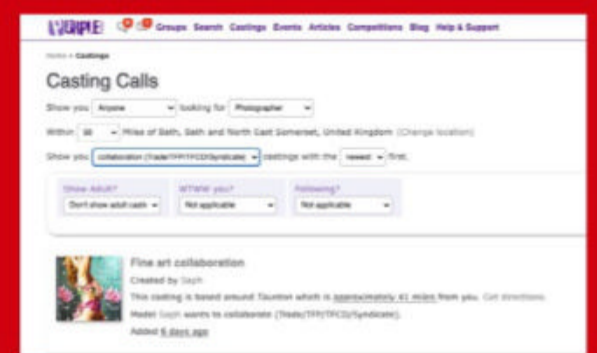
Putting any of these between your light source and the model can create some really interesting shadows for eye-catching contrast. It's then just a case of experimenting with the position of the shadows, and carefully guiding your model into the position that works best.

For this technique, you'll need to shoot

indoors with the lights off so they don't interfere with your shadows. Hang up your fabric in front of a bright window, and ask your model to move closer or further away until the shadows look just right. The closer your model is, the more defined the pattern and shadows will appear; the further away they are, the softer and more ambiguous the shape of the pattern will be.

Try this out on friends and family members around the house, and take plenty of test shots to make sure the shadows look just right. For even more contrast, you can convert to monochrome and add a little dodging and burning in Photoshop CC.

### PRO ADVICE CASTING CALL



Models can be found easily online, to suit a wide range of budgets. They include new models who are willing to work for free to gain some experience and add some shots to their portfolio, and those looking to trade time for print (TFP) – in other words, prepared to work for free in return for published pictures. Of course, you can also pay to work with a more experienced model. To find models local to you, have a look through casting calls, or set up your own on sites such as Model Mayhem or Purple Port.





# FEATURE

## 5 PLAY WITH PRISMS FOR PUNCHY PORTRAITS

Create a kaleidoscopic effect with distorted visuals and vibrant colours. Prism portraits are quirky, and guaranteed to turn heads



### GEAR ADVICE NIFTY FIFTY

Commonly referred to as a 'nifty fifty', a 50mm f/1.8 lens is usually priced around the £100-150 (\$100-150) mark, and even less on the second-hand market. With a perfect focal length for portraits when used on a full-frame camera, the wide maximum aperture of f/1.8 will create separation between your model and the background by blurring the latter. See some of our best-buy options here: [www.bit.ly/dcm278nifty](http://www.bit.ly/dcm278nifty)

**T**his head-turning effect may look like it was created entirely in post-production, but it's less complicated than that. To achieve it, you'll need to get hold of a glass prism, which can easily be found in all shapes and sizes and to suit all budgets on sites like eBay and Amazon. A 4-inch glass prism can be sourced from eBay for less than £10/\$10, and is a great way to get started. If you like the prism technique, you may want to upgrade to a Fractal Filters Classic 3-pack, which is more versatile but comes with a premium at \$119.

Bear in mind that the prism needs to be long enough to cover the whole front element of your lens (for most 35mm, 50mm and 85mm prime lenses, the 4-inch version will be fine). As you'll need to hand-hold the prism, it needs to be long enough to avoid your fingers appearing in the shot.

Start in Aperture Priority mode, and select the widest aperture on your lens,

such as f/1.8. This will not only throw the background out of focus, but will also render the prism in the foreground out of focus. Adjust the ISO value until you can shoot with a shutter speed of 1/200 sec or above to eliminate camera shake, and enable any image stabilisation.

Now it's time to start shooting, and asking your model to experiment with their poses.



With basic models starting at around £10/\$10, glass prisms offer great value. Although this pro kit from Fractal Filters is more expensive, it gives you many more options





# FEATURE

## 6 HARNESS IMAGE STABILISATION

Change the image stabilisation mode on your telephoto lens to suit different scenarios, such as panning for action shots



© Dan Mold

**W**hether you're taking pictures of wildlife, motorsports or even landscapes, shooting with a long telephoto lens means there's more risk of camera shake causing blurred images. A 50mm focal length on a full-frame camera gives roughly the same angle of view as the human eye, so any focal length higher than this is more zoomed in and considered to be 'telephoto'. A 70mm focal length is called a short telephoto, while a 300mm is a long telephoto. The more you zoom in, the more apparent shake and blur will become in your photographs, so image stabilisation can be handy.

If you can, it's worth stabilising your camera with a tripod, monopod or even a beanbag if you're shooting from a wildlife hide. Most modern cameras and lenses have some form of stabiliser, although different names are used – Vibration Reduction (VR) on Nikon, Image Stabilization (IS) on Canon and Vibration Compensation (VC) on Tamron, for

example. Image stabilisation can be found optically (OIS) or in-body (IBIS), and both systems are sometimes used together to better effect. Optical image stabilisation systems, where a group of lens elements can move to compensate for handheld vibrations, often come with several stabilisation modes that will help you get better shots in particular scenarios.

If you have such a lens, it's worth getting to grips with the stabilisation modes. If your stabilised optic has a switch for different modes, Mode 1 is usually to correct movement on both the X and Y axes – great for handholding where movement is coming from all directions. Mode 2 usually only corrects for vertical movement, which makes it ideal for panning shots, such as wildlife or motorsports, as it won't cancel out the movement on the X-axis. Some lenses offer Mode 3, which does the same job as Mode 1 but only activates the stabilisation at the moment the shutter is pressed, so when you look at the LCD

screen or through the viewfinder, the stabilisation won't distract you.



### GEAR ADVICE TELEPHOTO LENS

While new lenses can cost a small fortune, don't be afraid to search the second-hand market. Looking online, we found a used Sigma 70-300mm f/4-5.6 Macro DG Lens for just £40, or the Tamron 70-300mm f/4-5.6 SP Di USD (above) for just £100. If you're using a DSLR or mirrorless camera with an APS-C sensor, you'll also benefit from the 'crop factor', which makes small distant subjects appear even closer.

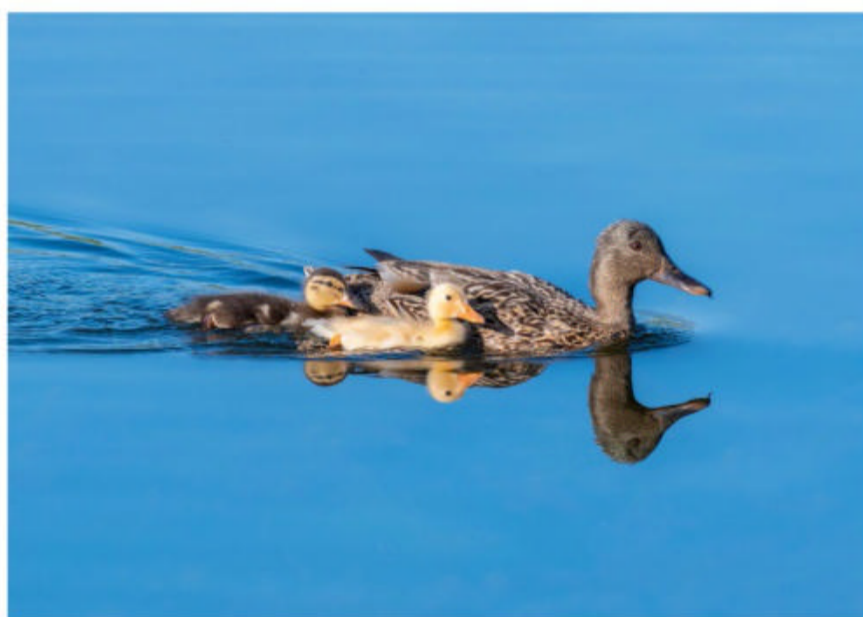




# FEATURE

## 7 TAKE TOP NATURE SHOTS CLOSE TO HOME

Set up bird feeders in your garden, or visit a local nature reserve to get access to bird-watching hides for brilliant photo opportunities



Practise taking bird portraits in your garden or at a local nature reserve, using a telephoto lens at wide apertures, such as f/4



3x © Dan Mold



### PRO TIP SETTINGS FOR WILDLIFE

Manual or Aperture Priority modes work well for wildlife, depending on what you're comfortable with. Open the aperture up as wide as it will go, to f/4 (or wider), for fast shutter speeds and better background blur. Increase the ISO until you have a shutter speed of at least 1/250 sec when shooting birds on a perch, or at least 1/2,000 sec for capturing birds in flight.

**Y**ou don't need to travel to exotic places to bag incredible wildlife photos; you can take top wildlife portraits in your back garden, or, if you don't have a garden, a nature reserve. To take winning portraits of garden birds, you need to think carefully about where it's best to place bird feeders, and take into consideration the background and lighting that these places get throughout the day, before setting them up or moving them to a better position. You'll also need to feed your birds on a regular basis to encourage wildlife into your garden.

Set up some mossy logs near the feeders so that the birds have a photogenic place to perch, rather than taking shots of the birds on the feeders themselves, which can look staged. A bird bath can also make for some

great photos – just be mindful that the background is far enough away from the bird bath so that it can be easily blurred by using a wide aperture.

When considering the choice of lens, a telephoto optic, such as a 100-400mm or 150-600mm, will give you plenty of reach, so you can shoot at a safe distance and not risk scaring the birds away.

Be sure to research any local nature groups close to your home. My local nature reserve is free to join, and has an excellent hide where I regularly spot kingfishers, goldfinch, reed warblers, woodpeckers, bitterns and other interesting species. It's also a great way to meet other like-minded photographers, share experiences, learn new skills, and become more involved with the local community.





# FEATURE

## EASY STILL LIFE IDEAS TO TRY AT HOME

Here are some quick still-life ideas to try at home, using everyday household items that you're likely to have already, and which won't break the bank

**I**f the weather takes a turn for the worse, don't worry – we've got you covered! Try one of these still-life setups, which can easily be shot indoors on a rainy afternoon with basic camera kit and a few household items...

### 8 MAKE A SPLASH

This dramatic high-speed coffee splash shot is easy to achieve at home, although it's inevitably messy, so it might be worth attempting this in your garage or the garden.

To get started, place a cup of coffee on a table, and add some set dressing by adorning the scene with some hessian cloth and a few coffee beans or cinnamon sticks. If you have a vinyl background, you could also set one of these up to change how the background looks. Mount your camera on a sturdy tripod and lock the focus on the coffee cup. Go into Aperture Priority mode, set an aperture of  $f/4$ , and

increase the ISO until you get a shutter speed of  $1/400$  sec to freeze the action. Then fire a burst of photos as you or a helper drop a sugar cube into the coffee to create the splash.



© Getty

### 9 SHOOT TINY TOWNS



© Getty

Use miniature models to turn a bowl of cereal into a macro swimming pool, or food into a forest, and produce some fun images, too. A macro lens will help you get close to the miniature figures and make them look more life-size, but if you don't have a macro lens, try our reversing ring hack in project 3.

We found that 1:100 scale miniature figures worked well, and as they come in all sorts of themes and colours, and are pretty cheap to purchase online, you could quite easily buy a few packs to experiment with. Carefully position your mini figures around the scene – use a pair of tweezers for extra precision. Set up on a tripod, and use natural light or a little bit of camera flash to brighten up the scene.

A wide aperture like  $f/2.8$  will produce a shallow depth of field, so only one or two figures will be in focus, while a narrow aperture like  $f/22$  will result in a much deeper zone of sharp focus.





# F E A T U R E

## 10 SWEETNESS AND LIGHT

Hit the 'sweet' spot using nothing more than your camera, a sheet of glass, water drops, and a few bags of colourful candies

**Y**ou can create vibrant abstract still-life shots at home using colourful sweets such as M&Ms or Skittles (other options are available of course!). To start, put a sheet of paper down and carefully place the sweets on it. Either arrange the sweets in rows of one colour, or randomly mix them up to create the blurry out-of-focus colours of your choosing.

Now take a sheet of glass, and position it above the sweets so that there's enough distance between the glass and the sweets to blur the colours with the shallow depth of field from using a wide aperture. For the sheet of glass, we took an old picture frame apart and gave it a quick clean with some window cleaning spray and a microfibre cloth to remove any streaks and fingerprints.

We cut down some kitchen roll tubes to the same height, and positioned one under each corner of the glass sheet to create a gap. Now, add some water drops, which will become your focal points – you can carefully position each drop with a pipette, or just use a water spray bottle.

As it will be tricky to set up a tripod above your table, shooting handheld works best. A macro lens, or a kit lens with a close focusing distance, will both give good results. Open the aperture to its widest setting for the maximum background blur and, for a sharp handheld photo, boost the ISO to enable a shutter speed of at least 1/200 sec.



### PRO TIP WATER BEADS

For more defined water drops, rub a little wax onto the glass until it's clear. This will make it more water repellent, and will help turn the water spray into larger and more defined droplets.



Here, some water drops on a sheet of glass combined with an assortment of colourful sweets has created a vibrant and eye-catching still-life macro photo



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\*Available for a limited time only. Standard subscription offer varies across platforms/devices – please refer to specific store for the most up-to-date offer



G A L L E R Y

# XPOSURE

THE WEEK'S MOST INSPIRING READER PHOTOS



## RISING SUN AND WAVES

**HOWARD PRATT**

"This image was one of a series I shot as I tried to capture a rolling wave in the distance, in the sunlit area beyond the central rocks, while also having some motion and interest in the shaded area in the foreground."

<https://bit.ly/4agEY8E>



# GALLERY

THE WEEK'S MOST INSPIRING READER PHOTOS



## LULU FROM FINAL FANTASY

**SALVATORE VITALE**

"I took this photo during the annual Lucca Comics & Games fair, which takes place in Lucca in Tuscany. The model in dressed as the character Lulu from *Final Fantasy*."

<https://bit.ly/3zmSje4>



G A L L E R Y

THE WEEK'S MOST INSPIRING READER PHOTOS



TREE ON A HILL

**MARIO OTTAVIANI**

"I was attracted by this beautiful tree growing in arid soil on a hill."

<https://bit.ly/3Akm016>



# GALLERY

THE WEEK'S MOST INSPIRING READER PHOTOS



## CIRCLES OF THE MIND

**BRUCE ROBERTSON**

"I took this photo for my weekly challenge, which this particular week was to photograph something that asks the question 'What am I?'. The image is of a hand-blown vase shot from above looking down to the base, with the vase placed on a lightbox at its brightest setting."

<http://bit.ly/3TLgvAm>



FACEBOOK

<http://bit.ly/39py9lg>



FLICKR

<http://bit.ly/2VIgsJ0>

## PHOTOGRAPHY WEEK WANTS YOUR PHOTOS!

Taken a portrait you're particularly proud of? Shot a sensational sunset you'd like to show off? Then join the *Photography Week* Facebook community and share your best photos today! You'll get feedback from fellow readers and the *Photography Week* team, plus the chance to appear in *Xposure*, or even on our cover!



I N S P I R A T I O N

# IT'S COOL, THAT

THE BEST THING WE'VE SEEN THIS WEEK



AndreJa Ravnak, Travel Photographer of the Year 2023



Sam Turley, Runner-up, Portfolio, Nature, Wildlife and Conservation



Athanasios Maloukos, Winner, Portfolio, People & Cultures



Kazuaki Koseki, Best Single Image in a Portfolio, Landscape & Environment

Images © The photographer and courtesy Travel Photographer of the Year

## THESE STUNNING TRAVEL SHOTS WILL FUEL YOUR WANDERLUST

The winners of the Travel Photographer of the Year contest have been revealed

**T**he winners of the 2023 Travel Photographer of the Year contest have been revealed, showcasing spectacular images captured around the globe, and no doubt inspiring many of us to start thinking about our next adventure.

Slovenian photographer AndreJa Ravnak was crowned overall winner for her portfolio of images featuring hop growing in Slovenia and rolling fields in the Czech Republic and Italy. Ravnak's work combines fairytale-like

beauty with compositions influenced by her background as an architect.

More than 20,000 images were submitted from photographers in 150 countries, with portfolio and single-image prizes awarded in categories including Nature, Wildlife & Conservation, Landscape & Environment, and three Young Travel Photographer categories. Click the link to see all the winning and commended images at the Travel Photographer of the Year website.





S K I L L S

# CRASH COURSE

ESSENTIAL PHOTO SKILLS MADE EASY



## LIGHT UP A LANDSCAPE

James Paterson show you how to use an off-camera portable flash to fill dim landscapes with light

**F**ew things are better than capturing a landscape in the perfect light; but often we're met with less-than-perfect conditions, dull skies and flat light, and this can be a great opportunity to try flash painting. Using off-camera flash, you can pick out details, and highlight the contours in a scene. You can also include a figure – or yourself if you're shooting solo – in the shot to create a point of interest while holding up your light, as we've done here. You don't necessarily

need an expensive flash for this, almost any flashgun will do. Firing the flash off-camera is essential, so you'll need a wireless trigger and receiver to activate it, but these can also be picked up very cheaply.

Twilight can be the best time to head out, as skies are dark and moody, the remaining daylight becomes a cool blue in colour, and scenes take on an atmosphere that feels entirely different to daylight. The technique for this might seem complicated, but when it boils down to it there are

two key things to grasp. First, we use an exposure that underexposes the daylight, so that – without flash – the scene comes out very dark. Then, with our exposure locked in, we simply fire our flash around the scene to illuminate the parts that we want to highlight. This way, everything else comes out dark and moody, while the flash-lit parts can look spectacular. To make the project easier, we can pop our flash in different places over several frames, then combine the best parts later in Photoshop.





## HOW TO SET UP FOR LANDSCAPE LIGHTING

Get set up for flash painting and light your landscapes from any angle

### 1 TRIPOD

We set the camera up on a tripod to keep it still, which not only means we can shoot with a slow shutter speed of 1 sec, but also fire off multiple frames from the same position. This allows us to experiment with our flash, lighting the scene from different positions to give us options for exposure blending and compositing.

### 2 CAMERA SETTINGS

Our camera here is set to Manual mode with an exposure of 1 sec, f/11, ISO100. Keep in mind that the shutter speed has no bearing on the effect of the flash, because the burst of flash is incredibly fast; the shutter speed only impacts the ambient exposure, which in this case is the fading daylight.

### 3 FOCUS AND QUALITY

When shooting in low light the autofocus can hunt. So, after focusing on a point a third of the way into the scene, we've switched to manual focus to lock it in place. It's best to shoot in raw, as this gives you greater dynamic range, which makes it easier to pull detail out of deep shadows.



### 4 MULTIPLE FLASHES

We fired a Godox AD300 Pro set to 1/8th manual power multiple times in different positions around the frame. This way, we can light different parts of the scene, and choose the bits that look the best. We kept the direction of the light from left to right, and angled towards the camera to emphasise the jagged edges of the rock face.

### 5 FIGURE IN SCENE

If you like you can include a figure in the scene – or yourself – to create a point of interest. By angling the flash back towards the camera it creates a starburst effect. This is emphasised if you shoot using a narrow aperture, like f/11 or narrower, which creates a more pronounced star shape.

### 6 SAFETY FIRST

When the light is low you need to tread carefully and not take any unnecessary risks, especially when shooting near to steep drops and around the coast. Be sure to scope out the location during daylight, and make a plan for your camera angle and the parts of the scene you intend to light with your flash.





# S K I L L S

## HOW TO PAINT WITH A FLASH



1

### EXPOSE FOR AMBIENT LIGHT

Begin by setting your camera to Manual exposure mode, and work out an exposure that shows a good level of detail in the sky but leaves the foreground looking dark and moody; our settings here were 1 sec, f/11, ISO100. From this base exposure, we can use our flash to pick out details in the dark landscape.

2

### SHOOT WIRELESSLY

You'll need to connect a flash trigger to fire the off-camera flash. The Godox trigger here links to our Godox AD300 Pro flash, but any cheap flash trigger and receiver can be used to fire an off-camera speedlight. In a pinch you can use a pop-up flash to fire another flash.



3

### GEL YOUR FLASH

Bare flashes usually produce light that's similar in colour to daylight in the middle part of the day, which has a colour temperature of around 5600 Kelvin. But the light can become warmer at sundown, and then cooler at twilight, so you might want to try gelling your flash with a CTO gel to match the evening light.





# S K I L L S

## HOW TO PAINT WITH A FLASH



4

### SET UP SELF-TIMER

If you have a wireless shutter release then you can use this to set off the shutter while you hold the flash in place. If not, you could equally use the self-timer – we set our self-timer to 20 seconds, then set it to fire nine shots with a 3-second interval between each shot.

5

### DON'T GO FULL FRONTAL

Here's what *not* to do. If you fire your flash from a similar position to the camera (or worse, use an on-camera flash) then the light will be straight-on. As you can see here, this results in flat, frontal light that falls away quickly, so close details will be overly bright, and distant areas will be near-black.



6

### MATCH THE SKY

The great thing about using flash in landscape photography is that you can fine-tune your exposure for the optimum sky. The delicate colours of twilight are usually difficult to capture without leaving the foreground very dark, but as we're using flash to lift the foreground this isn't an issue.

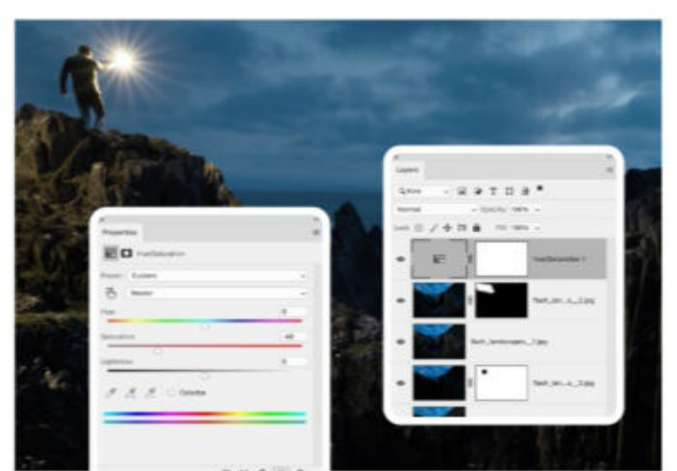
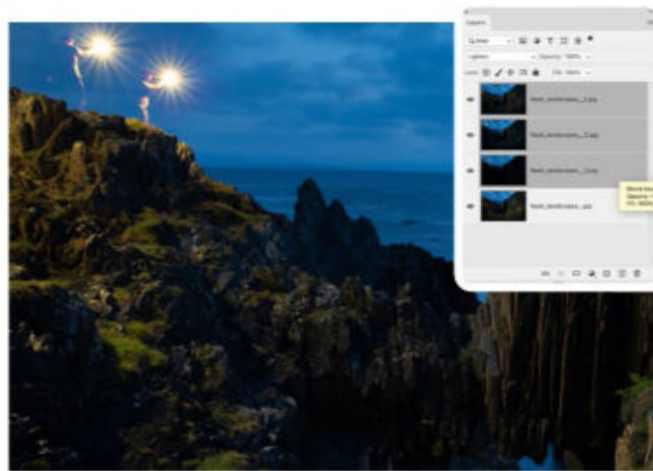
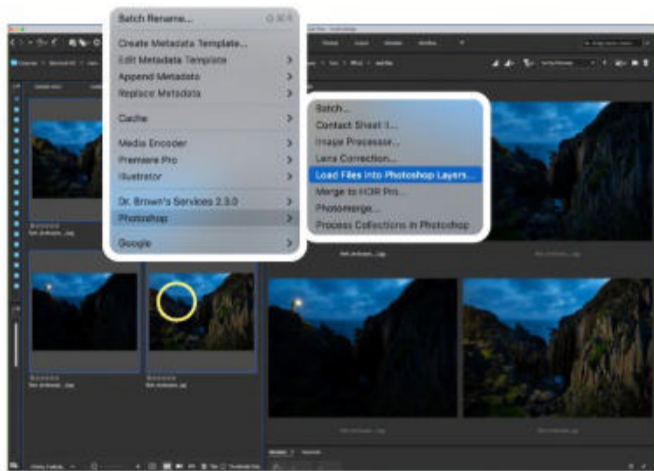




# SKILLS

## HOW TO BLEND YOUR FLASHES

Learn how to combine several flash-lit frames for spectacular landscapes



### 1 PREPARE THE LAYERS

First choose the images you'd like to combine – we used four photographs here – then make any changes you like to the entire set using Camera Raw or Lightroom. Once done, Cmd/Ctrl-click to highlight all the images in Adobe Bridge, then go to Tools > Photoshop > Load files into Photoshop Layers.

### 2 COMBINE BEST BITS

Go to the Layers panel and click on the topmost layer. Hold Cmd/Ctrl and click on the third layer down to highlight everything but the bottom layer. Then click the Blending Mode drop-down and select Lighten – this will change the blending mode of each image, so all of the brighter parts are combined.

### 3 REVEAL THE FIGURE

If you want to include a figure in your landscape, drag the layer with the figure to the top of the stack and set the blending mode back to Normal. Hold Alt and click the Add Mask icon to add a full black mask, then paint with a soft white brush to reveal the figure. Then make any tonal changes you like to finish off.

## LIGHT-PAINT ASTRO FOREGROUNDS

A powerful torch can work wonders in night-time scenes

If you're heading out to shoot at night – perhaps to capture stars or city scenes – then don't forget to take a torch with you. Not only will you need it for practical reasons, but you can also use it as a light to lift parts of the scene.

Simply set up your camera on a tripod, and set an exposure that lasts for a few seconds. Then fire the shutter, and use your torch to paint different parts of the nocturnal scene.

Here we used our torch to light the tree from the side, while shooting a series of 30-second exposures for a star trail image (with each frame blended with the Lighten mode, just as we've done in the steps above). As with flash painting, you'll tend to get more interesting light if you move off to one side or the other to light the objects in the scene with your torch.





E D I T I N G

# PHOTOSHOP

LEARN ESSENTIAL EDITING SKILLS FAST!



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DOWNLOAD THE  
PROJECT FILES  
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ON A PC OR MAC



HOW TO...

## SHOOT RIDICULOUS RESOLUTIONS

Learn how to shoot and stitch a multi-row panorama to capture outrageous levels of detail with James Paterson

If you want to capture landscape images that are packed with detail, you need to try multi-row panoramas. Essentially, the technique involves shooting the scene in a series of overlapping segments, just as you would a regular panorama. But instead of a single row you shoot several rows to create an entire grid of photos, and the longer the lens and the wider the grid, the greater the resolution you can achieve. The individual images are

stitched together in Photoshop or a pano stitcher like PTGui. This can give you an astonishing level of detail, allowing you to make a huge print or a wall mural.

In this video tutorial we'll start by looking at the basics of multi-row panoramas, from camera settings to shooting technique. The fundamentals are fairly simple, but it gets more advanced depending on what you're shooting. Essentially, if you want to include objects that are close to the camera then things

can get more complicated, as you have to account for parallax when rotating and tilting the camera, which can lead to misalignment between frames. As such, we'll delve into parallax correction and nodal points. But if you're shooting a relatively distant scene, like the Swiss village of Spiez here, parallax has minimal effect, which makes the technique a little easier, as there's no need to find the optical centre of the lens; you can just stick the camera on a tripod and eyeball it.



## RANGEFINDER CAMERA TEST

EXPERT OPINION ON THE LATEST KIT



## LEICA M11-P

The M11-P is leading the fight for AI accreditation – and looks great doing it

[www.leica-camera.com](http://www.leica-camera.com) [£8,000 / \\$9,195](#)

All of Leica's cameras are iconic in their own right, but it's the M series that perhaps has the most fervent following. Since last year's reveal of the latest generation of the M-series with the M11, we've been waiting for Leica to unveil its usual collection of variations on that core camera. So far we have seen the black-and-white-sensor M11 Monochrom and now we have this generation's M11-P variant.

The Leica M10-P was unique for its focus on a redeveloped silent shutter for quieter street photography or photojournalism, where discretion is

paramount. The M11-P is also aimed at these audiences, but a quieter shutter is not the focus of the M11-P. Instead, the camera has a trick that's to combat the rise in photos being misappropriated by AI.

The Content Credentials initiative is the start of a fightback by imaging companies (including Adobe, Leica and Nikon) and photographers to protect works from being misused by AI image generators while providing accreditation for photographers. The implementation of Content Credentials by Leica is hardware-based, with a dedicated chip in the M11-P that encodes the file

with the photographer's details. These credentials can then, in theory, travel across the internet with the image, so credit remains with the photographer, even if the image is manipulated using editing or AI. Unfortunately, due to the hardware element this feature won't be coming to existing Leica cameras by way of a update.

Apart from the new focus on content credentials, internally the Leica M11-P is the same M11 as the first time around. Like other cameras in the M-series, the M11-P is also a manual-focus-only, rangefinder-style camera, with no video. But then this





RANGEFINDER CAMERA TEST **LEICA M11-P**

**1** The iconic red dot has gone, making the M11-P a discreet-looking camera for street or candid photography.

**2** The triple-resolution 60.3MP colour sensor, also found in the M11, is capable of shooting at 60MP, 36MP or 18MP.

**3** The optical viewfinder on the M11-P is a joy to use, and shows that EVFs still have a long way to go to recreate the same feeling.

**4** Focusing through the optical viewfinder is easy enough once you've had a bit of practice.

**5** The LCD screen on the rear has no tilting mechanism, so isn't the easiest to use.

**6** Leica M lenses also manage to be compact while still providing excellent image quality.

**7** The camera's mechanical dials allow for manual adjustment of aperture, ISO and shutter speed.

**8** Like other models in the M-series, the M11-P is a rangefinder-style camera, with no video capabilities.

**9** The battery capacity has been increased, but the USB-C charging port on the bottom of the camera is a little awkward to use.



is the charm of the M11-P, with the photography experience being first and foremost. The triple-resolution 60.3MP colour sensor that was used in the M11 features again here, capable of shooting in 60MP, 36MP or 18MP, gaining a stop of dynamic range with reduced resolutions.

**Build and handling**

The M11-P is available in black aluminium or brass chrome versions; the chrome version comes in heavier than the aluminium, but both benefit from the same renowned Leica build quality. The iconic red dot that usually adorns the front of Leica cameras is gone in favour of a more discrete look; if you prefer your camera to not stand out when you're on the street, the M11-P fits the bill.

The camera is pleasingly compact, although with no grip as standard it isn't

the most comfortable to hold for long periods – I found the bottom corner of the camera digging into my palms or fingers a lot. Thankfully, the Leica M lenses also manage to be remarkably compact while still providing excellent image quality. Leica's lenses have their own unique characteristics that have

won them such a following; the way the lenses render images, especially foregrounds and backgrounds, is lovely.

Thankfully Leica dropped the baseplate for the M11-series, and uses a new spring-loaded battery compartment that has a little trigger for popping the battery; a small push







100%  
This image (left) was shot at 35mm, but the crop at 100% (above) still provides a sharp image that's usable for social media

## “IN TERMS OF AESTHETICS, THE M11-P TAKES ITS CUES FROM THE SLEEK, MINIMALIST DESIGN OF THE M11 MONOCHROM”

on the battery itself then unlocks it. The battery is a big increase in capacity from the previous generation, and can now be charged by USB-C, although the port is on the bottom of the camera, which means you have to balance the camera on its side, which is slightly awkward.

The SD card slot is beneath the battery, so you have to pop the battery out to access your photos or change the card. However, with a built-in 256GB hard drive, you might connect the camera via USB-C more, especially as Leica encourages you to use the Leica Fotos app. It's a great experience, but some may prefer to whip out the SD card and transfer their photos manually.

The optical viewfinder on the M11-P is a delight to use, and shows that EVFs still have a long way to go to recreate the same feeling. Focusing through the viewfinder is easy enough once you've had a bit of practice, and

makes you think about framing and subject matter, although all Leica M lenses come with a distance scale, so you can estimate the distance if you're brave enough. Using the viewfinder you can get accurate focus with a bit of practice, but this isn't a camera for fast-moving subjects.

Focusing through the LCD screen on the rear is also possible, although with no tilt to the screen this wasn't the easiest. The camera can use focus peaking to help, but seeing the red peaks when the scene was especially bright or colourful was often an issue.

### Performance

Photo performance is distinctly Leica, with rich, punchy and sharp images and great dynamic range. In testing, the ISO performance was excellent. On the gloomy London Underground, the noise was kept well under control but, like as on all modern cameras the ISO tops out at unusable numbers.

The Leica M11-P has a tendency to expose images on the darker side, giving scenes a grittier look beloved by many a Leica fan. There are some alternate styles in the settings, including a Monochrome look, but the Natural style suited us a little more. The M11-P combined with the Summilux-M 35mm F/1.4 ASPH lens produced some intense vignetting especially wide open, and while this could be quite easily cleaned up in Lightroom, it shows the limitation of some Leica lenses with this camera.

One issue with processing was that the M11-P often made skies a deep blue that didn't reflect reality. This was mostly in brighter scenes but it meant that a few photos couldn't be used straight out of the camera. Otherwise, Leica M lenses provide stunning photos with beautiful rendering of foreground and background, while the subject remains sharp.

At 60MP there's potential for cropping images, which is useful if



The M11-P camera is satisfyingly compact, although as there's no grip as standard, the camera isn't the most comfortable to hold for long periods





© Gareth Bevan



The M11-P has a tendency to underexpose images, giving scenes a darker, grittier look. However, this style is loved by many Leica fans and can always be altered in editing

## “PHOTO PERFORMANCE IS DISTINCTLY LEICA; IMAGES ARE RICH, PUNCHY AND SHARP”

© Gareth Bevan



Content Credentials are the M11-P's key feature, and although it's great to see Leica trying to protect photographers' work, the technology feels a little vulnerable at present

### CONTENT CREDENTIALS

Content Credentials is Leica's big new feature on the M11-P camera, and to use it you simply have to enter your details into the camera – each photo you take from then onwards will have your details coded in. These credentials can be tracked across image-editing software, including Adobe Photoshop, and social media platforms that support the feature, such as X (Twitter). You can also upload images to the Content Authenticity Initiative website to check their credentials.

However, as welcome as it is to see camera manufacturers trying to protect photographers' work, the system just seems too easy to get around at the moment; it remains to be seen how robust the system is, and how widely it will be supported.



you have a wider lens. Our image of a robin was shot at 35mm, but the crop at 100% still provides a sharp image that's usable on social media and elsewhere online; although with 50-100MB DNG files, the lower-resolution modes might be better if you don't plan to buy a lot of storage.

Content Credentials are the key feature of this camera, and it's encouraging to see companies trying to help protect photographers' work in this way. Content Credentials are simple – you enter your details on the camera, and each photo you take will have the details coded in.

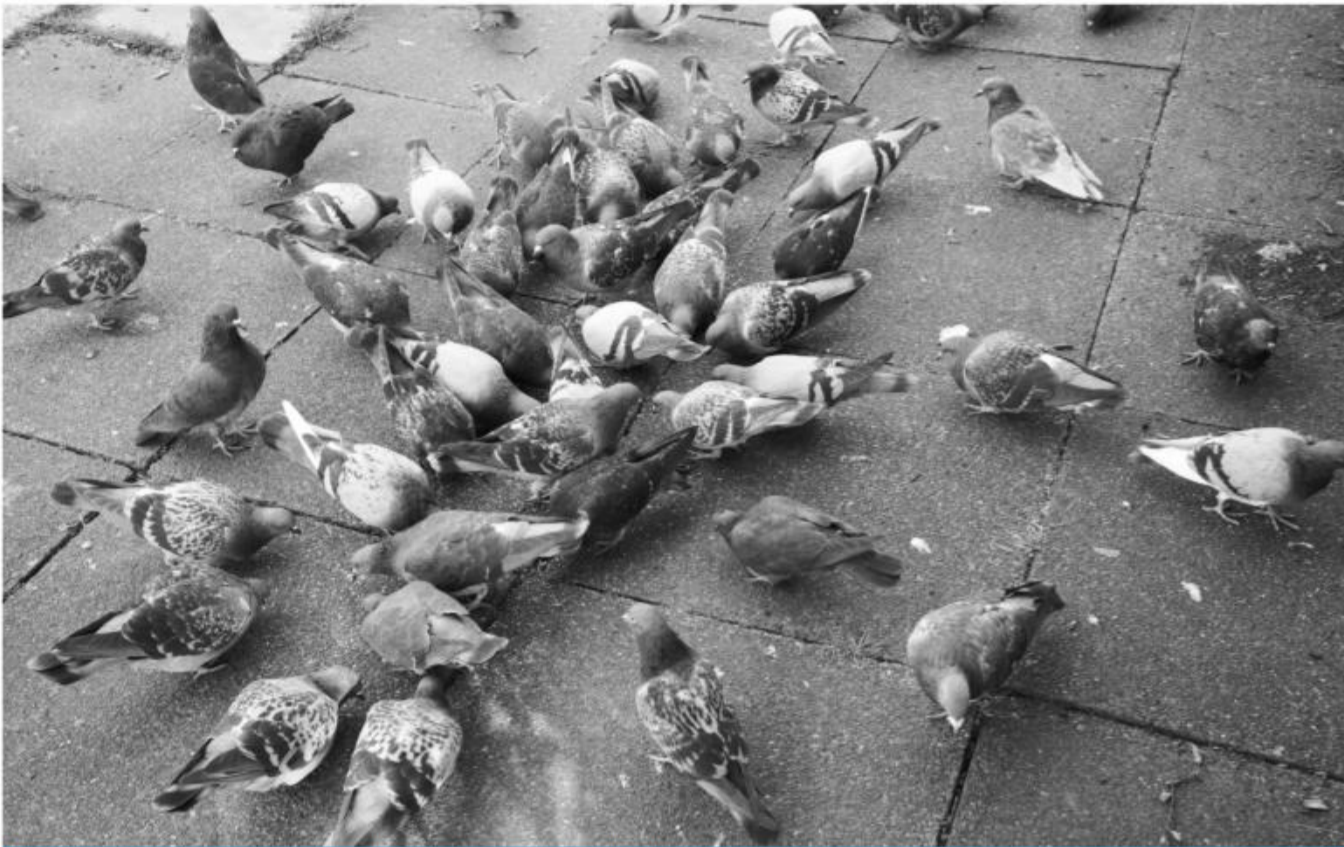
Credentials can be tracked across image editing software, as well as uploads to and downloads from platforms that support the feature. Adobe and X (Twitter) are two of the biggest partners, with Photoshop already supporting Content Credentials in its latest versions. You can also upload images to the Content Authenticity Initiative website





## RANGEFINDER CAMERA TEST LEICA M11-P

© Gareth Bevan



There are some alternate picture styles you can select in the M11-P's settings, including a Monochrome look. However, during testing, we found the Natural style suited us best



The M-11P is available in classic black aluminium or brass chrome versions. The chrome version is slightly heavier

to check their credentials.

However, for protecting work from unwanted manipulation, the system seems too easy to get around, and unfortunately, many out there won't be deterred by a few barriers. It appears to be possible to use photo editing software or screenshots to lift the image, remove the hard-coded content credentials and feed them into AI creations. If those images are registered, whether the lifted parts are still matched to the original owner remains to be seen.

Content Credentials will be a significant barrier to using AI in public

## S P E C S

**SENSOR:** 60.3MP FULL-FRAME CMOS **IMAGE PROCESSOR:** MAESTRO III **AF POINTS:** N/A **ISO RANGE:** 64 TO 50,000 **MAX IMAGE SIZE:** 9,528 X 6,328PX **METERING MODES:** SPOT, CENTER-WEIGHTED, MULTI-FIELD **VIDEO:** N/A **VIEWFINDER:** DIRECT VISION RANGEFINDER TYPE, 0.73X MAGNIFICATION, PARALLAX COMPENSATION **MEMORY CARDS:** SD/SDHC/SDXC, UHS-II **LCD:** 2.95-INCH FIXED TOUCHSCREEN, 2.33M DOTS **MAX BURST:** 4.5FPS **CONNECTIVITY:** WI-FI, BLUETOOTH **SIZE (W X D X H):** 139 X 39 X 80MM **WEIGHT (BLACK):** ~530G (INCL BATTERY) **WEIGHT (SILVER):** ~640G (INCL BATTERY)

works, like the uncredited AI entries (and winners) in recent photo awards, or in professional media organisations where there's more scrutiny. In a wider setting, though, it remains to be seen how robust the credentials

system is, and how widely it will be supported. Given the number of shady images going unchecked on Facebook or WhatsApp groups, I'm not sure how this helps in the fight against disinformation if sophisticated AI creators actively abuse the system, and the public doesn't check the authenticity of what they're viewing. This is an important step from Leica, but the real onus lies with social and traditional media companies to implement it in a meaningful way.

**Gareth Bevan**

## VERDICT

The M11-P continues Leica's tradition of blending of classic style and cutting-edge technology. In terms of aesthetics, it takes inspiration from the sleek, minimalist design of the M11 Monochrom, but without the iconic red dot, to offer a more understated look that will appeal to discerning photographers who want to go unnoticed on the street.

However, this camera isn't just about outward appearances. Inside, the M11-P mirrors the Leica M11, guaranteeing the same exceptional image quality that we loved in the original M11 model, with Leica's 60MP colour sensor and its triple-resolution tech offering big, detailed photos. The M11-P produced impressive images that popped, with

deep and rich colours, although it suffered slightly from underexposure. Leica's lenses continue to stand out, producing their almost ethereal-looking out-of-focus areas and upholding the iconic Leica look.

What really makes the M11-P notable is the introduction of its content authentication component, which could yet prove to be a highly valuable weapon in the ongoing battle against AI-generated image manipulation. However, its effectiveness in countering this currently appears somewhat vulnerable to those with ill intentions, although it's still early days for the technology. It will be interesting to see how Content Credentials evolves as it's more widely adopted.







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# A P P S

MORE GREAT MAGAZINES FROM THE MAKERS OF PHOTOGRAPHY WEEK



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<http://bit.ly/3atHlf0>



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## PHOTOPLUS

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<http://bit.ly/30Fo0l0>



<https://apple.co/2vaIdzw>



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