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Digital Camera World

The world's favorite
photography magazine

Issue 304 March 2026

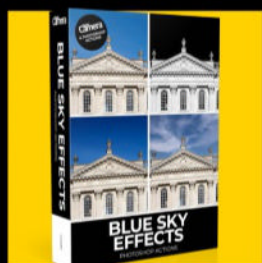
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PAGES OF
TOP PHOTO
ADVICE!

LIGHT TRAILS

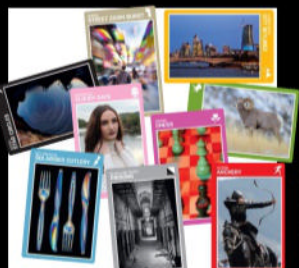
GET STREAKS AHEAD WITH YOUR PHOTOGRAPHY!

12 pages of pro insights for low-light and after-dark shooting
✓ Camera settings ✓ Tripod setup ✓ Focusing tips ✓ Editing

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23 Actions,
presets and more



9 all-new photo
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PHOTO
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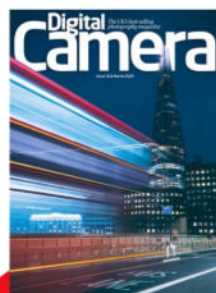


Welcome

The short days of winter are an ideal time to try long-exposure light trails, so for a primer (or refresher) on the genre, see our Apprentice reader challenge (page 8). Our cover feature stays with built-up locations, for a masterclass in shooting cityscapes with a fine-art aesthetic (p68). We've given our photo projects section a makeover, but you'll still find 10 ways to help you become a better photographer (p45). Camera Clinic (p86) focuses on getting creative with the exposure triangle, and our Remembering Wildlife reader photo competition returns (p34). This month's kit reviews include the Sony A7 V (p110) and the Ricoh GR IV (p114). Enjoy the issue.

Niall

Niall Hampton, editor
niall.hampton@futurenet.com



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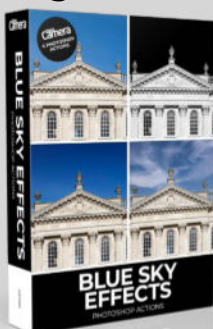


This issue's bonus gifts **Find out more on pages 6 and 108**



Nine all-new photo tips cards

Our latest selection of tips cards gives wallet-sized advice on how to take better photos on location



23 Actions, presets, LUTs and borders

As seen in this month's tutorials, give your photos a new look in just a few clicks with these bonus software extras



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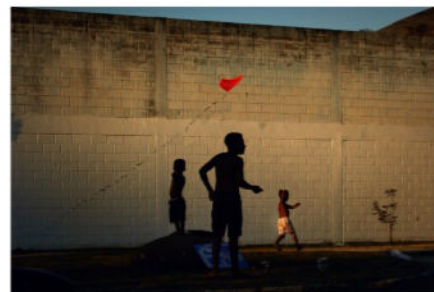
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Will Cheung



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Camera Clinic _ In the final part of a mini-series about getting more creative with your photography, Will Cheung explains how to harness shutter speeds to maximum effect for a wide range of different shooting scenarios

Jonathan & Angela Scott



Jonathan & Angela Scott
Wildlife photographers

Two of the biggest names in global wildlife photography and conservation join us to discuss their Sacred Nature Initiative and their new e-book. **Page 120**



Will Cheung
Photographer and writer

A fellow of the Royal Photographic Society and the former editor of many photography titles, Will is the man behind Camera Clinic, which continues on **page 86**

Georgie Foord Photography



Bernice Bradley
Photographer

The nature-lover and photographer recently created a unique photo of a frozen bubble of ice. We go behind the scenes of the shoot with Bernice, on **page 96**



Mike Harris
Photographer

The deputy editor of our former sister title *N Photo* is known for his motorsport photography, but he is equally adept at cityscapes. Learn his top techniques from **page 68**

Dave Fieldhouse



Dave Fieldhouse
Landscape & urban photographer

Having penned a *DC* cover feature on outdoor photography in 2019, Dave returns to discuss some of the photos in his latest photozine – night shots of Hong Kong and Tokyo. **Page 58**

Emma Stephenson



Emma Stephenson
Photographer & writer

She recently took an eye-catching image of a backlit puffin, so we spoke to the up-and-coming nature photographer to discover how she got her shot. **Page 50**

Stewart Reading-Brown



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Photo Skills _ **NEW!** We've given our photo projects section a makeover for 2026, now featuring step-by-step techniques and in-depth image analysis to help make you a better photographer. Turn to **page 45** to get started



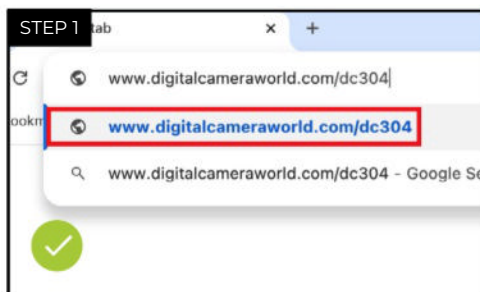
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**BONUS
SOFTWARE
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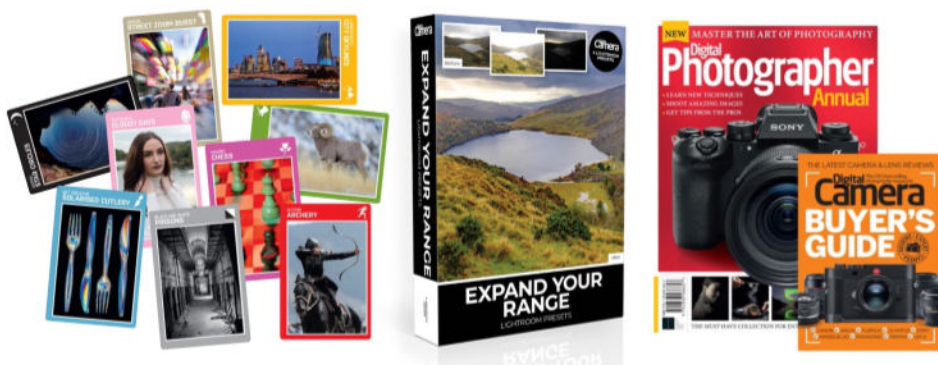
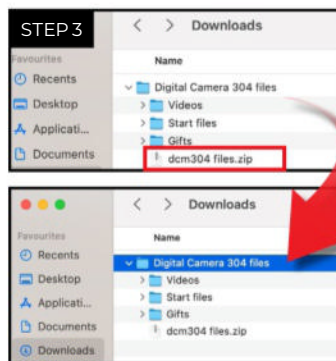
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Streaks ahead in Bristol!

Join us for a night out capturing light trails and
long exposures with Nikon pro **Iain Afshar**

W

ith the shorter days and longer nights, winter is the perfect time of year to hone your night photography skills. So for this issue's *Digital Camera Apprentice*, we've paired a reader with a professional photographer for a day (or in this case, night) of shooting together.

This month's Apprentice is Becca Luger, who wants to bring her night-time cityscape shots to life by capturing traffic light trails. Becca is based in Bristol, in south-west England, so we've paired her with a leading practitioner of light trails photography who happens to be based in the same city. Iain Afshar is a Nikon shooter who helms The Photography Project, which runs various photo workshops. —>



The Apprentice

Name: Becca Luger

Camera: Lumix S5 II

Becca is a fine-art photographer and film-maker based in Bristol. She uses a full-frame Lumix camera and loves to experiment with slow shutter speeds and intentional camera movement in her creative photography landscape work. She was keen to expand her skillset by learning more about night photography and how to capture sharp city shots using long exposures.

Instagram @beccaluger

The Pro

Name: Iain Afshar

Camera: Nikon Z 9

Iain is a professional photographer, teacher and international mountain adventurer. He runs workshops through The Photography Project based in Bristol Harbour. With many years of experience in shooting city scenes in low light, he's the ideal person to teach our Apprentice how to capture great cityscapes and traffic light trails.

www.thephotographyproject.com

SUPER SHOT #1



Becca encounters some issues as she struggles to keep her budget tripod stable enough for the long exposure.

CLIFTON SUSPENSION BRIDGE

THE APPRENTICE: "One of Bristol's best locations to photograph at sunset. The light was constantly changing, but I think my perseverance paid off."

THE PRO: "A classic view of the bridge, timed to perfection. Brand new bridge lighting together with high traffic density makes this a winning shot."

Bristol is a brilliant city for photography. It boasts a great mix of architecture, ranging from ancient to modern, with plenty of interesting bridges, back streets and main roads, and it's full of culture. It's also often a nightmare to drive around. But one upside of



Camera:	Lumix S5 II
Lens:	Lumix S 20-60mm F3.5-5.6
Exposure:	10 secs at f/16, ISO 200

its notoriously clogged-up roads and never-ending roadworks is that it offers plenty of opportunity for traffic light trail photography.

In the days before our photo shoot, Iain demonstrates the importance of planning ahead. As well as watching the weather forecast for a suitably dry and clear night, Iain discusses the best places to capture traffic light trails in Bristol with *Digital Camera*.

Like all good professionals, Iain also carries out a recce of his favoured locations prior to meeting up for our photo shoot. However, in doing so, he discovers that one of them, Park Street, is shut in one direction. Roadworks have also appeared on key spots in



Expert insight Fail to prepare...

... and prepare to fail, says our pro. "Always recce locations beforehand as many scenes require a combination of factors to work best," notes Iain. "These include weather, daylight hours, blue hour and rush-hour traffic. A recce is vital in cities, as roadworks and construction scaffolding may ruin otherwise perfect photo opportunities."



Camera skills **Setting white balance**

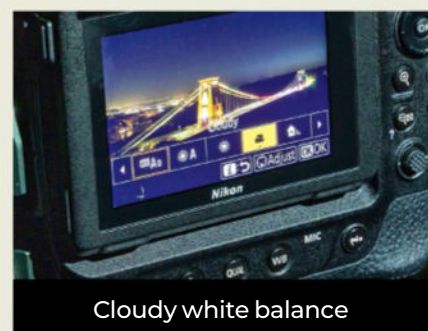


Auto White Balance



Natural Light Auto white balance

Iain prefers to use his Nikon's Auto White Balance (AWB) setting on his cameras, as he explains: "The Auto White Balance setting on the Z 9 is particularly good. It usually gets the image colour temperatures right – either warm or cool tones, depending on the time of night and ambient city lighting. However, I will use the Natural Light Auto WB setting for warmer results or Cloudy WB at sunset. Set your camera to shoot raw files and you can easily tweak WB in post-processing, too."



Cloudy white balance

Night-time photos 101

Learn these three essential tips to achieve better shots in the dark



1 Solid tripod

Becca's budget Manfrotto tripod was too short and flimsy with the central column extended. Iain uses a Manfrotto 055XPRO carbon tripod and MHXPRO magnesium ball head. Adding foam to the legs made it easier to carry on cold nights.



2 Remote shutter

For sharp exposures, Iain uses basic remote shutter releases with his Nikon gear. This one cost £20 from Amazon, though he has another with seven cable options to fit most cameras. They're cheap and ideal for expeditions.



3 Torch or head torch

Head torches are useful for night photography missions when you can't see where you're walking. Iain also has a budget Amazon rechargeable LED torch with an adjustable beam (spot and wide light) that he also uses for light painting.



CABOT CIRCUS 1

THE APPRENTICE: "This shot was all about timing, to capture the amazing neon streaks and lights from the passing buses. This really made the shot!"

THE PRO: "A combination of careful composition, adequate shutter speed and the timing of the shot has paid off well here for Becca."



Our pro's kit Nikon Z 9

Iain's pro flagship full-frame Nikon Z 9 is his tool of choice for night, landscapes and travel photography to achieve the best possible image quality, even in low light. He uses a Nikkor Z 24-70mm f/2.8 S standard zoom and Nikkor Z 14-24mm f/2.8 S ultra wide-angle zoom. When Iain is on his wild expedition travels in Asia and beyond, he uses a lighter setup with the smaller-bodied Nikon Z 7II and Nikkor Z 24-120mm f/4 S, plus a lighter Peak Design tripod.

the city centre and the Big Wheel that's lit up by the harbour at night has gone. Time for a change of plan. Thankfully, there are many other options around Bristol, so Iain suggests the suburb of Clifton and Cabot Circus in the city centre, with busy roads and interesting buildings within easy walking distance.

Take it to the bridge

We meet up with Becca in The White Lion pub in Clifton, which has spectacular views of the Clifton Suspension Bridge from its patio garden. Becca is a creative film-maker and photographer and is keen to master night



Camera:	Lumix S5 II
Lens:	Lumix S 20-60mm F3.5-5.6
Exposure:	8 secs at f/16, ISO 200

photography, in particular, long exposures and traffic light trails. Over a cup of hot chocolate, we discuss our plans for the photo shoot, talking cameras, kit and settings.

Iain has brought his Z 9, Nikon's flagship pro camera, while Becca is armed with her Panasonic Lumix S5 II, both full-frame mirrorless cameras. For glass, Iain is using his Nikkor Z 24-70mm f/2.8 S lens, while Becca uses an equivalent standard zoom, a Lumix 20-60mm f/3.5-5.6 lens. Finishing the drinks, we grab our kit bags and head for our first location, the nearby Clifton Observatory, which overlooks Isambard Kingdom →

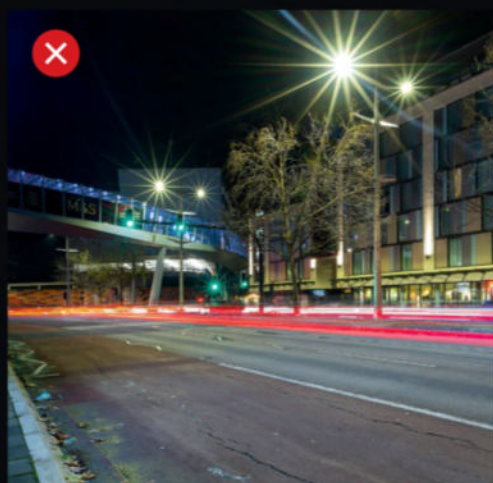
"One upside of Bristol's notoriously clogged-up roads is the opportunity it offers for traffic light trail photography"



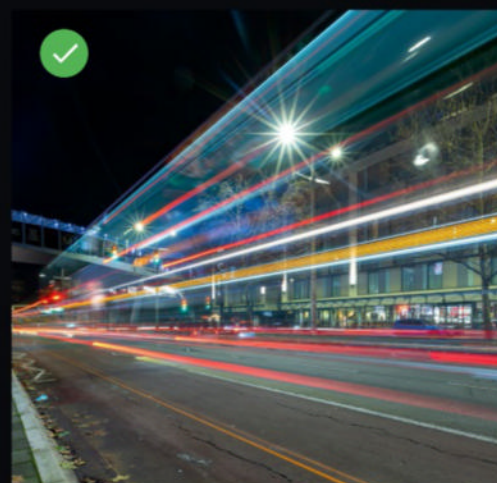
Expert insight Traffic trails

OK, so what sort of traffic is best for capturing light trails? First of all, avoid including only car lights, because they will appear in the areas close to the road and leave lots of empty, dark space above.

Instead, you should wait for a double-decker bus, preferably with neon adverts on the side, or a brightly-lit lorry to come into the frame. This will fill your frame with colourful streaks of light.



Cars on the outside lane



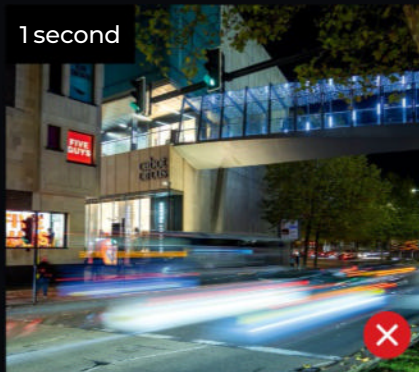
Double-decker bus on the inside lane

Expert insight **Shutter speeds**

It's not only your shutter speed that you have to get right to achieve the best light trails. You will also need the right type of passing traffic (see Expert insight panel, previous page).

Whereas one second won't be slow enough, and 30 seconds may be too slow for bright city lights, a good starting point for your shutter speed is 10 secs. Then, depending on the speed and the number of vehicles on the road, you can decrease or increase the shutter speed. Remember, you may also have to decrease or increase your aperture so that you can maintain a balanced exposure.

1 second



30 seconds



CABOT CIRCUS 2

THE APPRENTICE: "The challenge here was getting a good composition with the traffic flowing either side. Taking the time to set up the shot was key."

THE PRO: "Looking for different perspectives and shooting angles at a given location can really change the feel of the photo."

Stability for sharp shots

As we begin, Becca encounters some issues, struggling to keep her budget Manfrotto tripod stable, which is essential for sharp shots with long exposures. "Unfortunately, Becca's tripod was too small and unstable, especially as she had to raise the centre column to reach above the hedge," Iain says. "I also suggested she remove the neck strap from her Lumix as the wind from the gorge was causing her camera to vibrate." →

Brunel's iconic suspension bridge spanning the Avon Gorge, with The Portway dual carriage and River Avon below. By day, there are also views over Bristol and across the North Somerset countryside beyond.

However, we're here to do some night photography, so we get ourselves in the best spot to shoot the bridge, ready for the blue hour. As the sun begins to set, Iain uses the time to go over some key camera settings.

"Becca is happy shooting raw files, which is good, as it's pretty much essential for night photography and makes editing much easier," says Iain. "We set Auto White Balance. She was using Manual exposure mode but needed some help understanding the impact of setting a slower shutter speed to capture the blur in the car's lights over the bridge."

Iain shows Becca how to use the exposure level indicator to get a correct exposure. He explains that if she extends the shutter speed, for example, from one to two seconds, she would need to balance it by one stop, with a narrower aperture of f/11 or f/16 and so on. As the sun disappears, we have a brief window of blue hour light, which is still dark enough to attempt our first long-exposure captures.

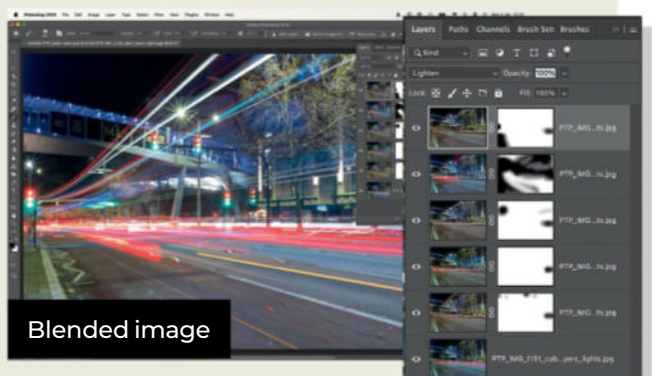
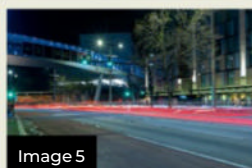
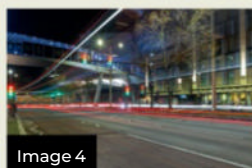
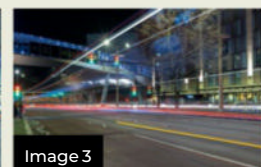
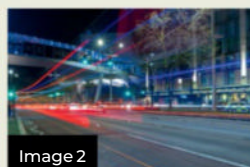
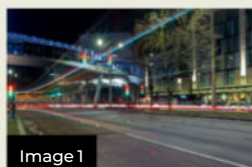
"With Iain's help in changing the exposure as it gradually got darker, I was able to use a slow shutter speed of 10 seconds for some great light trails of the traffic crossing the bridge," says Becca. For an extra splash of vibrancy, there are some new coloured lights on the bridge. We'd heard about these modifications, but it's the first time we had seen them as they'd only been installed a few days before.



SUPER
SHOT #2

Pro tip Blend multiple images for bolder light trails

To create a night-time city scene with brighter and more colourful traffic light trails, you can use editing software, such as Photoshop, to merge multiple images together. This will reveal several minutes of motion blur from multiple vehicles. First, make sure that you have taken all your shots with identical settings and from the exact same spot on a secure tripod. Then, with your batch-edited raw images saved as jpegs, open up Photoshop and go to File > Script > Load Files into Stack. Choose your images (in this example, we used six separate files), select the top layers in the Layers palette and choose Lighten as the Blending mode to reveal all the traffic light trails.



Technique assessment

To get Becca started in Bristol, Iain suggested a few camera settings



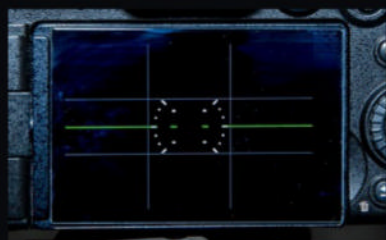
1 White balance

Iain uses AWB unless he's after a specific look, such as the Tungsten preset to avoid orange street lights. Experiment with the settings, as light levels change in mixed city lighting conditions. Shooting raw files allows for WB changes to be easily made in post-production.



2 Manual exposure

Shoot in Manual for full control of aperture, shutter speed and ISO. For depth of field and bright exposures at night, use an f/11 aperture and a shutter speed of 1 to 30 sec, depending on the brightness of lights. Keep ISO between 100-200 to avoid grain in dark areas.



3 Digital spirit level

If there are buildings or bridges in your scene, use your digital level to compose your photos. You want them level and parallel to the scene to avoid tall structures converging. Use your camera's digital level and fine-tune your composition using your tripod head.



The footbridge offers a superb vantage point that allows Becca and Iain to time their exposures with the traffic heading towards them.

Camera skills RGB histogram

With long exposures and bright city buildings, it's easy to over-expose shots. Keep an eye on your RGB histogram as the red channel may be clipped by dazzling car lights. Increase your shutter speed or lower your ISO, as necessary.



ECLIPSE TOWER

THE APPRENTICE: "Having a high vantage point really paid off and is something I would definitely recommend for shooting city light trails at night."

THE PRO: "Shooting from an elevated position has allowed Becca to capture the light trails beautifully at this busy traffic intersection."

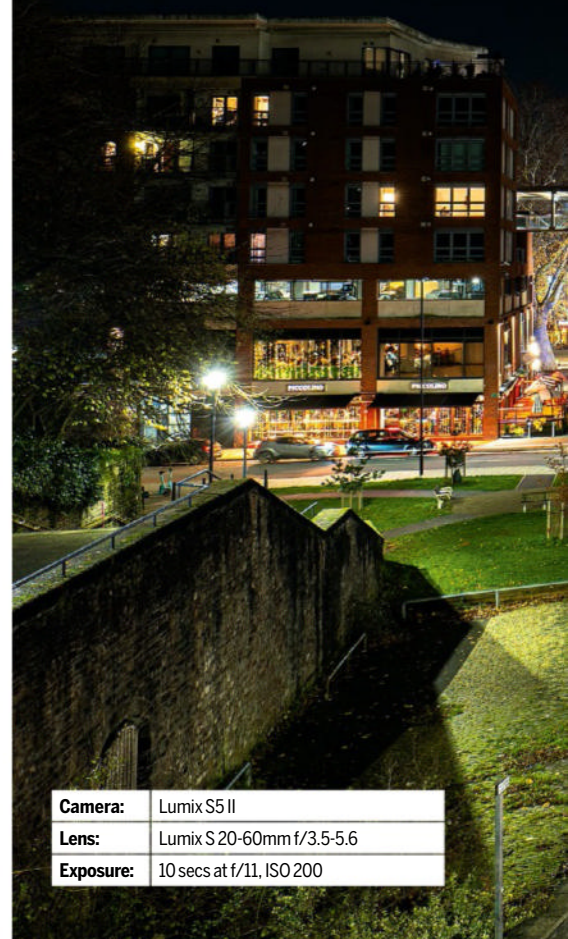
Thankfully, we have a spare Manfrotto tripod, which is larger, more stable and has a three-way adjustable head. Lending it to Becca to use for the rest of the evening so that she can ensure her shots are sharp, it highlights the difference between a budget and a pro-level tripod. Becca says she will consider an upgrade when she can afford it.

Fun at the circus

For our next location, we drive down into the city centre and set up outside Cabot Circus shopping mall during rush hour. There's a constant flow of traffic in both directions

of this three-lane carriageway and plenty of those all-important double-decker buses. Time these shots right and we'll be able to fill our frame with colourful traffic light blur.

Iain and Becca position their tripods near the edge of the road, remaining on the pavement but out of the way of pedestrians. Zooming in at around 50mm, they both compose a frame with the lit-up bridge and buildings behind. While Becca often uses fairly slow shutter speeds for her intentional camera movement fine-art photos, she isn't quite so confident using slow shutter speeds to capture shots that need to be sharp.



Camera:	Lumix S5 II
Lens:	Lumix S 20-60mm f/3.5-5.6
Exposure:	10 secs at f/11, ISO 200

"With Iain's help in changing the exposure, I was able to use a slow shutter speed of 10 seconds to get some great light trails"



SUPER
SHOT #3

Iain ensures that her tripod is now stable and uses his remote control to trigger his exposures so he doesn't nudge the camera when pressing the shutter button. Becca doesn't have a remote, but uses the Lumix Sync app to fire her camera instead. Iain chooses a shutter speed of 10 seconds, claiming this 'sweet spot' captures a good blur of the traffic light trails without being too bright. "Now, it's a case of timing our exposures to start when the lights go green and the traffic passes through our frame, hopefully, with a few double-deckers," he says.

Our next attempt sees us cross the road to shoot some traffic light trails from the central reservation. The aim here is to get blurred lights down both sides; red rear lights on the left and white front lights on the right. We compose wide here, with Becca shooting at 20mm with her Lumix S 20-60mm f/3.5-5.6 lens. Iain later merges several of her

Camera skills **Firing shutters remotely**

Becca fired her shutter remotely, using the Lumix Sync app on her smartphone, connected to her camera via Bluetooth. "Whilst her shutter release app worked well on the night, it would have been unsuitable in rainy or cold conditions. The touchscreen would be difficult to operate when it's wet or your fingers are frozen," warns Iain, an experienced and well-travelled pro photographer.

"If you don't have a remote, you can use the self-timer drive mode, but it's difficult to time your shots for traffic light trails. Your best bet is to invest in a basic cable release with a shutter lock function to allow shooting in Bulb mode for exposures longer than 30 seconds."



SUPER SHOT #4

Camera:	Lumix S5 II
Lens:	Lumix S 20-60mm f/3.5-5.6
Exposure:	30 secs at f/11, ISO 200

CASTLE PARK BRIDGE

THE APPRENTICE: "A great opportunity to capture the waterfront at night and with no traffic. It was less about timing and more about composition."

THE PRO: "Here, Becca has used the interesting shape of the bridge to lead the viewer's eye into the image. It's a great composition."

images in Photoshop to increase the density of light trails in one image (see Pro Tip, p15).

Iain has another great location in mind, so we walk around the corner to a footbridge over the road leading to the Eclipse Tower and Broadmead Shopping Centre. It's a fine vantage point that gives us the opportunity to time our exposures with buses and traffic heading up the hill towards us. There's less light around this area, so Becca increases her ISO to 200 for this Super Shot (see p16-17).

Focus on the screen

"I'm partially sighted, so having a large screen on the back of my camera really helps my photography," says Becca. "I use autofocus by tapping on the part of the scene I want to be the sharpest, such as the Eclipse Tower in this shot. Then I switch to manual focus to lock it in place," she adds.

"I tend to focus about a third of the way into a scene for a good, sharp image," says Iain. "When I'm shooting with a focal length around 20mm or 40mm and at f/11-f/16, the night scenes will be totally sharp," he says.

We finish our night in Bristol with a walk through Castle Park to the Castle Bridge for pedestrians and cyclists. The park is eerily dark and we wouldn't recommend doing it on your own at night, especially with expensive camera kit on show. We ask Iain whether he has any tips for avoiding the downside of being in the city at night. "Stay safe, wear bright clothing and avoid shooting in dodgy areas. Don't stand too close to busy roads and don't block the pavement with your tripod," he suggests. "If you don't feel confident on your own at night, ask a photographer friend to come along with you. You can support and inspire each other."



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Are you looking to take your photography to the next level, whatever genre you shoot? *Digital Camera* can help. Let us know what you'd like some help with, and we could pair you up with a top pro for the day! Email us with 'The Apprentice' in the subject line, let us know which camera you use and share some examples of your photos. Apprentice shoots take at least half a day, and you'll need to be able to travel to them independently.

Email us at:
digitalcamera@futurenet.com



Though we were tempted to take some shots down at the Castle Bridge, our pro Iain suggests a higher vantage point nearby with a better view.

Although we are tempted to take a shot from below, Iain takes us to a higher viewpoint in the park, offering a great view of the bridge lit up, with Bristol Bridge and the spire of St Nicholas Church in the background. Both the pro and our Apprentice shoot at around 45mm for a tidy composition, with Becca taking her cues from Iain by using the digital levels on her screen to get a level horizon.

"At this location in the park, we were far from the bright city lights, so we needed a long exposure of 30 secs, f/11 and ISO 200," Iain explains. "I also noticed most of Becca's images were landscape, so I encouraged her to try shooting in portrait orientation as well."

After spending much of the evening among the bustle of traffic and shoppers, the park is a suitably quiet place to wind down and finish up. With our memory cards full, we pack up our kit and slip away quietly into the night. ●



Apprentice verdict

"I am thrilled with my night shots and I loved learning from Iain how to experiment with longer exposures at night. It was great to gain confidence with the shutter speed settings and I'm excited to keep improving my skills."



Pro verdict

"Becca was a great apprentice. She has a keen eye for composition and a good grasp of the basics. She needed a bit of help fully understanding the relationship between shutter speed and aperture, and she learned the importance of a decent tripod for sharp shots."

Pro portfolio Iain Afshar



Phnom Penh

Having cycled into Cambodia from Vietnam, the hotel rooftop bar in the capital, Phnom Penh, offered a great vantage point from which to shoot the lightning storm in the distance. To capture it, I set the camera to shoot continuous exposures.



Gardens by the Bay

Singapore's Gardens by the Bay is a network of waterfront parks featuring trees with solar lighting. Using my widest-angle lens and shooting upwards during the blue hour really made the vibrant colours of the installations pop against the inky blue sky.



Ho Chi Minh City

I used a six-second exposure to capture the traffic at this busy junction in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. It was taken on my Nikon 24-120mm f/4 lens, which offers the perfect balance of size, weight and versatility – ideal for international travel.

InFocus

Photography news from around the globe

01	Photography news	page 20
02	The Photography Show	page 22
03	Ask Matthew	page 26
04	Letters	page 28
05	Reader competition	page 30



Nikon

Nikkor Z 24-105mm f/4-7.1

This affordable everyday zoom is suitable for a wide range of photography and videography, including landscapes, travel, street snapshots and close-ups

The Nikon Z 24-105mm f/4-7.1 is a lightweight standard zoom designed for FX-format (full-frame) mirrorless cameras. Although it has a generous zoom range, stretching from 24mm to 105mm, the aperture narrows to a relatively pedestrian f/7.1 at full extent.

However, the lens weighs just 350 grams and, despite its small size, offers a 4.4x zoom range and impressive close-up

capabilities: with a 0.5x reproduction ratio at full zoom, the lens can be used for close-up photography as well as acting as a versatile everyday standard zoom.

The lens is equipped with a stepping motor (STM) for fast, quiet autofocus, and a customisable control ring can be assigned to manage various settings.

Find out more at: www.nikon.co.uk; £529/\$550



1 VERSATILE FOCAL LENGTH

A broad wide-angle to medium-telephoto focal length range offers versatility.

2 CUSTOMISABLE CONTROL RING

Instantly access a variety of settings including manual focus and ISO.

3 DUST AND WATER RESISTANT

The lens is designed with dust and drip resistance for added durability.





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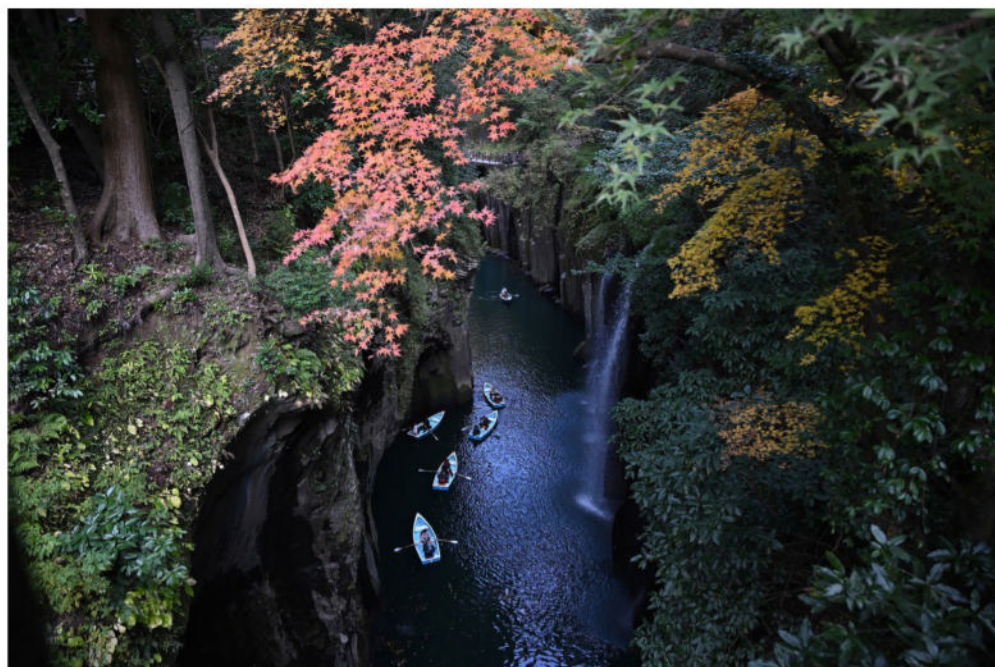
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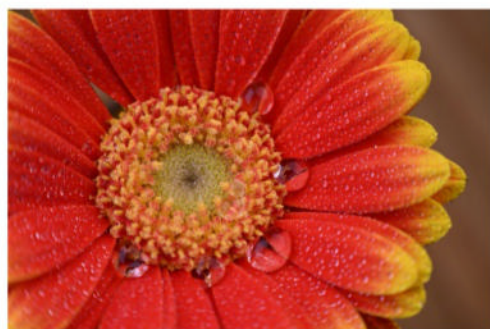
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Instagram: [@digitalcameramag](https://www.instagram.com/digitalcameramag)



Nikon

A wide perspective at the Nikkor Z 24-105mm f/4-7.1's short end makes it a versatile lens for travelling.



With a 0.5x reproduction ratio when fully zoomed, this versatile lens copes well with macro work...



Nikon

... and it will also be a good option for close-up food photography, a popular subject for creators.



Nikon

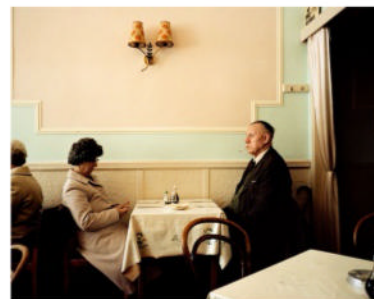
The rendering of defocused areas when shooting at wider apertures is pleasing.

The new lens is compatible with full-frame bodies like the Nikon Z f.



Focal point

Rounding up what's new and exciting this month



Martin Parr

The Last Resort to be exhibited at the Martin Parr Foundation

Fans of the late British photographer can enjoy an exhibition of one of his most famous photo series. The show runs at the MPF in Bristol, from 20 February-24 May. martinparrfoundation.org



Fujifilm

Fujifilm increases Instax film production due to popular demand

Proving there's a lot of life in the analogue format, a £23.5m (\$32m) investment by Fujifilm will increase production of Instax film by 10 per cent by the end of 2026. www.instax.com



Viltrox

Viltrox AF 35mm F1.2 Lab now available for Nikon Z mount

Previously only an option for owners of Sony E-mount cameras, the AF 35mm F1.2 Lab is now available for users of Nikon Z mirrorless bodies. www.viltrox.com; £959/\$999



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Packed with news, camera and lens reviews, buying guides and much more, this leading photography website is home to all the things you love about digital imaging.

Website: www.digitalcameraworld.com



World Food Photography Awards – last chance!

Sponsored by Tenderstem Bimi Broccoli, the World Food Photography Awards offers entrants more than 25 categories, and a tasty top prize of £5,000 (\$6,730) is up for grabs. Amateurs and pros can enter six photos for £35 (\$47). Entries close on 8 February.

Find out more: www.worldfoodphotographyawards.com

THE Photography & Video SHOW

14 – 17 MARCH 2026
NEC • BIRMINGHAM



The Photography & Video Show 2026

Just a few weeks to go until this amazing event opens its doors at the NEC – so book your advance tickets today!



1 SUPERB LINE-UP OF SPEAKERS

A wide selection of pro photographers and creators will be giving talks at TVPS.



2 SO MUCH TO SEE AND DO

Choose between demos, workshops, photo walks and much more.



3 TOUCH AND TRY THE LATEST GEAR

Get up close and personal with kit from more than 250 top brands.

Returning to the NEC in Birmingham this year, this four-day celebration of still and moving images opens its doors on Saturday 14 March. With so much to see and do under one roof, The Photography & Video Show (TPVS) is the only photo industry event you need to attend in 2026.

Organiser Future Publishing (the parent company of *Digital Camera*) looks forward to welcoming back regular showgoers; for anyone not familiar with the event, TPVS offers a peerless line-up of **speakers** from across photography, film and content creation; a wide range of **activities** to participate in, including photo walks with like-minded people; **workshops and**

demonstrations from leading professional photographers and creators; and the chance to **get hands-on** with the latest photographic products and services from more than 250 leading brands. You can also get inspired by browsing a wide range of photo galleries, including some leading competitions.

Standard entry for any single day of the show costs £18.95, and multiple-day tickets are charged at a 50 per cent discount for the second, third and fourth day. Concession tickets (aged 60+, disabled, and students aged 18-plus) cost £15.95 for a day and are available for Saturday 14 and Sunday 15 March. Students can attend for free on Monday 16 and Tuesday 17 March.

Meet the exhibitors: Light & Land

Founded in 1994 by Charlie Waite and Sue Bishop, Light & Land provides tailored photography workshops and tours in the UK and across the world. Run by some of the top landscape and travel photographers, Light & Land workshops allow small, friendly groups of tutors of photographers to come together. Five Light & Land tutors will be attending the show; we spoke to four of them to find out more about what they'll be doing...



Charlie Waite

Renowned for his painterly landscapes, Charlie has run photography tours across the world for decades. Taking

place on the Fundamentals Stage, his talk at TVPS is titled 'Return To Beauty' and will discuss his focus on using the camera to connect with the world around us.

"With so much turmoil in the world, and our daily lives ever more rushed, the need to no longer be so disconnected from the natural world is of paramount importance," he says. "The camera is a remarkable tool that allows me to associate with nature in a deep and profound way."

• Saturday 14 March, 12pm-1pm, on the Fundamentals Stage.



Charlie Waite

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Our colleagues on the *Digital Camera World* website have launched a podcast celebrating all things photography. Stream it now on podcast apps, including Spotify and Apple Podcasts, or watch it on YouTube.

Find out more: www.digitalcameraworld.com

THE Photography & Video SHOW

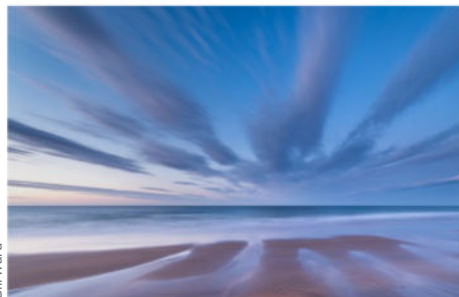
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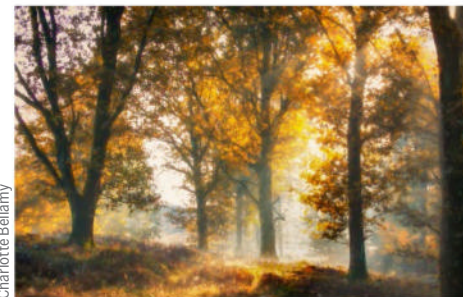
Meet the exhibitors: Light & Land (continued)



Verity Milligan



Bill Ward



Charlotte Bellamy

**Verity Milligan**

A landscape and travel photographer based in Birmingham, UK, Verity will be on hand at the Light & Land stand (B87). Here's

a flavour of what she will be talking about. "For over a decade, I've been documenting the changing face of Birmingham through my urban landscape photography. In my talk, I'll discuss why Birmingham became such an unlikely inspiration, how it unexpectedly launched my professional photography career and how my approach has changed over the years," she says.

Verity also has some tips for any readers looking to get hands-on with kit: "I'm looking forward to trying out the new Peak Design pro tripod and Shimoda women's backpacks. These are the perfect accessories for exploring the urban landscape," she says.

• **Light & Land stand (B87). Saturday 14 March-Tuesday 17 March.**

**Bill Ward.**

"In my talk, 'Liquid ICM: When ICM Meets Water', I'll take a deep dive into intentional camera movement and water, discussing the

specifics of shutter speed, technique and camera movement with seascapes, coastal and water-based ICM. I'll also be talking about my 'Immersive' ocean-based ICM project, recently published by Kozy Books.

"Then, for 'The Intersection of Theatre and Landscape Photography', on the Behind the Lens Stage, I'll investigate the intersection between the worlds of theatre and landscape photography, and the creative principles and ideas that run between the two. I've been a professional actor since 2000 and a pro landscape photographer since 2010."

• **Liquid ICM: Sunday 15 March on the Fundamentals Stage, 12pm-12.40pm.**
• **Theatre and Landscape Photography: Behind the Lens Stage, 3pm-3.30pm.**

**Charlotte Bellamy**

The landscape photographer will be based on the Light & Land stand for the duration of the show. "I'm looking forward to

presenting a couple of times," says Charlotte. "One talk is called 'Finding Photographic Focus in a New Location', which is especially relevant for photography tours, where you often find yourself in inspiring locations with limited time. New locations offer massive opportunities, but the unlimited possibilities can also be overwhelming. I will discuss how to get the most out of your experience and offer some great tips on making images that are uniquely yours.

"In my other talk, 'Interpreting a Location Using Creative Photography Techniques', I'll demonstrate how to use creative techniques to make unique images."

• **Light & Land stand (B87). Saturday 14 March-Tuesday 17 March.**

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AskMatthew

All your questions answered. Send your questions to digitalcamera@futurenet.com



Matthew Richards

Matthew Richards is a photographer and journalist who has spent many years using all manner of photo gear.

The Tamron 70-180mm F2.8 Di III VXD G2 has a useful zoom range for wedding and event photography, and combines excellent sharpness with beautiful bokeh.



A lens to get hitched with

Q I'm hoping to get into wedding photography and want to buy a 70-180mm f/2.8 telephoto zoom to use with my Nikon Z f. Would you recommend the Nikon or Tamron lens?

Andy Bennett

A That's an interesting question with a bit of history behind it. Tamron originally launched its rather excellent 70-180mm F2.8 Di III VXD nearly six years ago, but only for Sony cameras. Nikon liked it so much that they released their own version in 2023, badged as the Nikon Z 70-180mm f/2.8. They are virtually the same lens, but naturally, only the Nikon version is compatible with Z-system cameras.

Shortly afterwards, Tamron launched a second-generation (G2) version of its lens,

The G2 edition of the lens includes a range of upgrades. It is now also available for Nikon Z cameras, instead of only the Sony E mount.

with a host of upgrades, including a redesigned optical path and faster autofocus, plus the addition of optical stabilisation, custom modes and a customisable function button.

The G2 has recently become available for the Nikon Z mount as well as the Sony E mount, so that's the lens I'd go for. At around £999 (\$1,149), it's good value, too.

With the Godox iT32, you can mix and match its X5 base plates and wireless triggers to enable dedicated flash across different camera brands.



It's a bit flash

Q I read your recommendation about the Neewer Z3 flash last month (issue 303, February), but is there a dedicated flash that I can use with both my Fujifilm and Sony cameras?

Susan Weeks

A Until recently, I'd have said you'd be limited to a 'universal' manual flash with no dedication. However, Godox has just launched an intriguing iT32 flash (£89/\$99) with a modular design. The main flash unit is joined magnetically to an X5 base section. You can buy additional X5 units separately, for around £22 (\$19) each, in 'dedicated' Canon, Nikon, Sony, Fujifilm and OM System versions. You can then swap the iT32 head unit between different bases. The X5 also works as a wireless trigger for off-camera flash with the head removed.

Mechanical, electronic or a mix?

Q I'm trying to get my head around the different electronic and mechanical shutter options available in my camera. What's the difference and when should I use them?

Ryan Davis

A You'll often find Auto, Mechanical and Electronic front-curtain shutter options. Fully mechanical is generally most versatile, but 'shutter shock' can degrade sharpness, especially when using macro and ultra-telephoto lenses. Electronic front curtain shutter reduces this, but typically rules out super-fast shutter speeds. 'Auto' mode selects the best option for the shooting conditions.

You may find your camera has a 'Silent Photography' option, which uses a fully electronic shutter. This is good for macro photography as there's no shutter movement to jog the camera. However, it generally disables flash, long exposure noise reduction and flicker reduction.

As well as being soundless, the 'Silent' shutter mode gives a fully electronic shutter that avoids any 'shutter shock' in macro photography.



Second-hand superstar

I've always loved this Olympus camera; it's a triumph of both style and substance

Q I'm buying an interchangeable-lens camera and want something small, stylish, travel-friendly and reasonably priced. Can you recommend a second-hand option to tick the boxes?

Nick Elliott

A **Matthew recommends...**
Olympus OM-D E-M10 Mark III
It's one of my favourite travel cameras, and the Mark III added some significant enhancements. Replaced by the Mark IV in 2020, it remains a terrific second-hand buy.



Retro styling gives the camera classic looks, as well as making creative shooting adjustments easy to access.

Released (year): 2017
Price new: £630/\$650
'Excellent' £310/\$390
'Good' £270/\$350

I'm a big fan of this little camera and I'm not the only one. Shortly after being launched in 2017, the Olympus OM-D E-M10 MkIII won several international iF and Red Dot design awards. For me, its appeal starts with those iconic good looks, harking back to the Olympus film cameras I remember from my youth.

However, this isn't simply a case of style over substance; the retro layout of control dials puts a wealth of shooting adjustments literally at your fingertips.

Highlights include five-axis in-body stabilisation, upgraded high-speed autofocus with 'Touch AF' on the camera's tilting touchscreen, 4K movie capture and built-in Wi-Fi for easy sharing. It's not just a pretty face.

1 Micro Four Thirds
The mature Micro Four Thirds lens mount enables a huge choice of similarly travel-friendly, compact and lightweight lenses.

2 Shooting modes
The mode dial on the top panel gives direct access to PASM, Auto, Scene, Art and other shooting modes.

3 Viewfinder and screen
There's a high-quality 2,360k dot OLED electronic viewfinder on the top and a tilting 1,040k touchscreen around the back.

Sensor, proc: 16.1MP Live MOS, TruePic VIII
AF points: 121-point (contrast AF)
Shutter speeds: 1/4000 to 30s, Bulb
ISO range: ISO 100-25,600
Viewfinder: EVF, 2,360k dots
Rear screen: 3.0-inch, 1,040k tilting touchscreen
Memory: 1x SD/HC/XC
Size, weight: 122 x 84 x 50mm, 410g
Battery, life: BLS-50, 330 shots

Readers' Letters

Have a burning question about the future of photography? Want to discuss a feature or a tutorial in the magazine? Send us your letters...

★ Star letter prize ★

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we love photos

Love capturing life's moments?

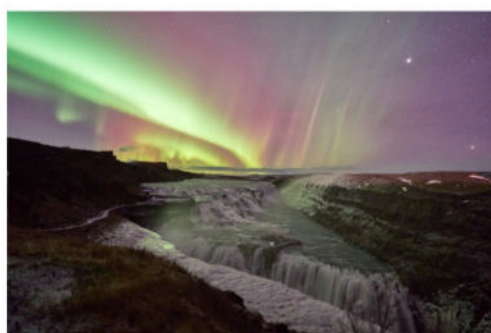
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Simon Tregidgo



Simon Tregidgo

Star letter: Iceland adventures

I spent an incredible four nights in Iceland at the end of November, on a trip dedicated exclusively to photography. I went on my own; no photography tour, just a rented car full of snacks and my photography gear.

I don't know if you accept articles written by readers, but I'd love to do a write-up of the trip and share my experience and tips with your readers. I have attached a couple of my favourite shots, and you can see more in my gallery (simotre.co.uk).

I'm also selling a calendar of these images, with all profits going to Shelter. I'm aiming to sell around 170 to raise awareness of the 170,000 children who spent Christmas in

temporary accommodation, a house they can't call home, and it would be great to get some exposure in your magazine.

Simon Tregidgo, by email
Instagram: @sim.o.tre

Digital Camera says: There are some genuine keepers in the collection you sent, the ones above being our favourites. As far as reader experiences go, everyone should have a look at the new *Photo Skills* section (see p45) to see how they can get involved. We have reader projects, photozines, the photo challenge winner and Rate My Photo, which is new. All the necessary contact details are in this section.



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Jess Reynolds

[@seagypsy.images.uk](https://www.instagram.com/seagypsy.images.uk)

Seascape and landscape photographer from Devon, with a wide range of atmospheric landscape and seascapes

Ania Matczuk

[@ania.m.photography](https://www.instagram.com/ania.m.photography)

Macroverse explorer and creative botanical photographer, with superb ethereal captures of flora

Daniel Adam

[@daniel.adam.photography](https://www.instagram.com/daniel.adam.photography)

A Sony photographer with a series of travel photos from Japan and London

Phil Bishop

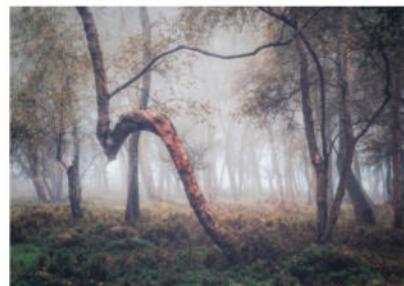
[@philbishop.photography](https://www.instagram.com/philbishop.photography)

Wildlife and nature photographer with a notable specialism in amazing macro shots of mushrooms

Andy Gray

[@andygrayphotographer](https://www.instagram.com/andygrayphotographer)

Landscape fine-art photographer with breathtaking woodland images from the Peak District and Derbyshire Dales



Andy Gray

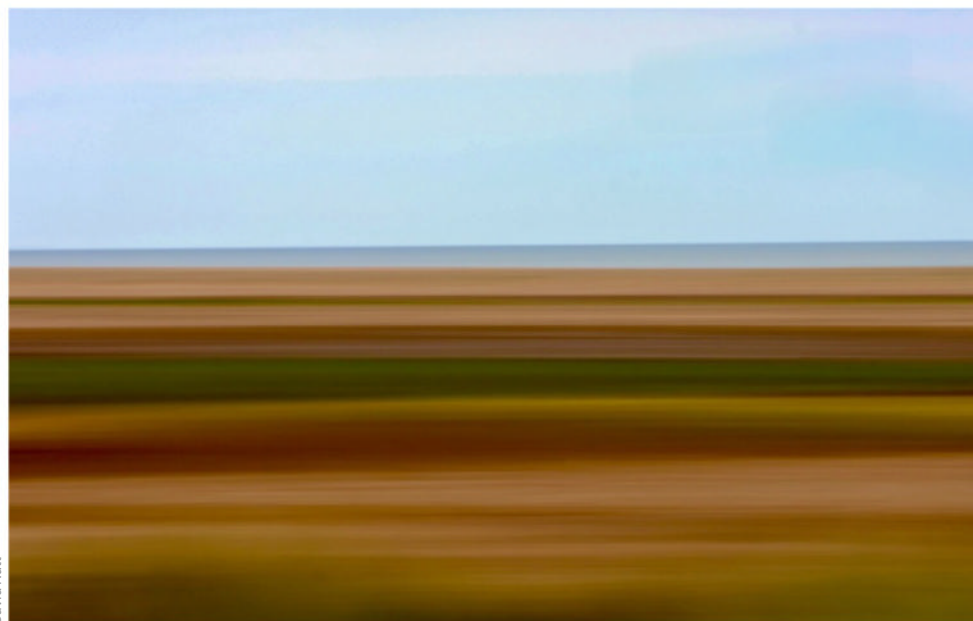
NEXT ISSUE: Read about the woodland captures that appear in Andy Gray's 'Enchanted' zine



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Our growing community is where you can see our readers' amazing work, plus get regular updates for challenges, Rate My Photo and subscription offers. We also showcase the highlights of our latest issue.

Instagram: [@digitalcameramag](https://www.instagram.com/digitalcameramag)



David Nutt

ICM at the seaside

I read your article on intentional camera movement and tried some experimental shutter speeds, which make for some interesting shapes and colours. The beach and turbine shots were taken at Gibraltar Point nature reserve, off England's Lincolnshire coast, with speeds of

between 1/5 and 1/20 second, and they were all captured on my Canon EOS R7.

David Nutt, by email

Instagram: [@davidnutt1953](https://www.instagram.com/davidnutt1953)

Digital Camera says: This one is our pick – the panning technique has worked really effectively.

Singing robin

After reading your January issue (302) and the '26 Photo Projects' cover feature, I was inspired to attempt project number four, the one on robins. They are my favourite birds, and I was pleased to get this shot of one in full song. *Jason Drury, by email*

Digital Camera says: It's a tricky shot to get through all that foliage, and the out-of-focus branch in the foreground of the image is a little distracting. It may be worth having a go at removing or replacing it in photo editing software. You could also crop in a little more to make the robin appear larger in the frame. It's a great capture though!

Jason Drury



Competition

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Niall

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Remembering Giraffes

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Remembering Wildlife

WIN AND GET PUBLISHED!

See your image printed alongside some of the world's finest wildlife photographers

Remembering Giraffes will be the 11th title in the charity book series, which was started by wildlife photographer Margot Raggett MBE in 2016. Prompted to take action after witnessing elephants being poached in Kenya, she asked her fellow wildlife photographers to contribute to a fundraising book.

Between them, *Remembering Elephants* and its successors – *Remembering Rhinos*, *Remembering Great Apes*, *Remembering Lions*, *Remembering Cheetahs*, *Remembering African Wild Dogs*, *Remembering Bears*, *Remembering Leopards*, *Remembering Tigers* and *10 Years of Remembering Wildlife* – have sold more than 60,000 copies and raised over £1.25m (\$1.62m) for 82 conservation projects across 35 countries.

For 2026, Raggett has announced that the next book in the series will be *Remembering Giraffes*. Due to be published on 12 October, the book will feature stunning images of all four species of giraffes donated by many of the world's leading wildlife photographers, including Wim van den Heever and Daryl Balfour, two of this year's guest judges (see page 36). The work of up to 70 wildlife photographers will be included under the banner

of 'Wildlife Photographers United' – and that's where *Digital Camera* readers come in.

Once again, the publishers have teamed up with this magazine to find images of any of the four species – Northern, Reticulated, Masai and Southern – via this competition. This year, we have up to 20 spaces for winners and also a chance to be voted the overall 'Remembering Wildlife Photographer of the Year' in a subsequent vote across all images contained in the final book.

What to submit

We are looking for images of all extant species of giraffes, living in their native habitat and taken in the wild (no zoos, sanctuaries, rehabilitation centres, tagged or tracked animals or baited hides, please). The submitted images will be judged by a panel of five judges (see opposite page), looking for striking and beautiful images that are true to the original scene, with nothing added or taken away. There should be minimal editing.

How to enter

You will need to sign up and upload your pictures to the Remembering Giraffes competition page at: <https://rememberingwildlife.awardsplatform.com>



Daryl Balfour

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NIKON Z 8
CAMERA AND
180-600MM
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There, you can also find the full terms and conditions. The entry fee for the first image submitted is £10 (\$13), with each subsequent entry costing £5 (\$7). All funds raised after costs will go to conservation projects. The deadline for submitting entries is Sunday, 8 March.

The prizes

The 20 best images will be printed in the *Remembering Giraffes* book, alongside shots from some of the world's best wildlife photographers. The images will also be printed in the May issue of *Digital Camera* magazine, which goes on sale on Friday, 24 April.

Each winner will receive a copy of the *Remembering Giraffes* book and an invitation to attend the launch event at the Royal Geographical Society in London on 15 October. Their images will be eligible, with all contributing photographers, for the overall 'Remembering Wildlife Photographer of the Year' title. This award is sponsored by Nikon, with a prize of a Nikon Z 8 and Z 180-600mm f/5.6-6.3 VR lens (total value of £5,588/\$7,510).



Daryl Balfour

- 1 Giraffe Circles by Wim van den Heever.
- 2 Masai giraffes & Mount Kilimanjaro by Daryl Balfour.
- 3 Masai giraffes under tree by Daryl Balfour.

ENTER TODAY AT
rememberingwildlife.
awardsplatform.com

TURN OVER FOR MORE!

Photographers Daryl Balfour
and Wim van den Heever
discuss their passion
for wildlife conservation

THE JUDGES

Meet the
competition's
expert panel



Daryl Balfour
Wildlife photographer



Wim van den Heever
Wildlife photographer



Margot Raggett
Founder and producer,
Remembering Wildlife



Niall Hampton
Editor, *Digital Camera*
magazine



Eddie Ephraums
Photographer,
publisher and mentor

Daryl Balfour & Wim van den Heever

One long-term contributor to Remembering Wildlife and the latest addition to the competition's judging panel look forward to the 11th book in the series



Daryl Balfour

1

THE PHOTOGRAPHERS



Daryl Balfour

Over a distinguished four-decade career, Daryl Balfour has established himself as one of Africa's

leading wildlife photographers, safari guides and tour operators. Working alongside his wife, Sharna, the Balfours' photography is widely recognised for its technical excellence, storytelling depth and strong sense of place.
www.darylbalfour.com



Wim van den Heever

An award-winning wildlife photographer and conservation storyteller, Wim is the previous winner

of the Natural History Museum's Wildlife Photographer of the Year competition (WPY 61). With decades of experience in some of the world's most remote and fragile ecosystems, his photography is shaped by a respect for the natural world and a commitment to conservation.
www.wimvandenheever.com

Remembering Giraffes will be published in October. As with every book in this successful series, it features images captured by the world's leading wildlife photographers. Here, Daryl Balfour and Wim van den Heever look forward to the book.

DARYL BALFOUR

As a long-standing contributor to Remembering Wildlife, what qualities do you think elevate a good image into a great one during judging?

Use of light is key, along with a sense of uniqueness – either in the subject or in the behaviour being captured. A great image stands out immediately, whether through exceptional light, a rare moment, or a fresh way of seeing something familiar.

You've been involved with Remembering Wildlife since the early years. What first drew you to the initiative and what keeps you returning?

I was on a flight from Samburu to the Mara, sitting opposite Margot Raggett, and we realised we had

independently witnessed an elephant that had died after being poisoned. Later, Margot contacted me about the first book, *Remembering Elephants*, and I jumped at the chance to be involved. I return because it's such a powerful conservation initiative and a tangible way for me to give something back.

Having witnessed the evolution of Remembering Wildlife, do you have a favourite in the series?

They are all favourites, as each book represents a different species and conservation challenge. That said, the latest edition, *10 Years of Remembering Wildlife*, stands out. It brings together a superb selection of images from across the series, along with some new work, and feels like a fitting celebration of everything the project has achieved.

You've seen first-hand how much the series has raised for conservation. Did you ever imagine it would have this impact?

None of us imagined it would be such a success. With *Remembering Elephants*, I expected a beautiful book and a fitting tribute – not the scale



2

of impact that followed. The project resonates because buyers invest in a world-class collection of images, while knowing their money goes directly to conservation projects rather than corporate executives or publishers.

What do you find most compelling – or challenging – about photographing giraffes?

Having photographed wildlife for over 40 years, giraffes sit high on people's list of favourite animals. They're iconic and uniquely African, but they can be challenging to photograph as they spend long periods standing still. That's why I'm drawn to moments of interaction, especially between mothers and calves.

WIM VAN DEN HEEVER

As a first-time judge for Remembering Wildlife, what distinguishes a strong wildlife image from one that's unforgettable?

It's the difference between going to the cinema with a bag of popcorn and sitting down to a Michelin-star dining experience. The popcorn is enjoyable, but it's not something you'll remember years later. What makes an image unforgettable is the artistic vision. It's about where the subject is placed in the frame, how light shapes the mood and how emotion is used to tell a story. Technique is essential, but what elevates an image is that extra layer of intent that adds drama, meaning and narrative.

What excites you most about photographing images of giraffes, and what unique storytelling opportunities do they present?

What excites me is just how unique they are. When people see a giraffe for the first time, there's often a moment of disbelief – their scale, elegance and extraordinary proportions feel almost surreal. Photographically, giraffes offer wonderful opportunities. Their striking silhouette set against vast landscapes allows photographers to work with scale, space and atmosphere in a powerful way. Giraffes are more vulnerable than people realise, and their decline has largely gone unnoticed. Projects like Remembering Wildlife help raise awareness while generating vital support for conservation.

What's your advice for photographers hoping to create wildlife images that emotionally resonate with viewers?

Understanding animal behaviour and context is essential; the more you observe, the more authentic your images will become. Secondly, simplify. Remove distractions from the frame so the story is clear. Strong composition helps create an emotional connection. Most of all, photograph with intent. Think about the image before you take it – subject placement, light, environment and mood. When you move from reacting to anticipating, and from shooting to storytelling, that's when images truly resonate.

What motivated you to get involved in Remembering Wildlife and what does the initiative represent for you?

I've always wanted to be part of Remembering Wildlife because it represents what I believe photography should stand for. It's not about ego; it's about using creativity, influence and storytelling to protect the natural world. Being invited to judge *Remembering Giraffes* is humbling, but what motivates me is contributing to something meaningful. I admire what Margot has built in Remembering Wildlife – not just her vision, but her commitment to delivering tangible results. Being involved feels deeply personal and profoundly important.

In these turbulent times we live in, what are your hopes or concerns for global wildlife?

My greatest concern is a growing attitude that treats wildlife and wild spaces as expendable in pursuit of short-term human interests. Too often, nature is framed as an obstacle rather than an asset, and that way of thinking is troubling. At the same time, I remain hopeful. Storytelling, education, and conservation play a vital role in reconnecting people with the natural world. Photography has a unique ability to humanise wildlife and remind us that these are living beings with intrinsic value. Hope, paired with action, is essential if we are to protect what remains.

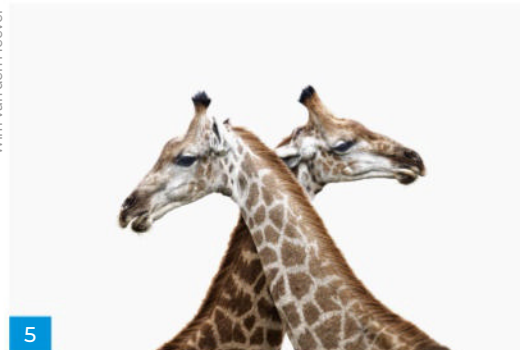
• *Long-term Remembering Wildlife contributors Jonathan and Angela Scott discuss their latest e-book, Safari Etiquette – turn to page 120.*



3



4



5

OPPOSITE PAGE

1 Southern giraffe in the Okavango Delta, Botswana by Daryl Balfour.

THIS PAGE

2 Giraffe's Misty Dawn by Wim van den Heever.

3 Masai giraffe mother & calf by Daryl Balfour.

4 Yellowbilled oxpeckers on Masai giraffe by Daryl Balfour.

5 Symmetry by Wim van den Heever.

Reader gallery

Digital Camera readers show how they've been getting creative, submitting images across a range of genres





1 'Hitters Hill' by Lee Howdle

"There are two things I love about this picture. The first is the scene of the peaks of Chrome Hill and Parkhouse Hill covered in snow with the pink sky above them. The other thing is the mist creeping in from the left. Normally, I'd have shot the landscape image facing the sunrise, but there was a bit of cloud cover behind these hills, and I thought it would make a great scene. It was -4C, so condensation was affecting the lens, making it tricky to focus."

Camera: Canon EOS 5D Mark IV and 24-105mm lens

Settings: 1/5 sec at f/11, ISO 200

www.leehowdlephotography.co.uk

Instagram: @leehowdle

Digital Camera says: This stunning landscape photo cleverly uses the rule of thirds, with the path as a leading line towards the cluster of trees on the right. The snow contrasts beautifully against the pastel pink hues in the sky, capturing the beauty of the landscape of the Peak District. It's also an example of a committed photographer braving the weather to capture that perfect shot.



2 'Al Maramah' by Yasser Alaa Mobarak

"Horsemen perform the traditional 'Al Maramah' equestrian display in Qena, Upper Egypt, as part of the celebrations for The Mawlid of Sidi Abdulrahim Al-Qanawi, a vibrant annual festival to commemorate the birth of the revered Sufi saint."

Camera: Nikon Z 5 and Nikkor Z 24-70mm f/4 S lens

Settings: 1/160 sec at f/8, ISO 100 **Instagram:** @yasseralaaamobarak

Digital Camera says:

We love this scene, with the crop of the horseman in the foreground, beautifully detailed and lit by the sun. The inclusion of the spectators watching the horses performing makes the viewer feel part of the action. The main scene is well composed according to the rule of thirds, and the use of an f/8 aperture delivers a sharp image.

3 'Glowing Mushrooms' by David Rijlaarsdam

"From the ordinary to the extraordinary. I shot these mushrooms in an underexposed setting, lit by a small LED, and used the focus stacking technique for greater depth of field. The images were combined using luminosity masking to create a mysterious glow, producing the fairy-tale atmosphere I was looking for."

Instagram: @davidrijlaarsdam

Digital Camera says:

A fine fungi capture, showing that you don't need to venture far to capture these amazing plants. The use of an LED light has lifted the fungi from the out-of-focus background.





4 'Lando Norris' by Danielle Grove

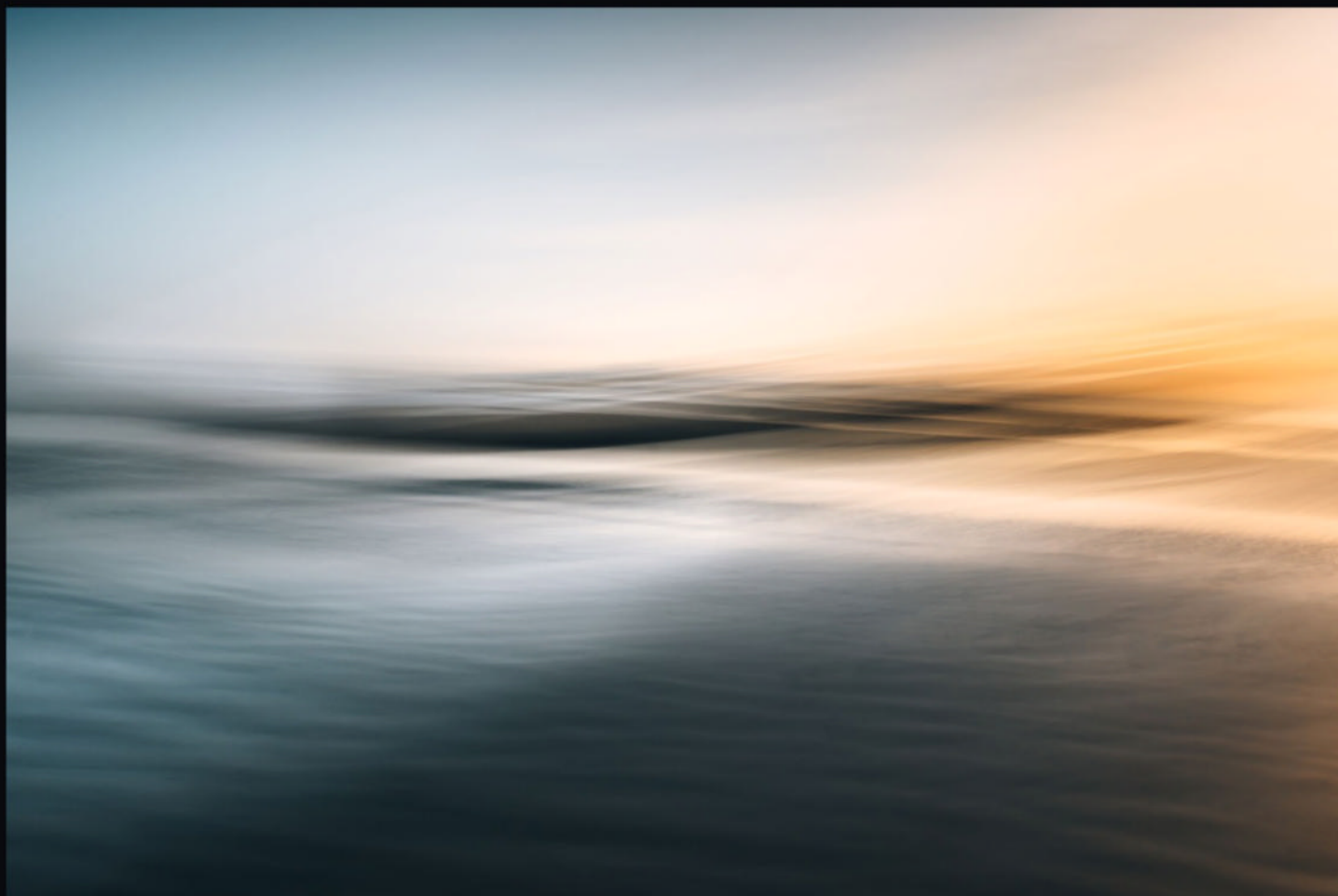
"I love the contrasting colours in this photo, highlighting the motion of the car. It was amazing to witness the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix in December 2025. I'm happy that I managed to get some good shots, especially this one of British racing driver Lando Norris, who won the Formula One Drivers' World Championship for McLaren on the day. It was difficult to focus on the cars as they came around the corners, so from my viewpoint, I had to pan as quickly as possible to get the shot through the opening in the fence." **Camera:** Canon EOS 50D
Settings: 1/30 sec at f/9, ISO 1600. **Instagram:** @daniicaptures_

Digital Camera says: And we love this photo of Lando Norris on the final race day of the season, too! With these cars reaching top speeds of over 230mph (370km/h), what makes this a great shot is that Danielle did brilliantly to get the main part of the car around the driver's helmet more or less in focus. The panning technique can be tricky at these speeds, but she has done really well. The day-night race at Abu Dhabi's Yas Marina circuit is always one of the most photogenic on the F1 calendar and we enjoyed the contrasting colours of the orange McLaren car against the green, turquoise and black background. Superb work, Danielle.

SEND US YOUR IMAGES!

Want to feature in our gallery or on our Instagram feed? Please email a high-res image (at least 10MB) marked 'Reader Images' and including a title and brief description, plus your social media handle, to:

digitalcamera@futurenet.com
or share it on Instagram with the tag:
#digitalcameramag



5 'Serenity' by Louise Collier

"I took this image while I was on the Woodland to Coast workshop with Wendy Bagnall (www.wendybagnall.com). We were at West Wittering beach in Sussex during low tide in early November. I chose to use ICM (intentional camera movement) not only to capture the intricate patterns in the sand,

the shallow pools and the setting sun, but also to convey the feeling of pure tranquillity."

Camera: Nikon Z 7 with a Megadap Sony E to Nikon Z Adaptor and Sony FE 24-105mm F4 G Lens with a K&F ND8 3-stop ND filter.

Settings: 1.6 secs at f/13, ISO 100

Instagram: @lcollier_fineart

Digital Camera says: This is a stunning artistic capture of this beautiful coastline. It shows how using an ND filter can really enhance the smoothness and colours of an ICM seascape scene. The shallow ripples of the water lead the eye to the sun setting over the horizon. Great work Louise!

6 'Eyeliner' by Eric Gregory

"This long-exposure shot of the London Eye, River Thames and Westminster Bridge was taken from the Golden Jubilee footbridge. After two hours of dull grey skies, enlivened by conversations with passers-by, the cloud cover finally broke and the golden hour produced a rich, colourful sky. I used ND 1000 and CPL filters to create the silky water and motion blur on the pods and moored vessel."

Camera: Fujifilm X-H2 and 18-55mm lens

Settings: 120 secs at f/11, ISO 125

Website: www.ericgregoryphotography.com

Digital Camera says:

This is a cracking cityscape over the River Thames, with the movement of the London Eye set against the static city backdrop. The spectacular skies were well worth waiting for.





7 'Stare of the Lion' by Paul Cheetham

"This image was taken on the Greater Makalali Game Reserve in South Africa. I first attended the reserve in 2020 as a conservation volunteer with Siyafunda Wildlife and Conservation, the joint owners of this private 'Big Five' reserve. In 2022, I started to take my own photography workshops to Siyafunda. This male lion and his brother share control of a pride called Tenby and the image was taken about 30 minutes before sunset. We were sitting in a safari vehicle with my photography group when the lion broke cover and walked down a dusty path towards us. The challenge on most safaris is being able to get low enough to get eye level with the subject. Thankfully, for this

photo, we were located at the bottom of a slope and, as the lion walked towards us, he was more or less at eye level."

Camera: Nikon Z 9 and 180-600mm lens

Settings: 1/1,250 sec at f/6.3, ISO 900, -0.7 EV

Instagram: @paul.cheetham.wildlife

Website: www.siyafundaconservation.com

Digital Camera says: Well done for capturing a superb portrait. The lighting highlights the lion's many battle scars and the direct eye contact gives him real soul, resulting in a fabulous wildlife photo.



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And if you would like to get your work published in our reader gallery, send your images to digitalcamera@futurenet.com

01

CREATIVE

How to create a rustic still life

Ignore the downpours and windy weather, raid your fridge or vegetable rack for this rustic tableaux, with **Wendy Evans**

Y

ou can either raid your kitchen for items or make a trip to the supermarket, with the added bonus that you can eat everything afterwards. The key element, though, if you're shooting this in your own home, is trying to exercise some control over the light. One neat trick is to close all your curtains, but then fit a blackout curtain with a slit in it in the middle of the window, to let in a shaft of light. This can be surprisingly effective. Otherwise, you can use artificial lights, as I did here, while drawing the curtains to remove most of the light from outside. The LED light was bright enough that anything not lit by it became dark.

Camera: Nikon Z 8, Nikkor VR 24-85mm f/3.4-4.5G lens

Settings: 1/200 sec at f/4.2, ISO 100, with Spot metering



Setting up your still life

Arrange the tableaux

The key items are the bread and the plate of vegetables, with the others as background details. As there are two layers to the composition, the bread and box are angled to be more dynamic. The grapes at the front pull the eye towards the plate of vegetables.

Colour scheme

It's important that most of the items are in a similar colour range, so with this being a rustic project, red was the core colour, with brown bread and a little green from the flowers. The products used were grapes, red onions, radishes, a courgette and some tulips. There's also a brown crate.



Base and background

The ideal base for projects like this is a large piece of old wood, full of texture. The next best thing is black cloth. I didn't have the first, and I couldn't find any of the second, so this patterned cloth had to suffice.

Choice of lens

This isn't a macro project, but you will need a short telephoto lens to be able to frame it properly. The more space you have, the wider the tableaux you can create. I was restricted here by the size of the table.

Lighting setup

The key light is to the left, using the barn doors on it to keep as much light away from the background as possible. On the right is a smaller light acting as a subtle fill light to bring out detail in the side of the loaf.

Step by step Shooting the scene

Here are the various ideas that went into shooting this rustic-themed still life



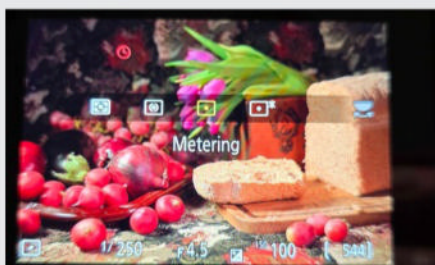
01 Colour temperature

The left light is a slightly warm colour, rather than being pure white, so the camera's white balance was set to 5600K. If you leave the camera on Automatic White Balance, it will attempt to correct any coloured lighting you use. The idea was for the scene to have a warm feel to it.



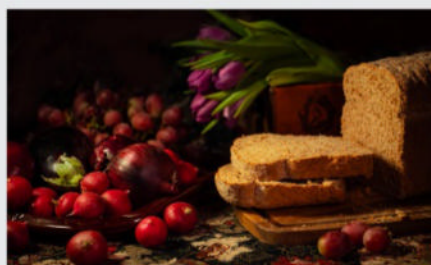
02 Three of a kind

If you're using individual elements, like the grapes at the front, then having a set of three usually works better than using two or four, which tend to look quite rigid. There were also three radishes to the left around the plate, though a fourth is crowding in and could have been moved.



03 Spot metering

As described in the Focus mode boxout, the idea was to make the background as dark as possible, so the metering mode was changed to Spot, and that was where the light fell on the edge of the brown bread. The midtones were brightened up, leaving the background dark.

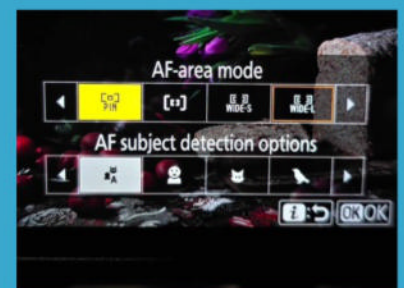


04 Alternative compositions

Once you have your main shot in the bag, don't be afraid to rearrange some of the elements to see if you can come up with an alternative composition. Here, I've switched the flowers and grapes around and introduced another slice of the bread (which was delicious).

Which focus mode should you use?

The choice of focus mode was keyed into the metering, as I use both functions tied to the shutter button. The idea was to make the background as dark as possible by exposing for the light falling on the bread. So, rather than use a large focus box, I selected the smallest point possible, the Pin focus point, and moved it to the edge of the bread. This meant it was in focus, and the f/4.2 aperture resulted in the second-ranked items going out of focus. A larger focus point might have selected a slightly different point, but more crucially, would have sampled the spot metering from a different point as well.



Using a pin focus point enabled precise focusing for the sharpest part of the image to be the edge of the bread.

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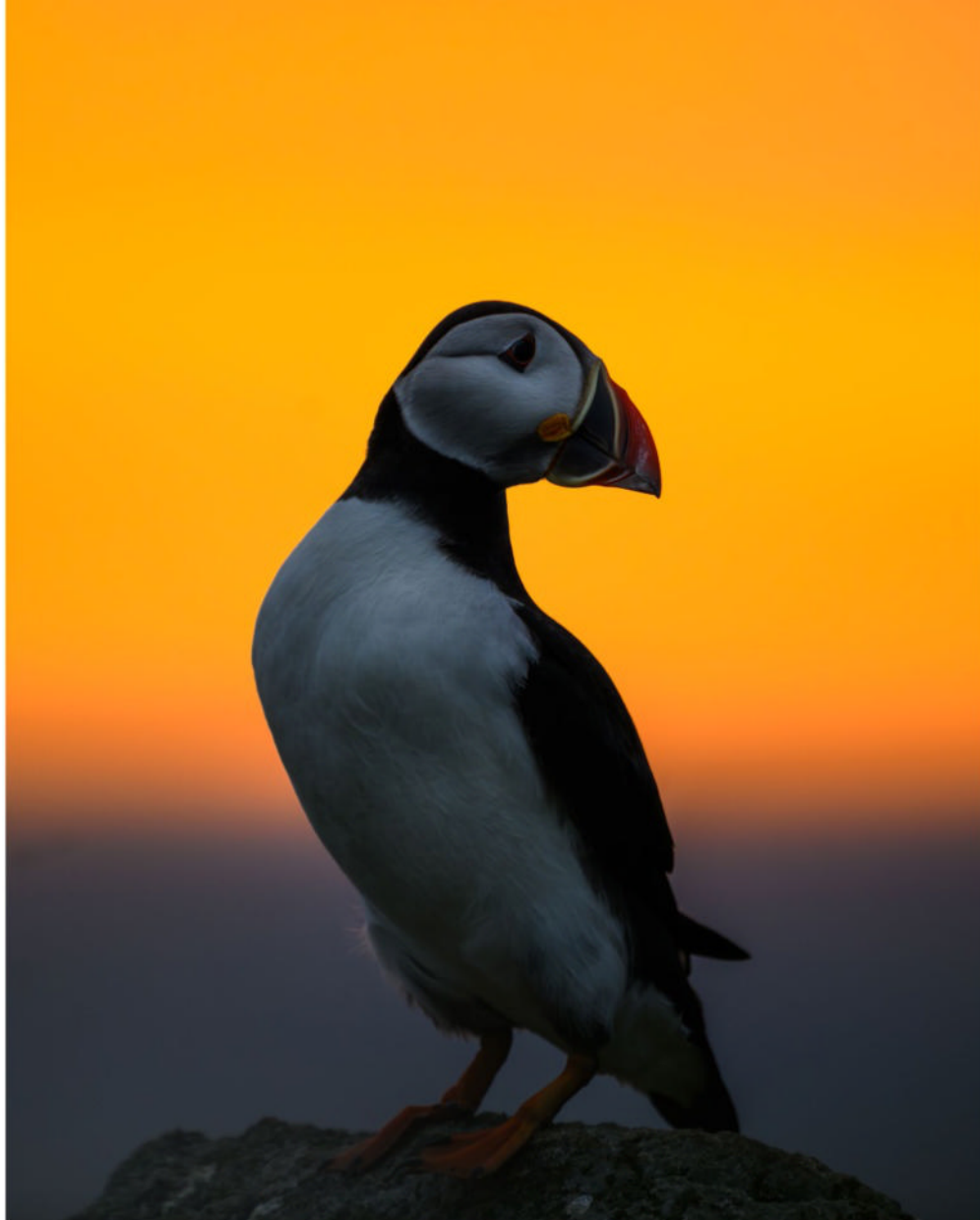
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Emma Stephenson

Emma's five top tips for shooting coastal birds at sunset

✓ Research the location
Get to know your subject and the environment it's in. Arriving at your chosen location some time beforehand gives you the opportunity to learn where the birds are roosting and also to observe their behaviour. Check the weather forecast to make sure you have a clear evening. This might sound silly, but use an app, such as PhotoPills, to check the direction in which the sun is going to set.

✓ Get to know your camera settings
When shooting at sunset, it's best to be in Manual mode with Auto ISO. You need to be confident in adjusting settings to adapt to changing light conditions and the challenges that fast-moving birds can present. Also, if you usually shoot jpegs, consider changing that to raw format to give more flexibility in post-processing.

✓ Try underexposing
Your camera will naturally want to overexpose the image, but it's actually better to set it to underexpose instead, to preserve the rich colours of sunset. You can do this by increasing your shutter speed to decrease the amount of light entering the camera.

✓ Experiment with your settings in changing light
Start with a 'safe' shot, where the bird looks sharp and you can see its details with the sunset behind. This image may have a high ISO or some blown highlights or loss of detail in the darker shadows, but once you've got that safe shot, then you can start to play! Adjust the aperture and shutter speed, or exposure compensation when using Auto ISO, to achieve an image you're happy with, that still has detail in the darker shadows but also has no blown highlights and good sharpness. This image was taken at 1/320 sec at f/5.6, ISO 360 (with Auto ISO), and EV -0.3.

✓ Learn basic editing
While you should be aiming to get as much of the shot right in-camera, editing can ensure your images are as close to what you actually saw as possible. For this image, I used Adobe Lightroom Classic, boosting the shadows to get a little more of the detail back and also to return some of the saturation to the oranges, reflecting the vibrant colours of the sunset I witnessed that evening.

02 WILDLIFE Emma Stephenson explains how to capture stunning seabird images late in the day



Emma is a neurodiverse hobbyist photographer. "I am a veterinary nurse who has had a passion for wildlife photography for about eight years now," she says. "I love being outdoors in nature in my spare time, and I enjoy playing with light and dark in my photography, capturing an animal's behaviour and a sense of the environment they're in," Emma adds.

"This image was taken on Skomer Island in Pembrokeshire, Wales. I love how intense the sunset is behind the puffin. It was a really beautiful and strong sunset with a gorgeous shade of orange. I like how it bathed the puffin in blue shadow as we were slipping into the blue hour. It was such a serene moment, and I'm happy I managed to capture it," she says.

"I was trying achieve a colourful contrast against an already iconically coloured bird. The vibrant orange of a sunset dips the puffin into an inky blue as dusk takes over. I wish I could have got lower to the ground, so that the whole

background was orange, then I wouldn't have the horizon line where the sun was dropping into the sea. Unfortunately, the cliff didn't quite allow for it," Emma explains.

Camera: Nikon Z 8 and Nikkor Z 100-400mm f/4.5-5.6 lens

Settings: 1/320 sec at f/5.6, ISO 360

Instagram: @emmas_wild_captures

THE LENS Nikkor Z 100-400mm f/4.5-5.6

This is an excellent alternative to Nikon's longer 180-600mm lens, offering great flexibility in a smaller and lighter form.





Alamy

03 SPORT Shoot to win

Wendy Evans explains how to hit the bullseye with your photography of archery

There are essentially three ways in which you might find yourself photographing archery as a sport.

The first one is at an archery contest, with a single archer loosing shots at the target; the second is as part of a medieval re-enactment; and the third is as a national festival showpiece, where archers aim to hit targets while riding on the back of a horse.

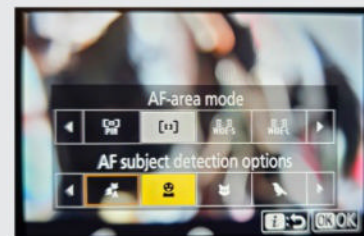
For a standard archery shot, you can either try landscape orientation to include the target or make it portrait orientation. In this case, either crop tightly to emphasise the person or open up the composition to show all of the bow. In either case, stand on the open side of the person, don't shoot from behind them.

Where things get really interesting is if you're trying to capture an archer on horseback, such as here, during the World Nomad Games in Kyrgyzstan. Now you have a fast-moving figure to cater for, which requires faster focusing and shutter speed. If you have subject-specific focus tracking, don't leave it to the camera on auto, as it's just as likely to lock onto the horse. Set it to a person to lock onto the figure.

If your camera doesn't have this feature, use continuous focusing and, in both cases, use a small group of focus points to pick up the body. A large group of focus points may, again, lock onto the horse instead. A single point is likely to be difficult to use accurately.

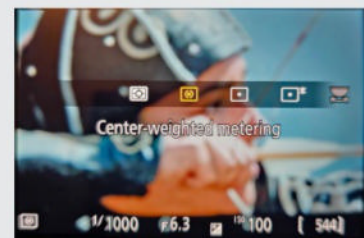
Settings: 1/1000 sec at f/6.3, ISO 100

Step by step Shooting archers



01 Setting up the focusing mode

Set the subject-tracking mode to people, so that it can help detect the face of the rider and focus on that. Failing that, a continuous focus mode is the best bet. Also, switch to burst or continuous shooting so that you can capture a batch of shots as the arrow is released.



02 Metering mode

If it's an outdoor event, it's likely that you're shooting in summer, and even in the middle of the afternoon, the sun will be high in the sky. Ideally, position yourself so the sun is falling on the side of the rider facing you. Centre-weighted metering may be your best option here.



03 Shooting parameters

Unless you have a pricey sports optic, the long lens you use is likely to have a widest aperture of f/5.6 or f/6.3, so set that. See what the light level is, as you'll need a shutter speed faster than 1/1,000 sec. Increase the ISO, if required.

04

BLACK & WHITE

Find your focus in prison

Wendy Evans explores a range of techniques for shooting inside an old prison, from aperture selection and picture styles to focusing and metering

RIGHT: Bring out the play of dark and light within the gloomy confines of a slowly decaying prison. 1/13 sec at f/7.1, ISO 100.

Old prisons make for fascinating photographic subjects, especially if you're thinking about converting the images to mono, or even shooting in mono in the first place. There isn't usually much colour anyway, but there are leading lines, light and shadow, structure and plenty of textures. The light levels inside a prison can be challenging, with dark areas and bright highlights from the small, high windows.

When you get out into open areas, like the exercise yard, that wide-angle lens that helped get everything into the shot inside might not be the right option. So you'll need the flexibility to go from a wide angle, like 18mm, to a short telephoto range, up to 70-80mm.

Camera: Nikon Z 8 and Nikkor 18-35mm f/3.4-4.5G lens

Settings: 1/13 sec at f/7.1, ISO 100

Picture Controls

If you aren't used to shooting in black and white, it can be a challenge to find the details to focus on. One way to get round this is to use a B&W Picture Control in-camera. Go to your camera's main menu and look for Picture Controls (or Picture Styles) and select Monochrome. For a DSLR, if you switch the rear LCD to Live View, you will now see the scene in mono. If you have a mirrorless camera, the viewfinder will show the scene in mono. The Picture Control will also be applied to any jpeg you shoot, but not a raw file format.



Step by step Know when to zoom in
Don't shoot everything with the wide-angle setting. Especially in open areas, make use of your zoom



24MM

01 Wide-angle distortion

Don't just walk up to interesting elements, especially when outdoors in the exercise yard, for example, unless you are using the distorted perspective for creative purposes. This is a 24mm focal length from right in front of the basketball hoop, which makes the building look like it's falling away.

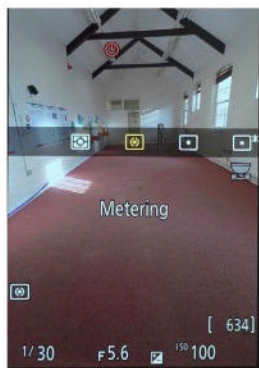


62MM

02 Use the telephoto

On this second image of the same basketball hoop, I stood much further away and zoomed in to use a 62mm focal length. The image has less distortion and the vertical lines appear much straighter than in the previous shot. The further away you can stand that's still within reach of your zoom, the better.



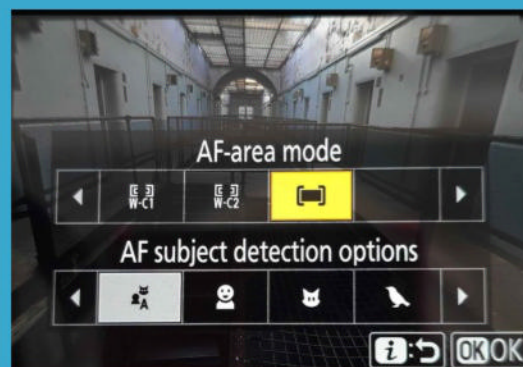
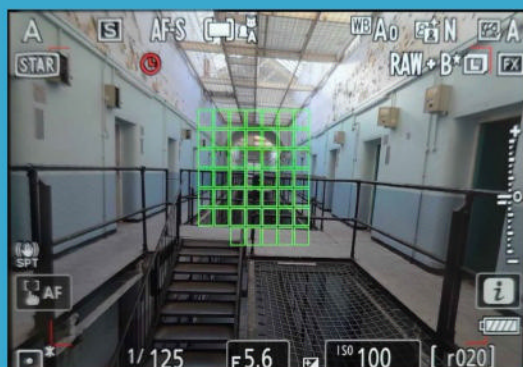


Metering matters

When you have lower light levels inside and bright light coming through windows, you will tend to lose the highlights with standard Zone/Evaluative or Centre-Weighted metering. In these conditions, a better option is to switch to Highlight metering, which exposes for the highlights, underexposing the rest of the image, which can then be brightened up in editing, especially if you are shooting raw files.

Focusing mode options

Sometimes it's better to have fewer focus points



01 Large focus point groups

The trouble with using something like this is that the interior of a prison can be quite busy in certain places, with different pieces of structure at different depths. If the system decides that something in the background has more elements that are selected by the focus points, then the foreground will be out of focus.

02 Change focus system

If you set up one of your customisable buttons on the camera to access the focus mode options, it will become easier to change to something more suitable when you're on location. Here, I've quickly scrolled through the options to a modest-sized area block for focusing. In a complex setting, a small point is likely to be too fiddly.

03 Use the new system

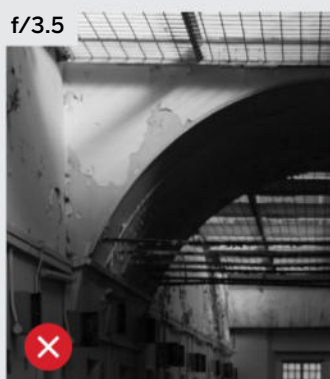
With the medium size focus block I could move it around the scene with the control stick (or just touch the LCD screen) making it far more accurate at focusing on the element I wanted, rather than something prominent in the background. The box is big enough to move quickly into position.



Aperture

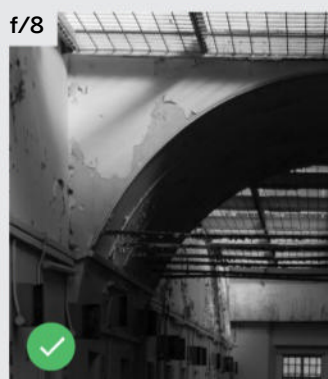
How much depth do you need?

For this type of image, you want as much in focus as possible, but you are also dealing with low light levels. However, as most interior shots will be with a wide-angle lens, you automatically get more depth of field, so you might not need to stop the aperture down as far as you think. These photos are extracts from the middle or back of an image at 18mm focal length, where the focus was a couple of metres into the image.



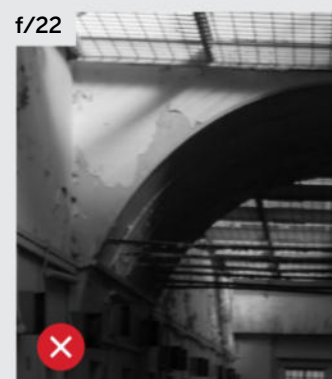
Wide aperture

This one used a relatively wide aperture of f/3.5, and while the foreground is good and sharp, there isn't enough depth of field in the image, so the middle-background isn't sharp enough.



Medium aperture

This is the same scene, now stopped down to f/8. Here, we have the perfect balance of sharpness throughout the image, from front to back. If the light level is low, you could use f/5.6.



Narrow aperture

There are two problems with an f/22 setting here. First, it requires ramping the ISO up to get 1/15 sec, and second, the lens is quite soft at this aperture – it's far sharper at f/5.6-f/8.

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Stewart Reading-Brown

05 ASTRO

Stewart Reading-Brown shares his tips behind his amazing star trail from Sussex



This image was captured just outside Henfield in West Sussex. There's so much I enjoy about this photo. It's not every day you come across a dead tree rooted in a dew

pond, let alone with clear sight lines to the north. That combination made it an ideal location for a star trail. With no wind, the pond was a perfect mirror, doubling the rotation of the stars and creating an even more striking result. My aim was simply to come away with a clean star trail, paired with a full reflection in the dew pond.

Working through the night always presents a few challenges, and framing wasn't one of them. Once I had the camera where I wanted it and ensured the north star was in the shot, I ran a few test exposures and fine-tuned the composition before setting the intervalometer to continuously shoot and let the camera do

the legwork. The cold proved to be the much bigger issue. There was a lot of moisture in the air, so I needed to remember to put a lens warmer and battery pack into my camera bag to stop the lens from fogging up.

Another challenge was the number of flight paths that cross this area. Because the pond was reflecting the sky so clearly, almost every plane needed to be removed twice. In total, I shot 424 frames over 180 minutes, capturing 45° of the Earth's rotation. The tree was lit from the side for the final few frames. Each photo had a global edit in Lightroom before being exported to Photoshop.

Camera: Canon R5 and Canon RF 15-35mm F2.8L IS USM lens

Settings: 25 secs at f/2.8, ISO 800

Instagram: @srbphotos_

Website: www.srb.photos

Stewart's five top tips for star trails

✓ Plan ahead

If you can, scout your location during daylight hours. It's also a good opportunity to plan your composition, saving time later on when you are setting up. Apps have their place in planning, so use them when and where you can. As a bonus, star trails mean letting your camera work for hours at a time, so don't forget to make sure you have a full battery to get the most out of the session.

✓ Dress sensibly

Shooting star trails will often involve standing around for hours and, during the winter, conditions can be cold and damp. Warm layers, waterproof boots and gloves will help to keep you going. Bringing a flask of hot tea or coffee often comes in handy, too.

✓ Protect your lens from fogging

This one is easy to overlook, but it could be the difference between getting the shot you want and a wasted night of photography. Night shoots usually mean moisture in the air. A simple lens warmer and power bank can save an entire session. Switch it on before you begin shooting, so that the glass stays clear throughout the sequence.

✓ Use continuous shooting

Set your intervalometer to fire continuously with no gaps between exposures. I usually aim for something like 20-30 seconds per frame. Gaps can cause breaks, so avoid delays between shots to get a smooth trail.

✓ Be prepared for post-processing

Expect to remove plane trails, satellites, and occasional distractions. It's time-consuming, but the results are usually worth it. Cleaning each frame individually before stacking them together produces a cleaner, more polished star trail.

PRO KIT

Remote release

Most cameras have a built-in intervalometer, which operates the shutter at set intervals. If not, you can use remote shutter release. These can be programmed to shoot a certain number of images at set intervals.





Wendy Evans

06 MACRO Master the board

Wendy Evans explains how to shoot a dramatic macro shot of a chess set with some modern LED lighting

You could set up a chessboard and photograph it using natural light; there's nothing wrong with that approach. However, thanks to inexpensive LED lighting that offers the ability to use any colour combinations you like, without being restricted to

old-fashioned gel filters, you can spice up your chessboard shots with some lighting that's a little more colourful and dramatic.

Here, the board is set up so that the white queen is directly attacking the black king. Make sure that pieces are on legitimate squares (especially the bishops) and that

you have a clear view of the key piece. There should be one piece that's the focal point, as we'll be using a wide aperture to throw the rest of the board out of focus.

Camera: Nikon Z 8 and Sigma VR 105mm f/2.8G macro lens

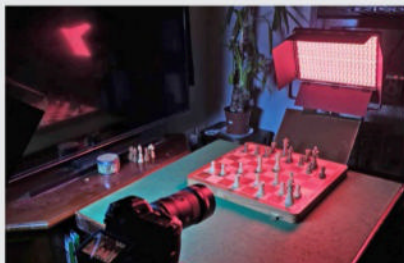
Settings: 1/320 sec at f/5.6, ISO 100

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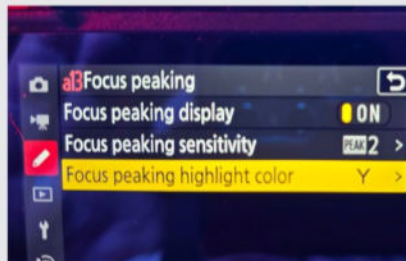
Step by step Maximise your focus

As this uses a shallow depth of field, focus peaking helps



01 Set up the lights

This was the initial setup with the rear LED panel set to red and the front left one to blue, which produced a deep blood-red board. So I switched the colours around by simply rotating the dials on the back.



02 Help with focus

Autofocus is fine, but I wanted it to be precise, thanks to shooting at f/5.6. Switch to manual focus, go into settings and turn on Focus peaking. Pick a different display colour from what's in the scene.



03 Adjust the focus

The camera was set to a two-second timer to avoid any shake, and the focus peaking effect was used to fine-tune the focus on the key piece, the white queen, which is on the left third vertical for the composition.

07

TRAVEL

Shoot cool city scenes

Dave Fieldhouse reveals the bright lights of Tokyo and Hong Kong with his two books



Dave Fieldhouse is a landscape, street and urban photographer. He has been a category winner in various photo competitions

You usually take landscape images, so what made you switch to shooting street photography for this project?
It was mainly time and opportunity. Work pressures and a young family made it difficult to find the time to photograph landscapes. I was spending a lot of time in cities, so I decided to maximise the opportunities in front of me, rather than lament the ones that weren't.

Your two books are on Hong Kong and Tokyo. What was it about these two cities that attracted you to them?
The neon lights. Ever since watching *Blade Runner*, I've been drawn to those cinematic colours. They're two of the safest cities on the planet, making them ideal for wandering alone in the dark.

What is your camera and lens choice for shooting street scenes?
I use a Sony A7 IV with a range of fast prime lenses for night shoots and a medium telephoto lens for daytime. My favourite lens is my 35mm f/1.4.

What are the main technical challenges you face when getting your night shots?
The biggest challenge is the processing stage. I tend to underexpose when shooting, so as not to blow the highlights, and then recover the shadow detail in Lightroom back at the computer.

Do you have any other cities in mind?
Nothing planned at present, although I have a bucket list of cities I would like to photograph, including New York, Naples, Hanoi and Lisbon.
Instagram: @davefphotos



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Dave's five top tips for shooting street scenes

1 Minimise risk, carry as little as possible

I tend to wander with a camera and lens, a lens cloth and a spare battery in my pocket, that's it. Even in the safest cities in the world, there are still some bad people.

2 Fast is best

Use your fastest lens; anything with an aperture of f/2 or faster is ideal for photographing at night.

3 Follow the light

Unlike shooting traditional landscapes, the city provides predictable light, so use it. Use a brightly lit doorway or the glow from an advertising board to highlight a subject.

4 Keep to relatively busy areas

When I'm in London, I tend to shoot in Soho a lot because it's always busy and there's plenty of light, so there's always something to photograph.

5 Don't annoy people

Don't go around shoving your camera in a stranger's face or pointing the camera at them for too long. Don't be creepy, like hiding behind a hedge. Act natural and most people won't notice you.



Get Dave's zines Hong Kong and Tokyo

These two visually stunning photo zines are available, each featuring almost 50 images taken on each of the trips.

They're priced at £14 each, including postage and packing (UK only, currently).

For details of how to get your hands on a copy of either zine, email Dave at: info@davefieldhousephotography.com

08

MACRO

Rate my photo

Kimberley Hodson-Walker's fungi macro shot comes under the microscope

This photo was taken in the woods near me and features mushrooms growing out of the tree. Using my Canon 650D with a 55mm lens and a macro adapter, I set the camera to portrait mode to capture a close-up image of these mushrooms growing on the tree.

I moved as close as I possibly could to highlight their detail and texture, even getting scratched by some thorns in the process of doing so. To achieve the final shot, it required some patience, steady positioning and attention to light.

Settings: 1/320 sec at f/20, ISO 100

✓ Consistent colours

The main colours in the image are all in the same range, with plenty of cream and brown tones. Including patches of bright green foliage in the frame would completely distract the eye, so this colour palette works well.

✓ Angles and lines

It's hard to get a dynamic photo with tiny mushrooms growing out of a tree, but Kim has succeeded here with the stems arching up and pointing slightly right to left. Meanwhile, the stem of the tree is angled in the other direction, from left to right vertically.

✗ High noise levels

To get sufficient depth of field, Kim used an f/20 aperture, which meant that she also had to ramp the ISO up to 6400, which made the final image rather noisy. However, Noise reduction tools in software, such as Adobe Lightroom, are excellent at resolving this.

✗ Under-exposure

With white objects in a dark scene, it would be easy to overexpose the fungi and lose the detail in them, so Kim has to be commended for managing to avoid this. However, the scene in general is underexposed, so there isn't much detail visible outside of the mushrooms themselves – see the boxout (right) for more details of how to resolve this.

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© Kimberley Hodson-Walker

✗ Central composition

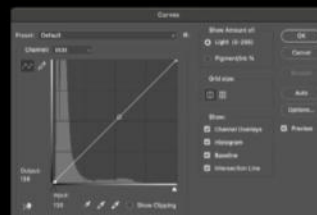
With all the great lines and angles in this photo, it's a shame that the mushrooms themselves are right down the middle of the photo. Cropping the image would be a quick fix.

✗ Stray stems

Although it's hard to see because the scene is fairly dark, there is a stray mushroom stem right at the top of the photo. The cap of the mushroom isn't visible – it's just the stem leading out of the photo – but once you see it, you can't ignore it. If you can't compose the image to avoid this, then it's worth carefully removing it from the scene altogether.

Underexposure

As can be seen from the Histogram, the original photo that Kim sent in was underexposed, with the cream tones of the mushrooms, which are the highlights, being just above the middle of the tones. Tweaking this with Curves or Levels will brighten the entire scene without losing the highlights in the mushrooms.



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.

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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

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09

STREET

Why this shot works

With this unusual image from Iran, **Morteza Pahang** was the winner of issue 302's 'Street' reader challenge



"This image was taken on the streets of Tehran, where everyday life unfolds like a quiet theatre. I was drawn to the way urban elements, such as lines, light and architecture, interact

with human presence in a single frame. For me, street photography is about observing reality and recognising these small visual coincidences that happen for a split second. Shooting in the late-morning light, I waited for the right moment when the rhythm of the city and the movement of people aligned."

Camera: Canon EOS 5D Mark III and Canon EF 24-105mm lens

Settings: 1/800 sec at f/8, ISO 250

IMAGE ANALYSIS

1 Interesting ambiguity

The focus is on the swan shape in the background, rather than the figure in the foreground, confounding the viewer.

2 Low angle

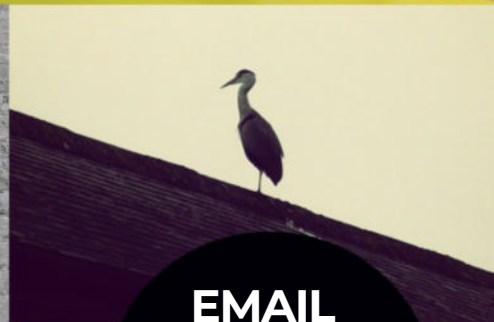
The low shooting position adds some menace to both the figure and from the installation behind, lending a sense of unease to the image.

3 Leading lines

Normally used to take the eye into and through the photo, here, the looming verticals help draw the eye up the photo from the bottom.



© Morteza Pahang



10 WILDLIFE Birds challenge

This month's assignment is to capture our feathery friends

Welcome to our monthly reader photo challenge, where the winning image will feature in the magazine, and you can claim bragging rights. For March, the theme is 'Birds'. They can be alive or dead, flying or perched, eating and hunting, or hovering for nectar in a flower. You can shoot one bird on its own, two birds interacting, or a group of them

in an interesting pattern or formation. You can even go for an awesome murmuration. As long as it has birds in it, we'll take it.

Enter via email

Email digitalcamera@futurenet.com with 'Birds' as the subject. Please attach your entry (send a hi-res version, rather than links) and include a brief description of the image. Look out for our monthly

reader challenges every month, and other calls for entries on our Instagram feed at: [@digitalcameramag](https://www.instagram.com/digitalcameramag). Enter the challenge by 26 February. And please remember that only one image per reader can be submitted.

The winner will be announced in issue 306 (Spring 2026) of *Digital Camera*, which goes on sale on Friday 27 March.



Email your entry to: digitalcamera@futurenet.com



TOP PHOTOGRAPHER

Bruno Ribeiro, Portugal

GuruShots

We've joined up with GuruShots, the world's greatest online photography game, to present the winning images from its Night Photography contest

G

uruShots is billed as the world's leading photo game. It's an online platform conceived to give global exposure to people who love taking photographs. GuruShots members start out as 'Newbies' and compete with other photographers to win challenges, increase their ranking on the site and progress to the coveted 'Guru' status. Challenges are voted on by Gurus and the wider GuruShots community, and there's a fresh challenge every day, such as 'Night Photography'. Winners receive prizes from GuruShots' partners, including Adobe Stock, Lowepro and Kodak. Find out more at www.gurushots.com

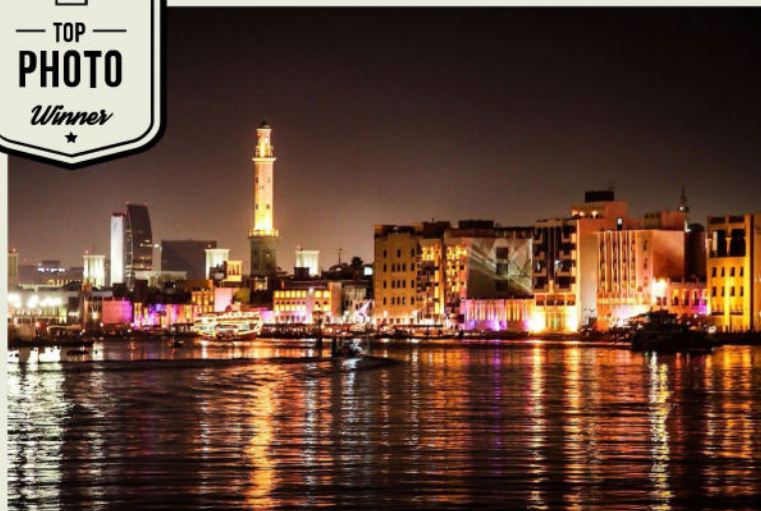
Enter GuruShots contests

Sign up to GuruShots for free, upload your best photos, enter challenges and receive helpful feedback from the GuruShots community. The best photography game in the world is now available on mobile! Download the app and get the GuruShots experience anywhere, anytime!
www.gurushots.com



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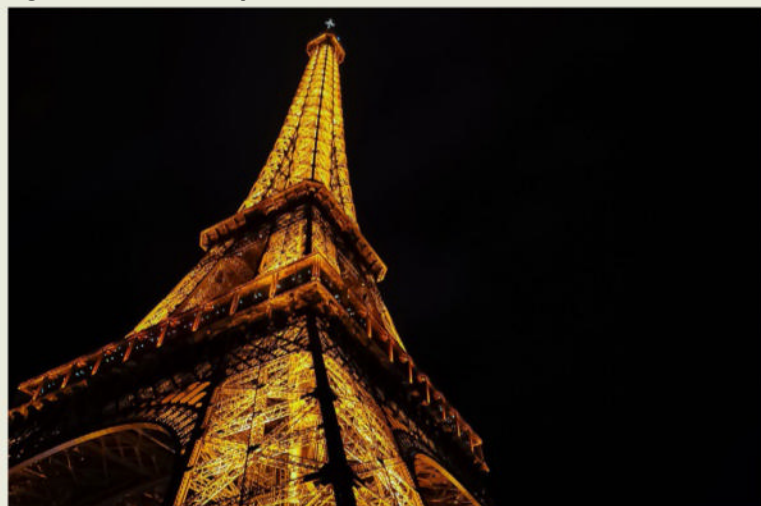


TOP PHOTO
Ronel Victor, South Africa



GURU'S TOP PICK
Anton Osinga, Netherlands

Inguna Škestere, Germany

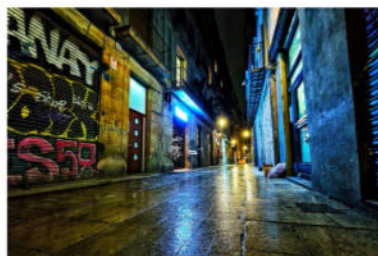


Honourable mentions

Roy Egloff,
Switzerland



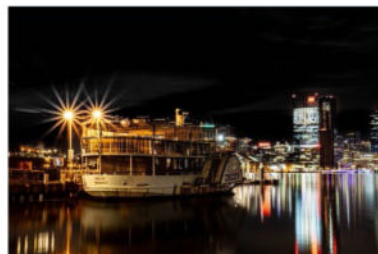
Juha Hi,
Norway



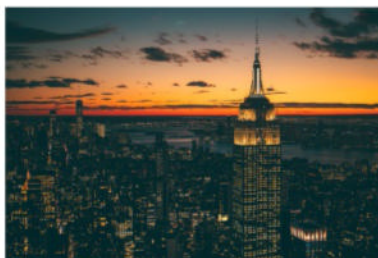
Will,
United States



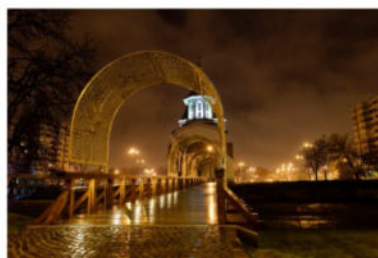
Daniel
Richardson,
Australia



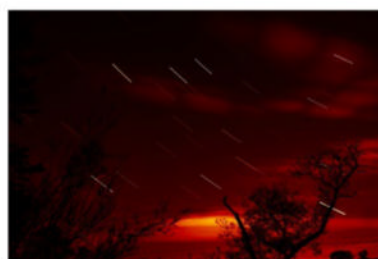
Gary Luk,
United States

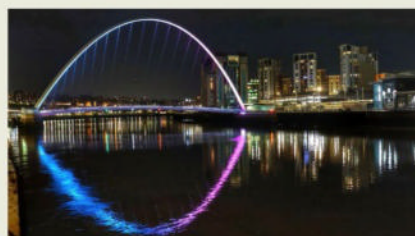
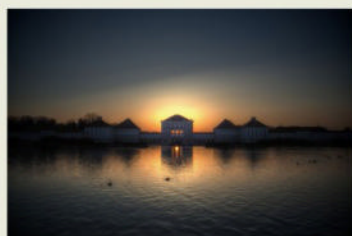


Bogdan Mocanu,
Romania

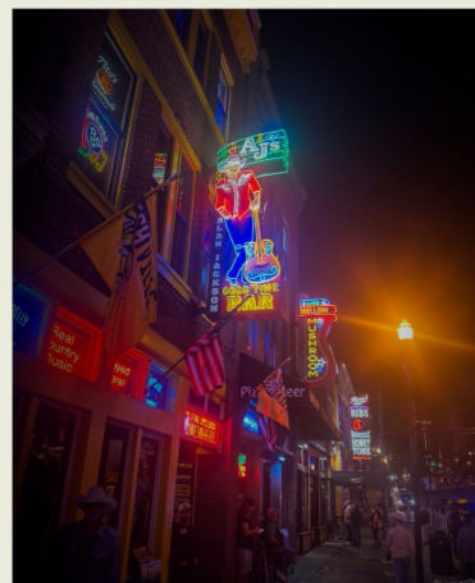


Andrew Carter,
United Kingdom





CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Andrew Hitrov, Russia; Hermann Klecker, Germany; Stephen Jones, United Kingdom; Keith Brown, United States; Ashley Hayes, United States



More honourable mentions



Xan White, Switzerland



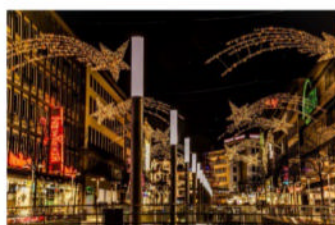
Kurt Borg Coppini, Malta



Justin McCloskey, United States



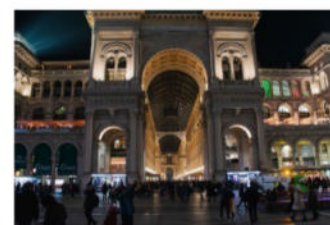
Cody Hammock, United States



Daggi M, Germany



Bryony Herrod-Taylor, United Kingdom



Tsoki Vrazhillov, Bulgaria



FINE-ART ARCHITECTURE

10 tips for turning out gallery-quality images the next time you visit a big city, by **Mike Harris**

A

rchitectural photography is one of the most accessible genres. And you don't need expensive gear, either.

Static subjects, such as buildings, allow you to carefully compose each shot, so you shouldn't be ditching many pixels in post-production, making a high-resolution sensor a luxury and not an essential. Also, advanced AF systems and fast burst speeds simply aren't required.

Fast glass is useful in low light, but you could build an entire portfolio shooting at f/8. If you were to carry just one lens, I'd recommend an ultra-wide-angle zoom, but a standard zoom or a wide-angle or standard prime would serve you fine.

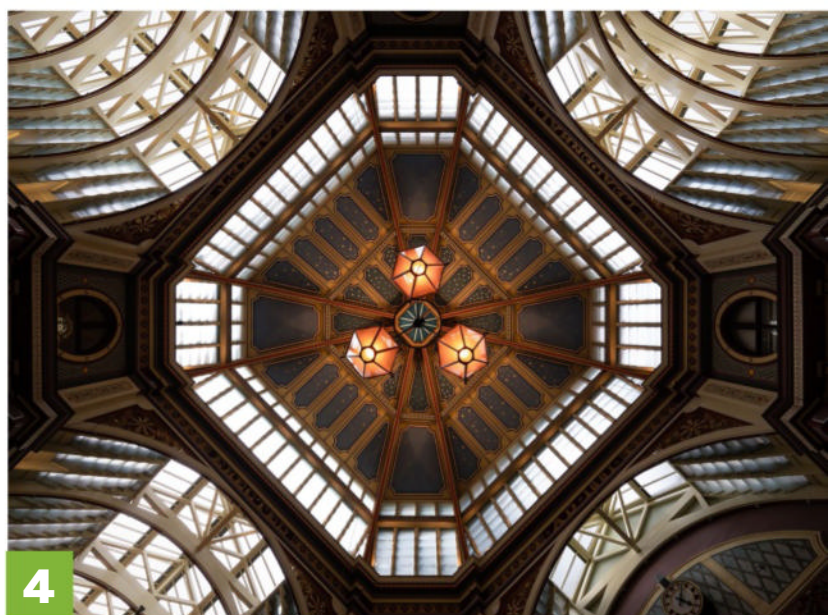
The key to architectural photography is identifying a suitable subject and a flattering composition. While big cities boast the most variety and potential, you can find suitable subjects almost anywhere.

I took all of the images for this feature in London, and most of them are known architectural hotspots that have been photographed time and time again. It's never a bad idea to deviate from the well-trodden path to find unique angles and subjects – but if you're starting out, you can hone your skills at the Millennium Bridge and St Paul's (pictured), Canary Wharf Underground station (page 53), or the view of the Shard near London Bridge (page 54).



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Make it mono in Silver Efex	p73	Active and dead space	p78
Figure in a cityscape	p74	Simple symmetry	p79



1 DON'T FORGET TO LOOK UP

Look-up shots are a mainstay of architectural photography. Here's how to find and photograph them

Architectural photographers don't just observe what's in front of them: they also need to keep tabs on what's above them. Look up while you're walking around the big city, and you'll soon notice interesting architectural shapes and patterns converging overhead.

Tall buildings receding into the distance, such as the Leadenhall Building [1] and the One New Change shopping centre's escalator [2], provide leading lines, while converging rooftops – like my image from More London [3] – can form interesting

shapes and patterns. Symmetry is another great indication that a 'look-up' is worth capturing, such as the ceiling in Leadenhall Market [4]. A big advantage of look-up compositions is that you don't have to worry about crowds, since you'll be angling your camera away from them. You can capture this kind of image at any time of day, provided you're happy with the lighting.

An ultra-wide-angle lens is a great look-up tool. I used a Nikon Z 14-30mm f/4 S. The wide-angle end affords me a sprawling field of view, often allowing me to cram in multiple buildings into the frame. Look-ups



If your camera has a fully-articulated rear LCD, you can hold it on the ground – lens pointing directly up – and still compose your shot. My Nikon Z 8 only has a tilting screen, so for the image of the One New Change escalator [2], I had to lie on my back to get the angle.

often benefit from central compositions or require you to line up horizontals, so if you're using an EVF or Live View, consider turning on a 4x4 grid. This will make it much easier to line up your shot.



This view from inside Canary Wharf station has been photographed many thousands of times. The trick is to capture it completely deserted. When empty, it's unsettlingly beautiful.



Mike Harris

2 CAPTURE DESERTED SHOTS OF CITY HOTSPOTS

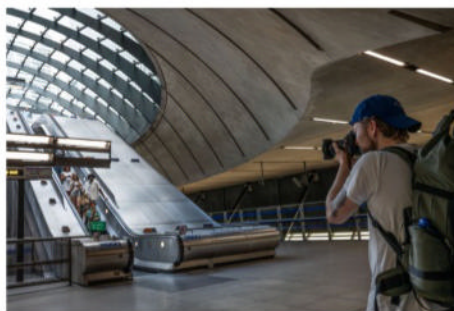
Don't want to rise at 4am? Patience and a little Photoshop trickery can help you 'avoid' the crowds, even in the middle of the day when the city is at its busiest...

Unless you're intentionally including crowds of people in your compositions, they will serve as a distraction and you'll want to omit them altogether. The best way to do this is by starting very early in the morning, when crowds are at a minimum. But this is really only effective in the months when the sun rises in the early hours. At any other time of year, you'll be forced to work when crowds are out in force.

You can skew the odds in your favour by shooting during weekdays (outside of school holidays) and timing shoots to avoid periods of peak footfall, such as rush hour and lunchtime. Then it's just a case of being patient. I spent more than 20 minutes at Canary Wharf Underground station to capture my image (above). And even then, I had to clone out a couple of pedestrians.

A tip for removing people in editing is to take at least two identical frames, two or

three seconds apart. So long as the people are moving, they should occupy different areas in each image. You can then import the images into the same Adobe Photoshop document and align them (Edit > Auto-Align Layers). Finish by adding a Layer Mask to the top layer and painting the people away with a soft, black brush, revealing the unoccupied spaces below.



When shooting in cities, you often have no choice but to deal with crowds. Timing, patience and a little editing magic will help you capture deserted scenes.

GEAR ADVICE ULTRA-WIDE

My Nikon Z 14-30mm f/4 S is my most-used lens for architectural photography, and can be considered akin to the more conventional 14-24mm focal range. When you're dealing with massive subjects such as skyscrapers and cathedrals, you often require a sprawling field of view. And with a standard 30mm focal length at the tight end, you could feasibly capture architecture for the rest of your life and use nothing else.





Mike Harris



PRO SHOT

Who glares wins

This popular view of The Shard (above) was shot in bright sunlight. I had to use a 10-stop ND filter to yield an exposure long enough to blur the clouds and the River Thames. I used my hands to shield the sides of the filter to prevent glare.

PRO ADVICE

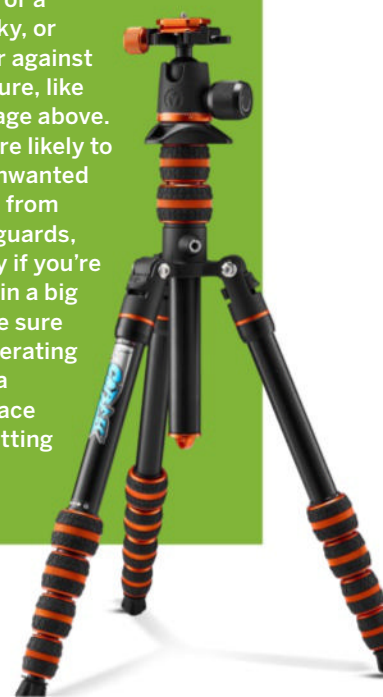
Screw-in vs slot-in filters

Screw-in filters are easier to use: they screw directly onto the end of a compatible lens thread. They can be adapted and stacked, but this can cause vignetting. Slot-in filters stack better, and compatible filter holders can be used with most lenses.

TOP TIP

TO USE, OR NOT TO USE A TRIPOD?

Tripods are great if you want a long-exposure blur from people against static buildings or a blurred sky, or still water against architecture, like in the image above. Tripods are likely to attract unwanted attention from security guards, especially if you're shooting in a big city. Make sure you're operating safely in a public space before setting up your tripod.



3 USE AN 'ND' TO BLUR MOVEMENT

Minimalist architecture images are all about simplifying the frame – blurring fussy details will create a cleaner composition

S

harp people, birds, lapping water features and dappled clouds can all detract from the architecture that should be the focal point of your image.

Using a long exposure to blur these elements will help to tidy up your frame and make those geometric, architectural shapes stand out a little bit more.

Neutral-density (ND) filters are essential accessories for shooting long exposures. These tinted sheets block varying degrees of light, so longer shutter speeds are required to gather enough light to produce balanced exposures. ND filters are available in a variety of strengths, most commonly three, six and 10-stop variants. To capture The Shard, I used a 10-stop ND filter from NiSi Filters.

HOW TO USE... ND FILTERS

To simplify your architectural scenes, use a neutral-density filter to lengthen exposures and blur features such as water and clouds

SECURE YOUR SETUP

1 Set up your tripod and frame your scene. Switch to Matrix/Evaluative metering and Manual mode. Dial in ISO 100 and an aperture between f/8 and f/11. Adjust your shutter speed to balance your exposure. Use single-point AF to focus, then switch to manual to prevent refocusing; this won't be necessary if you are using back-button focus.



Mike Harris

ADD YOUR FILTER

2 Select your chosen neutral-density filter (I used a 10-stop filter), taking care to hold it at the edges to avoid fingerprints. Use an air blower to blast away any loose debris on both sides before wiping away more stubborn detritus with a lens cloth. Slide the filter into the slot that's closest to the front lens element.



LONG EXPOSURES

3 If your camera's Live View is accurate, you can increase the length of your exposure and eyeball the results. Otherwise, avoid the maths by downloading an app such as Long Exposure Calculator. Simply input your ND filter's strength and the shutter speed you inputted in step one to calculate your new exposure time.



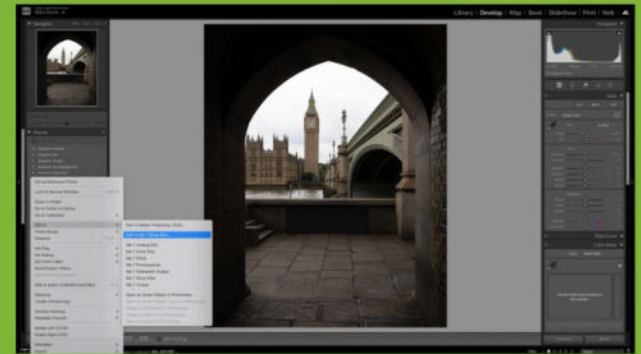
BAD VIBRATIONS

4 Camera shake is a concern whenever you shoot long exposures. Turn off image stabilisation and use a remote shutter release, self-timer or exposure delay mode to avoid physically pressing the shutter button. DSLR 'mirror slap' can cause unwanted vibrations, too. Mirror-up or exposure delay mode can help mitigate this.



4 MAKE IT MONO USING NIK SILVER EFEX

Many mono photographers swear by Nik Silver Efex, and with its selection of quality presets and compatibility with Creative Cloud, it's easy to see why.



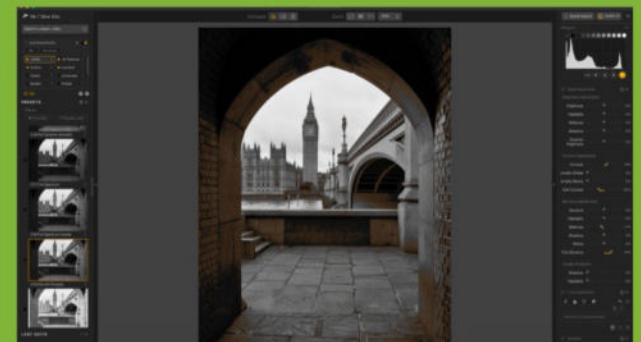
IMPORT FROM CREATIVE CLOUD

1 The beauty of Silver Efex is that it can be used as an Adobe Photoshop or Lightroom plugin. I like to import my images into Lightroom, rate them and make any necessary lens corrections, then open them in Silver Efex.



CHOOSE A MONO PRESET

2 Silver Efex allows you to select a base from dozens of mono presets. I heartily recommend going through the entire list and finding your preference. This alone makes Silver Efex worth it and saves lots of time in the long run.



TWEAK TO YOUR HEART'S CONTENT

3 Once you've settled on a preset, you can tweak it to your taste using the extensive range of tonal sliders, including the clever Curves histogram and Control Points, which allow you to perform local adjustments. When you have finished, click Apply to save a copy in Lightroom.

5 FIGURE IN A CITYSCAPE

A human element can add interest and a sense of scale

Architecture doesn't always have to be front and centre in your shots. A human element can anchor compositions with no clear focal point, while also providing the viewer with a scale reference. This is useful if you want to amplify the grandeur of, say, a high ceiling or an archway.

Adding human interest isn't always easy. Crowds rarely look good, so you'll want to isolate either a single person or a small group (the rule of odds works well here). You'll also need to find the right subject. Perhaps it's raining and you want someone holding an umbrella, or maybe you're looking

for somebody wearing light clothing to contrast against an otherwise dark scene.

Think about your subject's positioning. For example, walking subjects look best if they're heading towards active space (see page 60). Subjects framed against a clean background are much more visible than those lost against a busy background.

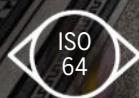
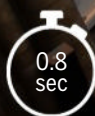
Photographing the right subject in the right portion of the frame is certainly no easy feat. Be prepared to wait a while or even return to the same spot multiple times before you capture the image you've been seeing in your mind's eye.



I had to wait a while to capture this lone pedestrian walking underneath the Adams Plaza Bridge in Canary Wharf. A few people occupied the midground, but I was able to clone them out.

Mike Harris

Unless you have some kind of permit, you will never be able to capture a tourist attraction such as the Natural History Museum without the crowds. Blurring the people is a clever way of making them an interesting feature.



6 GO INSIDE AND CAPTURE BUILDING INTERIORS

Sometimes, it's what's on the inside that counts...

Exteriors only represent half of architectural photography subjects. Head inside to seek out a plethora of photo opportunities. Arches and doorways make great frames within frames, sweeping staircases or long corridors form effortless leading lines, and ceilings often boast intricate, photogenic patterns. Use the low lighting to your advantage by blurring crowds with long exposures. Or frame a special feature, like this spiral staircase in Tate Modern (right).

Low light and restrictions against using a tripod mean you may have to boost your ISO to compensate. A noisy image is always preferred to a blurry image and if you're converting your images to mono, a little noise can make it look as though you intentionally added film grain. Combine modern sensors with the latest noise-reduction software, and photographers are getting away with higher ISOs than ever.



Mike Harris

7 USE CHANNELS TO SELECT AND REPLACE BUSY SKIES

Learn to add clean gradient skies in Adobe Photoshop

We've already seen how an ND filter can be used to blur out distracting textured skies. But if you're unable to use an ND filter or the clouds simply aren't moving fast enough to smooth out the sky, you may have to resort to other means in post-production.

Many photographers will tell you that you should get things right in-camera. They're certainly not wrong, but if you

only have a limited amount of time at a location or the conditions simply aren't working in your favour, knowing how to complete more involved edits can be a necessary evil.

As you can see (right), replacing an unflattering sky with a gradient can prove highly effective. But, as is often the case with image editing, the more time you put in, the better the end result. Here's how to use Photoshop's channels to replace skies.

TELEPHOTO LENSES

Long lenses are often thought of as the preserve of wildlife and sports photographers, but if you already own ultra-wide and standard zooms, a 70-200mm zoom is a fantastic addition. It won't get the same amount of use, but it might prove invaluable in the right situation. I used it to capture my image of St Paul's (right). A wider angle would have diminished the cathedral, but the tighter field of view made it more dominant.



PRO ADVICE Bit of a blur

The Millennium Bridge is a tourist hotspot and a main thoroughfare, so it's almost impossible to photograph it free of people, unless you're there in the early hours. I decided to make a feature of the crowds by using an ND filter to yield a long exposure and blur them. The speed required to blur the crowd wasn't enough to smooth out the sky as well, so I had to resort to other means in post-production.

ADD A GRADIENT SKY



SELECT THE RIGHT CHANNEL

1 Duplicate the Background layer (Ctrl/Cmd+J). In the Channels panel (Windows > Channels), find the channel with the most contrast between subject and sky (mine was Blue). Right-click your chosen channel and select Duplicate.

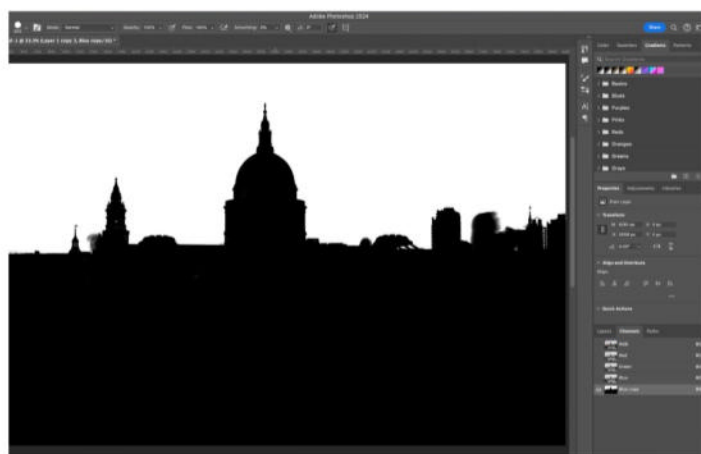


ADJUST THE LEVELS

2 Select the duplicate. Go to Image > Adjustments > Levels to bring up the Levels dialog box. Adjust the Input Levels highlight point until the sky is completely white, then pull across the shadow point until it meets the highlights.

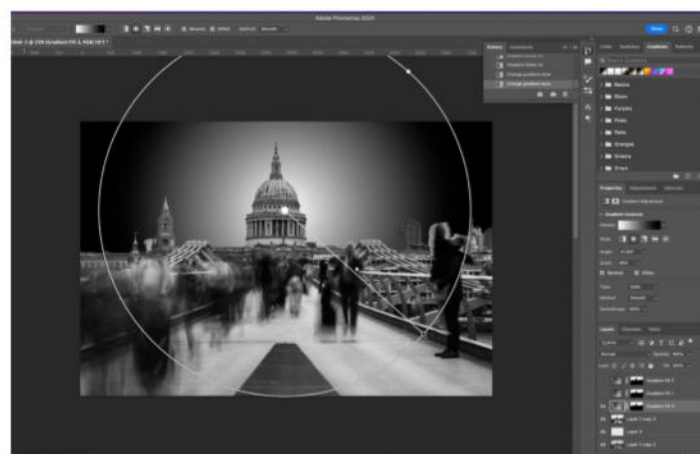


Mike Harris



REFINE YOUR SELECTION

3 Use a black brush to fill in any patches of white that are not sky. If you're struggling to know what is and isn't sky, make the other channels visible again for reference. If you make a mistake, paint over it again with a white brush.



SELECT AND ADD A GRADIENT

4 Hold Ctrl/Cmd and click the duplicate channel thumbnail to select the white areas. You can now head back to the Layers panel and click on the top layer, while retaining the selection. I used a white-to-black Radial Gradient for the sky.

AND FINALLY... IMPROVE YOUR COMPOSITIONS WITH 3 TIPS

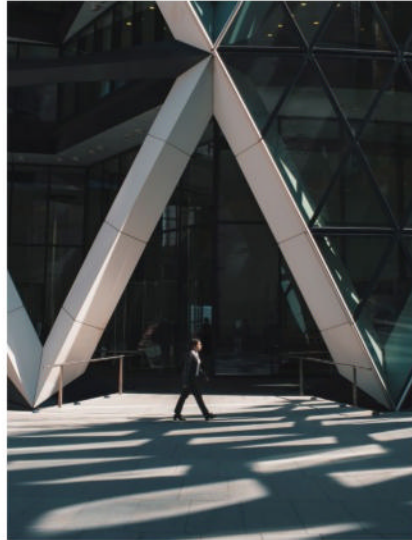
Buildings can't move, so you can refine your composition until it visually sings. Here are a few simple tips that will improve your architectural compositions almost immediately...

8 LIGHT AND SHADOW

An interesting subject and good framing are only half the battle; lighting is often the difference between a good architectural image and a great one. Typically, you'll want to shoot during the softer lighting that occurs earlier in the morning or later in the evening. Alternatively, head out on an overcast day, when cloud cover acts as a diffuser.

That's not to say there isn't a time and place for harsh sunlight. Crisp shadows can create interesting shapes and patterns, providing a graphic aesthetic. My image of The Gherkin (near right) was taken at midday, when direct sunlight created a tessellation of interesting shadows.

Look for light that highlights points of interest or spotlights your subject, too. My image of St Paul's



(right) was taken when the cathedral was slightly backlit overhead. This flooded the avenue of glass in front of the building with bright light and cast everything beyond in shadow. The result is a dynamic range of tones, from the brightest whites to the darkest blacks.



Mike Harris

9 ACTIVE AND DEAD SPACE

Active and dead spaces occur in front of or behind a subject, respectively. In this image, a pedestrian moves from left to right.

Framing them on the left provided context as to their trajectory towards the right portion of the frame (active space).

Placing them on the right would have created unwanted tension; they'd have been heading beyond the frame with no visible context. This would also leave an area behind that served no purpose (dead space). It's not as interesting as the bench and pub signs, and with the person in the foreground having already walked past, it would have had no bearing on the unfolding narrative.

This also applies to inanimate objects. Take the opening image of St Paul's (see page 68). The cathedral is the subject, but the Millennium Bridge naturally leads the viewer into active space.



Mike Harris



Symmetrical compositions are simple but effective. I cheated a little while capturing this image: it was actually mirrored in post-production so that it looked like commuters were descending both escalators, instead of just one.

10 SIMPLE SYMMETRY

Don't shy away from this simple compositional technique, which can provide jaw-dropping results

Perhaps the simplest compositional technique of all is symmetry. It's particularly useful for architectural photography, as so many buildings are inherently symmetrical. Another way to find symmetry is through reflections, for example, permanent water features, puddles or synthetic reflective surfaces.

If you're using an electronic viewfinder or Live View, grid references are invaluable for lining up symmetrical shots. Pay close attention to the corners of your frame, too. If all four corners line

up, chances are you've nailed the composition. But remember, seemingly symmetrical buildings aren't always perfect – especially historical buildings – so allow for elements that don't line up perfectly. Using a tripod will help you achieve precise results in-camera, but since you are likely to be shooting handheld most of the time, remember that if you find your composition needs a few tweaks, you can always fall back on alignment and cropping tools in editing.

You can also mirror images to achieve perfect symmetry. This is a technique I'd recommend using sparingly; however,

I did resort to using it while I was editing this image of a Tube station's escalator. My initial aim was to blur the crowds of commuters going up and down both sets of escalators, but despite shooting for a long period of time, busy crowds never seemed to coincide.

Knowing that my framing was perfectly level and there would be no perceivable join in the centre of the image, I decided to mirror it vertically. In this instance, there was almost no difference between the original image and the mirrored image, apart from the identical blur of commuters descending the escalator.

A photograph of a brick wall at sunset. The wall is made of light-colored bricks and is illuminated by the warm, golden light of the setting sun. In the foreground, the silhouettes of two children are visible. One child is standing and looking up, while the other is partially visible on the right side. A kite is flying in the sky, its string visible against the wall. The overall mood is peaceful and nostalgic.

Hotshots

Our showcase of category winners from the
Nikon Film and Photo Contest 2024-2025

i

EXCELLENCE AWARD: Single Photo Category
'Kite Festival' Andre Ferreira (Brazil)

"In the twilight of a radiant day, three children gather at the Kite Festival in Paraiba do Sul, in the heart of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. This image, which was taken with my Nikon D800, captures their silhouettes as they play and have fun. Recognition in this contest is a pleasure for me. I am very happy and grateful for this opportunity."





© Tiina Itkonen / Nikon Film And Photo Contest 2024-2025

i

GRAND PRIZE WINNER: Single Photo Category
'Jonas' Tiina Itkonen (Finland)

"I photographed Jonas, an Inughuit boy, in Savissivik, northwest Greenland. At over 1,000km north of the Arctic Circle, it's one of the most remote settlements on Earth. Greenland's Inughuit are the northernmost indigenous people, but melting sea ice is challenging their traditional way of life. Here, farming is not possible, so hunting seals, walruses and other Arctic animals is the main source of food for many households. In recent years, hunting on the sea ice has become more dangerous as the ice gets thinner. It's possible this way of life will be lost forever."



i

**SPECIAL ENCOURAGEMENT
AWARD: Single Photo Category
'Mom's Scent' Xianhui Fang (China)**

"In August 2024, in Lubao Village, Licheng County, Shanxi Province, mothers are cooking yellow steamed buns. Children sit together playing with toys, their laughter mingling with the rising smoke and the warmth of the kitchen fire. This is the taste of home."



i

**SPECIAL ENCOURAGEMENT
AWARD: Single Photo
Category 'We See Angels'
Emmanuel Lucky (Nigeria)**

"This is an editorial portrait of friends I made a few years ago. We wanted to convey the story of brotherhood in the most unlikely of environments. To say I'm grateful is an understatement. Winning this award with a work so close to my heart reminds me that honest storytelling still resonates."



© Farshid Ahmadpour / Nikon Film And Photo Contest 2024-2025

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EXCELLENCE AWARD: Single Photo Category 'Hunter' Farshid Ahmadpour (Iran)

"It is a great privilege to be named one of the winners of this prestigious global event, alongside outstanding artists from around the world. This photograph is part of my long-term series, 'At the Threshold of Silence', which has been running since 2017. It shows an old man walking alone through a snow-covered landscape, searching for prey for his waiting child. Amid the vast whiteness and frozen trees, the silence is deafening. The hunter symbolises the fragility of human existence, the weight of responsibility and the enduring power of love in desolate spaces."



© Stelios Tsagris / Nikon Film And Photo Contest 2024-2025

i

**SPECIAL
ENCOURAGEMENT
AWARD: Single
Photo Category**

**'Evening Passenger'
Stelios Tsagris (Greece)**

"I travel on the city trains... I empty my gaze into the light of the wagons... I travel, but I never leave. I feel happy that one of my own eyes has left its mark on this Nikon Film and Photo Contest. This prize is the culmination of a 35-year partnership, with a Nikon camera always in my luggage."



WINNER: General Public Award

'I am Unstoppable!' Liew Hong Hooi (Malaysia)

"A spirit medium jumps through the blazing fire hoops as a demonstration of faith and a form of ritual cleansing during the Nine Emperor Gods Festival. This inspired me to believe in myself and to move forward as a photographer. Even surging fire isn't an obstacle as long as you are willing to try, and that was the reason I decided to take part in this prestigious award. I want to thank Nikon for recognising my photo."

NIKON
FILM
+ PHOTO
CONTEST

About the competition

Since the first Nikon Photo Contest International in 1969, Nikon has provided a place for professionals and amateurs around the world who love photos and films to interact. The contest continues to evolve and create new opportunities.
www.nikon-photocontest.com

CAMERA CLINIC

Master the art of modern photography

This month: Master shutter speeds
Time and how you use it has a huge impact of the destiny of your photos



When shooting fast-moving subjects, using long lenses, working in low light or trying a creative approach, you will need to consider your shutter speed.

Will Cheung



Will
Cheung

An imaging journalist and freelance photographer based in London, Cheung has a wealth of experience over several decades.
www.williamcheung.co.uk

■ This month, it's the turn of the third member of photography's fabulous trinity – shutter speed – to take its turn in the limelight. The lens iris controls how much light passes through to the sensor, ISO is all about the sensor's sensitivity, while the shutter is a sophisticated timing mechanism that determines how long the sensor is receptive to light. The amount of thought you need to give to choosing the right shutter speed depends on the situation. In many scenarios, the aim is to achieve a speed that is fast enough for a sharp image. With an outdoor scene in good light and a standard lens, ensuring the speed is at least 1/125 sec is straightforward (see panel opposite for more on handheld technique).

But for fast-moving subjects, shooting with long lenses, working in low light or a more creative approach, your shutter speed selection will require deeper consideration.

Different situations demand different solutions and sometimes extra kit, such as a tripod and filters. In landscape work, for example, small f/stops and low ISO settings result in slow shutter speeds, so a tripod and graduated filters are essential. For nature photography, where long telephoto lenses are compulsory and low lighting a fact of life, you need wide f/stops and high ISOs to enable fast shutter speeds. But if you prefer high ISO speeds and a fast shutter for scenics, there's nothing to stop you. Similarly, in nature, slower shutter speeds to get movement in your shots is a legitimate technique.

Getting creative with shutter speeds means there is no right or wrong, as long as you get the result you wanted. However, practice, experience and sound camera technique are important. Hopefully, this month's Camera Clinic will set you on the path to successful shutter speed control.

Get the knowledge

Keeping the camera steady is a skill worth practising

Each situation is different, with your health, physiology and prevailing conditions, such as the wind or the terrain you're standing on, all factors that influence successful shooting at slower shutter speeds. Using longer lenses also makes your images more prone to camera shake.

It's always worth practising your hand-holding skills. Grip the camera securely in your right hand, with your left

hand supporting the lens. Stand feet apart, breathe gently and press the shutter release with a smooth action.

Even experienced photographers should give their technique the occasional health check. Factor in the latest image stabilising systems, in-body or in-lens, and you should be able to get acceptably sharp shots at relatively long shutter speeds.



Working the fractions

The right stuff to maximise the potential of shutter speeds

SHOOT SHARP

Many cameras and lenses have some form of integral image stabiliser for sharp shots at slow shutter speeds. An in-body image stabiliser (IBIS) works in five axes and uses an advanced system of detectors to shift the sensor when movement is detected. Lens IS works in three axes with lens elements moving to cancel out any detected movement. Many systems use both camera and lens stabilisers for an even greater benefit.



A SLICE OF TIME

Many DSLR and mirrorless cameras have a top mechanical shutter speed of 1/4000 sec, though some go up to 1/8000 sec. That's fast enough to 'freeze' action, but even faster speeds are available on mirrorless cameras with electronic shutters. Fujifilm X System models can reach 1/32,000 sec, while the X-H2 and X-T5 top out at 1/180,000 sec. The Sony A9 III, the first camera with a global shutter, has a top speed of 1/80,000 sec.



ND FILTERS

For long shutter speeds, you need neutral density (ND) filters. Weaker 1-3 stop NDs are fine for modest blur, but if you want to venture into the many seconds, dense 6-10 stop NDs are popular, while 15- and 16-stop NDs are also available. Even stronger, specialist NDs are available for shooting towards the sun. Stronger NDs can be prone to colour casts, which can be corrected by adjusting white balance in-camera or later in editing.

Time machines

Accessories to fine-tune shutter speed control



FLASH IN THE DARK

Most cameras synchronise with flash at 1/125 sec with mechanical shutters; a few high-end models offer faster sync. Apart from a handful of top-end models, electronic shutters do not sync with flash.

When flash is used as the sole light source, the equivalent shutter speed is the duration of the flash. On speedlights at minimum power, it can be as brief as 1/20,000 sec, although working range is limited.



ALL IN THE HEAD

Having a set of stable legs is important, but you also need a good head with a load rating that can cope with your heaviest camera-lens pairing. Look for a head with a locking knob and friction control. A ball-head is best for stills, while a fluid head suits video. Ball-heads use the Arca-Swiss standard, which accepts plates and L-grips. Avoid cheap heads with plastic release plates.



STEADY ON

Exploring exposures in seconds or even minutes means you need a stable shooting platform. Tripods come in every size, at every price point and can be bought with a head or legs only. A big decision is deciding between aluminium alloy and carbon fibre legs. Size for size, the former is usually less expensive, while the latter offers a weight saving. If you have the budget, carbon is a sound option.

Examples of choosing the best shutter speed

How dialling in the appropriate exposure duration can create memorable photos



WATERFALL DELIGHT

Cauldron Falls in West Burton, North Yorkshire, is a picturesque spot. It's popular and easy to get to, so it can get busy and patience is needed. With the falls sitting in a natural bowl, you may be shooting towards the light, so contrast can be high. Exposure needs to be tackled carefully so that the water does not burn out, and ND grads can help control the trees and sky. Rather than shoot the falls straight on, I took a side-on approach and moved in close with a 14-35mm wide-angle – this was taken at 14mm – with the camera on a tripod. After trying several speeds, I settled for 10 sec, giving a lovely milky effect on the foreground rocks.



10 secs at f/14, ISO 100

Will Cheung



A TOKEN OF SUCCESS

This was taken on a wet day at Pickering station on the North Yorkshire Moors Railway. The railway was running normally, though, so there was plenty to shoot around the heritage station. With an incoming steam train, I set the camera to continuous autofocus and burst shooting at 20fps to capture the token exchange between the driver and signalman. With a 70-200mm f/4 lens, I set ISO 500 and enabled a shutter of 1/500 sec, which I hoped would be fast enough to catch the action. As the train approached, I pressed the shutter button and kept it held down for a sustained burst that recorded the whole exchange.



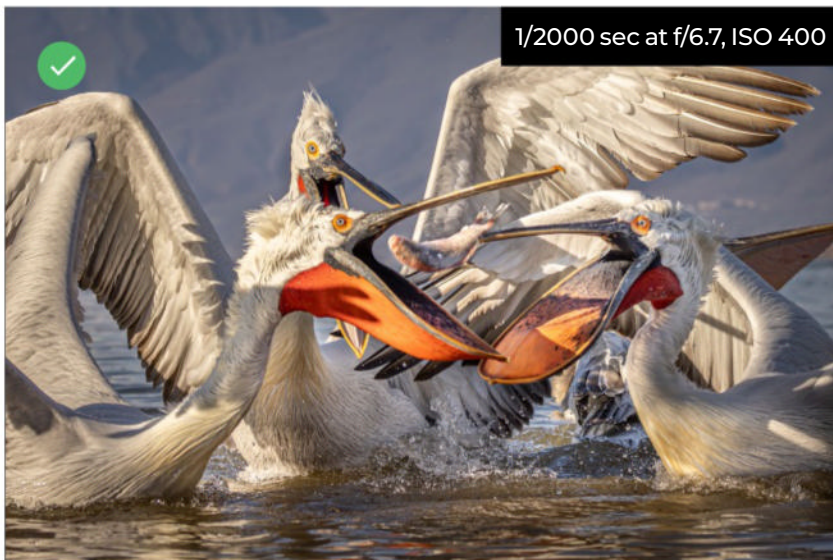
1/500 sec at f/5, ISO 800

Will Cheung



PELICAN BRIEF

The Dalmatian Pelicans of Lake Kerkini in northern Greece are popular with photographers, with late winter being the prime time when the birds are in their vibrant breeding colours. I visited on a photographic tour, which offered the chance to see the birds close up as well as from the shoreline, where this shot was taken. Fish from the lake are used to lure the birds in closer, so long telephotos aren't essential – this shot was taken at 106mm. The camera was set to continuous 20fps shooting and, as the fish was thrown, I pressed the shutter, using 1/2000 sec to stop the action. After several attempts, the fish was in the perfect spot.



1/2000 sec at f/6.7, ISO 400

Will Cheung



Master creative shutter speeds

Next time you're out, try shooting at different speeds

The camera shutter's role is to time how long the sensor is open to light, typically between 1/8000 sec and 30 sec. Mirrorless cameras have electronic shutters with even faster top speeds.

How you exploit the camera's shutter depends on the lens used, the lighting, the subject and how you wish to depict it. Nature and action

subjects generally need fast speeds to stop any movement and avoid camera shake, while for landscapes, slower speeds are preferred for small f/stops and plenty of depth of field.

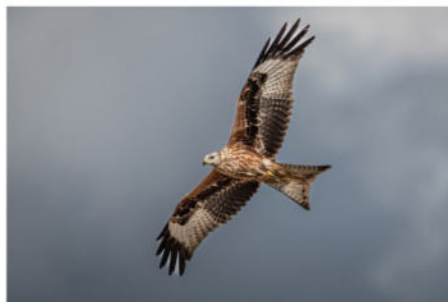
Whatever you're photographing, give shutter speed consideration alongside the f/stop and ISO.

Nine scenarios to explore to hone your shutter speed skills



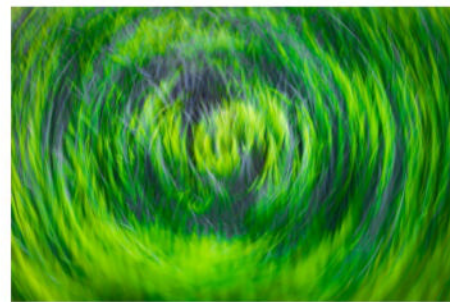
A DIFFERENT TAKE ON ZOOMBURSTS

For a standard zoomburst, zoom the lens on a static camera during a long exposure. A twist on this is walking into the scene during the exposure. A shutter speed of 0.5 or 1 sec can give an abstract blur without making the scene unrecognisable.



BIRDS IN FLIGHT

This is made easier by the subject-detect/tracking AF skills of modern cameras. Set continuous shooting, tracking AF and a shutter speed of 1/2000 sec. Depending on the light, you may have to set a fast ISO to allow such shutter speeds.



INTENTIONAL CAMERA MOVEMENT

There are many ways to move the camera for ICM. Rotating it on the lens axis, panning in different directions and even spinning it are all possibilities. Regarding the choice of shutter speed, pick a setting that is long enough to allow a smooth pan.



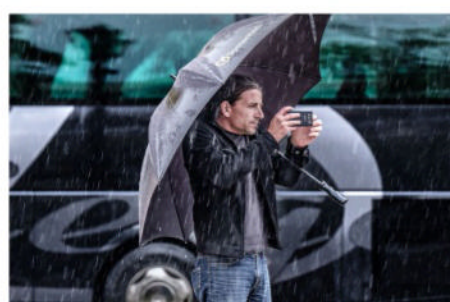
PANNING

Panning differs from ICM because the idea is to use a slow shutter speed and track the moving subject so it is sharp against a blurred background. The speed depends on the subject and how much blur you want. For a racing car, use 1/30 or 1/60 sec.



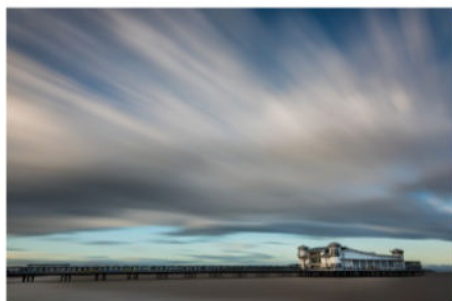
MOVING WAVES

Waterfalls, the sea and river cascades can be creatively captured, but getting the right speed is tricky as it depends on the water. A waterfall or raging torrent will blur even with a modest shutter speed, while a calm sea needs minutes.



SHOOT RAIN

Backlit rain shows up well and a shutter speed of 1/15 sec or 1/30 sec can be slow enough to record lines of water, or go faster for droplets. Protect the camera with a rain cover or a polythene bag or tuck it under your jacket and fit a protection filter.



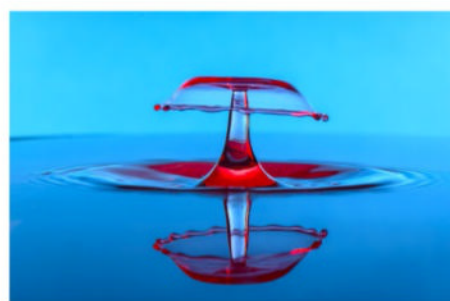
BLURRY CLOUDS

The key here is a sky with detail and movement, so avoid plain blue or flat grey skies. Fluffy clouds can also be a challenge because of the contrast, with the cloud detail burning out. Try shooting in different conditions to see what works best.



TRAVELLING LIGHT

Exploit your camera's long shutter speeds and shoot light trails. Find a safe spot over a busy road, get the camera on a tripod, frame up and shoot a test image to give you an idea of exposure. In this shot, the exposure was 25 secs at f/13 and ISO 200.



SPLASH IT ALL OVER

Try shooting water drop splashes with a macro lens and a speedlight as the light source. Flash bursts as brief as 1/20,000 sec will record water splashes. Specialist water droplet kits will trigger the camera and flash together, but it can also be done manually.

Pros and cons Get creative with shutter speeds

The shutter can also be a powerful creative tool

Correct exposure is a balancing act, and the aperture and shutter have a reciprocal relationship. The lens iris determines how much light passes through to the sensor, while the shutter determines how long the sensor is open to receive that light. Adjust one and you must adjust the other to maintain the same exposure level, and exploiting this relationship is where your creativity kicks in. So don't just settle for the basic correct exposure; explore all the creative options available to you.

✓ How slow can you go?

Get to know your limits by testing your hand-holding technique with slow shutter speeds. Shoot with your lenses in different conditions, with the image stabiliser on and off, and see how slow a shutter speed you can use while still getting acceptably sharp shots.

✓ Fit to burst

At slower speeds, using continuous shooting modes and taking a burst of several frames can help ensure you have at least one perfect shot.

✓ Shoot vibration-free

Mechanical shutters create vibrations that can increase the risk of camera shake. Many cameras have an electronic front-shutter curtain that generates less judder, so it is worth engaging that if yours has one. Electronic shutters don't suit

every subject, but they do have the advantage of being silent and totally vibration-free.

✓ IS on or off

Camera shake is magnified when using telephoto lenses. These types of lenses benefit more from image stabilisation, so have it active with the appropriate IS mode to suit the subject. Generally, IS should be turned off when the camera is on a tripod.

✗ Be aware

Your intake of substances like caffeine and alcohol, and physical conditions such as the wind and the terrain you're standing on, are all factors that can impact your ability to hand-hold at slower shutter speeds. It pays to recognise the situation and use a faster speed with a higher ISO, if required.

✗ Shutter distortion

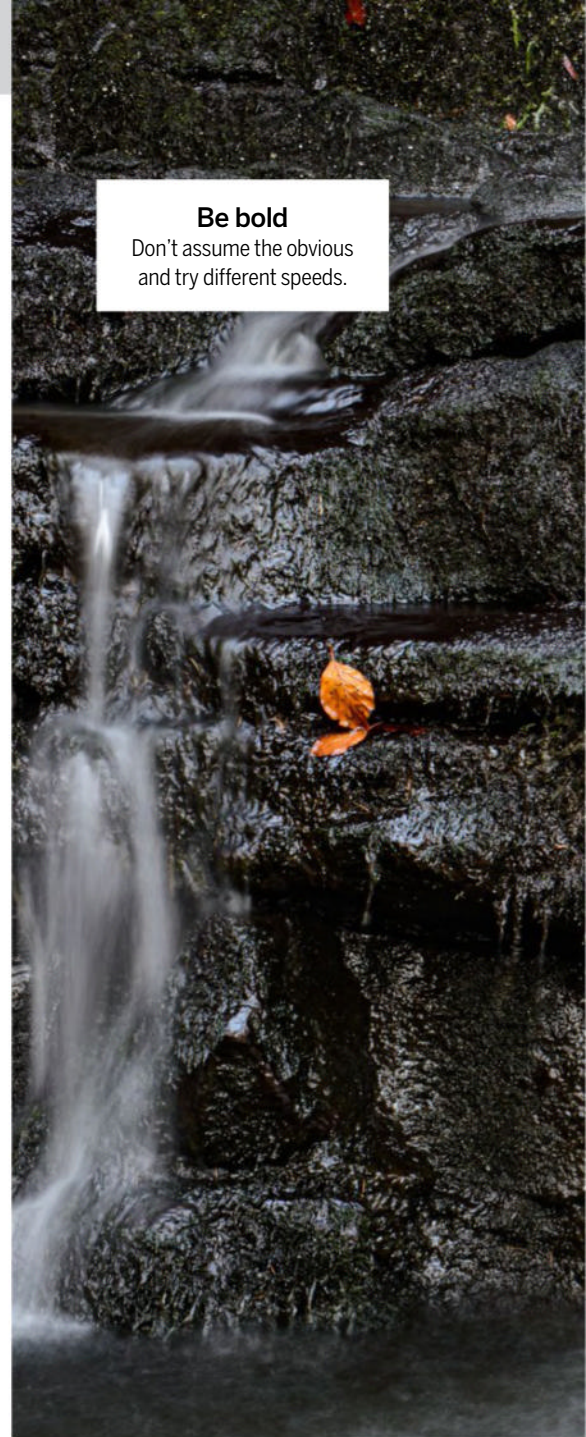
While electronic shutters are judder-free, many suffer from rolling shutter distortion. This becomes more evident with fast-moving subjects or when using the camera panning technique. Here, upright objects can appear to be slanted and moving subjects are distorted. If the previews don't look right, switch to the mechanical shutter instead.

✗ Light banding

Another issue with electronic shutters is flicker or banding with LED or fluorescent lighting. Many cameras have an anti-flicker option, but the most reliable cure is to use the mechanical shutter.

Be bold

Don't assume the obvious and try different speeds.

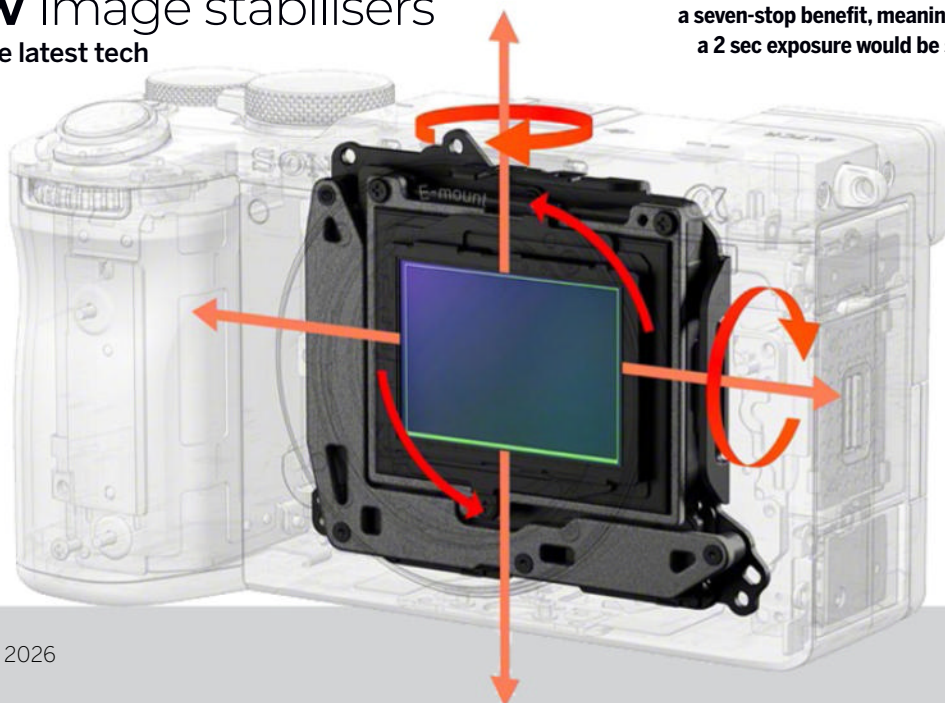


Camera know-how Image stabilisers

Keep things steady with the help of the latest tech

Image stabilisers, in-body or in-lens, are great innovations. The most efficient claim an 8.5-stop benefit, but how do such claims stack up in real life? In the pre-stabiliser era, the reciprocal rule was the guide to the slowest speed to use, so 1/60 sec for a 50mm lens and 1/125 sec for a 100mm.

The Sony A7CR's five-axis IBIS (illustrated, right) claims a seven-stop benefit with an FE 50mm f/1.2. Counting down from 1/60 sec (1/30, 1/15, 1/8, 1/4, 1/2, 1s), a seven-stop benefit means that a 2 sec exposure would be sharp. That might be possible in practice, but not for every shot and not for everyone. In other words, while the manufacturer's claims are one thing, the reality might be somewhat different.



The Sony A7CR's five-axis IBIS claims a seven-stop benefit, meaning that a 2 sec exposure would be sharp.



Sound technique

Make the most of your camera's shutter.

Subject matter

Tailor shutter speed to the subject you're shooting.

Will Cheung

Camera tech Moving the dial

Is there such a thing as the ideal exposure mode?

It sounds counter-intuitive, but Aperture Priority is just as effective as Shutter Priority for action subjects. However, you must keep an eye on the shutter speed to make sure it's fast enough.

That's easy with a static scene, but if, for example, you're tracking a bird in flight, there will be differences in light levels across the scene. The shutter speed might suddenly change and be too slow for a sharp shot.

In this situation, Shutter Priority is the best auto option because you know the speed is fixed and the camera adjusts f/stop and/or ISO accordingly. Manual mode is the other option, and in this scenario, Auto ISO can help get around lighting variances.



Aperture Priority is effective for action subjects, but keep an eye on the shutter speed to make sure it's fast enough.

Shoot photos like a pro

Think out of the box to give your photos extra zip

Correct exposure means using aperture and shutter speed with the support of ISO to produce a photo of a typical scene that has the full tonal range from deep shadows to sparkling highlights, with lovely mid-tones in between.

That might be the correct exposure in the technical sense, but it may not be the best exposure aesthetically, and that's

where the creative control of f/stop, shutter speed and ISO comes in.

Of course, not every shot requires such deep thought – and most of the time, all we want is to get a good exposure. So the first step in getting more creative is learning to recognise when you need to step in and give extra input to produce a photograph that pushes the boundaries.

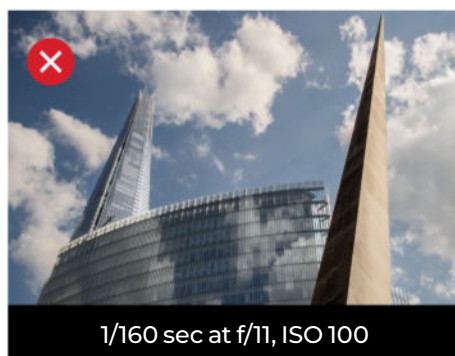
Plane truth

A fast shutter will stop any movement and avoid the risk of camera shake, but a slower speed can give a more engaging result. Using 1/2000 sec in the image below has 'frozen' the propeller blades so that the shot looks static – the plane seems more like a suspended plastic model. On the other hand, shooting at 1/320 sec (right) has resulted in a blurred propeller blade, giving a sense of action and a more pleasing outcome.

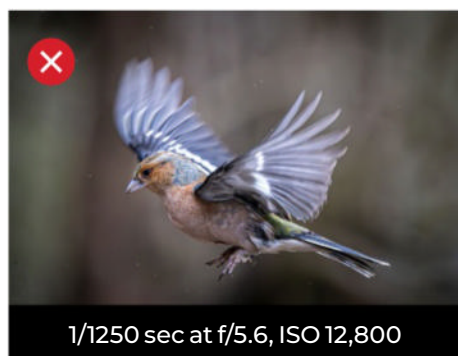


The sky moved sideways

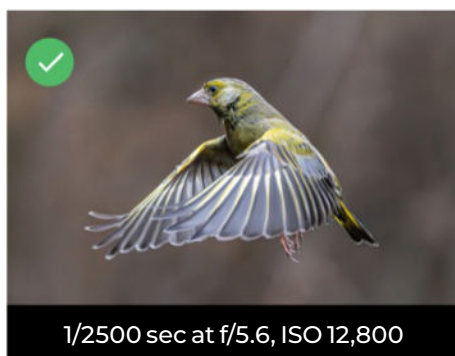
To blur skies on bright days, you'll need an extreme ND filter. A 10-stop ND is the minimum and you might need a 15 or 16-stop ND for exposures of 60 secs or longer, which is what you'll need for slow-moving skies. Stronger NDs are also useful for shooting long exposures without having to stop down too much. Sensor dust shows up more at small f/stops, so consider using wider f/stops to save cloning time in software.



Will Cheung



1/1250 sec at f/5.6, ISO 12,800



1/2500 sec at f/5.6, ISO 12,800

Will Cheung

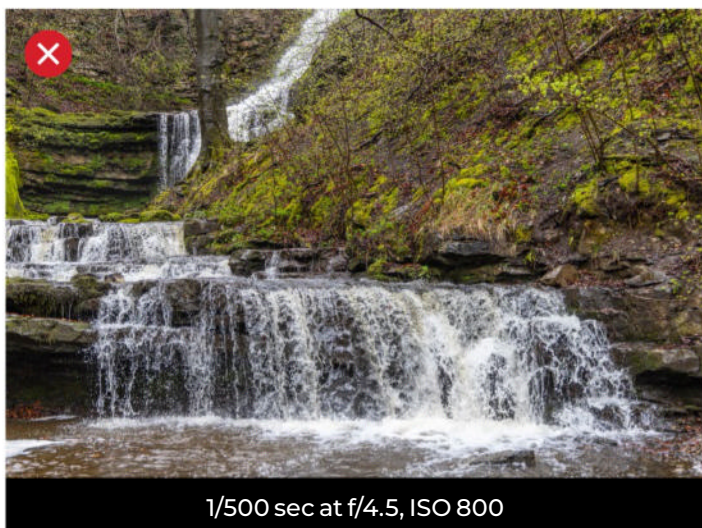
Watch the birdie

Shutter speeds of 1/2000 sec or more are essential to capture the wing detail of a bird-in-flight shot. This applies particularly to small birds, which generally have a higher wing beat frequency. Larger birds tend to have a more leisurely pace, but this depends on the species. Mirrorless cameras have the fastest burst rates with their electronic shutters, but this type of shutter can distort wings. If your camera suffers from that issue, use the mechanical shutter.



Double-decker bus

Getting the right amount of blur in a shot like this is tricky because the buses are passing by at a similar but not constant speed, making any test shots to determine the ideal speed an inexact science. My first shot at 1/20 sec is fine, but I wanted some more blur in the bus. I dropped down to 0.3 sec using a smaller f/stop and lower ISO, which worked well. Here, the camera's IS helped keep the shot sharp.



Be a flow master

Do you like your water sharp or blurred? That's up to you and your choice of shutter speed. All approaches are valid, whether you go fast and sharp or slow and smooth. If blurred water is your aim, fix the camera to a tripod and try different shutter speeds from 1/30 sec downwards. Slow-moving water will need a longer shutter than fast-flowing water, but generally, the longer the exposure, the milkier the effect.

Camera skills Which shutter type?

Electronic and mechanical shutters, which is best?

Most mirrorless cameras have an electronic shutter as well as a mechanical version. Indeed, there are cameras now that only have an electronic shutter. Electronic shutters have their advantages. They are silent and vibration-free, so they are discrete and promote shake-free shooting at slower shutter speeds. Plus, they also enable rapid burst shooting rates and fast shutter speeds. On the downside, electronic shutters can suffer from rolling shutter distortion, which can manifest itself in certain situations and subjects. When panning with the camera, straight lines can come out slanted or fast-moving subjects can look strangely warped. Check out this pair of shots (right) featuring a working fan and the weird result (far right) caused by using an electronic shutter. Should your camera's electronic shutter suffer from rolling shutter, go into the menu and switch it to the mechanical option.



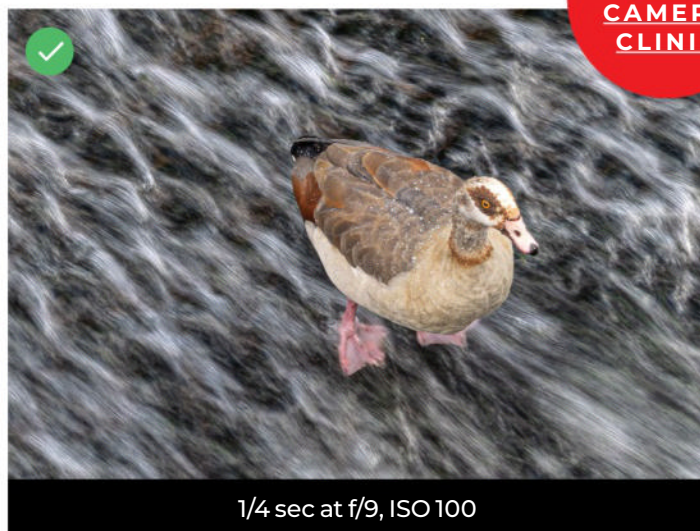
Mechanical shutter



Electronic shutter



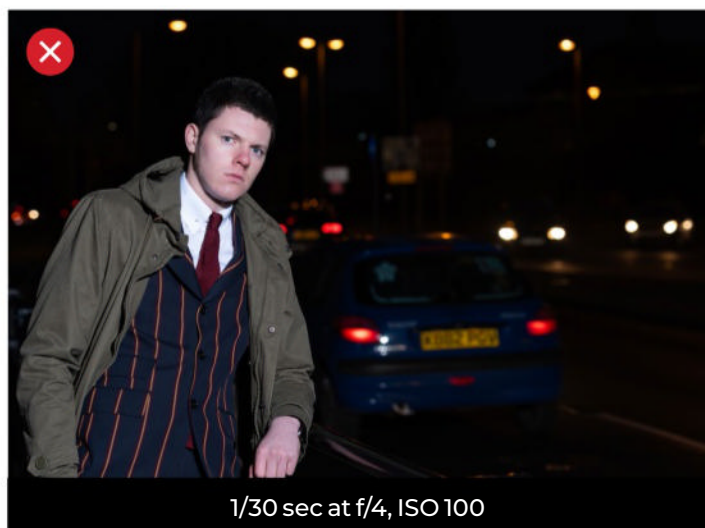
1/40 sec at f/4, ISO 100



1/4 sec at f/9, ISO 100

What's good for the goose

A slower shutter speed can come in unexpectedly useful. I was crossing a bridge and saw an Egyptian goose feeding below. I quickly took a shot without giving the settings much thought, in case the bird moved in the meantime. However, when I checked the preview, the idea of a slower speed with greater blur came to mind. Thankfully, the bird looked up but stood still so the image is perfectly sharp, even shooting at 1/4 sec.



1/30 sec at f/4, ISO 100



2 secs at f/5.6, ISO 100

In a flash

A speedlight is worth its place in every photographer's bag and, with ample potential to get creative, it can be much more than a light source. In low light, using the camera's correct flash sync speed will only record the flash, but shooting with a slower shutter speed will register any existing light. Which speed to use depends on the scene's brightness, so while you may need a tripod, you could try shooting handheld.

Pro tip All about B and T

How to shoot super-long exposures

The longest speed on most cameras is 30 secs, but when even longer times are required, the B (Bulb) and T (time) settings come into play. These two modes can be seen on the shutter speed dial of the Fujifilm X-T5 (pictured, right). Traditionally, with B, the shutter is open for as long as the shutter button is held down by a finger, remote release or app. With the less commonly used T mode, the first press of the button opens the shutter and a second press closes it. On many newer cameras, B and T have set times up to eight minutes and more, which means there's no need for a remote release or app to hold the shutter open. It also means you don't need to use a watch to time the exposure.



"Each pattern is different," says Bernice. "I find the anticipation exciting, hoping to capture the photo before the bubble pops."



Bernice Bradley

Shot of the month

Bernice Bradley explains the process behind her stunning shot of a frozen bubble on snow



Georgie Foord
Photography

Bernice Bradley
Photographer

Location: Lincolnshire, UK
Camera: Canon EOS R5 and Sigma 105mm lens
Exposure: 6 secs at f/9, ISO 100
Instagram: @bernice_bradley_photography
Facebook: Bernice Bradley Photography

At first glance, this image looks like a photo ball with frost on it, so we were surprised to discover that it's actually a bubble. This creative capture is the brainchild of enthusiast photographer Bernice Bradley, whom we discovered on Instagram. Bernice created a bubble on some snow, and thanks to temperatures of -4C on a frosty morning, the bubble froze and the surface became covered in this attractive pattern – showing that there's nothing quite like the beauty of nature.

"I love the fine details and watching as the patterns form," Bernice explains. "Each pattern is different, and I find the anticipation of waiting to be exciting, hoping to capture the photograph before the bubble pops."

"I love nature, and so I wanted to show people a world that is so often missed with our busy lives. Stepping back and taking time out is so important."

Creating this fabulous photo required patience and dedication, recalls Bernice. Working in such low temperatures meant her equipment had to be acclimatised; getting the shot settings right took a lot of trial and error. "It was my first time trying light painting and so I had to ensure that the light wasn't overexposing the subject because of the long shutter speed."

To form the bubbles, Bernice used a combination of water and corn syrup, which stabilises the mixture, and then applied some clear washing-up liquid with a straw. She piled up a small tower of snow on a frozen table, then gently blew a bubble onto the snow. Having set up her camera on a tripod beforehand to enable the slow shutter speeds she needed, she fired the shutter with a remote release. She had to work fairly quickly, but the lower the temperatures fell, the more time she had.

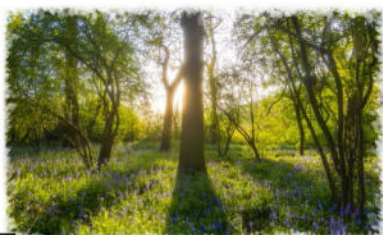
"This particular image was captured using Bulb mode (see page 95), so I had control of

the timings," Bernice adds. "Focusing manually with an aperture of f/9 helped keep most of the subject in focus, but the technical challenge was achieving the blurred background; I had to ensure that I was far enough away from my subject."

"Then it was all about practising. I took 172 images and was happy with about 13 of them. These images look good in natural light, especially at sunset, but it might not be cold enough if you're shooting at that time. When using artificial lighting [Bernice uses Smallrig RM 03 Macro Photo LED lights], it's important to be aware of hotspots or overexposing the subject, as the bubbles are both translucent and reflective. Many of the bubbles pop, but I like having to slow down and take time getting the photo." ●
Go behind the scenes of Bernice's bubble photography by watching her Instagram reels: @bernice_bradley_photography
See more of her work on her Facebook page at: Bernice Bradley Photography

Digital Darkroom

Transform your photos with our easy, effective guides



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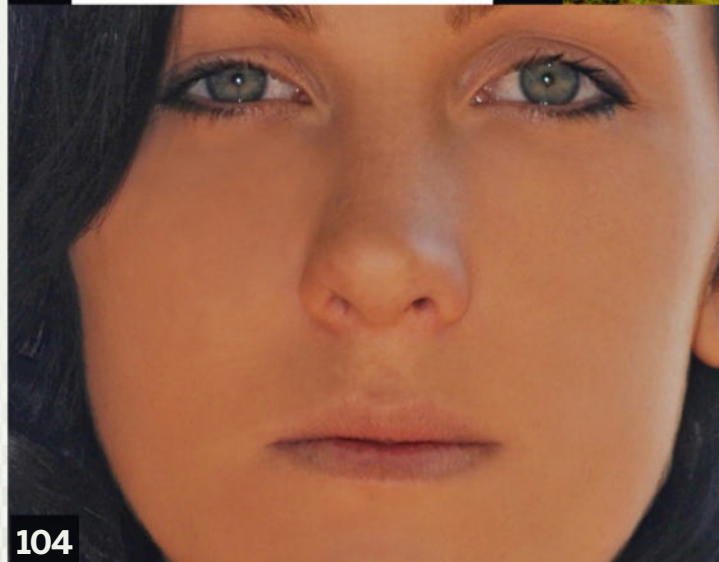
BLUEBELL WOODS
PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAN MOLD



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PAGE 98

Photoshop

Make your images look their best with these fine-art borders

PAGE 100

Lightroom

Merge your bracketed images for better landscape shots

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Photoshop

Transform plain blue skies with these four simple techniques

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Affinity Photo 2

Remove blemishes in your portraits with frequency separation

PAGE 106

ON1 Photo RAW MAX

In part two of our guide, we look at replacing and enhancing dull skies

MEET YOUR TRAINERS Edit like a pro with their expert insights



Dan Mold

As the deputy editor of our former sister title *Photo Plus*, Dan Mold has over a decade of experience in writing Photoshop tutorials and guides.



James Abbott

Specialising in landscapes and portraits, James Abbott is an advanced Photoshop user and has created hundreds of tutorials.



Sean McCormack

A photographer and writer based in Galway, Ireland, Sean McCormack is the author of books including *The Indispensable Guide to Lightroom CC*.

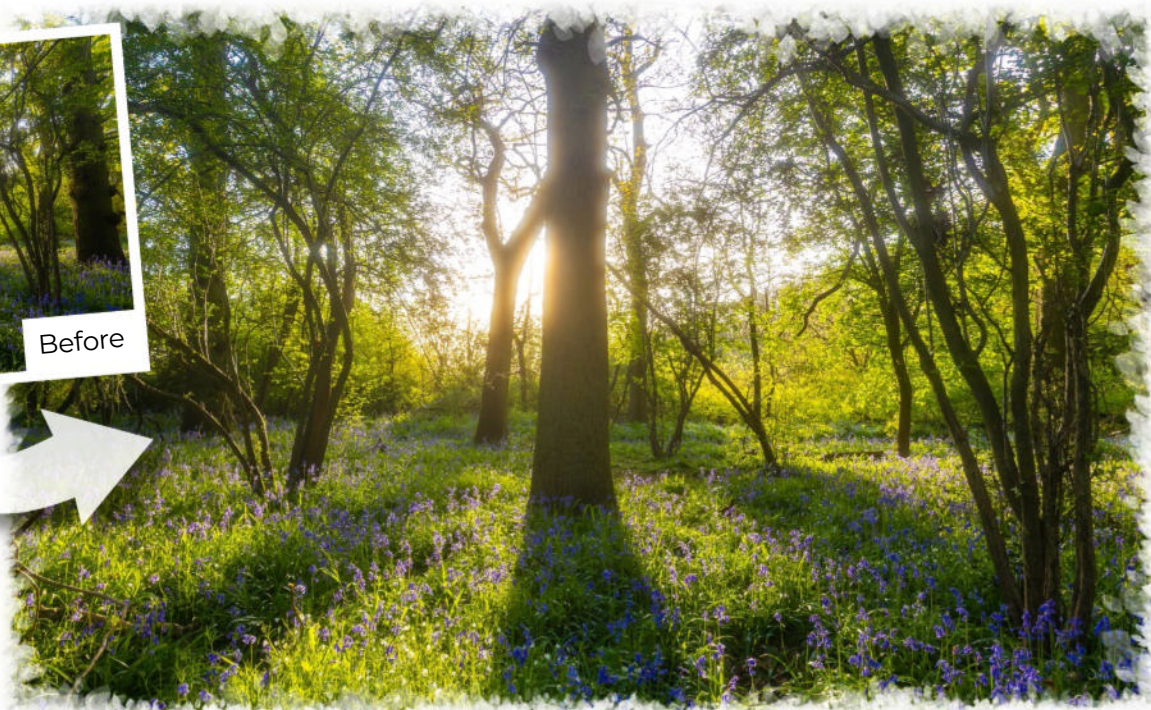


Wendy Evans LRPS

The author of over a dozen books on the subjects of photography, CGI and Photoshop, Wendy Evans has used Photoshop since version 3.0.



Before



BLUEBELL WOODS

PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAN MOLD

After

It's presentation time

Dan Mold helps make your shots look their best with fine-art borders in Photoshop

How do you present your photographs? I must admit, it's a question that I don't think about nearly as much as I should. Like many people, I've fallen into the habit of uploading my best images to social media, but not taking my photos much further than that. However, I was recently handed the privilege of judging my local camera club's photography competition, and it reignited a passion for printed imagery – I loved seeing the entrants taking the time and care to print off their best photos and frame them with a mount board ready for viewing and judging.

So this month, I wanted to use that inspiration to devise a few fine-art borders that you can use to frame your work, give it a title and a photo credit, and make your photos look good enough to print out and hang on the wall. In this step-by-step tutorial, you'll discover how to make your own fine-art borders, but to set you on your way, we're also giving away a free presentation border pack featuring 12 samples plus an accompanying video tutorial for you to download and watch so you can try it out for yourself. Let's get started!

12 free fine art borders

This month, we've supplied a variety of fine-art presentation borders that you can use to frame your best shots. There's a range of sizes and styles for you to choose from, depending on which you prefer. They're customisable too, so you can add your own image title and picture credit as well as change the font type and colour.

Download your files

www.digitalcameraworld.com/dc304
Download your files and video tutorial from the folder titled 'Photoshop_Fine Art Borders'



12 Photoshop
fine art
borders

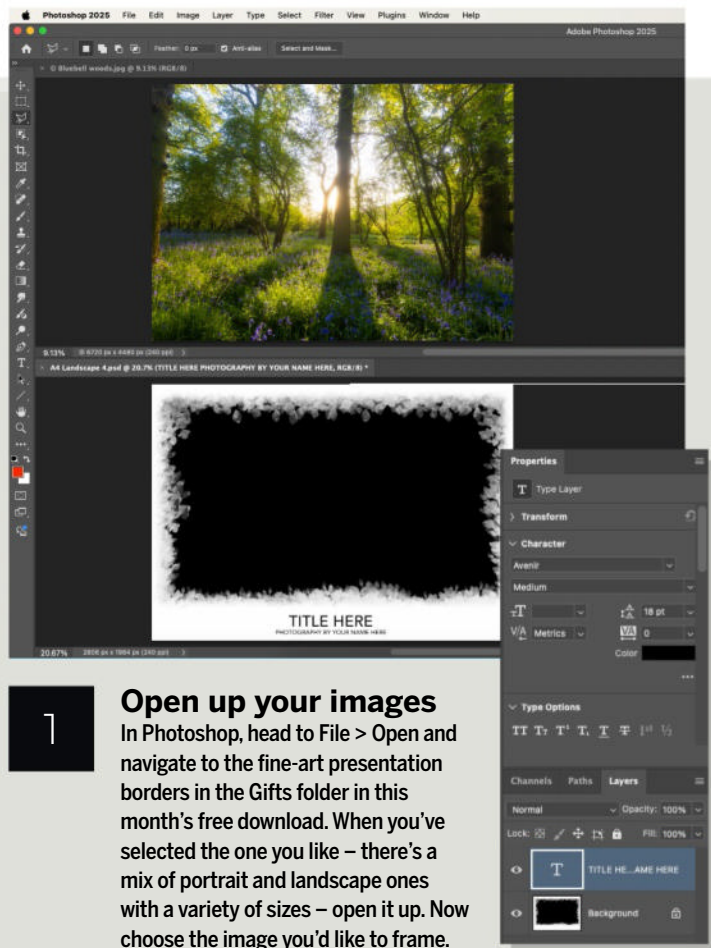


7-minute
video
tutorial



Project
files and
instructions

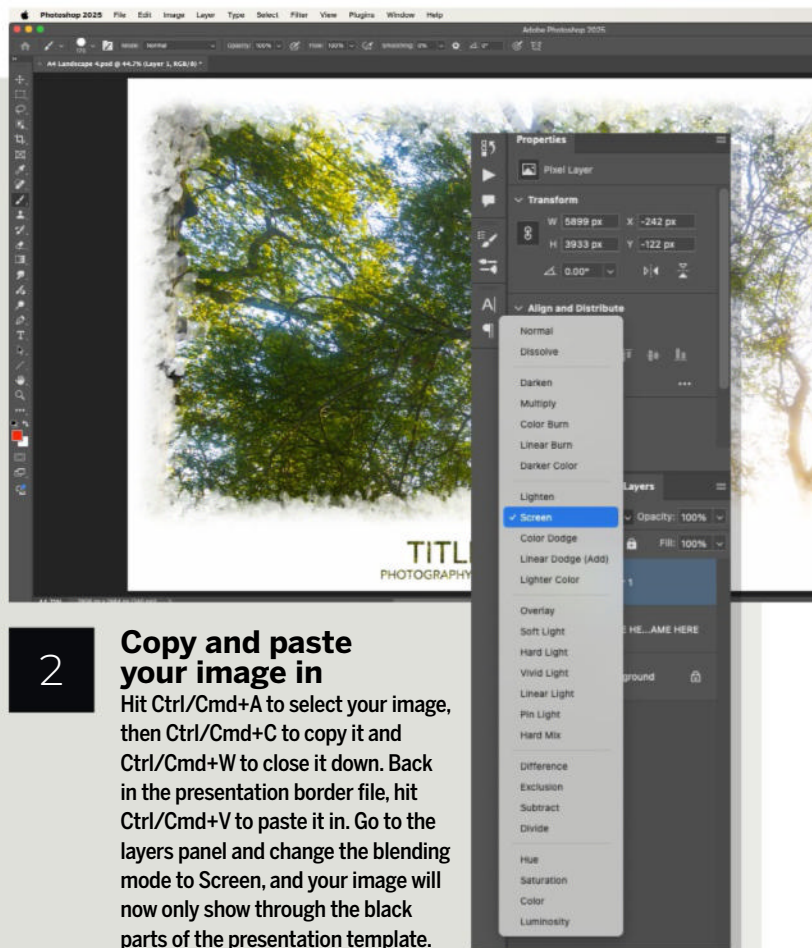




1

Open up your images

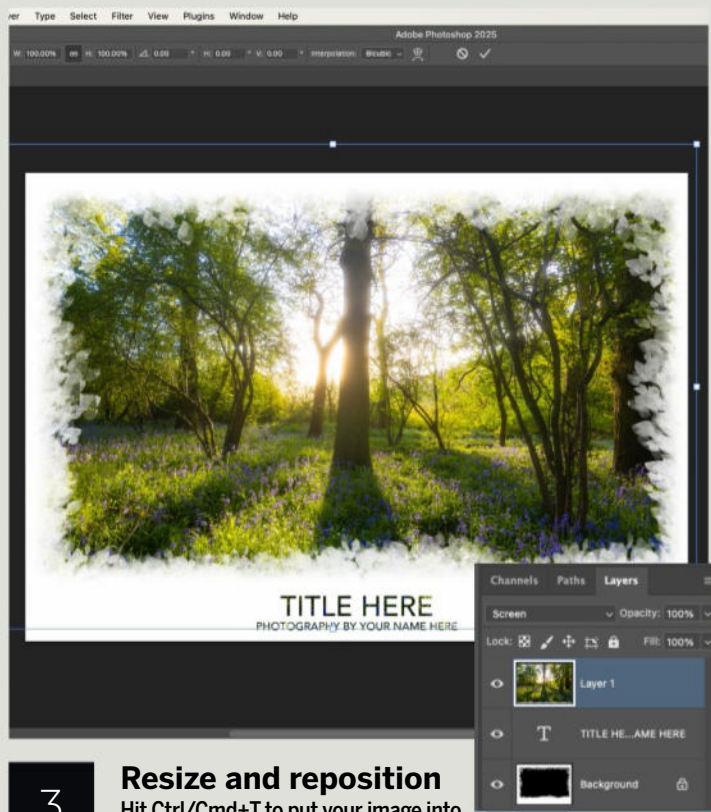
In Photoshop, head to File > Open and navigate to the fine-art presentation borders in the Gifts folder in this month's free download. When you've selected the one you like – there's a mix of portrait and landscape ones with a variety of sizes – open it up. Now choose the image you'd like to frame.



2

Copy and paste your image in

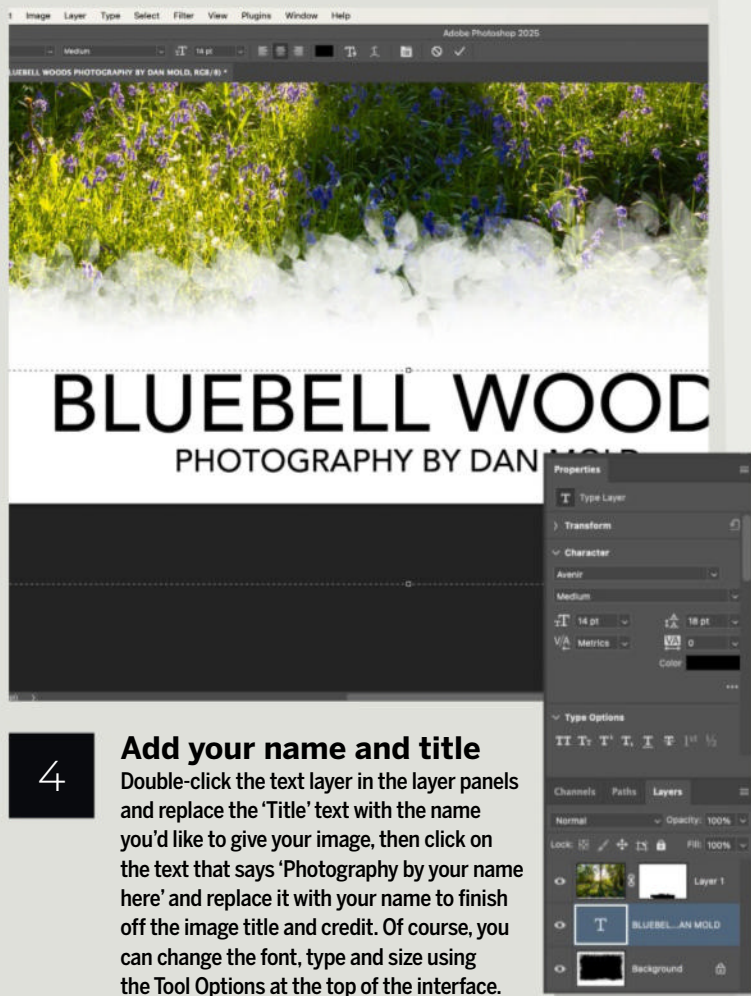
Hit Ctrl/Cmd+A to select your image, then Ctrl/Cmd+C to copy it and Ctrl/Cmd+W to close it down. Back in the presentation border file, hit Ctrl/Cmd+V to paste it in. Go to the layers panel and change the blending mode to Screen, and your image will now only show through the black parts of the presentation template.



3

Resize and reposition

Hit Ctrl/Cmd+T to put your image into Free Transform mode, then click to drag it around the main window aperture of the template. You can also drag the corners of your image to resize it, making it larger or smaller, and hit Return when you're done to set it in place. If the image appears through the black text below, add a Layer Mask and paint the hard-edged black Brush Tool over the text to mask it off.



4

Add your name and title

Double-click the text layer in the layer panels and replace the 'Title' text with the name you'd like to give your image, then click on the text that says 'Photography by your name here' and replace it with your name to finish off the image title and credit. Of course, you can change the font, type and size using the Tool Options at the top of the interface.



After

How to expand your range

Sean McCormack merges bracketed files for better landscapes

The wider-landscape photographer, the lover of vistas, faces some greater challenges than those who shoot the intimate landscape. The biggest of these is the extent of light reaching the camera, from full sun to deepest shadows. Even with the sensor technology we have today, it still doesn't match the ability of your eye.

Fortunately, you can mitigate this. Traditionally, you'd have used a neutral density graduated filter in front of your lens. But, being linear, they would also darken hills and mountains that protruded into the sky. Now, the solution is simple: you turn on the bracketing feature in your camera. Set it to Auto Exposure Bracketing (AEB) and choose your range. For a basic set, you could choose three images with a gap of two or three stops. As you gain experience, you may want to try five or seven images with smaller exposure intervals.

Lightroom Classic can merge the files into a 32-bit format that it can view and process natively. If you have a monitor with extended range, you can even allow Lightroom to work in a native HDR mode, showing the true image colour and tones. Let's process this image of Lough Tay in County Wicklow, Ireland.

Check the HDR Preview mode

For an HDR preview mode, press HDR in the Basic panel. Both the Histogram and the Basic panel expand to allow those with better monitors to correctly work with and edit the merged DNG file that Lightroom creates. If you have one of these monitors, then give it a go! The Google Chrome web browser correctly previews these files, too.



Download your files

www.digitalcameraworld.com/dc304
Download your files and video tutorial from the folder titled 'Lightroom_Expand Range'



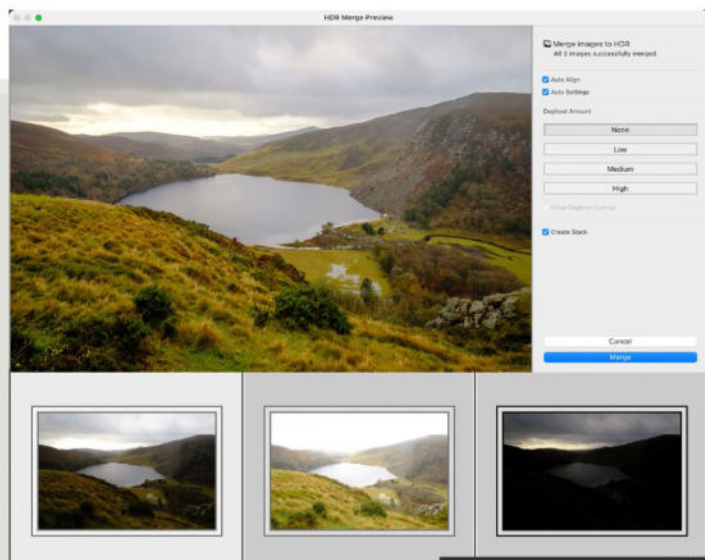
Four
Lightroom
Presets



13-minute
video
tutorial



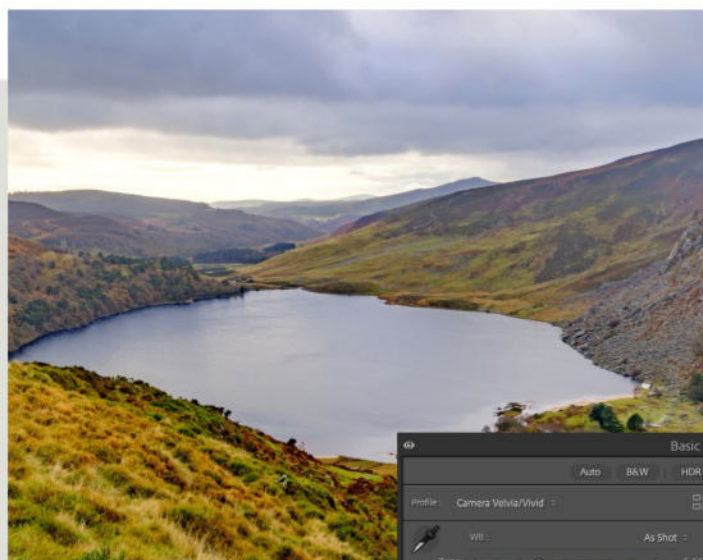
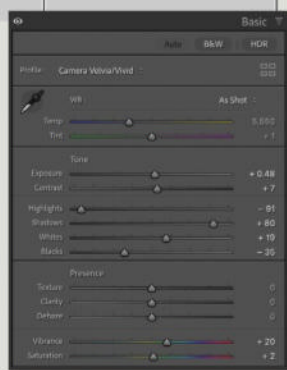
Project
files and
instructions



1

One blend

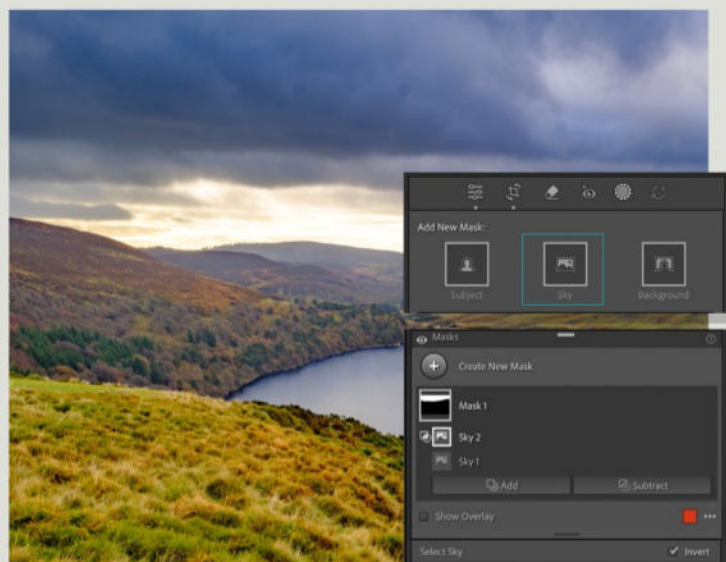
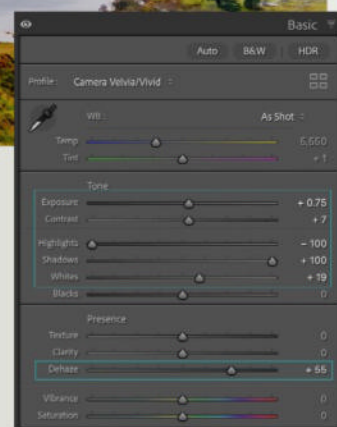
In Grid, select the photos to merge and either go to the Photo > Photo Merge > HDR menu or use the shortcut Control + H (both Mac and PC). The Merge dialog appears. Use Auto Align for handheld images for a better blend. Use Auto Settings for a start to edit. Use Deghost Amount to mitigate movement (use the overlay to view these areas). Finally, set 'Create Stack' if you want to only see the final merge in the grid, then press Return.



2

Little fixes

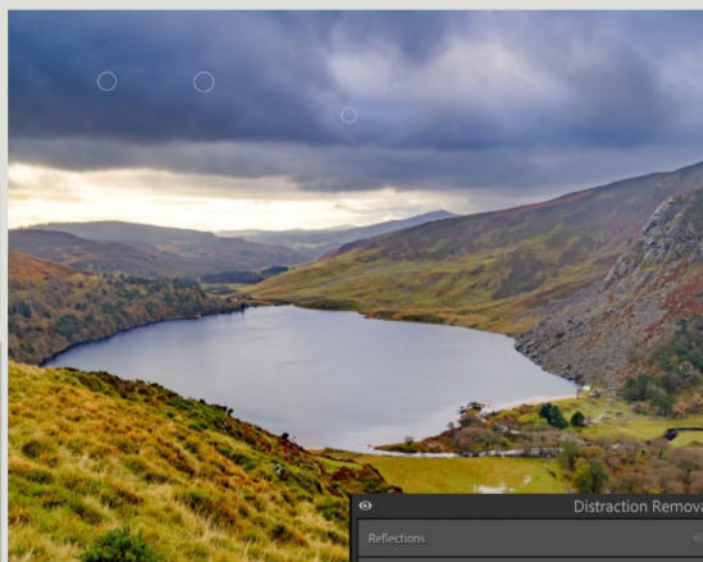
Lightroom likes to add Vibrance and Saturation, so zero these out first. The haze can be reduced with Dehaze of +55. Set Highlights to -100 and Shadows to 100 to reduce light and increase visibility in the darker areas. Increase Exposure to +0.75 as Dehaze darkens your image. Hold shift and double-click on Blacks to set the black point. This covers most of the tonal and global colour issues, apart from the sky, which is still drawing too much attention.



3

The sky is the limit(ing factor)

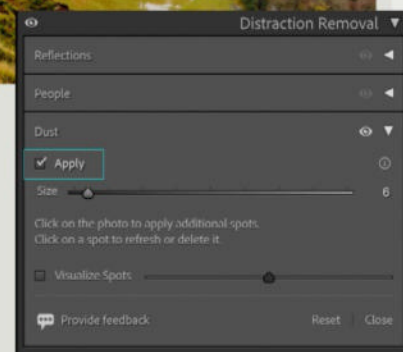
Sky masking is among the oldest of the AI masks, and it's easy to do because it's right there at the top of the Masking panel. Use Shift + W to open Masking and click on Sky. A red overlay will appear, but vanish when you start editing. Bring Exposure down to -0.5, Contrast to 100 and Highlights to -90. The mask affects the hills too much, so click Subtract, and choose Sky. Now, click on the Sky2 mask ellipsis (...) and choose Invert.



4

Dust begone

The sky work has revealed some sensor dust. This gives you a chance to try out the new AI Dust Removal tool. Open the Remove tool (Q) and in the Distraction Removal panel, click Apply in the Dust section. This did a great job, but you can always add more spots manually or edit the ones applied by AI. Visualise Spots still works in this tool, and you can choose the preferred spot size before using Apply. Click the yellow circular arrows icon to update the AI masks as well.



Before



Edit with some blue-sky thinking

James Abbott explains how to boost plain skies in your cityscapes, with four simple but effective Photoshop techniques

Clear blue skies are often considered boring in landscape and cityscape photography. And to be fair, they can be much less impressive than skies filled with dramatic clouds. These shots, in some situations, can be a write-off; however, in many cases, there are several techniques you can use to make plain blue skies look much more interesting. From colour shifts to dramatic black and white, we're going to explore the possibilities with a simple cityscape photo.

The four techniques we'll look at are all easy to apply, but their result is a dramatic shift from the original image. We'll also take a non-destructive approach, as always, which means you can not only leave the underlying pixels of the photo unaffected, but you can also stack effects to increase the creative possibilities available to you. Simple doesn't always have to be boring – and that's what you're going to discover here...

Download your files

www.digitalcameraworld.com/dc304
Download your files and video tutorial from the folder titled 'Photoshop_Blue Sky Effects'



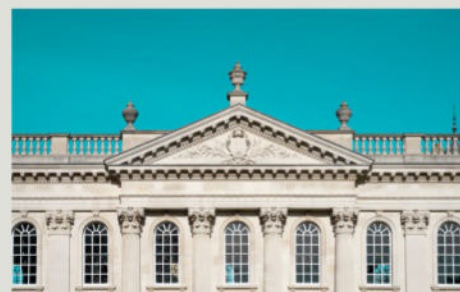
Four
Actions for
Photoshop



6-minute
video
tutorial



Project
files and
instructions



1

Surreal turquoise sky

Click on the Create new fill or adjustment layer icon at the bottom of the Layers panel and select Hue/Saturation from the options. When the dialog opens, select the blue channel and set the Hue to -40, which will turn the sky turquoise for a surreal look. The effect looks great at this level, but if you prefer a more subdued effect, use Layer Opacity to reduce the strength. Another option is to play with the Blending modes to see if they produce a result you like.



2

Red filter black & white

Using a red filter while shooting black and white film was a great way to turn plain blue skies into black skies and add a boost of contrast to your photos. You can mimic this effect by using a Black & White Adjustment Layer. Create the Adjustment Layer, and when the dialog opens, select the High Contrast Red Filter from the Preset dropdown menu. Now, drag the Cyans slider to -90 and the Blues slider to -130 for a completely black sky and a generally high-contrast photo.

3

Apply an ND grad

Click on the Create new fill or adjustment layer icon at the bottom of the Layers panel and select Curves. When the dialog opens, left-click on the curve to place a point, then drag down and to the left to darken. If you accidentally place a point, drag it away from the curve to delete it. Next, press Ctrl/Cmd+I to invert the Layer Mask, and press D to set the Palette colours to black and white. Make sure white is in the foreground and use the Gradient Tool to add a gradient to the Mask.

4

Replace the blue sky

Go to Edit > Sky Replacement, and when the dialog opens, select a blue sky with clouds from the list of options. For this image, no edge adjustments are required. Make sure Output To is set to New Layer and hit OK. This sky is a little dull, so create a Levels Adjustment Layer and drag the black point below the histogram inwards to 16 and the white point inwards to 200. Next, left-click on the white square with a downwards arrow to clip the Levels Layer to the new sky Layers below.



Clean up your face

Remove blemishes and stray hairs with the help of frequency separation – and **Wendy Evans**

Download your files

www.digitalcameraworld.com/dc304
Download your project files from the folder titled 'Affinity_Frequency Separation'.



Four LUTs to
apply to your
images



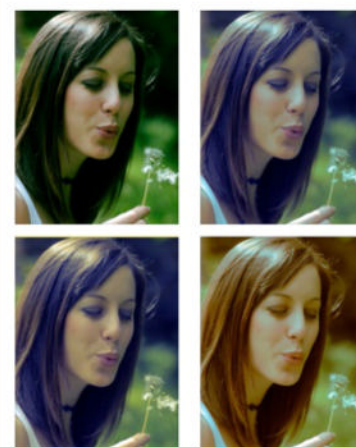
No video
tutorial
this month



Project
files to
follow along

Cleaning up portraits, especially female ones, can be a laborious process. It's also easy to go overboard and end up with an unnatural-looking result. While you can start with the Clone Brush (K) tool for obvious moles and blemishes, it's tricky to remove uneven textures and stray hairs. In this tutorial, we'll look at combining the Clone tool with frequency separation layers to make it easier to get good results.

But before we get to that, the first thing to do is to ensure you have tweaked any exposure or perspective issues in the image, as doing it afterwards can affect the visible results of your editing. The reason for using Affinity's frequency separation ability is that it's completely customisable and allows you to separate detail from background colour. This makes it easier to then correct details without changing colours.



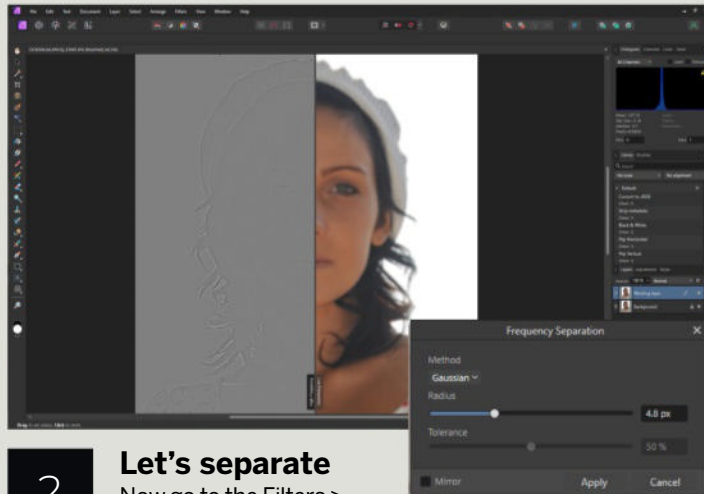
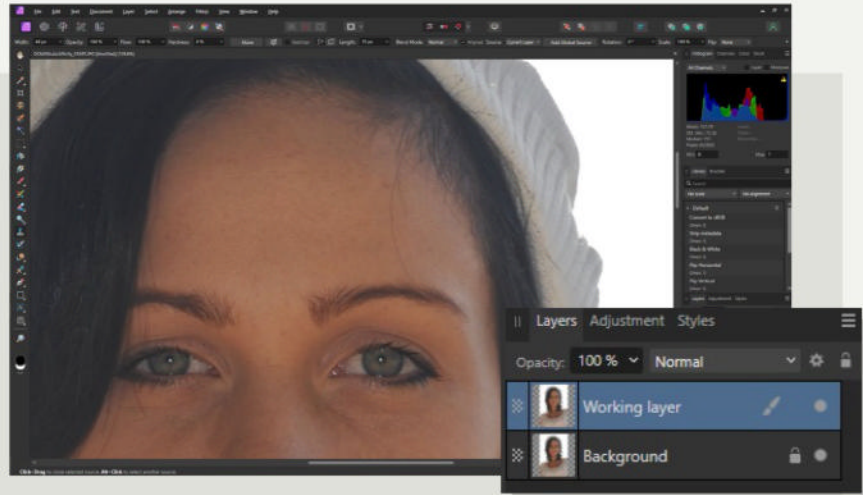
Spring colours

Once you've finished cleaning up your portraits, why not add some spring colour with this collection of four LUTs that work as adjustment layers?

1

Remove moles

Load your image and duplicate the Background layer so that you have something to work on. Select the Clone Brush tool at 100 per cent Opacity and 0 per cent Hardness, so that it has soft edges. Zoom in and clone from adjacent areas to remove any obvious and large moles or spots. Use the square brackets to adjust the brush size.



2

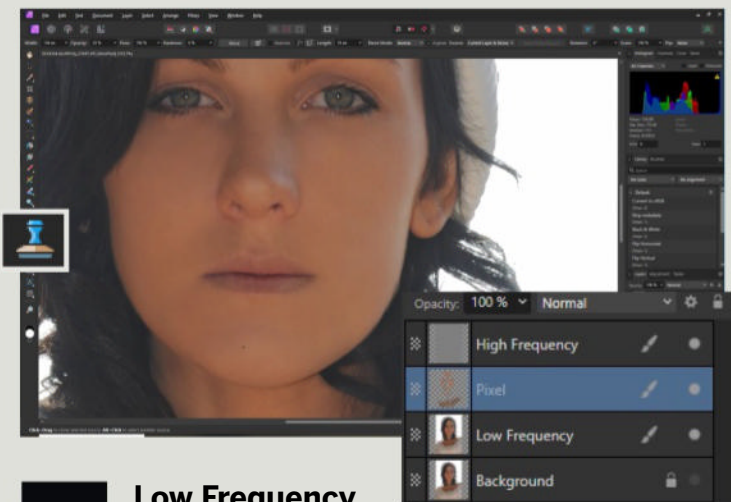
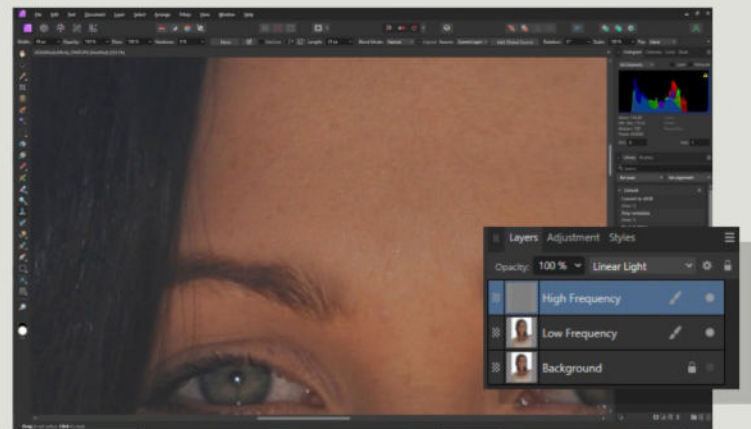
Let's separate

Now go to the Filters > Frequency Separation tool, which will separate the layer into high and low frequencies. The screen displays the results side by side. Use the Radius slider to put enough detail into the High-frequency layer on the left before it starts to bring in the colour. This is the texture part of the image; the Low Frequency layer on the right is the colour.

3

High Frequency work

Click on Apply, and the layer now splits into two. You can turn off the visibility of the other layers while working on the High Frequency layer, but you might find it easier to have the Low Frequency layer displayed at either 24 per cent or 100 per cent. Zoom in and use a small Clone Brush to remove any hairs. Then increase the brush size to smooth out uneven textures.



4

Low Frequency colour problems

Even though we have cleaned up the texture part, there may still be areas where the colours don't look right. So select the Low Frequency layer and then, in the Layers palette, click on the New Pixel layer icon to create a Pixel layer. Select the Clone Brush with 20 per cent Opacity and change the Source mode to Current Layer & Below. Now, with the Pixel layer selected, carefully brush over the errant colour areas to clean them up.

**Now add colour**

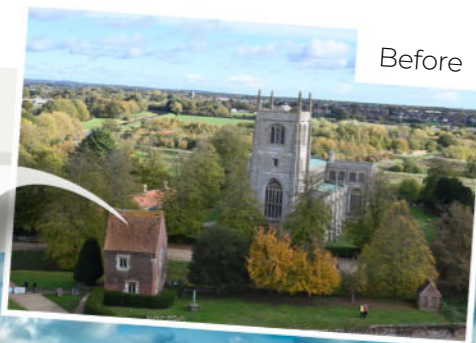
OK, so you've cleaned up your portrait – how about adding some fresh colours to it? In this month's software downloads, we're giving away a selection of four LUTs that you can apply as Adjustment layers. Top tip: if you don't think it adds or changes much (it depends on what colours of yours are in the LUT itself), then try different blend modes, such as Soft Light and Overlay, for a more dramatic result.



EXCLUSIVE READER OFFER!

Get a 40% discount off Photo RAW MAX 2026, until 30 April 2026

Go to this link:
on1.sjv.io/dc26
and use the code:
DIGITALCAMERA40



Before



After

Dull grey skies? In ON1 Photo RAW, we can replace them and enhance the image overall.

Wendy Evans

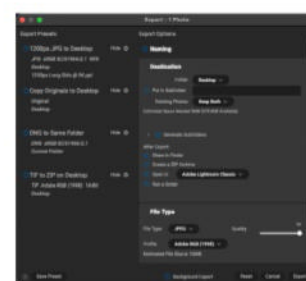
How to replace skies in landscape photos

Wendy Evans continues our new series on getting to know ON1 Photo RAW MAX 2026

PART 2 OF 4

See issue 305,
on sale 27 Feb,
for Part 3

The interface for Photo RAW may be a little different from what you're used to, but it contains some interesting and powerful features. In part two of our guide, we're going to replace the sky and jazz up the landscape element using various presets. If you're planning to replace or enhance the sky, the first thing to address is any lens distortion, as this will affect the horizon, which the system is masking. The other point to note is that while it may be tempting to add a spectacular sunset to a drab afternoon shot, the rest of the lighting in the image won't match, so it's best to replace skies with something that blends well with the original image.



Finalising edits

When you've finished with all your edits, click on the blue arrowed circle in the bottom right to apply them. You are now back in the Browse section. Select the raw file again, then go to File > Export.

You can now set all the parameters for whatever format you want the edited raw file to use. Here, it was set to export as a jpeg.



1

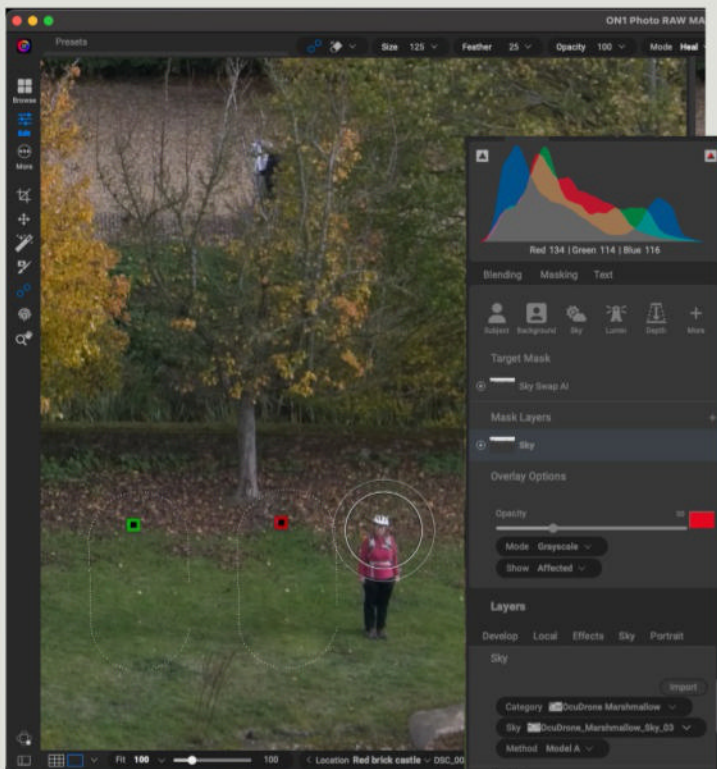
Load and correct

Find your image in the Browse section, click on it and then on Edit. Now, in the palettes on the right, under the one for Layers, you will see a range of tabbed headings. Click on Develop and then on Lens Correction. The system should detect the right lens and select it here, but you can do it manually and also make further adjustments with the Distortion slider.

2

Add some sky

In the Layers palette, find the tabbed heading for Sky and click on this. There are some styles you can use in one click, but instead, click on Category and select the type of sky that fits in with the scene. Click on the Sky drop-down menu to select which sky you want from this category. Scroll down to see the parameters for tweaking how this is applied.



3

Spot tweaks

The panel to the left also has tools for localised tweaks, such as cloning out distractions. Zoom in on the people at the bottom of the screen and select the diagonal circles icon for the Clone tool. Paint over the area you want to remove, then grab the handle for the sample area and move it to where it gives the best overall fit.



4

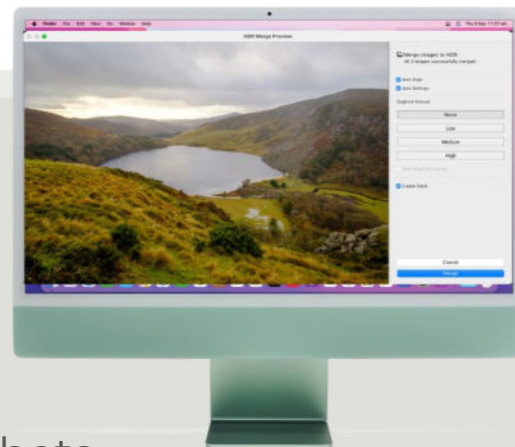
Look and feel

You'll notice a panel on the left called Presets. Now we have the sky, head over there and try out the various categories. The AI adaptive presets can blend better with the underlying image, but are slower to process at times. You can try film emulations or opt for a retro vibe instead. Here, I went into the Cinema presets and used the CN4 preset for a punchy result.

THIS MONTH'S SOFTWARE EXTRAS

23 Actions, presets, LUTs and borders

As seen in this month's tutorials, give your shots a new look with our collection of downloads



This month, we are giving away 23 software extras with our Digital Darkroom tutorials. Once installed in Adobe Photoshop, Lightroom, Camera Raw or Affinity Photo, these Actions, presets and borders will transform your images. Rather than manually adjusting your shots, they will get you there in just a few clicks.

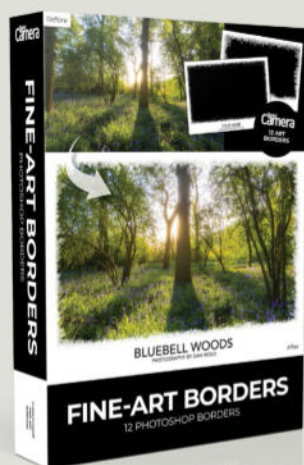
This month's software giveaways include 12 fine-art borders that will give your images a more professional touch. There are three Lightroom presets that adjust exposures, and we also have four LUTs to add some spring colour to your images – these work for Affinity and Photoshop. Finally, there are four Photoshop Actions that will transform plain blue skies.

How to use your software extras

Once you have downloaded the 'dcm304-files.zip' file to your computer, extract it and put the folders where you can easily access them. These folders contain the software, project files and a PDF with installation instructions.



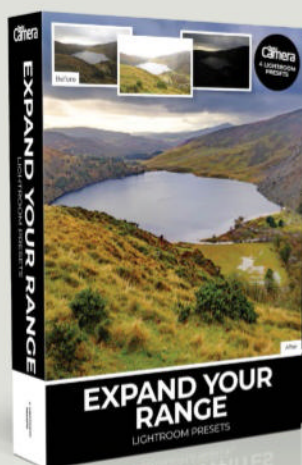
DOWNLOAD FILES & VIDEO AT
www.digitalcameraworld.com/dc304



12 FINE-ART BORDERS

Software: Photoshop
 (Version 25.5 or higher)

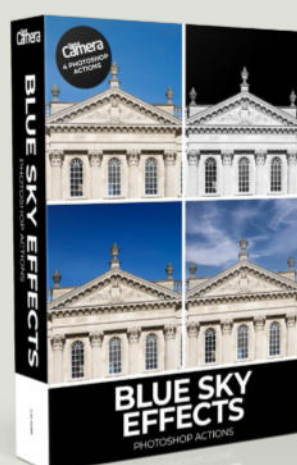
Add a touch of style to your images with this collection of fine-art style borders. Simply paste in your image, add a location and name, and set the blend mode to Screen. You can resize the borders as you see fit, and they can be used in all photo editing apps.



THREE TONES PRESETS

Software: Lightroom

To go with the tutorial this month, here are three presets called Reset Sat/Vib, HDR Sky and Expand range. The first of these sets the saturation and vibrance to zero, the second darkens the sky and includes a sky mask. The final one changes the Highlights and Shadows.



FOUR BLUE SKY EFFECTS

Software: Photoshop
 (Version 25.5 or higher)

Discover these four Actions for Photoshop that will transform plain blue skies in your cityscape or landscape shots. The pack includes a turquoise colour, red filter black and white, apply a graduation, and replace a sky for one with clouds.



FOUR SPRING COLOUR LUTs

Software: Photoshop & Affinity

To finish off the tutorial on cleaning up portraits, we are giving away four lookup tables in standard .cube format. These work with Affinity Photo and Photoshop, both as adjustment layers, so you can tweak how they affect your image.

Download all four packs from: www.digitalcameraworld.com/dc304

KitZone

New gear, buying tips and the world's toughest tests



110

Sony A7 V _ Update for brand's do-it-all hybrid full-frame mirrorless



114

Ricoh GR IV _ Iconic compact for street shooters gets best update so far



116

Canon RF 85mm F1.4L VCM _ Hybrid prime for stills and video portraiture



118

Lumix S 70-300mm F4.5-5.6 Macro OIS _ Modern take on old-school focal range



ts resolution-focused A7R sibling tends to get bigger headlines, but the A7 line is no slouch – it's one of the best all-rounders. And that's

unlikely to change with the latest update to the A7. Version V packs a 33MP sensor, which offers impressively detailed images with a manageable file size. A new sensor speeds things up, and AI being integrated into the image processor makes things smarter across the board. Turn the page to read our hands-on verdict on the Sony A7 V – sadly, we weren't able to get it tested in

our lab by the time this issue went to press. Another camera with a dedicated following is Ricoh's GR line. Compact and powerful, it's therefore popular with street shooters, and its APS-C sensor can produce great photos while keeping things subtle. And the new version is supposed to be the best yet.

Two new lenses come under scrutiny this month. Canon's RF 85mm F1.4L VCM will tempt portrait shooters for whom faster native glass is beyond their budget, and the Lumix S 70-300mm F4.5-5.6 Macro OIS offers a modern take on a popular focal length from the days of film. **Niall Hampton**



250-page gear Buyer's Guide
Find out more on page 6

The awards bestowed by the *Digital Camera* lab...



Given to the top product in a group test



For products that receive five stars overall



Given to products that offer superb value for money

Ratings explained

★★★★★ Best in class
★★★★☆ Excellent
★★★☆☆ Good
★★☆☆☆ So-so
★☆☆☆☆ Poor

All products reviewed in KitZone are tested independently by photographers with years of experience, using lab and real-world testing

Mirrorless Sony A7 V



1
The grip has been redesigned: it is marginally deeper and has more of a lip.

2
The A7 V sports a new partially stacked sensor, which is faster than the one used in the A7 IV.

3
A refreshed Bionz XR2 image processor enables an evolution in AF performance.

Sony A7 V

£2,799/\$2,899 (body only)

A smarter, faster all-rounder, but with a few compromises

www.sony.co.uk

Specifications

Lens mount: Sony E-mount
Resolution: 33MP
Processor: Bionz XR2
ISO: 100-51,200
Autofocus: 759-point phase detect, 94% coverage, -4.0EV
Stabilisation: 7.5 stops (centre), 6.5 stops (periphery)
Max burst: 30fps with AE/AF (electronic) for 185 jpegs / 85 raw
Video: 4K60p 4:2:2 10-bit, 4K120p (Super35),
Viewfinder: 0.5-inch, 3.68m-dot, 0.78x magnification, 60/120fps
Screen: 3.2-in, 2095k-dot LCD
Memory cards: 1 x CFexpress Type A / SD UHS-II, 1 x SD UHS II
Battery/shots: NP-FZ100, rated for 630 shots (EVF), 750 shots (LCD)
Dimensions (W x H x D): 130.3 x 96.4 x 82.4mm
Weight: 695g (incl battery and memory card)

The A7 series has always been Sony's dependable full-frame workhorse, the jack-of-all-trades, and the camera most general photographers should probably buy, whether they shoot portraits, sport, landscapes, weddings or video. The new A7 V doesn't change this; it's still the everyman's camera, but it represents the biggest generational shift this range has seen since the A7 III.

The A7 V has many improvements that trickle down from other recent models, but Sony has also introduced a few firsts. There is a new partially stacked sensor, which improves readout times for faster burst speed and writing video. This is joined by a refreshed Bionz XR2 processor, which integrates the separate AI unit we have seen in most of Sony's recent range into the processor, enabling an evolution in autofocus performance over the prior model.

It's still recognisably an A7-series body, but it's faster, more intelligent and more refined than the A7 IV. However, since the A7 III came along and changed the mirrorless camera game, the

competition has arrived at the party. The latest mid-range bodies from the big players, including the Canon EOS R6 Mk III, Nikon Z 6III and Lumix S1 II, challenge Sony's once-dominant position in this market segment. So does the A7 V do enough to get back out in front?

Build and handling

If not for the camera name printed along the top plate, you might not spot the difference between the A7 V and the previous model. Sony hasn't radically changed the design, which is fine. Sony cameras are some of the best-looking cameras around, so as the saying goes, if it ain't broke, don't fix it.

Tweaks include a redesigned grip that is marginally deeper and has more of a lip than the previous model. Though the A7 V is compact, it still feels comfortable and well-balanced in the hand, even with the huge array of Sony E-mount glass. However, it could use a little more support at the bottom for larger hands, as my little finger was left dangling.

The A7 V still has controls everywhere, including a button for almost every function you'd want during everyday

Sony A7 V Mirrorless



4

The electronic viewfinder offers 100 per cent coverage, with a 3.68m dots resolution.

5

A collar on the main mode dial offers fast switching between Still/Video/S&Q.

6

There are twin UHS-II SD card slots; the top one also takes CFexpress Type A cards.

7

The layout of controls on the rear panel has been retained and is intuitive to use.

8

A pair of USB-C ports offers one for charging, and one for transferring data.

9

Battery life has been improved, and it betters most of the A7 V's mirrorless rivals.

shooting. Most can be remapped to taste, making the camera feel more personalised the longer you use it.

The EVF is identical to the one on the A7 IV. It's a 0.5-inch, 3.68m-dot screen with a 0.78x magnification, and it is switchable between 60 and 120 fps, for power conservation or smoother subject tracking. It's not class-leading, but it's a fine EVF that you won't struggle to use. The LCD screen has received a more significant improvement, with a bump in size from 3 inches to 3.2 inches, and a long-overdue leap in resolution from a 1.03m-dot screen on the A7 IV to a 2.1m-dot screen on the A7 V.

Sony's menus are well-designed and relatively easy to navigate around, although some newer users might find them overwhelming due to the number of options. Fortunately, Sony has brief in-camera explanations for settings, should you be confused about what something does. But I still had to Google a couple of times where a specific setting was, after trawling through the menus had me pulling my hair out. Thankfully, there is a simplified

touch interface that is the fastest way to change key settings without diving through layers of menus.

The A7 V has also inherited the 4-axis multi-angle screen we've seen on recent Sony models. It's a big upgrade over earlier A7 bodies, and with the added tilt, it makes low-angle photography easier and more subtle, as you no longer have to flip out and rotate the entire screen. It can also avoid cable congestion, with the additional axis providing enough space for the screen to clear any HDMI or USB-C cables connected to the camera during filming.

I am a little torn on the unmarked port doors. On one hand, it looks clean and minimalist, but the unmarked flaps are confusing and I opened the wrong flap in search of the USB-C ports on a few occasions. Underneath those ports, Sony has included a full-size HDMI for connecting to an external monitor, a headphone jack for monitoring sound, a mic jack with plug-in power, and a new addition that's slightly surprising: two USB-C ports – one for mains power and one for connecting accessories. Perhaps Sony knows differently, —>



The 3.2-inch flip-out LCD rear screen assembly features Sony's latest fully articulating design.

Gareth Bevan



The 4-axis multi-angle screen is a big upgrade over earlier A7 bodies. It makes low-angle shots easier, as you no longer have to fully flip out the screen.

Gareth Bevan



The A7 V is compact and feels well-balanced and comfortable in the hand. However, it could use a little more support at the bottom for larger hands.

Gareth Bevan



Even in harsh, low winter sun, jpegs on the A7 V retained a surprising amount of detail in the highlights without brightening the shadows, too.

Mirrorless Sony A7 V



Gareth Bevan

The amount of detail I was able to salvage from underexposed images was particularly impressive. There's plenty of scope to manipulate colours, too.

but it feels a little unnecessary, and not a scenario that will trouble many users.

Finally, the two SD card slots from the previous model remain, with one doubling as CFexpress Type A. This is useful if you shoot a lot of high-bitrate video or long bursts, but Type A cards are still prohibitively expensive and not widely used outside Sony's camera ecosystem. Of course, Sony is going to support its own format, but CFexpress Type B would be more affordable and more useful for any frequent system switchers.

Performance

Sony has kept the resolution at a respectable 33MP, making it the highest-resolution partially stacked sensor yet, albeit from a limited field. It remains the sweet spot of file size, detail and overall usability, and if you do need more resolution, the Sony A7R V has you covered. In terms of image quality, the A7 V doesn't spring any surprises – it just refines what Sony already did well. Using

the excellent Sony FE 24-50mm F2.8 G lens, my images were packed with plenty of detail and a decent amount of scope for cropping, but you'd struggle to see any difference over the previous model.

Sony promises 16 stops of dynamic range, and there is a good amount of scope to push and pull shadows and highlights. Both jpeg and HEIF files are good; the highs and lows are nicely balanced without looking overly processed. I shot in harsh, low winter sun lighting conditions, but the jpegs retained a surprising amount of detail in the highlights without brightening the shadows too aggressively. And shooting in 4:2:2 10-bit HEIF, I was especially impressed by the amount of detail I was able to salvage from underexposed images, and the scope to manipulate colours.

Noise performance has so far been strong throughout the 100-6,400 range, but it becomes an unavoidable issue at higher ISOs. You can go up to 51,200, although

I wouldn't recommend these extreme values unless you really need that shot.

Sony also claims that white balance will look more consistent thanks to AI-assisted AWB, and I have been impressed by the accuracy from the A7 V; even in challenging light, it has avoided the slightly greenish cast Sony has been known for.

Colours are accurate and true to life, but don't have a signature look. Sony offers some control over jpeg images, with several different pre-programmed styles, including a few non-specific film emulations and black and white profiles, and you can also tweak your own. These profiles are great for adding a quick bit of style to an otherwise mundane image, but they don't have the flexibility of Fujifilm's recipes or Lumix's LUTs to consider the A7 V jpegs as being social-media-ready.

Autofocus on the A7 V is the biggest improvement Sony has made over the prior generation. The A7 V doesn't see anything new that hasn't already been on other Sony models, but the new AI unit (now integrated into the main processor) brings the latest subject recognition across all subject types, not just human faces, but also to animals, birds, insects and vehicles. There are also a whopping 759 PDAF points covering 94 per cent of the sensor.

“Autofocus is lightning-quick. It's also one of the most confident and accurate subject recognition AF systems I've used”



Gareth Bevan

Noise performance is strong throughout the ISO 100 to 6,400 range, but becomes an issue at higher ISOs.



Gareth Bevan

AI-assisted AWB is impressive on the A7 V. It avoids the greenish cast that Sony had become known for.



Sony offers several styles, including film emulations and black and white profiles.

The A7 V also benefits from the latest auto subject recognition mode, which means you no longer have to pick the specific type of subject you are shooting, as the camera can recognise all subjects in one unified mode. However, you can still pick a specific subject type, should you wish to focus on a pet and not the owner, or a driver and not the car, for example.

In practice, the autofocus was lightning-quick. It's also one of the most confident and accurate subject recognition autofocus systems I have used. Tracking is incredibly sticky and easy to use; just tap on your subject on the touchscreen, and the autofocus glues itself to it.

Though I didn't really push it to its limits, one of the benefits of the partially stacked sensor is the A7 V's blistering 30fps blackout-free shooting with autofocus and auto exposure, while the buffer can handle up to 185 jpeg or 85 raw images when using CFexpress Type A cards. You also get pre-capture, which is programmable from 0.03 to 1 sec before you press the shutter, giving you a safety net for moments that happen just before you can react.

The battery life is good, too. Official ratings of 630 shots with the EVF or 750

with the LCD represent an improvement – and are much better than most mirrorless rivals. In practice, I didn't quite get those numbers, but there was a noticeable improvement, and I would be confident shooting a full-day event such as a wedding on just a couple of NP-FZ100 batteries.

For video, it's another big leap from the previous generation, adding 4K/120P, and the new partially stacked sensor improves readout speeds for less rolling shutter. But while video has improved, some limitations feel more noticeable, given what other brands are offering. Where rivals are pushing 6, 7 or even 8K open-gate video, the video from the A7 V tops out at 4K. The 4K is oversampled from the 7K readout of the sensor, and video quality is excellent as you'd expect from Sony. But missing out on open gate limits a creative tool that is increasingly useful to video editors trying to edit for multiple platforms, while restricting the resolution limits in post-production cropping.

Using the full sensor, the A7 V can record in 4K up to 60p. 4K/120P, on the other hand, requires a more significant Super35 (roughly APS-C) crop. This is to be expected and does allow better control over rolling shutter speed and colour dynamic range. The

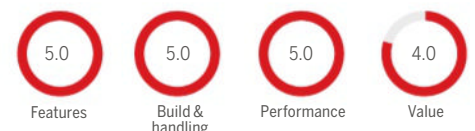
Canon EOS R6 Mark III is the only hybrid camera at a similar price point that offers full frame readout 4K/120p – but we have yet to see how that performs.

The rolling shutter is well controlled, and high-speed trains remained firmly upright rather than skewed. This is not just a huge improvement on the last generation, but it embarrasses recent video cameras like the Sony FX2 and its lousy rolling shutter. Unfortunately, Sony also continues to avoid raw video. This is another Sony camera with no internal raw, including industry standards like Apple ProRes, which again sets it behind similarly priced rivals. You get 4:2:2 10-bit footage in S-Log or S-Log2, which gives scope for changing colours and lighting in post-production, but also makes it more challenging to use with footage shot using other systems.

The A7 V has an improved 7.5 stops of in-body stabilisation in the centre and 6.5 stops on the peripheries. The A7 V is impressively stable for handheld video in subtle movements like panning, but IBIS alone won't counter heavier movements like walking. However, the A7 V now benefits from improved digital stabilisation, with Active and Dynamic stabilisation modes. These add a slight crop to the footage, but they are effective and make handheld footage look smoother than before. It isn't quite Lumix/OM level, but the A7 V remains one of the better stabilised full-frame cameras for general use. **Gareth Bevan**

Digital Camera early verdict

4.5 ★★★★★ Outstanding



While the autofocus leap alone might have been enough to make this a compelling upgrade over the previous model, Sony has also improved the handling, stabilisation and burst speed, and with the new partially stacked sensor, video gets a big boost with 4K/120P and tighter rolling shutter. However, the A7 V is not flawless. Despite the improvements to video, the specs still feel a little held back compared with some rivals, with no open gate, a max resolution of 4K and limited codecs with no internal raw. CFexpress Type A also remains a pricey investment to get the best out of the latest power features.

The bottom line is that the A7 V is faster and smarter than the A7 IV and is a worthy upgrade. Although it has strayed even further out of enthusiast territory and more into professional territory – and for many photographers, this might be overkill – for serious enthusiasts, pros and hybrid creators, this could be the best Sony camera that has been released for quite some time.

Compact Ricoh GR IV



1

The pocket-sized Ricoh GR IV suits street shooters who want to be subtle.

2

The APS-C sensor gets a bump over its predecessor's, to 25.74MP.

3

The GR IV's fixed 18.3mm lens is equivalent to 28mm in full-frame terms.

Ricoh GR IV

From £1,199/\$1,499

Beloved compact street camera gets its biggest upgrade yet

www.ricohgr.eu

Specifications

Lens: Fixed 18.3mm (28mm equiv) f/2.8

Sensor: APS-C BSI CMOS, 25.74MP

Image processor: GR Engine 7

Autofocus: Hybrid phase/contrast AF, Snap Focus (fixed distance)

Stabilisation: 5-axis, up to 6 stops

ISO range: 100-204,800

Max burst: 4fps estd

EVF: None (optional OVF)

LCD: 3-inch fixed touchscreen, 1.037m dots

Max image size: 6192 x 4128px

Video: Full HD 1080p @ 60/30/24 fps

Storage: microSD + 53GB internal memory

Size (W x H x D): 109.4 x 61.1 x 33.7mm

Battery: DB120 (approx 250 shots)

Weight: 262g (incl battery and memory card)

For over 30 years, Ricoh's compact cameras, such as the 35mm R1 and the premium GR1 series with their ultra-slim bodies and sharp wide-angle lenses, have built a cult following. Since 2013, the digital APS-C GR line has continued the legacy, with the GR IV keeping the familiar metal body and 28mm-equivalent prime lens, while introducing its most substantial set of upgrades yet.

Ricoh maintains the photography-focused philosophy, with a 'real camera' interface, prime lens and pocketable design. Under the surface, almost everything has been tweaked, from a new backside-illuminated (BSI) sensor to a redesigned lens and overhauled control layout.

The GR IV is the most refined entry in Ricoh's iconic fixed-lens compact line, and costing £1,199 (\$1,499), the premium price reflects both the cult reputation of the series and the significant upgrades added here: BSI sensor, redesigned lens, stronger stabilisation and a larger battery.

Build and handling

With the GR IV, Ricoh has learned from previous generations. In the hand, it's a slim magnesium-alloy brick – a touch thinner than the GR III – and at 267g, it all but disappears in a pocket. The handgrip is small, but it's enough to anchor the camera securely.

Ricoh has brought back the plus/minus rocker from the older models, and the revised controls feel better. Exposure tweaks are so much faster when you're working on instinct. The new rear e-dial is also a proper dial and the press-to-ADJ [adjust] control feels natural once you customise its five categories. With 17 different settings to choose from, you can tailor the camera to shoot exactly the way you want.

The move from a rear wheel to a navigator keypad also helps the camera feel more decisive, giving direct access to ISO, white balance, macro and drive modes without diving into menus. There's only one Fn button, but Ricoh lets you assign 37 different functions to it. The menus are still in a tiny font, but the layout is clean and structured. The

Ricoh GR IV Compact



4

There's no viewfinder, but the rear screen allows rapid selection of focus points.

5

To save going into the menus, you can assign 37 different functions to the Fn button.

6

The plus/minus rocker from older models returns. Use it to make exposure tweaks.

touchscreen helps, too, not just with AF point placement but also with sliding through menus and reviewing images.

As expected, there's no built-in flash, and the optional GF-2 accessory flash remains a curious non-TTL unit. Physical connectivity is minimal, with just a USB-C port, but wireless options include dual-band Wi-Fi and Bluetooth 5.3 for the GR World app – handy for geotagging and remote control.

The fixed 7.62 cm LCD is the same as before, though the new Outdoor View Setting is a welcome addition for shooting in bright sun. There's an option to display histograms, grids, highlight warnings and level indicators, and in playback, the 20- or 81-thumbnail view and dual histograms make reviewing images surprisingly deep. Ricoh has included many useful editing tools, too – Levels Compensation, White Balance Adjustment, Colour Moiré Correction and even a post-capture parameter adjustment system that feels unusually powerful for such a tiny camera.

Performance

The GR IV feels like a huge step forward. The updated hybrid AF system is quicker and more confident than before. It locks on faster, misses less,

and even the tracking feels more secure. Face- and eye-detection work well, and the various zone and pinpoint modes let you choose exactly how deliberate you want to be. Of course, the secret weapon is still Snap Focus. Setting a distance and snapping to it with a shutter press is as fast as ever.

Exposure is handled by a capable 484-point metering system, and the highlight-weighted option is useful for keeping drama in bright outdoor scenes. The new Snap Distance Priority AE mode is clever; pick a Snap distance and a depth of field profile and the camera takes care of the aperture. With ± 5 EV of compensation and three-shot bracketing, it offers plenty of control. The biggest surprise is the upgraded five-axis stabilisation. Ricoh claims up to six stops of correction, making the GR IV more resilient in low light. With the new BSI sensor, it feels more capable at night than previous versions.

Image quality is exactly what you'd expect: crisp detailing, smooth tonal transitions and plenty of dynamic range. Highlights hold up beautifully, while raw files have at least four stops of usable shadow recovery. Better corner sharpness of the redesigned lens gives the images a more polished look, too.

Paul Burrows



There's plenty of depth of field when the lens is used at its minimum aperture: 1/125 sec at f/16, ISO 800.

Gareth Bevan



Raw files offer you at least four stops of usable shadow recovery. 1/30 sec at f/2.8, ISO 250.

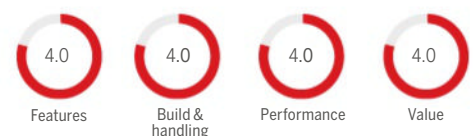
High-ISO performance is impressive for an APS-C compact. You start to see noise at ISO 12,800 and, even at ISO 102,400 and 204,800, colours start to fall apart, but the shots are still usable. Continuous shooting remains modest at 4fps. In tests, it captured 23 jpegs in 5.8 secs. Video is an afterthought – Full HD only, no AF tracking, no manual exposure and limited mic control – but the GR has never been a video-first camera.

Overall, the GR IV is fast, responsive and instinctive, with the combination of the new stabilisation, BSI sensor and autofocus improvements making it the best GR yet.

Paul Burrows & Gareth Bevan

Digital Camera verdict

4.0 ★★★★★ Excellent



The Ricoh GR IV takes everything people love about the GR series – portability, sharp optics and discreet shooting – and improves almost every meaningful component. It isn't perfect, and its video mode remains an afterthought, but for stills shooters, the GR IV is a brilliant, pocket-sized photographic tool and the strongest GR model yet.

Prime lens Canon RF 85mm F1.4L VCM



Canon RF 85mm F1.4L VCM

£1,799/\$1,649

Canon's classic portrait lens receives an update with hybrid video performance

www.canon.co.uk

Portrait photographers have been waiting for the Canon RF 85mm F1.4L VCM since the EOS R system debuted in 2018. Sure, we had the RF 50mm F1.2L at launch, but that's not a headshot lens; for that, we had to wait until 2019's RF 85mm F1.2L and 85mm F1.2 DS lenses – but those were hulking, expensive, prestige optics. Then we had the budget RF 85mm F2 Macro in 2020 – a much smaller and cheaper but also much slower and non-sealed option.

What the Canon RF 85mm F1.4L VCM presents, then, is the traditional sweet-spot portrait lens – a cut above the plastic fantastic f/2, offering great performance without the price or heft of the f/1.2. More than that, though, it's the latest addition to Canon's line of hybrid lenses – optics that combine the handling and performance characteristics of its EOS, Cinema EOS and broadcast lenses.

This means that the Canon RF 85mm F1.4L VCM joins the four current hybrid primes – the RF 20mm, 24mm, 35mm and 50mm f/1.4 VCM – to form an outfit of video-friendly lenses with harmonised size, weight and filter threads for friction-free filming.

As someone who owns the RF 85mm F1.2L, I was intrigued to see how this new lens performs, because at 18 per cent of the length, 53 per cent of the weight and (crucially) 55 per cent of the price, what's to lose by downsizing? So I took it on a professional portrait shoot for a client to see how the Canon RF 85mm F1.4L VCM fared.

Build and handling

It should come as no surprise that the Canon RF 85mm F1.4L VCM looks, feels and handles almost identically to its hybrid prime siblings. It has the same uniform 76.5 x 99.3mm size and 67mm filter thread, but is the heaviest of the quintet at 636g – compared to the 20mm at 519g, the 24mm at 515g, the 35mm at 555g and the 50mm at 580g.

1 The f/1.4L features the same 67mm filter thread as its hybrid prime siblings.

2 This lens doesn't have stabilisation, which is worth noting if you own a camera without IBIS.

3 There is a manual Iris Ring to control the aperture, but this was designed for video.



The f/1.4 aperture gives sublimely shallow depth of field that makes portraits look very special indeed.

Obviously, the upside of the harmonised sizing is that hot-swapping filters and gimbals (and lens caps) across the hybrids is a breeze. However, a side effect is that the hoods are also interchangeable – and, unless you know the difference between 'Lens Hood ES-73' and 'Lens Hood EW-73F', you won't know which one is for which lens, as there's no other information on each hood.

The Canon RF 85mm F1.4L VCM has a large manual focus ring complemented by the standard customisable control ring, along with – again in common with the rest of the family – a smooth manual Iris Ring to control the aperture. Bear in mind that these rings were designed for video, and they have a strange relationship with photography: currently, they only control stills apertures on Canon's cameras from 2024 onwards, namely the EOS R1 and R5 Mark II.

While all the hybrid primes are weather-sealed – being as they're L-series lenses and adorned by the coveted red ring – they aren't stabilised, which is worth bearing in mind if you own a camera without in-body image stabilisation (IBIS) and you plan on filming without a gimbal.

It can't be overstated just how much smaller and lighter this lens is than its f/1.2 counterpart – take a look at the two of them side by side. Honestly, I love the f/1.2 – but it's ridiculously big, even on a chunky body like my EOS R5. On a smaller RF-S body, it becomes ludicrous. If you're someone shooting on a smaller body like an EOS R7 or an R10, the new f/1.4 is a far better fit.

Performance

As noted, I own the RF 85mm F1.2L and it's my go-to lens for portraiture, including my paid commissions. So I thought the best way to evaluate the new Canon RF 85mm F1.4L VCM was to take it on a professional client



Canon says that the 85mm F1.4L 'comes close to delivering the same quality' as the 85mm f/1.2L...

shoot and see how it did. In summary, its performance was nothing short of exceptional. This is an extremely good lens.

Canon says that the 85mm F1.4L "comes very close to delivering the same quality" as the 85mm f/1.2L – and that's no exaggeration. This is sharp as a razorblade, even when shooting wide open. Indeed, I don't think you can fault it optically – and our lab test results certainly attest to that.

The voice coil motor (the VCM in the lens's name) does a superb job of providing quick, quiet, accurate autofocus. And like other members of the hybrid family, the VCM technology isn't just there to shunt around the large internal elements at speed – it also delivers smooth focus transitions while filming, where breathing is also suppressed.

Portrait photographers will no doubt be wondering just how big a difference there is between f/1.4 and f/1.2. Well, in terms of rendering, it's not as dramatic as you might think. Yes, shooting at f/1.2 will always create superior subject separation with more pleasing bokeh (the quality of the out-of-focus areas of the image), but f/1.4 still gives you sublimely shallow depth of field that makes portraits look very special indeed.

The same is true when it comes to low-light performance, as shooting at f/1.4 still enables you to shoot in incredibly challenging conditions. And today's sensors are so good that bumping up your ISO – or slowing your shutter if you have IBIS to rely on – is a perfectly acceptable compromise.

Really, the biggest difference between the two lenses is how they handle, particularly on Canon's smaller RF-S cameras. As much as I love my 85mm F1.2L, it's monstrously big. Even on chunky bodies like the EOS R5, it dwarfs the APS-C flagship EOS R7, and it becomes completely impractical on the R8 or anything smaller.



... and it's no exaggeration. This lens is as sharp as a razorblade, even when shooting wide open.

By contrast, the 85mm F1.4L is small and light enough to make a decent dance partner for any EOS R camera – especially smaller APS-C bodies. In fact, with its equivalent 136mm focal length, this becomes a compelling option for RF-S shooters – and R7 owners in particular, where the stabilisation is especially welcome.

That's really the only negative with this lens: the lack of built-in shake compensation. Arguably, you could say that it's a pro lens, and therefore intended for higher-end bodies equipped with IBIS. But having tested it on the Canon EOS R50 V, I would definitely have appreciated a little stabilisation. Though of course, the f/1.2L lens doesn't have any stabilisation either.

So will I be selling the bigger lens and picking up the smaller, lighter, cheaper f/1.4L? No, I won't – I'm a sucker for the bokeh and the additional creaminess is worth it to me, even though the difference will probably only be marginal to most people. However, while I won't be selling my f/1.2L lens, if I were buying an 85mm today – and, certainly, if I owned any camera smaller than an R5 – I would be buying this new f/1.4L.

It's close enough in performance, but the huge advantages in size, weight and cost make it a far better buy for 90 per cent of photography – and it's also an infinitely better video lens, an area where the f/1.2L is almost entirely impractical. **James Artaius**

"The performance is nothing short of exceptional. It's an extremely good lens"

Prime lens

Specifications

Mount options: Canon RF/ RF-S

Full-frame: Yes

Autofocus: Yes

Image stabilisation: No

Lens construction: 14 elements in 10 groups.

Angle of view: 28.5° (RF-S: 18°)

Diaphragm blades: 11

Max aperture: f/1.4

Min aperture: f/16

Min focus distance: 750mm

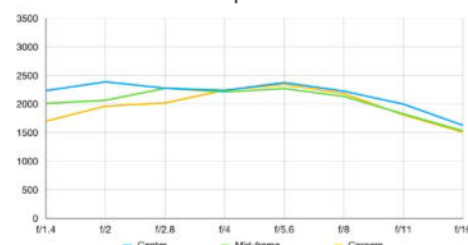
Max magnification ratio: 0.12x

Filter size: 67mm

Dimensions (L x D): 99.3 x 76.5mm

Weight: 636g

Sharpness



Sharpness

The level of sharpness is excellent, right across the entire image frame. Even wide open at f/1.4, it is superb, and it remains so through to f/11.

Fringing

0.69

Colour fringing strays into visible territory at larger apertures, but stop down to f/4 and it becomes a non-issue. Enabling in-camera lens correction banishes aberrations when shooting wide open.

Distortion

1.21

There's a little more pincushion distortion than we'd normally expect for an 85mm lens, but this is pretty much eliminated when firmware correction is enabled.

Digital Camera verdict

5.0 ★★★★★ A best-in-class product



The Canon RF 85mm F1.4L VCM is an extraordinary lens for portrait photography and videography, offering the crossover characteristics and optical performance the range is renowned for, but also offering EOS R photographers a long-awaited middle ground for 85mm glass. The RF 85mm F1.4L offers premium performance without breaking the scales or the bank balance. It's a genuine 'Goldilocks' lens; for videographers, it fills the short telephoto gap in the hybrid lineup. While I'd prefer this hybrid prime to have stabilisation, in every other respect, the Canon RF 85mm F1.4L VCM is the sweet-spot optic that photographers and videographers have been waiting for on this system.

Zoom lens Lumix S 70-300mm F4.5-5.6 Macro O.I.S.



Lumix S 70-300mm F4.5-5.6 Macro O.I.S.

£799/\$948

Reprises a popular telephoto zoom range of old, in a thoroughly modern design

www.panasonic.com



The 70-300mm tends to be relatively compact and lightweight compared with most telephoto zooms.



As you'd expect from the high-end build quality, there are weather-seals to prevent dust and water.

ED) element and one UHR (Ultra High Refractive index) element. The lens has a well-rounded 11-blade aperture diaphragm, which helps to ensure rounded bokeh discs. Sure enough, a tight depth of field is available from f/5.6, especially at longer zoom settings. At narrow apertures, it also delivers an exciting starburst effect.

One thing you need for sports and wildlife photography is fast autofocus for tracking moving subjects. The AF system, based on a linear stepping motor, is rated at 480fps. Here, the camera's autofocus system can be a limiting factor, and Panasonic's contrast-detection 'DFD' (Depth From Defocus) system isn't renowned for its agility.

With telephoto lenses, camera shake is a danger, and in-body image stabilisation (IBIS) tends to be less effective. Here, dual image stabilisation is on hand, featuring an optical image stabiliser that works with in-body stabilisation to deliver 5.5-stop performance.

Panasonic is partial to developing 'hybrid' camera systems that work equally well for stills and video. This lens fits this ethos, in that it's designed to maximise autofocus performance in terms of 'zoom tracking', so it locks onto the subject when zooming in and out. Focus breathing is also suppressed; both of these elements combining to deliver what Panasonic claims is professional-grade video quality. One downside is that the minimum focus distance extends from 0.54m to 0.74m as you zoom from shortest to longest focal length. The upside is that at the longest setting of 300mm, the lens can deliver 0.5x macro magnification at its shortest focus distance, reproducing objects at half life size on the sensor, giving scope for huge enlargements of tiny bugs, for example.



What happened to 70-300mm lenses? Towards the end of the DSLR era, they became difficult to find. Sigma and Tamron, to name but two manufacturers, stopped making them altogether, and in the mirrorless age, there has been a shift to 100-400mm zooms. Canon repurposed an old lens for EOS R-system mirrorless cameras, but the resulting Canon RF 75-300mm F4-5.6 is unimpressive. Anyway, all of that is largely irrelevant if you shoot with a Panasonic Lumix S series camera or other L-Mount body. The good news is that Panasonic has reinvented the 70-300mm telephoto zoom for the mirrorless age.

Build and handling

One of the best things about 70-300mm lenses is that they're relatively compact and lightweight compared with most telephoto zooms. This one measures a modest 148 x 84mm and weighs a modest 790g, which is a big plus for wildlife or sports photography, where you may be shooting handheld for hours on end.

Compared with 70-200mm zooms, the 70-300mm typically lacks a constant aperture rating. As such, the widest available aperture shrinks from f/4.5 to f/5.6 as you go through the zoom range. The long end is still relatively quick, compared with many telephoto zooms for mirrorless cameras, which often shrink to a pedestrian f/6.3 or f/8. Typically, 70-300mm lenses have an inner barrel that extends as you zoom through the focal lengths. The downsides are that the centre of gravity shifts at different zoom settings, and there's a danger of dust being sucked into the lens. However, the Panasonic feels well-balanced at all settings and has extensive weather-seals.

Along with its high-end build quality, the lens features a high-performance optical layout, with 17 elements arranged in 11 groups, including two ED (Extra-low Dispersion) elements, one UED (Ultra

1

Some of the lens's extra length is due to its compatibility with teleconverters.

2

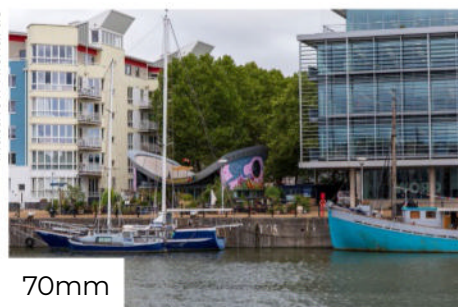
The manual focus ring has granular control, distance markings and hard stops at each end.

3

The lens is weather-sealed, which is great news for outdoor macro shooters.



The lens delivers superb levels of sharpness, especially at the widest available apertures in the range.



70mm

These two example shots were taken of the same scene, from the same position, here at 70mm...



300mm

... and, here, at the 300mm end of the range. They show how the zoom range works out in practice.

Performance

During testing, I used the lens with the Panasonic Lumix S1 IIE, which has hybrid phase/contrast-detection autofocus. It gave snappy performance for stills, locking onto subjects instantly and tracking them effectively. That's a big plus for wildlife and sports genres, to which the lens is suited.

It lives up to claims of 5.5 stops of image stabilisation when working in tandem with IBIS. High-performance autofocus and stabilisation give the lens nowhere to hide when it comes to the sharpness of the optical design. But it delivers superb levels of sharpness, more so at the widest available apertures throughout the zoom range. That's important because this isn't a 'fast' lens in terms of its aperture range, so you'll want to shoot at or near the widest apertures to freeze motion with fast shutter speeds, without having to bump ISO up too much.

Bokeh is also impressive with a soft and dreamy look in defocused areas. The 11-blade aperture diaphragm helps keep bokeh disks well-rounded when stopping down a little. Colour fringing can be problematic with telephoto lenses, but the Panasonic does well to keep this at bay throughout its entire zoom and aperture range. Similarly, there's virtually no distortion at the shortest focal length



The Lumix makes a pretty good stab at macro, retaining sharpness and clarity from close-up.

of 70mm, and only minimal pincushion distortion at medium to long zoom settings. Though it isn't the kind of lens I'd normally use for macro photography, the Lumix makes a pretty good stab at it, retaining impressive sharpness and clarity in close-up shooting. Overall, performance is exemplary.

The lens is designed to be equally adept at stills and video capture, although it would benefit from an aperture control ring for the latter. Even so, focus breathing is minimal and quality remains good when zooming in and out, with impressive autofocus tracking and a consistent level of minimal distortion.

Matthew Richards

Zoom lens

Specifications

Mount options: L-Mount

Full-frame: Yes

Autofocus: Yes

Stabilisation: Yes

Lens construction: 17 elements in 11 groups

Angle of view: 34-8.3°

Diaphragm blades: 11

Min aperture: f/22

Max aperture: f/4.5

Min focus distance: 0.54m-0.74m

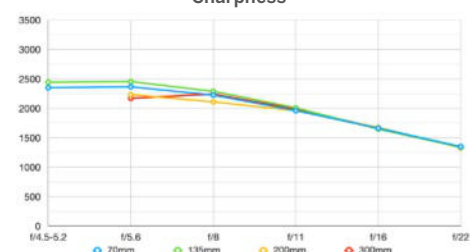
Max magnification ratio: 0.5x (at 300mm)

Filter size: 77mm

Dimensions (L x D): 148 x 84mm

Weight: 790g

Sharpness



Sharpness

Some of the lens's best scores for sharpness are near the widest available aperture. This is a bonus, as you won't want to use a narrower aperture than f/4.5-5.6 in sports and wildlife genres, so you can freeze motion with fast shutter speeds, without needing high ISOs.

Fringing Short 0.20 Long 0.34

In the 70-200mm range, there's virtually no colour fringing. It is noticeable at 300mm with apertures of between f/5.6 and f/8, but only at edges and corners.

Distortion Short 0.05 Long 0.89

At 70mm, it's basically a zero-distortion lens, while pincushion distortion in the 135-300mm range is minimal. That's a bonus for those who shoot video.

Digital Camera verdict

5.0 ★★★★★ A best-in-class product



The Lumix S 70-300mm F4.5-5.6 Macro O.I.S. is a keeper as far as I'm concerned. I'm impressed by the speed and consistent accuracy of its autofocus system, the effectiveness of its optical image stabilisation and its rather gorgeous image quality. For me, the 70-300mm telephoto zoom range is a classic and a favourite. It makes this lens tremendously versatile, and the additional 0.5x macro ability is yet another bonus. It works brilliantly well for both stills and video, and is an excellent choice for sports, wildlife and event photography. On top of that, it's refreshingly compact and lightweight, while still boasting high-end handling characteristics. It's a beauty.

Jonathan & Angela Scott

The leading conservationists
tell **Niall Hampton** about their
Sacred Nature Initiative



Jonathan and
Angela Scott
**Photographers and
conservationists**

Two of the biggest names in global conservation, the Scotts split their time between Nairobi in Kenya and the Maasai Mara.

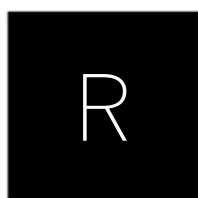
They are patrons of numerous conservation organisations working to protect cheetahs, lions, rhinos and other species.

Jonathan fell in love with Africa after his first visit in 1974, and lived permanently in the Maasai Mara between 1977 and 1992.

Born in Egypt and raised in Tanzania, the wonders of the Serengeti National Park gave Angela her love of photography.

www.jonathanangelascott.com

Instagram: @thebigcatpeople



eaders with an interest in wildlife photography, or those who enjoy our coverage of the Remembering Wildlife series of books, will be aware of Jonathan and Angela Scott and their conservation work.

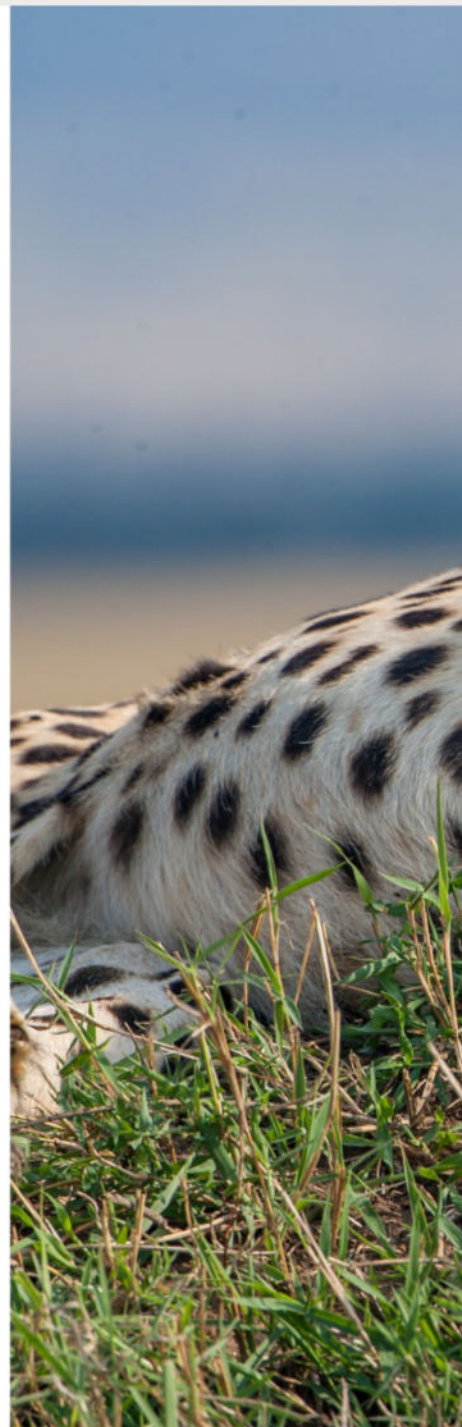
The couple have written and illustrated over 40 books, and worked on the popular BBC TV series *Big Cat Diary* between 1996 and 2008, with Jonathan as co-presenter and Angela as game spotter and stills photographer. While living in East Africa, Jonathan and Angela have also undertaken 16 expeditions to Antarctica. *Digital Camera* got to meet them in much warmer climes, at last year's Xposure photography festival [<https://xposure.net>] in Sharjah in the United Arab Emirates, where we discussed the couple's Sacred Nature Initiative – and a new e-book.

Did you both enjoy the Xposure festival?

Angela: [Curator] Simon Newton invited us to speak at Xposure about one of our passion projects, the Sacred Nature Initiative, the non-profit organisation that we founded on the back of the two Sacred Nature books we've published so far. We had a gallery of photographs about big cats, which we loved, and we were able to speak to people about the Sacred Nature project.

Jonathan: The exhibition space at Xposure is a photographer's paradise. I don't know anywhere in the world where photographers are given an exhibition

Angela Scott





space like they get there. Your photographs are displayed almost life-size – you're standing next to a picture that is four or five feet high. Which photographer could afford to do that?

How would you define the Sacred Nature Initiative?

Jonathan: It is built on three pillars: 'Inspire', which we hope we can do with our books and television programmes; 'Educate', which is working with young people, getting the message across about how sacred nature is; and 'Conserving'.

The first book was titled *Sacred Nature: Life's Eternal Dance* and the second was named *Sacred Nature 2: Reconnecting People to our Planet*. We produced the books ourselves so that we could retain control of them. Publishers are always looking to cut costs, and while they might initially say they want to

produce a big book with 300 images, this can gradually get pulled back over time because of the overheads.

Angela suggested that rather than having a book led by the text, where the editor asks for a picture to illustrate the text, why don't we go the other way round – let's have words which help to amplify the message of the images, but make it all about the photographs. We got support from some brands for which we are ambassadors, including Canon, SanDisk and Swarovski, so we were able to create the book we wanted. We had it printed on Japanese Oji paper by Artron, the premium art book printer in China, and it was published by HPH in South Africa.

Angela: When you're producing a book, you have to find a designer who has the same vision as you do. Jonathan is such a wonderful storyteller that all of our —→

Above: Cheetahs struggle to raise cubs in areas with lots of lions and hyenas (they will attempt to kill them and steal their food). They also raise fewer cubs in areas with a high density of tourists.



Angela Scott

Above: Cheetahs are active in the daytime, so they are especially vulnerable to disturbance from tourist vehicles, particularly when with their young.

previous books have been led by a story. However, this time, because I'm the visual person, I asked for the photographs to tell the story. But I couldn't find a designer who had the same vision; things just didn't seem to work. Our son is a creative director, so when he came back to Kenya for Christmas [in 2015], I told him about my idea for the book and asked him to design it.

He said, "OK, here's the deal: you give me your archive and you will have nothing to do with the design. I will choose the pictures." And because David grew up in the back of the car [on safari] and knows both the subject and the two of us so well, I agreed.

Jonathan: David said he didn't want to use pictures that illustrated typical animal behaviour; he wanted to choose images that actually spoke to the essence of the animals. And 85 per cent of the pictures were Angela's, which tells you something.

Angela: Before he left after the holidays, David produced the rough design. It was perfect because it was a real family collaboration. His wife Tori is wonderful at publicity and she did the social media campaign, so the four of us created the first book.

When I asked David to do a second one for me, he said 'Oh, Mum...', but then came up with a wonderful design.

I always feel that the photographer has the easy part in a way, but unless the photographs are shown in a certain manner, it's rather like a movie. Nobody thinks that the [film] editor actually creates the visual magic, but a designer can create the visual magic of a book by weaving the visual story together. If it's designed in a certain way, people will stop and see the magic of it. That's what I always feel David did for us.

In fact, he still continues to do so, because he produces our website and all our other publications, and Tori still does the PR magic.

How do the two Sacred Nature books differ?

Jonathan: *Sacred Nature: Life's Eternal Dance* is a eulogy to the area that we know best, East Africa's Mara-Serengeti, a wildlife and photographer's paradise. Angela was brought up in Tanzania as a child. I came overland from London to Johannesburg in 1974 with the dream of doing something in Africa and I chose Kenya as my home. So, for the past 50 years, this has been the epicentre of our work. The book celebrates what we consider to be the last great place on Earth, the Mara-Serengeti, and at the same time, we decided to found the Sacred Nature Initiative.

Sacred Nature: Life's Eternal Dance focuses on the great wildebeest and zebra migration and individual big cats – in the same way that the Remembering Wildlife series, which we have contributed to from the outset, features individual species, amplifying the message and

“Our concern is the rampage of aggressive tourism, driven by social media and the plague of the selfie”

Angela Scott



getting people's attention. But Angela rightly said that the best way to save these creatures is to preserve their habitat; give them somewhere to live and they will do just fine. There is no time to waste with eight billion people driving wildlife off the planet: 96 per cent of all mammal mass is livestock (62 per cent) and humans (34 per cent). Wild mammals are just four per cent (less than that of domestic dogs alone). So for our second book, *Sacred Nature 2: Reconnecting People to our Planet*, we took a global, landscape approach, focusing on savannas, forests and plants, deserts, mountains, water and the polar regions.

Angela: Saying things like 'I like lions but hate crocodiles' is irrelevant. It's about the land, and if we don't focus on the environment and how we can protect it, then the species will die. The wildlife ecosystem is so interconnected that species cannot live alone. All life needs other life to survive. You have to have the matrix of every environment and if you take one piece out, it can have unforeseen and catastrophic consequences.

What else have you been working on recently?

Jonathan: We're working on *Safari Etiquette*, a project that is dear to our hearts and was recently published as an 80-page e-book. Our greatest concern is the rampage of aggressive tourism, which is going worldwide, driven by social media and the plague of the selfie. This makes people want to get close to things with their smartphone, without being aware of the wonder of what they're seeing. They're simply —>



Angela Scott

Above: It is important not to get too close to a mother big cat with cubs at a den site.

Left: The most moody and atmospheric light is sidelight or backlight.



Angela Scott



Top: Around half of lion cubs do not survive to maturity due to infanticide, predation and starvation.

Above: Safari vehicles help to mask the human outline of visitors, allowing them good views of wildlife.

saying, 'Hey Mum, look where I am today!' But the next day, they will have forgotten the name of the location.

People aren't absorbing the privilege of what they are seeing and this is what's crucial: we have to get people to reconnect to the awe of being in the natural world. Sacred Nature shouldn't just be about a place where there are big cats or big charismatic animals. Everybody has their own 'sacred nature', even my mother with her little potted plant in her kitchen. It's their link to that ethereal, wonderful sense of other life with which we share the planet.

We say to people that loving nature is not a choice; it's essential. Because if you don't love nature, you don't love yourself, the air you breathe, the food you eat, all those truisms... we have to get people back to being concerned enough not to see nature and land as a commodity to be exploited. George Schaller, the great field biologist and conservationist, says he gets frustrated when he hears people talking about natural resources as if they're just there for humans. They believe we can do without nature. But there is no life without nature. That is why we call it 'sacred'.

How has Safari Etiquette been received?

Jonathan: We've had an amazing response from the conservation space, because our mission is to try to put reasoning behind the rules and regulations instead of just being schoolmaster-ish and saying, 'Don't do this, don't drive off-road, don't drive too close to the animals'. We're explaining why you shouldn't do these things, because, for example, if you drive up to where a cheetah has her babies, where she may have spent a few weeks deciding where she was going to den, and you just drive blindly up to get closer for your shot, then she's going to move and may lose her cubs.

So we have to be considerate. We have to put nature first, and what we're concerned with is that – and, unfortunately, this is driven by photography because everybody is a photographer now – there's this urge to compete, because social media has created a competition for everything. It's all about getting a better shot, more likes or winning a [photography] award.

Right: The vast majority of accidents are caused by people getting too close to wild animals, especially when accompanied by their vulnerable young.

And now there's this insane competition to get ahead of everybody else, where people have to have elbows like the paparazzi to get the image they want.

When you talk to other photographers and ask them how they managed to get a particular shot, they will often say it was the access and the time they had that was the key. Now, not everybody can spend 50 years watching the same big cats or dedicating themselves to one area, as Angela and I have done. However, all of us can pause for a moment, step back and become a little more considerate and thoughtful about what's going on. Our Sacred Nature Initiative, with our books and this latest e-book, explains these basic points to people. It's just common sense, really.

In the next couple of years, we're hoping to publish the final part of the trilogy, *Sacred Nature 3: Life's Incredible Journey*. And that will be, in a sense, about us and our personal journey, what we learned and what we hope we can share with other people.

How do your creative roles differ?

Jonathan: I took up photography because I loved animal behaviour. My background was zoology, which I was fascinated by, so my driving force was nature and not initially photography. I used to love drawing and then I found myself in this extraordinary place, the Maasai Mara, where anybody can take a good photo, quite frankly. And that's why *Big Cat Diary* ran for so many years, because it was the best place to get access to the wildlife and capture footage of it.

Angela and I met 35 years ago, and what I learned from her was understanding the different types of light and how to create atmosphere and emotion, which are the essence of a beautiful image. I just took what I saw, whereas Angela is never satisfied with the ordinary.

For example, if we had gone out early in the morning and seen a wildebeest against a beautiful backlight – the sort of thing we'd photographed many times before – I'd say, 'Let's go and take some photos', and she'd reply by saying, 'Not if we're just going to photograph what we've already got'. But on that very morning, she captured a beautiful backlit picture of two egrets jumping on the back of the wildebeest for a ride, then feeding on frogs and insects stirred up by their feet. Suddenly, Angela had a little window into the details of what goes on around the wildebeest.

There are literally a million photographers taking photographs of African wildlife, whether they're amateurs or professionals. And there's a huge push now to do things differently for a quick fix – to get low-angle shots, to take photos from outside the



Angela Scott

vehicle, using remote cameras, drones or whatever. But that's not our kind of photography. We have taken a different approach by investing our lives in following these creatures, in trying to record every element of their existence without artifice. As we always say to people, 'Isn't nature impressive enough anyway? Why do you have to embellish it?' →

“Ask a photographer how they got a particular shot, and they will often say access and time was the key”



Now, if you want to show things differently from how they are, that's fine, but not growling, snarling or looking at you nervously. They're in their own world and it's like you are a fly on the wall, inviting the audience to enter the picture and connect with the individual creature, acknowledging that it is a living, breathing, real entity and an individual. Angela and I might have watched it for 17 years, from when it was a cub until the day it died. Just imagine that kind of continuity.

We've had the time and access [for our conservation work], and that's what we felt with our audience [at the opening event of the Xposure festival]. They were all photographers and we gave them a preview of our exhibition and they were completely captivated because, through the stories behind the pictures, they understood what we were doing.

Before the preview started, I asked the audience not to look at the photographs as they might otherwise have done – 'Oh, there's a lion, that's a leopard, this is a cheetah'. Instead, I wanted them to see that this

"Don McCullin nailed it by saying, 'If there's no emotion when I look at the picture, you've failed'"

particular leopard was Zawadi ('gift' in Swahili), who was in her 17th year the last time we saw her.

When you make a connection with an animal, as people did with Craig Foster's film, *My Octopus Teacher*, the reason it worked was that the viewers connected with the character of the subject. Through doing that, you also learn something about the photographer, and while you don't want that to be a primary factor, you begin to ask who this photographer is and what they have done to make this film different. And it's not because of trickery or gadgets – though they had to use great equipment, of course – but, ultimately, it's empathy, it's creating emotion. Don McCullin nailed it when he said, "If there's no emotion, if you don't move me, if you don't make me feel the emotion when I look at the picture, then you've failed."

Angela: One of the questions we're asked most often is, 'Tell us about when you nearly got trampled or gored'. The truth is that humans are the most dangerous large animal – 99 per cent of accidents with wildlife happen when people don't follow the rules, prompting animals to defend themselves, particularly when they are with their young. Wild creatures learn from experience that humans can be a danger to them; it's in their DNA. They invariably try to move away if they see people on foot. Safari vehicles mask the human outline to an extent, which is why big cats in places like the Maasai Mara are so accustomed to people in vehicles. *Safari Etiquette* is designed to keep wild animals and humans safe. ●

Above: The destiny of wild animals lies in the hands of local communities. If they don't see the benefits from living side by side with animals, such as through wildlife tourism, they will not survive.



Safari Etiquette: An Essential Guide is available now, priced £9/\$12, from: www.jonathanangelascott.com/shop/p/safari-etiquette
• Watch Jonathan discuss Safari Etiquette on YouTube: @MasaiMaraPodcast

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14-24 F2.8 Art DG HSM box	£799
18-300 F3.5/6.3 DC OS box	£299
35 F1.4 Art	£499
50 F1.4 Art	£499
105 F2.8 EX DG HSM OS	£299
150-600 F5.6/3 DG OS sport	£999
150-600 F5.6/3 DG OS contemp	£699
TC1401 1.4x extender	£149
10-24 F3.5/4.5 DIII	£179
300 F4 IS USM L	£399
18-400 F2.8/3.5 DIII VC	£549
180 F3.5 SP Di	£299

Used Nikon

Z8 body **Z7 MKII body** **70-200mm F2.8 SVR**

£2399 **£1499** **£1499**

NIKON Z MIRRORLESS USED

Z9 body box	£2999
Z8 body box	£2399
Z7 MKII body	£1499
14-24 F2.8 S	£1499
14-30 F4 S	£799
24 F1.8 S box	£699
24-70 F2.8 S box	£1199
24-70 F4 S	£399
24-120 F4 S	£749
24-200 F4.6/3 VR	£699
35 F1.8 S box	£449
50 F1.8 S	£449
70-200 F2.8 VR S box	£1499
85 F1.8 S	£599
180-600 F5.6/6.3 VR box	£1499
400 F4.5 VR S	£2199
800 F6.3 VR S	£4199
TC 1.4x tele converter	£449
FTZ adapter II box	£199
FTZ adapter	£149
MB-N11 grip (fit Z6/7)	£229
MB-N10 grip (fit Z6/7)	£129

NIKON DSLR USED

D5 body box	£1599/1999
D850 body box	£999/1899
D780 body box	£1199
D750 body box	£599
D500 body box	£599
D7500 body box	£599
D7200 body box	£399
D7100 body box	£299
D5100 body box	£199
MBD-18 (D850) box	£249
MBD-17 (D500)	£199
MBD-16 (D750)	£99
MBD-15 (D7100/7200)	£99
MBD-12 (D600/810)	£99
MBD-11 (D7000)	£49

FLASH / ACCESSORIES USED

SB-400	£99
SB-900 box	£149
SB-910	£149
SR-800 commander	£149
DR-6 or DR-5 angle finder each	£149
MC-36A rem.	£149
MC-30A rem.	£79

Used Nikon

300mm F2.8 AFS VR II **500mm F5.6 E PF VR AFS** **500mm F4 E FL ED VR**

£1999 **£1499** **£3499**

NIKON AF LENSES USED

10-20 F4.5/5.6 AF-P DX VR	£239
10-24 F3.5/4.5 AFS box	£349
10-24 F4 AFS DX	£199
14-24 F2.8 AFS	£599
16-35 F4 AFS VR box	£399
16-80 F2.8/4 VR DX	£499
16-85 F3.5/5.6 AFS VR	£199
18-35 F3.5/4.5 AFS	£299
18-105 F3.5/5.6 VR DX AFS	£199
18-140 F3.5/5.6 AFS VR	£199
18-200 F3.5/5.6 VR DX MKII	£299
18-200 F3.5/5.6 VR DX	£149
18-200 F3.5/6.3 VR DX	£449
20 F1.8 AFS box	£599
24 F1.4 G AFS Mint box	£799
24 F2.8 AFD box	£249
24-70 F2.8 AFS VR box	£1199
24-70 F2.8 AFS box	£499
24-120 F4 AFS VR	£499
28-300 F3.5/5.6 AFS VR box	£599
35 F1.8 AFS DX	£149

35 F1.8 AFS ED

35 F2.8 AFD	£299
50 F1.4 AFS G box	£299
50 F1.8 AFS box	£349
50 F1.8 AFD	£69
55-200 F5.6/5.6 AFS VR DX box	£99
55-300 F4.5/5.6 AFS DX VR	£229
70-200 F2.8 E FL AFS box	£1299
70-300 F4.5/5.6 E AF P VR	£499
85 F1.8 AFS box	£299
105 F2 DC	£699
105 F2.8 AFS VR	£399
200-500 F5.6 E ED AFS VR box	£699
300 F2.8 AFS VR II	£1999
300 F4 E PF VR box	£899
500 F4 E FL ED VR	£3499
500 F5.6 E PF VR AFS box	£1499
TC14-EIII	£349
TC14-EII box	£199
TC17-EII box	£199
TC20-EIII box	£199
TC20-EII	£99

Used Nikon

D850 body **D500 body** **D5 body**

£999 **£999** **£1599**

SIGMA NAF USED

8 F3.5 DC	£399
10-20 F3.5 DC	£229
12-24 F4.5/5.6 II HSM	£349
18-300 F3.5/6.3 DC OS	£299
20 F1.4 DG HSM Art	£499
24-105 F4 DG OS	£499
35 F1.4 Art	£499
50 F1.4 Art	£499
70-200 F2.8 Sport box	£799
100-400 F5.6/3 DG OS	£599
105 F2.8 EX DG HSM OS	£299
150-600 F5.6/3 DG OS sport	£999
150-600 F5.6/3 DG OS contemp	£699
180 F2.8 OS macro	£499
TC-1401 1.4x extender	£149
TC-2001 2x extender	£199

TAMRON NAF USED

16-300 F3.5/6.3 DIII VC	£399
70-300 F4.5/5.6 DIII VC HLD	£229
90 F2.8 Di VC	£199
90 F2.8 Di	£199

NIKON 35MM BODIES/LENSES USED

F5 body box	£699
F100 body	£1999
F801/F801 body each	£499
F3HP body	£499
F2 + DP-1 black	£599
F + plain prism	£599
FM2N body	£399/599
FE2 body	£499
28-85 F3.5/4.5 AIS	£249
35 F2 AIS	£349
35-105 F3.5/4.5 AIS	£149
50 F1.4 AIS	£299
55 F2.8 AIS micro	£199
100-300 F5.6 AIS	£199
105 F1.8 AIS	£499
135 F2 AIS	£399
180 F2.8 AIS	£399
200 F4 AIS macro	£399
300 F4.5 ED AIS box	£399
PB-5 or PB-4 bellows each	£199

Fujifilm Used

56mm F1.2 R

£399

Olympus Used

OM-1 MKII Body

£1499

Panasonic Used

GH5 Body

£599

Sony Used

200-600mm F5.6/6.3

£1199

Canon FD Used

A1 Body

£199

Gitzo Used

GT5541LS Carbon Fibre

£699

FUJIFILM DIGITAL USED

X Pro 1 body	£429
16 F1.4 WR box	£349
16-55 F2.8 XR	£499
16-80 F4 WR	£399
18-55 F2.8/4 XF	£299
23 F1.4 XF WR	£349
27 F2.8 XR	£349
35 F2 XR	£299
50-140 F2.8 WR box	£799
50-230 F4.5/5.7 MKII	£239
55-200 F3.5/4.8 R box	£349
56 F1.2 R	£399
70 F2.4 R	£399
70-300 F4.5/6.3 R	£399
1.4x XF conv	£249
X500 flash	£249
EF-42 flash	£99

OLYMPUS MICRO 4/3 USED

OM-1 MKII body box	£1499
OM-1 MKII body	£899
E-M10 MKII body	£379
7-14 F2.8 Pro	£699
8-25 F4 Pro	£749
9-18 F4.5/6.3	£349
12-20 F3.5/6.3	£599
14-150 F4.5/6.3 ED MKII	£1349
25 F1.8	£249
30 F3.5 macro box	£399
40-150 F2.8 Pro box	£899
40-150 F4 Pro box	£649
45 F1.2 Pro ED	£599
60 F2.8 macro	£349
75-300 F4.8/6.7 MSCII	£349
100-400 F5.6/3 IS box	£699
HLD-10 grip box	£299

PANASONIC MICRO 4/3 USED

GH5 body	£599
G9 body box	£499
BGG grip	£99
7-14 F4	£399
8-18 F2.8/4 box	£599
12-35 F2.8 II	£449
12-60 F2.8/4	£399
12-60 F3.5/5.6	£199
14 F2.5	£149
14-42 F3.5/5.6	£99
14-140 F3.5/5.6	£399
25 F1.4 box	£399
45 F2.8	£399
45-175 F4.5/5.6	£299
45-200 F4.5/5.6	£179
100-300 F4.5/5.6 MKII	£429

SONY FE MOUNT DIGITAL USED

A7 MKII body	£799
20 F1.8 G box	£649
24 F2.8 GM	£999
24-105 F4 G OSS	£1099
24-240 F3.5/6.3 OSS box	£499
35 F1.8 GM	£349
50 F1.2 GM	£1299
70-200 F2.8 GM OSS box	£1199
70-200 F4 G	£699
85 F1.4 GM	£999
100 F2.8 GM	£699
200-600 F5.6/6.3 box	£1199
Sigma 35 F1.2 Art	£699
Tamron 150-500 F5.6/7 VC	£799
Voigtlander 50 F2 APO MF	£499

A6100 + E SERIES SEE WEBSITE

CANON 35MM USED

EOS 3 body	£499
EOS 5 body	£499
EOS 50 body	£99
EOS 650 body	£99
A1 body box	£199
A9-1 body silver	£129
T90 body	£499
T70 body	£49
FD 200 F4 macro	£299
FD 50 F8	£199

MINOLTA MD 35MM USED

GT5541LS	£599
GT5543LS	£699
X-300 body	£199

OLYMPUS OM 35MM USED

OM-10 body	£499
Olympus bellows	£149

LEICA USED

Voigtlander 50 F3.5 Heliar	£369
Televid 77 + 32x eyepiece	£599
5x4 MONORAIL USED	
Cambo Master 6 5x4 monorail	£499
Cambo bag bellows	£149
Wista 6x7 roll film holder	£149
Wista 6x9 roll film holder	£149
GITZO USED	
GH3382 QD ball head	£329
GT3541LS	£499
GT5540LS	£599
GT5541LS	£599
GT5543LS	£699
G2220 Explorer	£199
G2380 Fluidhead	£239
GM5561 monopod	£249



with Chris George

What the f-stop?

How much do you really know about photography? Test yourself to the max every issue with our tricky trivia quiz!



4 Which country is planning a major celebration to mark 200 years of photography in 2026?

- ☐ A England
- ☐ B Scotland
- ☐ C France
- ☐ D Germany

8 How much bigger is a Fujifilm GFX-series sensor compared to a Fujifilm X-series sensor?

- ☐ A 1.9x
- ☐ B 2.9x
- ☐ C 3.9x
- ☐ D 4.9x

5 Which British landscape photographer founded the photo tour company Light & Land?

- ☐ A Joe Cornish
- ☐ B Thomas Heaton
- ☐ C Art Wolfe
- ☐ D Charlie Waite

9 Which photo contest, now in its 15th year, boasts a total prize fund of \$1 million?

- ☐ A HIPA
- ☐ B CEWE Photo Award
- ☐ C Hasselblad Masters
- ☐ D Sony World Photography Awards

6 The Photography & Video Show returns to the NEC in March. How many days does it run for?

- ☐ A 2
- ☐ B 3
- ☐ C 4
- ☐ D 5



10 Which of these companies doesn't currently make film scanners?

- ☐ A Plustek
- ☐ B Kodak
- ☐ C HP
- ☐ D Nikon



CBS Photo Archive/Getty Images

1 Who is the famous American photographer pictured above?

- ☐ A Richard Avedon
- ☐ B Ernest Withers
- ☐ C Eli Reed
- ☐ D Gordon Parks

2 The autobiography of which photographer is called *Hold Still*?

- ☐ A Lynsey Addario
- ☐ B Sally Mann
- ☐ C Annie Leibovitz
- ☐ D Lee Miller

3 Nan Goldin's groundbreaking photo essay, *The Ballad of Sexual Dependency*, celebrates which anniversary this year?

- ☐ A 20th
- ☐ B 25th
- ☐ C 40th
- ☐ D 50th

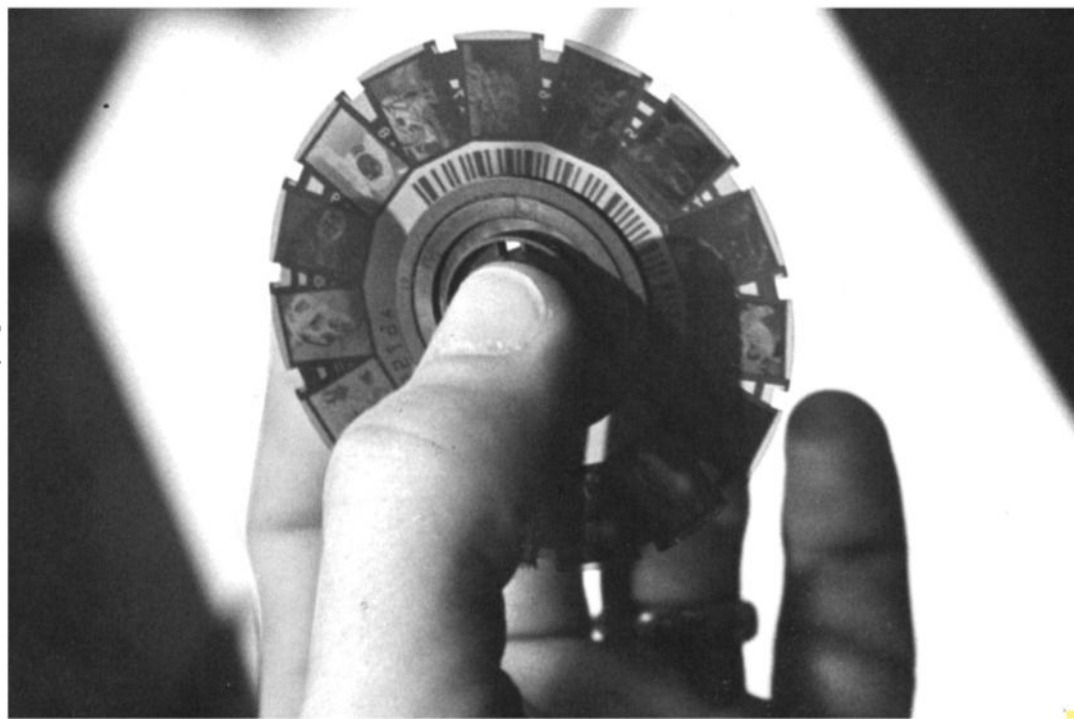
7 What is the name of this bizarre-looking Kodak film format from the 1980s (pictured below)?

- ☐ A Disc
- ☐ B 110
- ☐ C 126
- ☐ D 220

How did you do?

10 points You're a photo mastermind!
8-9 points Fantastic, you're a brainiac
6-7 points Really good score
4-5 points Respectable, but no cigar
2-3 points We'll keep your score secret
0-1 points Epic fail

ANSWERS 1D,2B,3C,4C,5D,6C,7A,8C,9A,10D



Ed Maker/The Denver Post via Getty Images

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