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Digital Camera World

*The world's favorite
photography magazine*

Issue 313 November 2026

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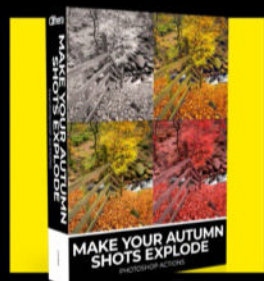


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Welcome

This month, we have everything you could possibly wish to know about lens filters. Turn to our cover feature (**page 62**) for a filters masterclass from top pro Karolina Konsur, and there's more about long exposures in Camera Clinic (**page 82**). You'll find some seasonal outdoor photography projects in Photo Skills (**page 41**), and Shot of the Month (**page 92**) takes you behind the scenes of our fabulous cover photo. This month's Apprentice (**page 8**) sees us travel to Essex for an equine photography extravaganza, and we put the Sony RX10 V (**p108**) to the test in Kit Zone, plus a new 16-30mm lens from Tamron (**p112**). Enjoy the issue.

Niall

Niall Hampton, editor
niall.hampton@futurenet.com



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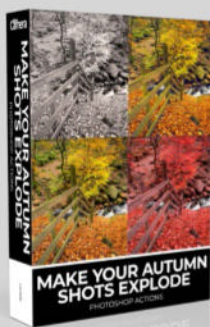


This issue's bonus gifts **Find out more on pages 6 and 106**



Nine all-new photo tips cards

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



29 Actions, presets & displacement maps

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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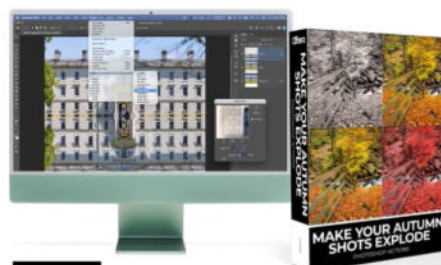
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This month's contributors

Karolina Konsur



Karolina Konsur Landscape photographer

Specialising in seascapes and long-exposure photography, Karolina has attracted an international audience. She helms this month's cover feature, from **page 62**



Elizabeth Ebsworth Photographer

An experienced equine and country photographer, Elizabeth invited us over to Essex, UK, for a reader shoot with two of her regular collaborators. **Page 8**

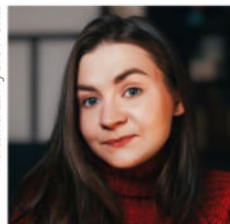
Indi 4



Peter Dazeley Photographer

Having worked as a commercial photographer for decades, Dazeley has just released his fourth book of photos about London – get access to all areas from **page 120**

Natalia Zmyslowska



Natalia Zmyslowska Photographer and writer

Drawing on topics she writes about in her photography blog, our columnist says that using a framing device will help you see scenes with fresh eyes. **Page 28**

Gary Bhaztara



Gary Bhaztara Landscape photographer

The multi-award-winning Indonesian landscape photographer gives us the inside track on his cover-gracing Shark Teeth Beach photo. **Page 92**



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 82**

Will Cheung



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Camera Clinic _ Exploring long exposures is a wonderful way of expressing yourself as a photographer, says Will Cheung, so read his expert technique advice, subject inspiration and kit recommendations... then give it a try!



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Apprentice _ All roads lead to the east of England this month, as we join equine photographer Elizabeth Ebsworth on location in Essex for a shoot with an enthusiastic reader, a fabulous model – and a horse called Isabelta

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Peter Dazeley



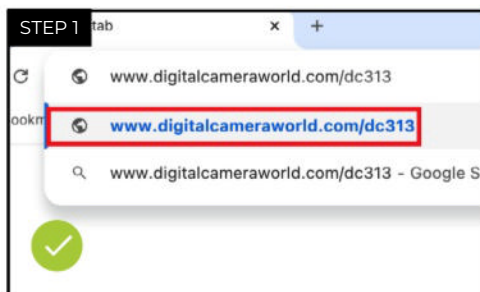
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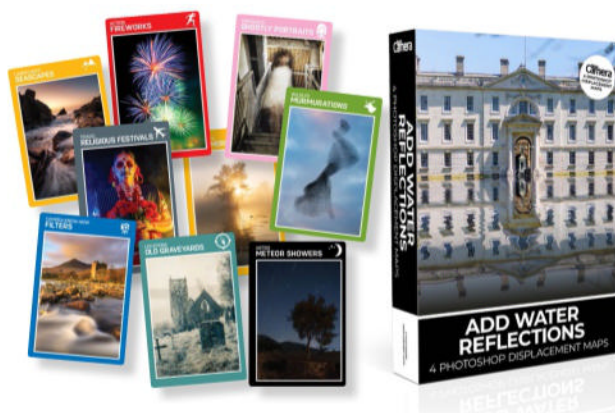
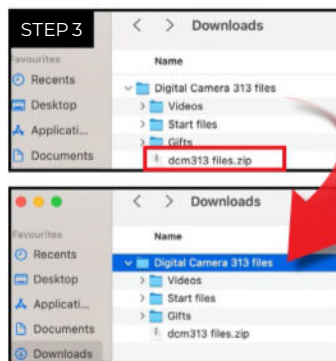
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The Apprentice with Elizabeth Ebsworth

The Pro

Name: Elizabeth Ebsworth

Camera: Canon EOS R5

An equine and country photographer based in Essex, UK, Elizabeth fuses both classic and contemporary photography styles. With a lifelong love for horses and the natural world, and having enjoyed many years in the saddle herself, Elizabeth strives to capture the tender moments between a horse and a rider.
www.elizabethebsworthphotography.com
IG: @elizabethebsworthphotography

The Apprentice

Name: Heather Tweedie

Camera: Nikon Z 6II

Having bought her first camera to document key moments in family life, Heather taught herself how to use Manual mode during the lockdowns. As passionate about horse riding as she is about photography, Heather's horse photos have helped her climb the competition rankings of Photofold Camera Club in Billericay, Essex, although she also likes to experiment with other photography genres.
Instagram: @heathertweediephotography

On the hoof in Essex

One reader, one pro – plus a horse and a model...
shooting equine images with **Elizabeth Ebsworth**



Digital Camera APPRENTICE



W

elcome to *Digital Camera Apprentice* – a one-to-one workshop with a reader and a pro that's witnessed by a wider audience. This month we're in Essex, one of England's most storied counties. Lying to the east and north-east of London and stretching all the way to the North Sea, Essex has plenty of wide-open spaces that lend themselves to horse riding. Which is what we're doing today, near Chelmsford, Essex's county town, in the company of pro equine photographer Elizabeth Ebsworth. Elizabeth has appeared in *Digital Camera* before, in our August 2022 issue (258), in a project where she explained how to photograph a horse and a model. —→

Expert insight How to work with horses

All three participants on today's shoot are keen riders with years of experience, so they know how horses behave – and how to behave around horses. Equine photography isn't just something you can start doing on the fly, so start attending equestrian events or join social media groups that can help you develop your skills, including how to cajole horses into posing for the camera (right). Camilla's horse Isabelta is used to being photographed, so Elizabeth's use of strobe lighting (far right) didn't faze her in the slightest.

Elizabeth directed the shoot at a brisk but gentle pace, mindful of keeping things moving and avoiding Isabelta having to stand still for too long. Camilla constantly chatted to Isabelta during the shoot and took her off for walks at regular intervals to keep her occupied.



Future



RIGHT: SUPER SHOT #1

THE APPRENTICE: "A relaxed moment that captures Camilla and Isabelta's trusting and close relationship – lit to show the pretty detail on Camilla's top."

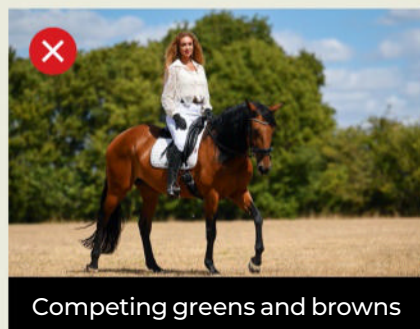
THE PRO: "I like the rich colours. It's a good, strong pose with nice angles. A slight turn of Camilla's head towards Isabelta would remove the over-exposure."

That model was Elizabeth's friend Camilla Sheeley, who is also an equestrian and a stylist. Elizabeth and Camilla will be joining up for *Digital Camera* again today, with reader and enthusiast photographer Heather Tweedie. Heather wrote in expressing her interest in being mentored by a professional equine photographer, so she could get some help nailing her style. We gave Elizabeth a call, and here we are.

Given that Heather previously attended one of Elizabeth's equine photography workshops, the introductions for today's shoot won't take very long. The final piece in the jigsaw is Camilla's horse Isabelta, a beautifully coloured bay with a silky coat...

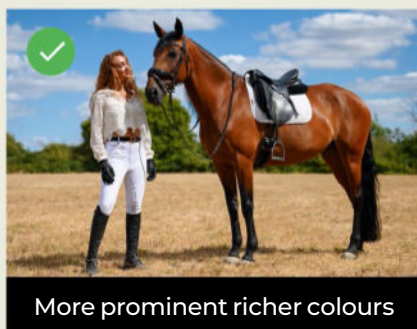
Pro tip Backgrounds

On such a bright, sunny day, and as long as the light was hitting them at the right angle, it wasn't difficult to make Camilla and Isabelta stand out against the treeline background – this wouldn't have been the case under overcast conditions and flat lighting, where the definition wouldn't have been so pronounced. In the two examples shown below, Heather was shooting with her 70-200mm telephoto wide open at f/2.8. In both cases, Camilla and Isabelta are far away enough from the trees behind for them to be pleasingly defocused, but Isabelta's brown coat doesn't 'pop' against the green background. The shot on the right, where Heather has framed up to make the lighter colours more prominent, is more successful – there's more blue and white sky, more (sunkissed) grass and less green to clash with Isabelta's coat.



Heather Tweedie

Competing greens and browns



Heather Tweedie

More prominent richer colours

"Camilla and her horse Isabelta will do both static and ridden setups today, and Camilla will model some different outfits"

Hot for a trot

Arriving at Camilla's stable around lunchtime, it's hot and sunny with a rich blue sky and fluffy clouds. As Camilla leads out Isabelta into an adjoining field, where the ground is parched after this year's record-breaking heatwaves, our pro and apprentice start discussing the plan for the afternoon – an equine shoot with a fashion theme. Camilla and Isabelta will do both static and ridden setups, unmounted and mounted, and Camilla will have a couple of different outfits to model, plus some complementary pieces of jewellery. Heather has taken plenty of equine photos over the years – she's a horse rider herself – so Elizabeth will be showing her how to progress to the next level, rather than going over the basics.

One thing that Heather hasn't tried before, though, is using artificial lighting for equine photography, so Elizabeth has brought her Pixapro CITI600Pro →



SUPER
SHOT #1

Camera:	Nikon Z 6II
Lens:	Nikkor VR 70-200mm f/2.8G at 98mm
Exposure:	1/8000 sec at f/2.8, ISO 220 -0.33 EV

SUPER
SHOT #2

Camera:	Nikon Z 6II
Lens:	Nikkor VR 70-200mm f/2.8G at 200mm
Exposure:	1/8000 sec at f/2.8, ISO 220 -0.33 EV



LEFT: SUPER SHOT #2

THE APPRENTICE: "A completely unplanned shot. A reflector low, front left, would lift the shadows, and I'd remove her fingers from the horse's nose."

THE PRO: "There's a lovely connection in this image. Moving Camilla's head to the right and tilting it up slightly would have reduced the shadows."

studio strobe to help lift shadow areas produced by the harsh sunlight.

Our pro and apprentice both fetch their cameras from their backpacks and begin setting up. Elizabeth is a Canon shooter (right), while Heather uses a Nikon Z 6II full-frame mirrorless, having upgraded from the Nikon D5600 DSLR that she started her photography journey with. Both are using 70-200mm f/2.8 telephotos, so they can maintain a safe working distance from Isabelta and get the benefit of the pleasing image compression these optics produce.

While Elizabeth's flash trigger needs to be able to communicate with Heather's Nikon, it doesn't matter that Elizabeth and Heather are using different makes of camera.

Today's settings won't require any cross-brand translation: a single autofocus point; wide apertures to emphasise our subjects; low ISOs for optimum image quality; and fast shutter speeds. The latter will serve two purposes: in addition to freezing any movement, short exposures will help reduce



Our pro's kit Canon EOS R5

The original EOS R5 is still a powerhouse imaging machine. With a 45MP full-frame sensor, up to eight stops of IBIS and extensive autofocus options, the R5 packs a punch. Elizabeth pairs her R5 with a Canon RF 70-200mm F2.8L IS USM, a Sigma 105mm F1.4 DG HSM used with the Mount Adapter EF-EOS R, and also has a Canon EOS 5D Mark IV DSLR in reserve as a backup body. www.canon.co.uk

overexposure in today's bright conditions, and the reciprocal rule (using a shutter speed equal to or more than the focal length) will help avoid camera shake.

The mane event

We start with a static shot of Camilla and Isabelta looking towards Elizabeth, who distracts Isabelta by holding up a handful of straw and making clicking noises. Kneeling a few feet away, Heather starts firing the shutter and likes what she's seeing. →

Thanks to... Our models

Camilla Sheeley is an international model, equestrian, actress and wellness expert. A true creative, she brings a natural eye for posture, composition and standout imagery to every shoot, with an instinctive, free-flowing approach to working in front of the camera. Her versatility, movement and expressive presence make her an engaging subject. **Instagram:** @camilla_glowwell



Isabelta is a beautiful 17-hand bay. She and Camilla compete successfully at dressage, but Isabelta's favourite pastimes are being out modelling and acting, and galloping in the sunshine.

Equine photos 101

Things to bear in mind when capturing these majestic animals



1 Safety first

Horses are big and can move unpredictably, so treat them with the respect they deserve. Maintain a safe distance from horses at all times and only get close to them if the owner is there and has given you permission.



2 Be mindful

Don't do anything that could 'spook' a horse and frighten it. Don't make any sudden movements and never walk behind a horse. Ask the owner if their horse is particularly sensitive to anything, so you can bear that in mind.



3 Telephoto lens

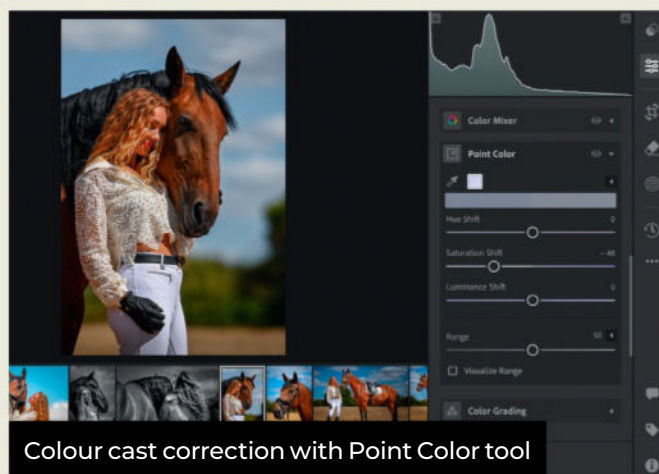
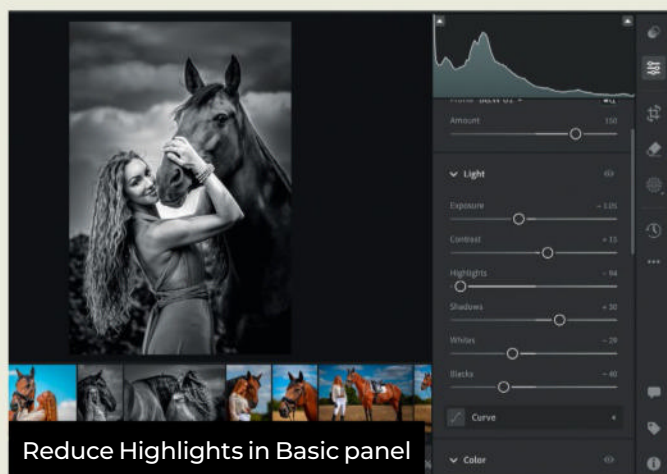
One way to maintain a safe distance from equine subjects is to use a telephoto lens like Heather's 70-200mm f/2.8. Make sure you obey the reciprocal rule: the shutter speed should be equal to, or greater than, the focal length (left).

SUPER
SHOT #3

Camera:	Nikon Z 6II
Lens:	Nikkor VR 70-200mm f/2.8G at 92mm
Exposure:	1/8000 sec at f/4.5, ISO1600 -0.33 EV

Editing skills **How to polish equine captures**

Elizabeth favours minimal editing, “otherwise, it’s digital art and not photography.” She adjusts highlights and contrast to increase the definition of muscle structure, and will tidy up small details, “... if a horse has flies on its coat, or something else I don’t want in the image.” Heather mostly uses Adobe Lightroom and likes to stay true to what she saw, tweaking the light to highlight the subject and minimise distractions. She applies a base preset across her images to lift shadows, reduce highlights, increase whites and darken blacks slightly, and fine-tunes those adjustments if needed. For today’s images, because the sun was so bright, she reduced highlights further than she would normally. And as seen in Super Shot #3, she will occasionally do a monochrome conversion: “It simplifies the image and means I can direct the viewer to what I want, a feeling or an expression.”



“Camilla, I love it when you look at Isabelta,” says Heather. “That’s great.”

Isabelta seems to have a calm nature and is clearly well experienced when it comes to photo shoots, but Camilla keeps her relaxed by talking to her and taking her for short walks on a rein when our pro and apprentice need to discuss any photographic matters.

Elizabeth suggests that Camilla and Isabelta finish one of their walks by coming towards Heather. The resulting movement means that Heather has to bump up her shutter speed slightly to keep Isabelta’s mane and Camilla’s hair tack-sharp.

Composing static shots of a horse and rider might seem straightforward, but moving subjects require additional consideration. It’s not just adjusting settings to freeze the motion: the posture and gait of the subjects are also factors, as is planning the movement of the horse and rider so it looks natural – and elegant.

Our trio of experienced equestrians soon come up with a plan, suggesting where Isabelta should walk, and which side Camilla should lead her from. They also consider the background; the field

is fringed by trees on all sides, but the treeline height isn’t uniform. So the shooting position Heather chooses to use will dictate how much blue or green will appear at the rear of the frame.

Sunny intervals

“What settings are you using at the moment, Heather?” asks Elizabeth.

“I’m on 1/1000 sec at f/2.8, to try cutting out some of the sun,” Heather replies. “Isabelta is darker, thankfully, which is helping, and against the blues and the greens, she actually looks really good.”

Typically for England, though, patchy clouds mean that Heather keeps switching her white balance from Sunny to Cloudy. Elizabeth suggests that Heather try zooming in for some medium close-ups.

“There’s a good shot here, where they’re against the green, and there’s a little bit of sky with some cloud, which looks really good,” she says. “And when she looks over her shoulder, that’s just beautiful.”

“Yes, I’ve gone in really close on that one,” says Heather. “Lovely hair movement, too.”

After a pause while Camilla pops a saddle on Isabelta, then goes for a trot in a

LEFT: SUPER SHOT #3

THE APPRENTICE: “I liked this image in black and white, as Camilla’s dress was quite striking. If I shot it again, I’d prefer if there was no jewellery.”

THE PRO: “I like how Heather chose monochrome. It really sets this image off, accentuating the tones, as does cropping in to capture the main focal point.”





ABOVE: SUPER SHOT #4

THE APPRENTICE: "A low angle helps add drama and separation from the hedge line, and framing wide adds other colours to contrast with the dress."

THE PRO: "An elegant image by Heather. It captures the presence of both Camilla and Isabelta, with a good composition and strong colours."

shady area, Elizabeth suggests that it's time for Camilla to go and swap to her other outfit. While we're waiting for Camilla to return, I ask Heather about her photography journey.

"I'm a horse rider, so I started off by photographing my own horses," she replies. "Friends would ask me to photograph their

horses, too, and if I was at shows, where I couldn't photograph myself, I would capture other little moments behind the scenes."

Heather has also tried street photography – "it's terrifying to begin with, but enjoyable once you get over the initial fear of doing it" – and shooting landscapes, but found she prefers immersing herself in pleasing settings rather than actually photographing them. Her main passion is taking pictures of horses.

"Every horse has a different personality, and that's what I try to capture," she explains.

"The best thing about photographing horses is the variation. You can start off with an idea, but sometimes you're forced to adapt to challenges – the horse might be fidgety,

and you can't plan for the weather, but that's when you discover something new.

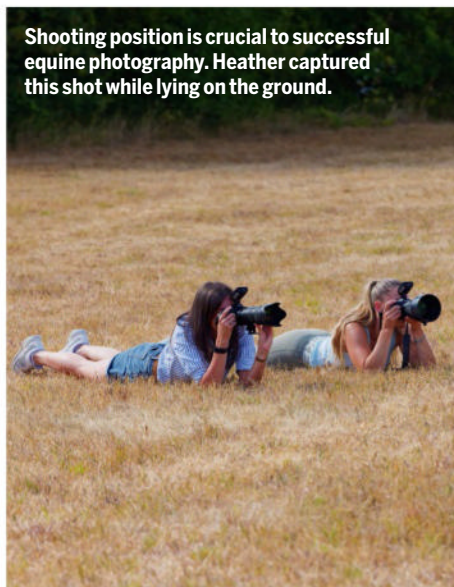
"I enjoy that aspect of it, and learning how to work with the light, because everything takes place outside. I don't think there are any downsides to horse photography, apart from that you can't control everything. But as long as you're happy to accept that, then you'll always come away with something."

It's strobe time

"You look amazing!" says Elizabeth as Camilla reappears in a flowing red dress. It's time to try a setup with strobe lighting, so we all move to an edge of the field with a high treeline where the lighting is less harsh.

SUPER SHOT #4

Shooting position is crucial to successful equine photography. Heather captured this shot while lying on the ground.



Camera skills Fill flash

Elizabeth brought her battery-powered Pixapro CITI600Pro 600W strobe to brighten any shadow pockets. Fired remotely via a wireless adapter mounted on the camera's hot shoe, Elizabeth uses the strobe in high-speed sync (HSS) mode as horses move unpredictably.



Camera:	Nikon Z 6II
Lens:	Nikkor VR 70-200mm f/2.8G at 92mm
Exposure:	1/8000 sec at f/5.6, ISO 1100 -0.33 EV

"We can adjust the strobe to add a little bit of light to the scene," explains Elizabeth. "The sun is coming from this side, so we just want to help the darker areas."

"We're going to use the strobe without a modifier, called 'bare bulb', and this will throw the light differently. Most photographers use modifiers in the studio, because they soften the light and you know where the light

coverage is going to fall. When you're outside, though, the flash light has to be more direct because it's fighting with the natural light."

Putting the strobe in Manual mode so that she can input her own settings, rather than the strobe choosing them for her, Elizabeth gets Heather to dial in the settings on her Z 6II. The strobe's trigger unit isn't cooperating, though. Although the

Technique assessment

Top tips for taking fabulous photos of horses and their owners



1 Camera settings

Heather uses Manual exposure mode for full control of her camera settings. "The lowest shutter speed I can afford to go to is 1/800 sec," she says. "I tend to keep it high because horses are constantly in motion – not just their legs, but their ears and noses, too."



2 Autofocus and ISO

Single-point AF is Heather's preferred option, again for maximum control of where she wants the image to be sharp. She always tries to keep her ISOs as low as possible for maximum image quality. The ISO settings she used today ranged from 100 to 1600.



3 Histogram

The RGB histogram shows the brightness of the image and can be displayed in the viewfinder or on the rear LCD. Histograms allow exposures to be assessed in real time; if the graph is biased towards the right, then there's a risk of the highlights blowing out.

"Heather's passion is equine photography. 'Every horse has a different personality, and that's what I try to capture,' she says"

Pro portfolio

Elizabeth Ebsworth



Elizabeth Ebsworth

A stroll in the heather

"Taken at my heather workshop this year. A lovely diffused natural light ensured continuity of tones. Capturing the horse in trot, leg placement is essential, as they can look unbalanced and unappealing. Little movements in the hair and mane added to the *Wuthering Heights* vibe."



Elizabeth Ebsworth

Tulips and Fashion

"From my tulip workshop this year. Bright light, and using it to reduce harsh shadows. Careful choice of poses and how the sun touches the face; no other objects giving shadows, and shot from a low perspective. Wind adding movement to the static image."



Elizabeth Ebsworth

An evening in the poppies

"Personal work. Moody skies after rainfall added to this image, and shallow DoF added a softness of light and muted colours. I posed the horse and rider in an appealing way to create a connection between them."



Although shooting at fast shutter speeds, Heather's camera handling was spot on: her arms were close to her body to make a stable platform.

RIGHT: SHOT OF THE DAY!

THE APPRENTICE: "Originally captured wider and as a portrait; I've cropped in to show their relationship. The sky colour feels off, but it is true to what it was."

THE PRO: "I like how Heather shot this from a lower perspective, as it brings the subjects into focus. A nicely balanced image showing real connection."



Apprentice verdict

"It has been a great day. I appreciated the opportunities that Liz creates for working with stunning horses, and she offered some great tips for handling the afternoon sun."



Pro verdict

"I thoroughly enjoyed the shoot with Heather. The bright conditions were challenging, and off-camera flash would have helped with it. I hope Heather can apply some new learnings in her future work."

strobe is in high-speed sync mode, to enable the use of fast shutter speeds, Heather can only reduce the shutter speed on her camera, rather than keeping it as fast as she needs. Elizabeth has brought the strobe's instruction manual along with her, but mindful of how long it could take to fix the problem, and with Camilla and Isabelta waiting patiently, she decides to abandon today's flash exercise.

"I had the same problem on one of my workshops once, and we managed to sort it," Elizabeth says, "but I had to phone someone, and there isn't time to do that now."

As Heather said earlier, when things don't work out on equine shoots, you just have to adapt and try doing something else.

Little details

Camilla's new outfit looks striking, and it hasn't just changed the aesthetic for Heather.

Isabelta's saddle has been removed, and she's not wearing a bridle any more – without the distractions of various items of clothing and tack, Heather can now focus on compositions that explore the emotional relationship between horse and owner.

Camilla gets in close to Isabelta, touching her tenderly and forming 'S' shapes with her arms, and striking poses that emphasise the flow of her long red dress.

"That looks nice with the background and a bit of wind in her hair," observes Elizabeth, who says that little details complete images.

"I know what I'm looking for when I'm taking pictures, and know if I've captured it. Once, on my tulip workshop, I knew exactly what I wanted to capture, but there were only a few moments to get it. Here, I'd be waiting for a bit of wind to take Camilla's dress or her hair, or Isabelta's mane – it just adds an extra dimension to the image."

Camera:	Nikon Z 6II
Lens:	Nikkor VR 70-200mm f/2.8G at 150mm
Exposure:	1/800 sec at f/2.8, ISO 100 -0.33 EV



SHOT
OF THE
DAY!

Now we're focusing on static portraiture, Elizabeth swaps her 70-200mm telephoto for her other go-to lens, a Sigma 105mm F1.4 Art, mounted on her EOS R5 with an adapter.

"If there's enough distance between the subject and what's behind them, a prime lens makes backgrounds come out nicely, and especially here with the trees – it's why I use prime lenses for a lot of my photographs."

Has this helped Elizabeth form her style, which leans towards fine-art, I wonder?

"Yes, and I've done lots of different things since starting photography at A-level, when it was on film – studio work, shooting for brands and businesses, and equine photography. I believe you never stop learning and evolving, and I don't think you ever get to know it all."

Heather takes some more variations, then shows her shots to Elizabeth and Camilla, to much admiration. It has been a successful afternoon – the only neigh is Essex! ●



An experienced workshop leader, Elizabeth was in constant communication with Heather, and they compared their images after every series of shots.

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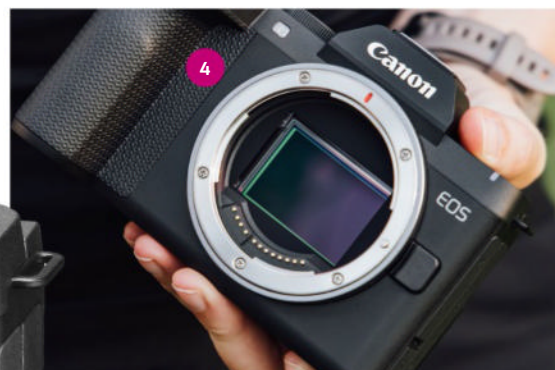
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InFocus

Photography news from around the globe

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- 1 SENSOR AND PROCESSOR**
The new model has the R8's 24.2MP full-frame sensor and Digic X processor.
- 2 NOW WITH IMAGE STABILISATION**
7.5 stops at the centre and 7 stops at the edges – handy for low-light work.
- 3 CHANNELLING AN 80s RETRO LOOK**
Remember the Canon T80 film SLR from 1985? The R8 Mark II nods to its design.
- 4 PEOPLE PRIORITY AND PRE-CAPTURE**
Two major additions, found in far pricier cameras, now on the second-gen EOS R8.
- 5 BODY HAS PLENTY OF GRIP**
If it's not enough, the R8 Mark II launches with an affordable extension grip.

Canon EOS R8 Mark II

Brand's latest camera is its lightest full-frame model with image stabilisation, and adds a series of improvements to the original R8

Online chatter that Canon was working on a retro-looking mirrorless was rife before the EOS R8 Mark II dropped last month... and the new camera might not have been quite what Canon-watchers were expecting. The R8 Mark II is a more subtle take on trendy retro designs, referencing the angular top of 1985's Canon T80 without straying too far from the look and feel of Canon's modern mirrorless bodies. The Mark II has the same sensor and processor as its predecessor, but also adds a joystick for moving autofocus points. And while the Dual Pixel II autofocus system carries much of the R8's specs – including subject recognition – it comes with algorithm enhancements and an improved low-light rating at -7.5 EV over the original's -6.5 EV.

The EOS R8 Mark II borrows the people-priority registration from pricier models such as the EOS R3 and R6 Mark III. It is also Canon's lightest full-frame body with in-body image stabilisation,



- 6 FLIP-OUT SCREEN AND TALLY LIGHT**
Watch yourself when filming videos, and see when the camera's recording.

despite the addition pushing the weight up slightly over its predecessor, bringing the body up to 546g with the battery and a memory card (compared with the EOS R8's 461g).

Another improvement fixes the placement of the SD card slot. Previously located in the battery compartment, it required the camera to be removed from a tripod when swapping cards.

Find out more at: www.canon.co.uk. **£1,729/\$1,899 (body only); £2,119/\$2,099 (kit comprising EOS R8 Mark II and 24-50mm f/4.5-6.3 IS STM lens)**



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Focal point

Rounding up what's new and exciting this month



Adaptalux Pod Mini 2.0 adds Bluetooth control

Pods are at the heart of the Adaptalux studio lighting system, providing power and control to its lighting arms. The Pod Mini 2.0 is a portable and robust Pod, with Bluetooth control from the Adaptalux App. <https://adaptalux.com>; £80/\$103

Adaptalux



World Food Photography Awards open until 7 February

Entries for the 16th edition of the prestigious award, sponsored by Tenderstem Bimi Broccolini, are now open and will close on 7 February 2027. Open to amateurs and pros alike, this year's top prize is £5,000/\$6,640. www.worldfoodphotographyawards.com; £35/\$47 (adults); free (under-18s)

Fujifilm releases its second X-mount super-telephoto prime

Ideal for sports and wildlife photography, the Fujinon XF400mm F4.5 R LM OIS WR is 90g lighter than the XF500mm F5.6 R LM OIS WR and is compatible with Fujifilm's 1.4x and 2x teleconverters. Up to 5.5 stops of optical image stabilisation also features. www.fujifilm.eu; £2,500/\$3,199



OM System PEN

Budget retro MFT mirrorless sees the beloved PEN series enter the OM System era

Reiving the longtime favourite Olympus PEN series with its retro, rangefinder-inspired design, the OM System PEN sits at the more affordable end of OM System's lineup. It carries the same unstacked 20.4MP Micro Four Thirds sensor and TruPic IX image processor as the likes of the OM-5 Mark II, and brings weather-sealing and in-body image stabilisation – two features that are hard to find in this mirrorless camera price bracket.

The OM System PEN isn't just weather-sealed but is also rated as IPX1 splashproof. That means the camera can withstand rain (but not water spraying from every direction), while the X means that the camera wasn't tested for dust resistance.

The OM System PEN houses a stabilisation system rated for 5.5 stops. The camera is available body only or with a newly announced kit lens, the M.Zuiko Digital 14-42mm f/3.5-5.6 III.

Find out more at: <https://explore.omsystem.com>.
£850/\$999 (body only); £999/\$1,099 (with M.Zuiko Digital 14-42mm kit lens)



Simple controls and a compact size make the PEN an everyday camera.

New glass from Sigma

Leading third-party brand releases 20-60mm F2.8-4 DG Contemporary and 85mm F1.2 DG DN Art optics for Sony E-mount and L-Mount

Constructed with lightweight compactness at its core, the Sigma 20-60mm F2.8-4 DG Contemporary aims to be a small and convenient lens for walkabout photography. Its ultra-wide maximum viewing angle makes it ideal for vlogging, where presenters want to include some background to set the scene, and the combination of a 20mm focal length and f/2.8 aperture will endear it to astrophotographers.

Also released was the Sigma 85mm F1.2 DG DN Art, for portrait photographers looking for a seriously fast prime lens. 85mm is a classic focal length for portraiture, but the extra-wide f/1.2 aperture allows photographers to create an incredibly shallow depth of field and separate a subject from the background.

Find out more at: sigmauk.com;
£749/\$849 (20-60mm F2.8-4 DG C)
£1,299/\$1,599 (85mm F1.2 DG Art).





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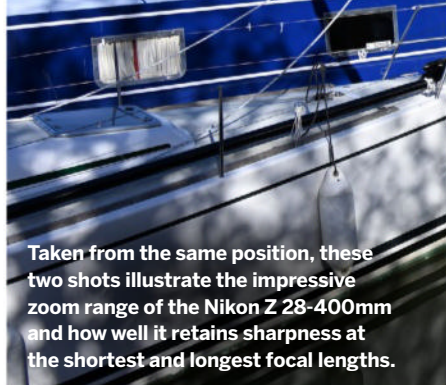
AskMatthew

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.



Taken from the same position, these two shots illustrate the impressive zoom range of the Nikon Z 28-400mm and how well it retains sharpness at the shortest and longest focal lengths.

A super-duper-zoom

Q I'm considering either the Nikon Z 24-200mm or the Z 28-400mm. I'd prefer the latter for its greater telephoto reach, but I'm worried it won't be sharp. What do you think?

Martin Carns

A Both of these are great lenses and among the sharpest 'superzooms' I've used. I have enjoyed excellent 'real-world' results from the Nikon Z 28-400mm f/4-8 VR, but I'll let our in-house lab tests tell you the full story. We thoroughly test lenses for



Telephoto shot

centre, edge and corner sharpness, as well as colour fringing and distortion, at four marked intervals throughout the zoom range, from shortest to longest. The lens proved sharp across almost all the frame, but dropped off a little at the extreme edges and corners, mostly at both ends of the zoom range. That's entirely normal.

For comparison, we found that edge/corner-sharpness was actually a little better than from the smaller Z 24-200mm at all competing focal lengths, and was even a



close match for the 'S-line' Z 24-70mm f/4 S standard zoom. That's pretty amazing for a 'superzoom' lens, especially one with such super-telephoto power.



The Hähnel ProCube3 costs around £79 (badged as Manfrotto and costing \$115 in the USA) and comes with interchangeable plates for different same-brand camera batteries, plus AA rechargeable cells.

Going on a charge

Q I bought a Hähnel ProCube3 charger for my camera batteries, but it only seems to charge them up to about 85-90 per cent. Is it faulty or is that normal?

Jane Robertson

A I like these robust and immaculately finished metal cube chargers, which are available in a range of different editions and colours to suit different camera brands. Highlights include interchangeable plates to accept different types of the camera company's batteries, as well as AA rechargeable batteries, along with a digital info display and fast charging via USB-C. However, I've also noticed that when the charger says that the batteries are 100 per cent charged, they register less than 90 per cent in my cameras. It can feel a little frustrating, but on the plus side, Li-ion batteries are said to have a longer overall lifespan if you don't fully charge them every time.



If you have a lens like the Fujifilm 55-200mm that suffers from zoom creep, tape or a rubber wristband can solve the issue.

Zoom creep fix

Q I'm pleased with my Fujifilm XF 55-200mm F3.5-4.8 R LM OIS, except that the zoom goes into freefall when I'm shooting at upward or downward angles with a tripod. Is there a fix?

Phil Scott

A It's a lovely lens, but it's somewhat notorious for suffering from 'zoom creep'. Many zoom lenses with extending inner barrels have the same problem; however, there are a couple of easy DIY fixes.

Set the lens to your desired zoom position, then apply a small strip of gaffer tape to keep it in place. Gaffer tape leaves no sticky residue and can be reused. You could also apply a stretchy rubber wristband, of the type often given away by charities for a donation.

Second-hand superstar

A full-frame mirrorless classic from 2018

Q My Sony A7 has finally given up the ghost. What would you recommend as a second-hand replacement that combines strong performance and good value for money?

Karl Manning

A **Matthew recommends...**

Sony A7 III

This full-frame camera still has a lot to offer and is a great pre-owned buy



Unlike the original, the 24.2MP full-frame mirrorless A7 III features IBIS, and is a major upgrade over the Mark II version.

Released (year): 2018
Price new £1,499/\$1,999
'Excellent' £875/\$999
'Good' £750/\$850

but is BSI (back-side illuminated) with better high-ISO signal-to-noise and dynamic range, and twice the readout speed.

I was always disappointed with my original Sony A7's lack of in-body image stabilisation, but the second edition fixed that. I'd actually skip that generation and go for the A7 III, which is a major upgrade over the interim version.

Building on the inclusion of the Mark II's 5-axis stabilisation, it also features an improved back-side illuminated image sensor for enhanced low-light performance, and autofocus tracking with 693 phase-detection points rather than 117, complete with joystick control.

You also get dual memory card slots instead of just one, nearly double the battery life and the option of 4K UHD video capture instead of maxing out at 1080p.

1 Image sensor

The image sensor has roughly the same 24MP resolution

2 Autofocus tech

The A7 III has 693 phase-detection points, covering 93 per cent of the image sensor area, combined with 425 contrast-detection areas to deliver Sony's 4D Focus tracking abilities.

3 Memory and battery

Dual memory card slots allow instant backup while shooting. The new NP-FZ100 battery enables up to 610 shots with the viewfinder or 710 with the rear screen.

Sensor, proc: 24.2MP CMOS, BIONZ X
AF points: 693 phase, 425 contrast
Shutter speeds: 1/8000 to 30s, Bulb
ISO range: ISO 100-51,200 (50-204,800 ext)
Viewfinder: Electronic, 0.5in 2,359k
Rear screen: 3.0-inch, 921k tilting touchscreen
Memory: 2x SD/HC/XC
Size, weight: 127 x 96 x 74mm, 650g
Battery, life: NP-FZ100, 610/710 shots

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Star letter: The reward of the landscape

Landscape photography is rarely about simply being in the right place at the right time. More often, it is about being willing to put in the effort to make that moment happen. It means planning, travelling, getting up before dawn, staying out after the light has faded, waiting longer and returning again and again. It means sitting it out when the weather turns, when the light fails to appear and when the landscape gives you little in return.

There will be plenty of mornings when the alarm goes off, and the conditions are disappointing, plenty of evenings when you come home with nothing of note. Failure and disappointment are simply part of the process. But that is what makes the rewards so much sweeter.

When everything finally comes together, the light breaks through, the clouds fall perfectly, the landscape reveals itself for just a few fleeting moments, and you know that the image has been well earned. The struggles,



John Cuthbert ARPS

stumbles, trips, slips and falls, the early starts, the long waits and the failures, they all suddenly become worthwhile.

Perhaps that is what I love most about landscape photography. The best images aren't simply captured; they are worked for, waited for and sometimes fought for.
John Cuthbert ARPS, by email

Digital Camera says: Beautifully put, John. There's a saying that nothing worthwhile comes easily, and it could have been penned specifically for landscape photography. The problem comes when you can't easily return to a distant location.

Get in the frame

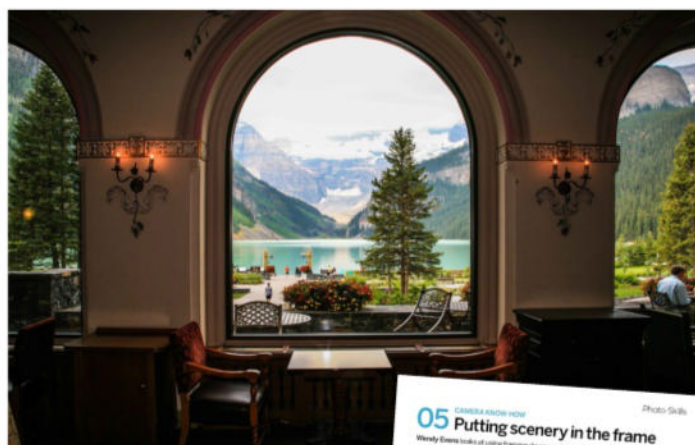
Your Photo Skills article about putting scenery in the frame (September issue, 311) inspired me to dig out this image taken on a trip to the Canadian Rockies. The image was shot from the lounge of the Lake Louise Hotel, looking out across the lake to the mountains beyond.

I titled it 'Lake Louise through the windows'. I hope you like it.

Camera: Canon EOS 5D, Canon EF 28-135mm f/3.5-5.6 IS USM

Settings: 1/13 sec at f/18, ISO 200

Brian Wakeling, by email



Brian Wakeling

Digital Camera says: Good effort! It's always tricky shooting inside because there is little light compared with outside. As a result, it's better to meter from the view through the window and adjust the shadows later, as some of the detail of the mountains has been lost.





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Michael Schweiger @west_aussie_mick

Hailing from Western Australia, this photographer has many jaw-dropping drone images of natural geology and rock formations from Down Under that are a visual feast for the eyes.

Joanna Steidle @joannasteidle

Photographer from New York State, USA, with a great selection of still and video imagery of the natural world, taken with a DJI Mavic drone. We liked her recent 'Glazed' series of fine-art images, a result of declining wildlife and adverse weather conditions.

Tarun Mathur @travelphotodoc

Landscape and wildlife photographer from Philadelphia, USA, who also has a fantastic collection of cityscapes from Asia, Europe and the Americas.

Joanna Noble @joannanoblephotography

Wildlife photographer from the Midlands in the UK. She has captured a vast array of wildlife species including kingfishers, owls, deer – and more.

Kim Millburn @kim.in.wildlife

A wildlife photographer from Cumbria, UK, who specialises in bird images taken around the British Isles.

NEXT ISSUE: Check out Catherine Bullen's long-exposure seascape in next issue's reader gallery. See more of her work at: [@CatBPhoto](https://www.instagram.com/CatBPhoto)



Catherine Bullen



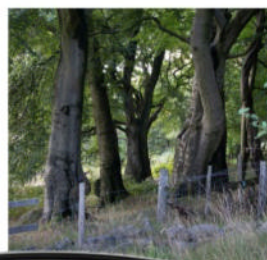
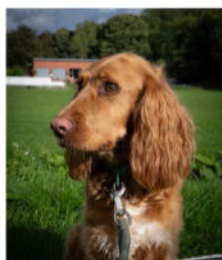
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The Nikkor Z 24-200mm covers most shooting scenarios.



Adrian Schofield

The very flexible lens

After reading a review in one of your sister magazines, I bought a second-hand Nikkor Z 24-200mm lens from Wex. I got it to take pictures on our holiday – a 40th wedding anniversary celebration with the family near Montpellier in the south of France.

The lens is so versatile. It captures fine detail as well as wider vistas with aplomb. I take photos when I'm walking the dog every day, and share the things I see on Instagram. On a walk, I can capture the feel of a habitat, but also zoom in on fine detail. Walking a dog doesn't allow much time to ponder a shot, so this lens is ideal for that.

Adrian Schofield, by email

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

Digital Camera says: We are glad you are having fun with the lens. Technique editor Wendy also purchased the same lens recently and now uses it as her default, go-to optic.





Natalia Zmyslowska

The world with Nat

Slow down and look at familiar places in a new way, says **Natalia Zmyslowska**

This time of year rarely inspires me to take my camera out. The days are shorter, the light is often flat and familiar places seem dull. Yet sometimes, a shift in the weather can

make me see a spot I've photographed before in a completely new way.

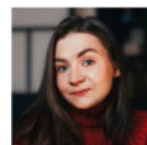
On this day, I had no intention of looking for anything spectacular or unfamiliar. But while I was strolling with my camera, I saw an ordinary scene that became magical because of the weather. The winter sun, low in the sky, was changing the city's appearance. When I looked across the water, I saw something that perhaps I had missed many times before. Instead of taking a usual photograph of the cityscape,

I spotted a circular opening that naturally framed the buildings, the water and the warm light beyond.

It reminded me of one of the things I like to do with my camera: taking a photo that contains another photo. I like searching for elements that change how people see a subject – a doorway, an arch, branches, a gap or even something ordinary. Instead of just recording what's there, you're finding a new way into the scene.

The frame doesn't need to be perfect or dramatic. Sometimes, hiding part of the view makes the photo more interesting. In this case, the dark, blurry edges fill most of the image, so the city becomes a small part in the centre. Not seeing everything at once pulls you in.

"I came across an unexpected view and used a simple opening to frame the city in a new way," says Natalia.



Natalia Zmyslowska

www.theworldwithnat.com

@theworldwithnat

Camera: Canon EOS R

Lens: Canon RF 24-240mm

Exposure: 1/320 sec at f/5, ISO 160.

This reminds me not to neglect familiar places. While I am out and about with my camera, I make a point of not taking the same photographs again and again. Instead, I look for what has changed: the light, the weather, the reflections, the shadows or even an unexpected composition like this.

That's why I rarely go out just to 'take a photograph'. Instead, I look for something I haven't seen before: mist that makes a skyline dreamy, sunlight that turns the city into silhouettes or a hole that reveals a whole new view.

You don't need to travel somewhere spectacular to take interesting photographs. Start with a familiar place. Then return with your camera and see it with fresh eyes. ●

Stop. Watch.



We could have rushed this. Instead, we stopped, and took the time to get it right. We looked into every detail that makes a chronograph worth having – from bold hands and registers, perfect for the pit lane, to robust construction strong enough for space – and combined them in a single watch. The result: the new **C63 Sealander Chronograph**. Three perfectly symmetrical sub-dials with polished rhodium rings, a sandblasted ceramic bezel with tachymeter for measuring speed, and our thinnest chronograph case yet: 1.1mm slimmer than before. Driven by the new Sellita SW510 b, with up to 62 hours of power reserve, it performs as well as it looks.

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Christopher
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christopherward.com





Reader gallery

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



1 'Contrast in Infrared' by Sebastian Bevan

"Although I am relatively new to the world of infrared photography, it has quickly become one of the most rewarding aspects of my photographic journey. I use a Canon EOS R camera with a full-spectrum conversion, carried out by Protech Repairs. By extending the camera's ability to capture light beyond the visible spectrum, a full-spectrum conversion allows for much faster shutter speeds when working with infrared filters.

I captured his image while walking on the Dartington Trust Estate in South Devon. What immediately caught my eye was the composition. The path draws the viewer effortlessly through the centre of the frame, creating a natural divide between two different subjects. On the one side stands a magnificent oak tree, its strong, dark trunk contrasting beautifully with foliage rendered as brilliant white by the infrared spectrum. On the other side, a dense softwood plantation forms a darker, more

subdued mass, which almost appears to be absorbing all the available light."

Instagram: @sebastianbevanphoto

Website: sebastianbevanphotography.com

Digital Camera says: We loved this infrared landscape capture, and the story of how this camera conversion has transformed Sebastian's photography experience, allowing him to capture a different view of the world around us. We look forward to seeing more infrared captures from his collection.



2 'Golden Silence' by Curtis Cain

"One of the things I love most about this image is the elegance of the owl's silhouette. I feel it perfectly captures the bird's silent, graceful flight, while the intense golden light of the setting

sun creates a dramatic atmosphere. Long-eared owls are incredibly elusive, and managing to photograph one while it was actively hunting required patience, anticipation and a strong understanding of its behaviour."
Instagram: @cphotography97_

Digital Camera says: A stunning wildlife capture, with the silhouetted owl contrasting well with the golden sky. This spectacular image is a reward for resisting the temptation to zoom into the subject – instead, capturing the owl naturally within its surroundings.

3 'Autumn Trees' by Noah Crick

"I took this image on my DJI Mini 4K drone. I wanted to capture a perspective of autumn that you don't normally see. This bird's-eye view of autumnal treetops made for a special shot."
Instagram: @noahcrickphoto

Digital Camera says:

We love the colours and variety in this shot. From this angle, the trees look like broccoli.



4

**'Fiddle Rock' by
Connor McLaren**

"This image of Bow Fiddle Rock in north-east Scotland is one of my favourites. It's a popular area for photography, so the challenge for me here was to try capturing it in a different way to anything else I've seen. With a bit of luck

at sunrise, I managed to time it so that the tide created miniature waterfalls in the foreground rocks." Taken on a Canon EOS 5D Mark IV and Canon EF 16-35mm f/4L. Settings: 8 secs at f/11, ISO 100.

Instagram: @connormclarenphotography_
Website: www.connormclaren.co.uk

Digital Camera says: This is a stunning seascape scene, with the foreground interest leading to this eye-catching rock, which is beautifully lit by the sunrise colours. The result is a fantastic contrast between the rock formation, the motion of the sea and the superb lighting from the sunrise.



5

'Quiraing' by Bill Aylett

"Earlier this year, I made my first visit to the Isle of Skye. As an amateur photographer with a passion for landscapes, I had wanted to experience this bucket-list location for some time. On the day I went to the Quiraing, the sky was great and the light constantly changing. All in all, it was a very otherworldly location!"

Settings: 1/100 sec at f/16, ISO 100

Flickr: [exposurematters](#)

Digital Camera says: This is a particularly atmospheric shot, with the narrow aperture generating a wide depth of field across the whole scene. The splashes of sunlight make the photo.





6 'Brighton West Pier' by Billy Callum

"I like the way the moody sea contrasts with the calming colours in the sky, and how the light bounces off the stones to create a lovely bokeh."

Taken on a Sony A7 IV and Tamron 70-180mm F2.8 G2. Settings: 1/400 sec at f/5, ISO 250.

Instagram: @bh_media_17

Digital Camera says: A super capture of this prominent landmark, with the silhouette sitting nicely against the sky. The foreground reflections greatly enhance the scene, too.





7 'Rice Ladies' by Matt Jackson

"I was out in Bali for six weeks and had been looking to photograph some rice workers for a while. I managed to capture a bit of a story in this shot. I love the look in the ladies' faces. It was taken at a fast shutter speed, which you can probably tell from the water droplets. Annoyingly, though, I'd left the camera on Auto ISO, so it pushed it up to 3200. Thankfully, Lightroom's Denoise tool saved the day."

Website: www.mattjacksonphotos.com

Digital Camera says: This is a great shot under tricky lighting conditions, but you've overcome them by using a low perspective.



8 'Painted Night' by Rich Morris

"I thought I'd share this light painting photograph that I took recently. This image is a single exposure taken on Bath Street in Bath, UK. In the background, you can see the Cross Bath at Thermae Spa, an open-air thermal pool. To create the shape and light, I used a black tube with a coloured feather in one end and a torch in the other."

Instagram: @biglitttlelightsuk

Digital Camera says: This is very well done indeed, with great technique required to control the highlights. By using a long exposure of over three seconds, anyone passing through the background of the frame hasn't registered in the image, which isolates the subject well.

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01

ARCHITECTURE

Shooting spooky old graveyards

Get into the spirit of
Halloween season, with
witchy Wendy Evans

Do you know the difference between a graveyard and a cemetery? The answer is that the former has a church on the grounds. If there's no church, it's not a graveyard; it's a cemetery. That could be useful for your next pub quiz.

So as we head towards Halloween, what better place to roam with your camera than a graveyard... specifically, an old graveyard? Forget about pots of ashes and freshly laid flowers; what we're looking for are gothic monuments, crumbling stonework and hints of life and death from the 19th century and earlier.

The best conditions for this kind of endeavour are on a misty morning. If you wake up to fog, then bingo! Your photos will have bags of atmosphere. The worst conditions are basically early afternoon on a sunny day, as you have very bright areas and others in deep shadow. It's a contrast-based nightmare.

Even on an overcast day, there is still going to be a challenge, as old graveyards often have plenty of tree cover that has grown up over the years, making it gloomy at ground level, but quite bright in the sky.

Camera: Nikon Z 8 and Nikkor Z 24-200mm f/4-6.3 VR

Settings: 1/320 sec at f/8, ISO 100.
AP mode, Highlight Metering

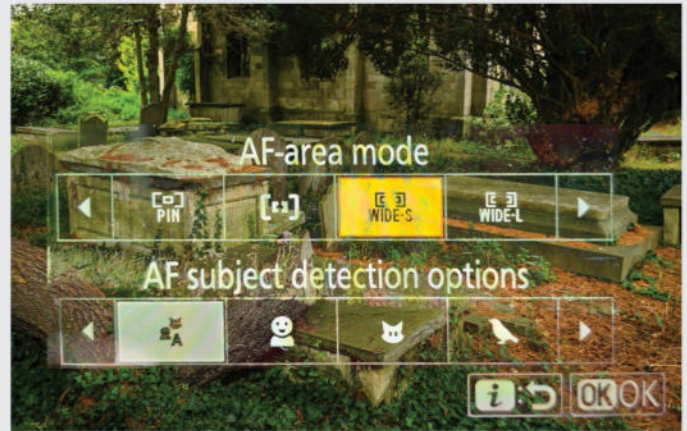


Rather than shooting straight on, angle the photo for a more dynamic composition and focus on the nearest tomb.



Future

Step by step Get into the graveyard groove



01 Set the mode

This is a challenging environment, so for me, the best shooting mode to use is Aperture Priority (A or Av on the mode dial). With a wide-angle lens, there is more depth of field, but you will need to be on top of the aperture settings throughout. Start off by using an aperture of f/8.

02 Focus mode options

Single focus is the best mode to use here, obviously, but with a cluttered scene like this, you really need to be able to pick out where the focus is – and that means a smaller focus box that you can move around. Multi-point focus would potentially focus in the wrong place.



03 Metering matters

While there are several different ways in which you can approach this, unless you are shooting on a foggy day, a graveyard is likely to be gloomy under the trees with bright highlights. Centre-weighted or Zone metering is likely to overexpose the highlights, so Highlight metering is the best option.

04 What about ISO?

In open areas, you can use ISO 100 and hand-hold the camera, but under the canopy, it's likely to be too dark. Only you know how low you can take the shutter speed, but be prepared to increase the ISO when required, rather than sacrifice the depth of field by opening up the aperture to f/4 or wider.

Selecting the metering

Which mode will make a difference?

When shooting beneath the trees, it will be fairly dark, so you could use Zone or Centre-weighted metering

and bracket the images, combining them later. If you don't want to go to all that effort, you could either try using -1EV exposure compensation, or follow the suggestion we mentioned about using Highlight metering. These two images above are jpeg conversions that show the two metering modes (Centre-weighted metering on the left and Highlight metering on the right). Remember, though, it's much easier to pull out details in the shadows than it is to rescue lost highlights.





Why not convert your photos into sepia for that late-Victorian era feel? To complete the effect, you can add creases, dust or borders.
Settings: 1/250 sec at f/6.3, ISO 200. AP mode, Highlight metering.

Future



02 WILDLIFE How to capture murmurations

Pawel Zygmunt offers a practical field guide to capturing thousands of birds in motion



Shooting a murmuration is a long-term commitment for Ireland-based landscape photographer, Pawel Zygmunt. "My nearest location, Lough Ennell in County Westmeath, is 100km from my home, so every attempt is a deliberate journey," Pawel says. "It took six visits before I captured anything meaningful. Murmurations reward patience, repetition and a willingness to learn in the field.

"I look for quiet, windless evenings. Calm air keeps the flock cohesive, producing cleaner, more sculptural shapes. Local photographers helped me understand where the starlings gather and when they arrive. The birds appear shortly after sunset, so I position myself early and watch the sky for the first ripple of movement.

"I shoot handheld with a Nikon Z 9, using both a Nikon Z 100-400mm f/4.5-5.6 and, for wider contextual frames, a Nikon Z 24-120mm f/4. Continuous focusing with

AF-C is essential for tracking the flock, and burst mode allows me to capture evolving formations. The most dramatic shapes occur when a predator is present; the murmuration is a defence mechanism, so the birds move with far more intensity when threatened.

"Low light is the biggest challenge. For this image, I used 1/320 sec at f/4, ISO 3200, at 80mm, accepting that noise reduction would be handled in editing. Some photographers experiment with long exposures to create abstract, painterly trails, but my field is



Pawel Zygmunt

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landscape photography, and this project is part of a broader learning adventure. There's more to come as I continue exploring murmuration photography.

"These events typically occur between the months of October and February. Don't expect success on your first outing because persistence is everything."

Camera: Nikon Z 9

Settings: 1/320 sec at f/4, ISO 3200

Instagram: @breakinglightpictures

Website: breakinglightpictures.com

Pawel's five tips for photographing murmurations

- 1 Scout the location**
Local knowledge is invaluable – knowing where the birds gather saves wasted evenings and long drives, so do your research before setting off.
- 2 Choose calm weather**
Wind disrupts flock cohesion, turning a piece of aerial art into a swarm of birds. Quiet evenings produce tighter, more sculptural patterns.
- 3 Use AF-C tracking**
Continuous autofocus keeps the flock sharp as it shifts unpredictably across the sky. You need to be able to shoot quickly and in bursts without having to refocus the camera.
- 4 Prioritise shutter speed**
Low light forces you to use high ISOs to keep the shutter speed fast. Freeze the motion of the birds first, then clean up the noise in post-processing.
- 5 Watch for predators**
Predators such as raptors trigger the most dramatic shapes in the murmuration – the flock reacts instantly, creating intense, dynamic formations that make for great photos.

Pawel's essential kit Nikkor Z 100-400mm f/4.5–5.6 and Nikkor Z 24-120mm f/4

These lenses give me the reach, speed and flexibility to isolate fast-moving formations, while still being able to react quickly to sudden changes in the flock.



03

STILL-LIFE

Small car, big scene

Wendy Evans uses forced perspective to make it look as though she's won the lottery

Forced perspective is a camera trick that makes small things appear much larger or smaller than they really are. Filmmaker Peter Jackson didn't magically make Elijah Wood and his friends smaller in *The Lord of the Rings*; he just shot it so they appeared smaller, or so that Gandalf looked bigger. You can use the same idea to make a toy sports car appear as if it's the real thing, like one you'd buy after having a big win on the lottery.

The first thing to do is create your base for the car to sit on, but there are some things to note. If it's going to replace the foreground, you can depict it however you want, but if you're going to blend it into parts of the foreground, making it the same colour and texture are essential. You also need to be able to create enough depth of field so that the background has detail – it doesn't need to be in sharp focus, just readily identifiable. Here, using a crop sensor is an advantage over a full-frame sensor camera, as it has more depth of field at the same aperture.

You could use a phone camera, but only if it has a Pro mode where you can select a narrow aperture to create depth of field. In automatic mode, the DoF tends to be shallow when faced with an object right in front of it.

Camera: Nikon Z fc with Nikkor DX 16-50mm (24-75mm equivalent) f/3.5-6.3 VR

Settings: 1/160 sec at f/16, ISO 400, AP mode, Highlight metering

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Future



How to set up your millionaire's car shot

Size of the car

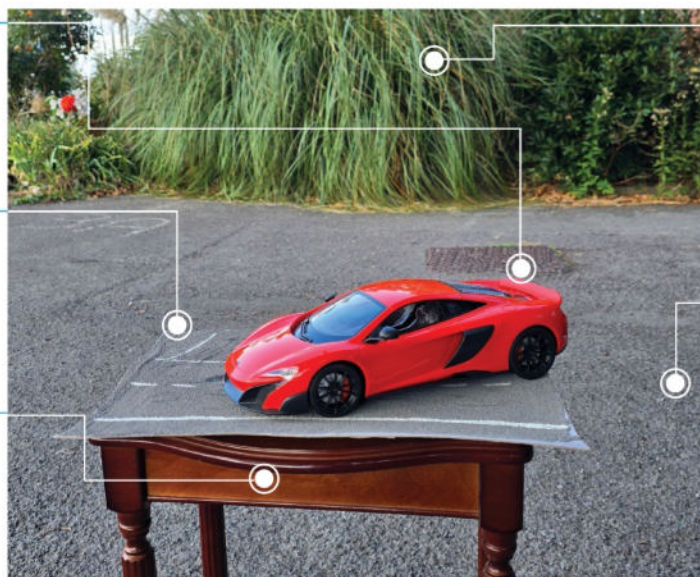
The size of your toy car will determine how hard or easy this project is. This is a remote control car that's about 25cm long. Bear in mind, the bigger the car, the larger the base you need to create for it.

Lining the edges up

The idea is to get down low enough so you can line up the back edge of the base with the edge of the scenery in the background. You want to replace the foreground, then smoothly continue on to the greenery.

The table

Place the base and car on a table or raised platform so you can get the angle just right. Too high or too low, and it's hard to get the perspectives to line up. This is a small table, so I needed to crouch to get the best angle.



The background

Find either an interesting or natural-looking background that looks like it would have a road in front of it. You couldn't set this up in the middle of a field, for example. Using a car park, like here, is ideal.

The foreground

Ideally, you are going to replace all of this with the base of your project, but (see side panel) if it doesn't quite fit, then be prepared to blend your base with the actual foreground. Having them the same colour and texture helps here.

Step by step Setting up the shot

Get the camera settings right for the conditions and create depth of field



01 Create the base

Here, I'd suggest using a thin piece of plywood. I initially used card, but the glue made it warp. Cover the base in water-based glue and sprinkle scenery gravel over it. Then paint on lines or markings. You can get all of these items in arts and crafts shops or model shops, particularly ones that sell train sets.



02 Set the exposure mode

You'll want to select a narrow aperture for this project, so set the camera to Aperture Priority mode (A/Av). You can set up your camera on a tripod, depending on where you are, but if you don't have one, you may need to increase the ISO rating to ensure there is no camera shake.



03 Metering the scene

For the first set of shots, I used Centre-weighted metering. However, because there wasn't much light in the foreground and plenty in the background, the shots were overexposed. For subsequent attempts, I used Highlight metering to retain the highlights.



04 Depth and focus

Focus on the part of the car nearest to the camera and use an aperture such as f/16 to ensure that the background retains plenty of detail. I could have chosen f/22 to include more detail overall in a slightly softer image, but this proved to be the better combination.

Scale and space

Making the forced perspective work

For the first attempt at this project, I used some small metal cars that were around 4-5cm in length. I created the base, leaving plenty of space for the cars, measured the gaps and painted in some white lines to indicate parking spaces.

However, it didn't work because they were too small, so I had to get extremely close to make them look large, which would have required a macro lens. That made getting the background in focus and lining the base up with it impossible. For the second attempt, I used a remote-controlled car that was about 25cm long. This time, it worked perfectly.

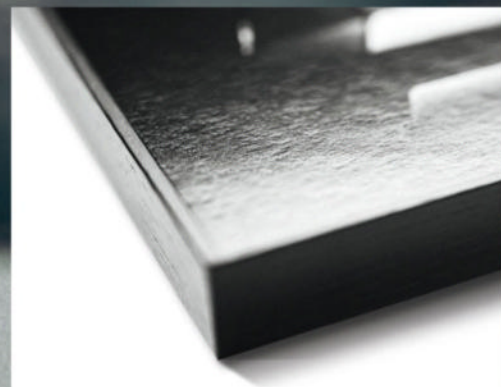


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Jonas Lindell

04 ASTRO Shooting stars

Capturing the Perseids at their peak, Jonas Lindell frames meteors as brushstrokes across the night sky



"For some photographers, the end of summer isn't just fading colours and earlier nights; it's the return of darkness," says Finland-based astrophotographer

Jonas Lindell. "With that comes opportunity. If you're into astrophotography, there's aurora chasing, Milky Way shooting or documenting celestial events. This is your season. In Finland, the sun barely dips below the horizon during summer, but by late August, the skies finally grow dark enough to reveal stars again.

"In 2026, we were lucky; there was almost no visible moon during the Perseid meteor shower peak in August. With the night sky free from moonlight, I knew the conditions would be ideal. So I packed my camera bag and headed into the archipelago, searching for the deepest darkness, far from city glow. During the day, I monitored weather forecasts, hoping to avoid clouds and the disappointment of returning home empty-handed.

"To capture as many meteors as possible, I aimed my camera toward the shower's radiant and let it run for one to two hours

on a tripod. Once the composition and settings were dialled in, I locked the remote shutter and let the camera work independently. Later, in post-processing, I made a careful blend of all the frames containing meteors, each streak a brief, brilliant signature of the Perseids written across the night.

"The Perseids show up every August, while the next notable meteor event is the arrival of the Leonids in November."

Camera: Nikon Z 8

Settings: 20 secs at f/2.8, ISO 500

Website: www.jlphotography.fi

Instagram: @jonas.lindell

Top kit

Nikkor Z 14-24mm f/2.8 S

This wide-angle lens never lets me down. The reasonably fast aperture and low chromatic aberration keep the stars round and clear.



Jonas's five tips for astrophotography



Dark spot

You need to be pretty far away from the closest city. Note the moon phase (new moon or, at most, 1/3rd moon is best). Check light pollution maps.



Weather forecast

Nights with low humidity (so that the lens doesn't fog up) and no clouds offer the best conditions for observing the night sky and its phenomena.



Preparations

Scout the location in daylight to plan your composition, and pack your gear early so comfort doesn't stop you from heading out.



Decide on the goal

Use appropriate websites and apps, such as aurora forecasts, Milky Way visibility, meteor showers or the moon phases, to decide what to shoot.



Gear and settings

Tripod, remote shutter, headlamp and wide-angle lens with a fast aperture. Use the 500 rule to estimate the longest shutter speed. Shoot in raw format.

05

ACTION

Light up the sky

How to capture the spectacle of fireworks, with **Wendy Evans**

We are fast heading towards the season of launching sparkly explosives into the night sky – think Bonfire Night in the UK (and New Year's Eve will be here before we know it). So whether you want to record your efforts in the back garden or at a large public display, here are some tips for great shots.

The first thing to bear in mind is that you don't want to be trying to focus on the fireworks as they are going off. Instead, find yourself a position with an unobstructed view of the sky but leave space at the bottom of the scene for the cityscape or an interesting feature.

Focus on that and then turn auto-focus off. The other essential item is a sturdy tripod, as these will be long-exposure shots. If you have a remote or an app release system, then even better as it will minimise the chances of camera movement when you press the shutter release button.

Camera: Canon EOS 5D at 100mm

Settings: 2 secs at f/9, ISO 100



Getty

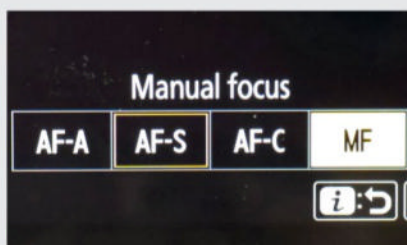
Step by step Setting up the shot

Use long exposures to capture more explosions



01 Enter Manual mode

Once your camera is set up on the tripod, switch to Manual mode, as you don't want to be metering a virtually empty sky when the exposure starts. Set the ISO to 100. With dark skies, you want as little noise as possible so you don't have to clean the images up later.



02 Focus in the distance

If you don't have any distant scenery to focus on and are just recording the sky, then turn the Auto-Focus off and manually set it to infinity. If you are photographing garden fireworks, focus on where they are going to go off first, then turn off the AF.



03 Try these settings

Given that all the fireworks won't ignite in the same place, a narrower aperture like f/8 is a good place to start for more depth of field. Set the shutter speed to around 4-6 secs. For a large commercial display, you can use a shorter exposure time, such as 2 secs.

Shubhodeep Roy



06 TRAVEL The Second Skin

Shubhodeep Roy explores the ancient Hindu folk festival of Gajon, which examines the themes of devotion, sacrifice and identity



Shubhodeep Roy is an award-winning documentary photographer from India who explores faith, identity, migration, labour, mortality and climate vulnerability.

Rooted in immersive, long-term storytelling and social responsibility, his photography draws on quiet spaces within the human experience. Shooting with patience, empathy and curiosity, he allows people and their stories to remain larger than the camera.

What is your zine about?

The Second Skin is a psychological study of Gajon, exploring how faith and ritual can loosen our sense of identity. Rather than documenting the festival as a spectacle, I follow the passage from preparation and transformation to dissolution, where familiar faces recede, and the body becomes a vessel for something beyond the everyday self.

How did you approach shooting the people in the festival?

I approached people first as a person, and only after that as a photographer. I also spent time listening, observing and learning the rhythm of the village before raising my camera. I never directed or repeated moments. Sometimes I photographed; sometimes I simply watched. Respecting the sacred space mattered more than making a picture.

Were there any challenges you had to overcome?

The greatest challenge was knowing when not to photograph. These rituals carried an intimacy and sacredness that I didn't want my presence to disturb. Darkness, smoke, movement and intensity demanded patience. I had to accept that some moments could not, and perhaps should not, be translated into photographs.

Are you inspired by the style of any particular photographers?

I have been deeply influenced by various photographers, including Raghu Rai, Ed Kashi and Jonas Bendiksen, particularly by their ability to look beyond the surface of an event. However, *The Second Skin* grew from my own encounters in Murshidabad, and from the questions those encounters quietly left within me.

Are there any plans for a follow-up, or are you working on something new?

The Second Skin is an ongoing journey, and I hope to return to Gajon as the work continues to evolve. Alongside it, I am continuing my long-term work in Varanasi and developing stories across India, following questions of faith, identity, memory and what it means to be human.

Instagram: @shubhodeeproy.in

Shubhodeep's five tips for shooting religious festivals

1 Listen before photographing

Spend time with people before raising your camera. Observe their rhythm, introduce yourself when appropriate and listen. When people become comfortable, it allows moments to unfold naturally, honestly and with dignity.

2 Respect sacred spaces

Rituals can be deeply personal and sacred. Know when to step back, when not to photograph and when your presence may alter what is happening.

3 Look beyond spectacle

Dramatic moments are easy to notice, but quieter moments often reveal more. Look for the pause before action, a lowered gaze, a gesture, a breath or a moment of preparation.

4 Let stories unfold

Don't force a narrative onto the people you photograph. Stay curious and allow the story to reveal itself through observation. Shoot what you encounter rather than what you expect to find.

5 Stay human first

Approach people with empathy, patience, kindness and humility. Your camera records a moment, but your relationship with the subject shapes its meaning. Honour their trust, protect their dignity and remain willing to learn.

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Shubhodeep Roy



Get the zine

@shubhodeeproy.in

The Second Skin is a self-published, handmade zine from Shubhodeep's ongoing project that explores faith, identity and transformation through the Gajon festival. The project is still a work in progress, and the zine represents one moment within that ongoing journey. Each copy is made to order, so to request one, contact Shubhodeep directly via Instagram.

07

LANDSCAPES

Misty mornings

Discover the tips you need for the season of magical mists, with **Wendy Evans**

After cold nights, misty mornings often follow, especially around rivers and lakes where the water is warmer than the ground conditions. So if you've had a cold evening and the weather forecast is clear for the following morning, set your alarm, get up early and head for your nearest water source. With any luck, you'll have the spectacle of a scene shrouded in mist and fog and a rising sun that slowly burns its way through, creating a halo of golden light.

Of course, you may also get mist and fog anywhere on low-lying ground, so another idea is to climb a hill overlooking a valley – if you're feeling particularly adventurous, head for the mountains. However, here we are looking at finding a scene and composing with a view to have the sun glowing through the mist as it comes up. Finding a water feature that reflects the golden light will also add to the atmosphere.

Settings: 1/20 sec at f/5.6, ISO 100



Sunrises through mist are tricky to get right, so be prepared to use exposure compensation.

Getty

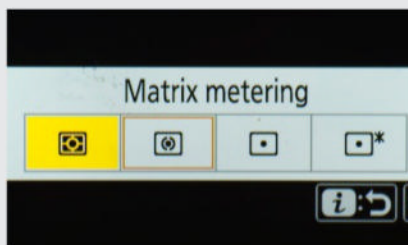
Step by step Capture the sun

Don't underexpose or overexpose your images



01 Fit some filters

The sun provides brightness, even through the mist, but there may be too much contrast. You can either try bracketing and combining images, or reduce the tonal range right from the start by using a graduated ND filter to lower the brightness in the sky area.



02 Metering matters

If the exposure is fairly balanced, then Zone metering or Centre-weighted metering should be fine. If you don't have a graduated ND filter, then it might be more problematic, and the Highlight metering mode might be a better choice.



03 Make some adjustments

Aim for f/5.6 or f/8 to ensure enough depth of field and a sharp image, but avoid having out-of-focus vegetation right in front of the camera. Check the results, and if over- or underexposed, be prepared to use +/-0.7 or +1EV exposure compensation.



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the subject line

Too much sky

With a 2:3 vertical composition, you need a lot of content to fill the view – here, it's all in the bottom third, with an added attraction in the middle. That means there's an awful lot of boring sky. Using a 3:4 crop instead keeps all the good stuff and loses a top slice of the sky, giving more emphasis to the planes.



08 ACTION Rate my photo

We examine a vintage aircraft photo by Liam Curtis

I took this photo while shooting historic aircraft, and it was one of those moments that just happened to come together. The Spitfire was sitting on the ground in front of me, and I noticed the biplane flying in the background. Having both aircraft in the same frame gave the photograph something a little different. Rather than just being a photograph of a Spitfire, there was another aircraft in the distance that helped tell more of the story. The monochrome treatment gives the photograph an older, timeless feel.
Camera: Nikon D7000 and Nikon 50mm f/1.8
Settings: 1/500 sec at f/5.6, ISO 100
Instagram: @liamcurtisphotography



Make it mono

The choice to go mono is an excellent idea. These are vintage aircraft and suggestive of a time when black and white photography was more common. You could also duotone them. The sky could possibly do with a little more work, but it's fine as it is because it doesn't detract from the biplane.



The tight crop

It would have been tempting to include more of the Spitfire, but shooting at a wider angle would have resulted in the biplane being smaller. Also, Liam shot this with a 50mm lens, so he was restricted in how this could be shot. This tight crop works well though, because it has the impact and detail of the Spitfire and the visibility of the biplane.



Foreground distraction

When visiting an airfield, you are restricted as to where you can shoot from. And using the prime lens means less flexibility, too. The result is that the out-of-focus fence posts at the front right of the image are a distraction. Removing them in editing might have helped the image.



Surplus people

On a similar theme, there's a person with a ladder clearly visible to the left of the Spitfire. While one option may have been to have taken the photo before they arrived in the frame, capturing the biplane in the distance meant that time was of the essence, so this wasn't possible. However, it detracts from the image and could have been removed in editing.



Sharpness

How far away is the aircraft, and has the photo been cropped? It's difficult to say, but the Spitfire isn't particularly sharp and the tail fin nearest the camera even less so. This was shot at f/5.6, whereas f/8 would have created more depth of field.

09

PORTRAITS

Stylish, colourful portraits

Khandie Rees was the winner of the Portraits challenge in the September issue with this striking image



Khandie is a photographer and author based in Northampton, UK. She specialises in portrait, commercial

and fashion photography, and has become known for her 'bold, personality-driven imagery for people who want something more than stiff poses and awkward smiles'.

"This image is of my partner," she says. "We don't share a first language, so our early days together were spent learning to communicate patiently, in a way that helped us truly understand each other. At first, he didn't really understand what I did for a living, but he could tell it meant something to me."

"This was one of our first shoots working together. I convinced this man, who only ever wears black, to dress up and float in a hot tub for me. He was transfixed by the way I changed lenses, and by the way the image slowly came together in front of him."

"His steady stare gives the image its fierceness, while the styling of the image and the decision to flip it upside down brings in an unexpected softness. It's that contrast, I think, that makes the picture feel alive," she says.

Camera: Nikon D750 with 50mm lens

Settings: 1/160 sec at f/3.5, ISO 100

Instagram: @khandiephoto



Khandie Rees

IMAGE ANALYSIS

1 THE FOCAL POINT

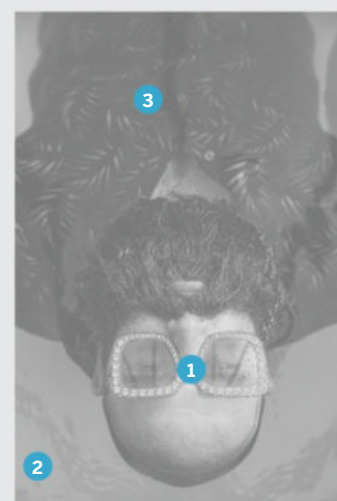
Even with sunglasses on, the focus is on the eyes – the water droplets and the reflections in the glasses. You can barely see the eyes, but it doesn't matter, because the sunglasses draw your attention.

2 COLOUR SCHEME

The blue and red tones contrast, while the shirt colours are sympathetic with the sunglasses, the skin tones and the beard, making it look stylish.

3 POSE AND WATER

Flipping the portrait upside down provides visual interest, suggesting a story of a wild party. The face and beard are sharp, while the torso is out of focus.



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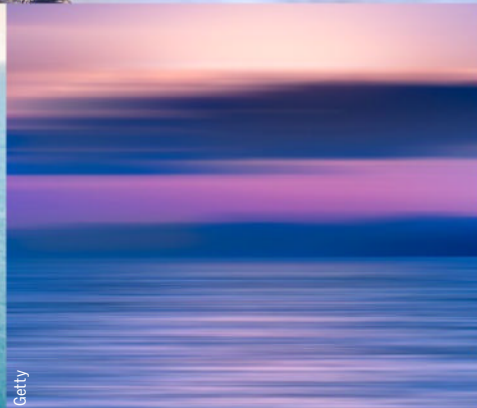
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10 LANDSCAPES

Seascapes challenge

Send us your best photos showing the sea and the coast

W

elcome to our monthly reader photo challenge, where the winning image will be featured in the magazine.

For November, the theme is 'Seascapes', which gives you plenty of latitude to interpret the subject however you like. This could include some ICM of the sea, a coastal shot of some cliffs looking out over the horizon, or a pier as part of the

background. The focus of the shot should be the coastline and the sea, so while boats, harbours and piers are all fine to include, the idea is that the seascape is the focus, rather than being the background behind something.

Enter via email

Email digitalcamera@futurenet.com with 'Seascape' as the subject. Please attach your entry (sending it as a high-res jpeg version,

rather than links) and include a description of how you came to take the image. Remember to list your social media handles or website, so that we can give you due credit if you win. Enter by 5 November, and remember: only one image per reader, please.

The winner will be announced in the January 2027 issue (315) of *Digital Camera*, on sale from Thursday 3 December.

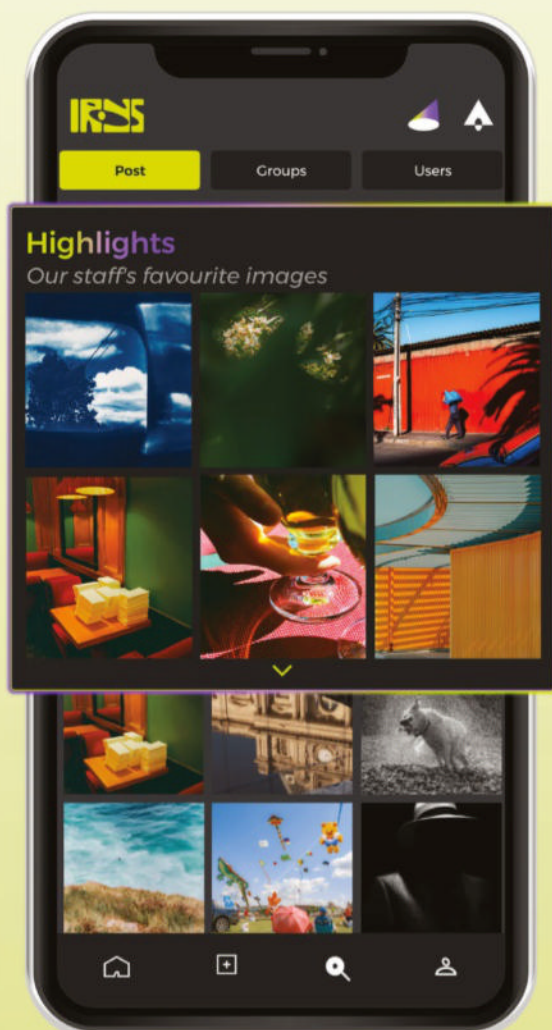
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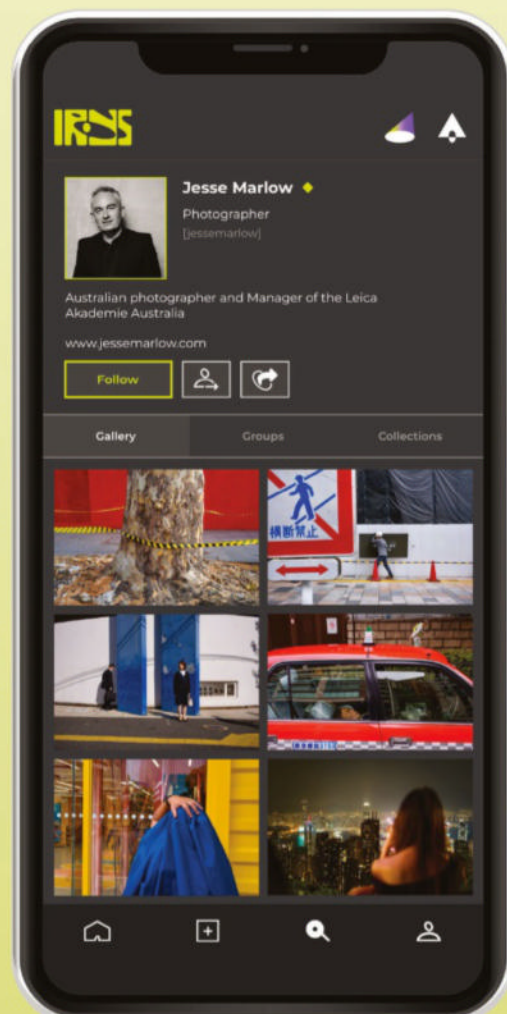


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LIGHT, MOTION AND CONTROL

Explore how the conscious use of filters improves control over light, movement and contrast while preserving the natural character of the landscape, with **Karolina Konsur**

Landscape photography often involves working with conditions that exceed the limits of a single exposure. Bright skies can overwhelm darker foregrounds, reflections may obscure important detail and elements such as water, clouds or vegetation can either strengthen a composition or distract from it. While these issues can be addressed in post-processing, achieving a balanced and natural-looking result is often easier at the point of capture.

This is where lens filters remain valuable. Circular polarisers, neutral density filters and graduated ND filters allow photographers to influence how light, movement and contrast are recorded, reducing the need for extensive correction later in the workflow. Using filters also results in files with greater retained detail, making post-processing less dependent on aggressive tonal correction.

Filters encourage a more deliberate way of working. Using them depends on observing how light changes, how reflections shift with camera position and how movement affects the structure of a scene. An understanding of how different filter types determine exposure leads to a more coherent image. Instead of a fixed approach, photographers must learn to adapt to changing conditions, where timing and decision-making are as important as technical settings.

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HOW TO USE FILTERS

For a handy guide showing how to set up slot filters and use screw-on polarisers, see the PDFs in the digital gifts download. **Page 6**

PRO SHOT

Sakrisoy, Lofoten Islands, Norway

The day was mostly overcast, with brief bright spells. The sun illuminated part of the sky, casting a beautiful glow over the yellow houses above the water.

10 secs at f/14, ISO 100.



KAROLINA KONSUR

A landscape photographer based

in Gdansk, Poland, Karolina specialises in seascapes and long exposures. She is an award-winning artist and author of articles published in leading photography magazines, speaks at prestigious industry events and is a global ambassador for Marumi lens filters. **Instagram:** @karolinakonsur

PRO SHOT

Władysławowo, Poland

This photo was taken from the beach with a telephoto lens and a focal length of over 400mm. I used a UV filter to reduce the haze and improve clarity.



All photos: Karolina Kosiur

1 CUTTING THE HAZE

UV filters are useful in bright coastal and high-altitude environments

Although modern digital sensors incorporate a UV-cut filter, external UV filters can still provide benefits in certain landscape conditions. Their primary purpose is to reduce ultraviolet radiation, which may contribute to a subtle bluish haze in the atmosphere, especially

at high altitudes and along coastlines, where UV intensity is naturally higher.

In coastal landscapes, strong sunlight and reflections off water can lower contrast and reduce the clarity of distant objects. A high-quality UV filter may help improve scene definition by minimising some of this atmospheric haze, which is most

noticeable when photographing distant objects, such as lighthouses, mountain ridges or ships on the horizon.

While the improvement usually looks subtle on digital cameras, the cleaner tonal separation and increased visual clarity can improve the final image, particularly in bright, cloudless conditions.

2 FILTER DENSITY REGULATION

Adapt instantly to changing light while maintaining full control over exposure

Variable ND filters offer an effective balance between flexibility and precision, making them particularly useful in rapidly changing lighting conditions.

Consisting of two rotating polarising elements, they allow smooth adjustment of light reduction by simply turning the front

ring, enabling quick refinement of shutter speed while maintaining the selected aperture and ISO. This versatility makes the filter valuable in a wide range of landscape situations, from controlling the motion of water to managing longer exposures.

This ability to react immediately is particularly useful during sunrise and sunset, when brightness levels can shift

dramatically within minutes. For photographers who are developing their long-exposure skills, the variable ND filter provides a practical introduction to advanced exposure control.

To maintain the best image quality, avoid using extreme settings where uneven density and a characteristic 'X' pattern may be visible.



PRO SHOT
Chatupy, Poland

A variable ND filter is ideal for fast-paced environments because it offers quick and precise control over exposure time. The ability to adjust density smoothly makes experimentation possible without changing filters, significantly raising ISO or stopping the aperture down excessively.



3 CONTROLLING YOUR MOTION

Use moderate density to retain texture when capturing movement

Neutral density (ND) filters reduce the amount of light reaching the sensor without affecting colour, allowing longer shutter speeds than would otherwise be possible. Available in various strengths, they provide varying degrees of exposure reduction, adapting to creative and technical goals.

ND filters are usually available in two formats: circular and square, and in two mounting options: screw-in or magnetic. Lower-density filters (ND2-ND16) are particularly useful when motion is desired without completely losing detail. Flowing water can be softened while retaining texture; waves can display movement without becoming featureless, and drifting clouds take shape rather than dissolving into streaks.

An ND filter also allows shutter speed to be regulated independently from aperture, making it easier to preserve the desired depth of field while controlling movement within the scene. Moderate densities often provide the most versatile starting point for landscape photography.

PRO SHOT Mussenden Temple, Northern Ireland (right)

Here, I used an ND16 filter because I wanted to extend the exposure to a few seconds. My goal was to subtly blur the water, drawing attention to the cliff and temple. Furthermore, these few seconds of exposure made the light coming from the right side of the frame softer and less contrasting.

4 BOOST YOUR NATURAL COLOURS

Enhance colour saturation and contrast without relying on post-processing

A circular polarising filter (CPL) can significantly increase colour saturation and local contrast by reducing unwanted reflections from non-metallic surfaces. Vegetation, water surfaces and distant terrain often reflect ambient light, which masks natural colours and textures.

By selectively removing reflected light, a CPL filter uncovers deeper greens, richer blues and greater tonal contrast across the landscape, especially in scenes with blue skies and scattered clouds, where the darker sky creates stronger cloud definition and makes atmospheric patterns appear more pronounced.

Unlike applying saturation adjustments in post-production, polarisation removes dispersed light before it reaches the sensor, resulting in a more accurate rendering of colour and contrast. Moderate regulation typically delivers more natural-looking results.

PRO SHOT Kuźnica, Hel Peninsula, Poland

These photos were taken under the same conditions, one after the other. The one on the right was taken with a CPL filter, and the difference is apparent. Contrast improved, colours became more saturated and clouds stood out clearly against the sky. Additionally, a pink glow appeared on the water, which was not as intense before.



No filter



With polarising filter



5 SEEING BENEATH REFLECTIONS

Control surface glare to expose detail hidden below water and glass

Water rarely reveals its full character at first glance. Surface glare can hide submerged rocks, riverbeds and underwater textures that contribute significantly to a composition. A circular polarising filter can minimise these reflections, allowing details beneath the surface to become visible and introducing additional depth and structure to the scene. This filter works well where surface reflections often obscure important foreground elements, such as streams, lakes and coastal environments. The same principle can show details behind glass and reduce distracting highlights on wet foliage.

Even small modifications can dramatically alter the balance between transparency and reflection, making careful filter rotation an important part of the compositional process. Aim for a natural balance that preserves atmosphere while exposing key details beneath the surface.



PRO SHOT Lofoten Islands, Norway

Tidal pools are one of the most interesting subjects for building a foreground. Using a CPL filter, it is possible to peer beneath the water's surface, full of colourful rocks, vegetation, and stunning turquoise water, creating a compelling lead-in to the rest of the frame.



6 HIGHLIGHTING THE ESSENTIALS

Turn movement into shape through extended exposures with high-density ND filters

Filters with higher densities (from ND64 upwards) enable exposure times measured in seconds or even minutes in daylight. While lower-density filters preserve movement details, stronger ND filters simplify complex scenes by removing transient elements and emphasising form. Fast-moving clouds become sweeping patterns, rough water transforms into smooth surfaces, and crowded scenes appear calmer and less distracting.

This simplification often strengthens existing elements in the composition, such as piers, solitary trees, coastal rock formations or architectural landmarks. By reducing movement to colour, tone and shape, higher-density filters can introduce a more interpretive approach to landscape photography. With these filters, shutter speeds increase rapidly, making accurate exposure calculation essential. To streamline the process in the field, it is often best to rely on dedicated long exposure calculator apps.

PRO SHOT Dunlewey Church, Ireland (right)

I chose an ND1000 filter for this shot because I wanted to emphasise the church's shape and texture. Had I stuck to the basic exposure settings, the distinct cloud structure would have overshadowed the building, making it disappear into the surroundings. The long exposure allowed me to blur the clouds and create a background glow that made the church a focal point.

40 secs at f/11, ISO 100



7 TRY TO BALANCE THE EXPOSURE

Manage bright skies and darker foregrounds at capture with graduated filtration

Graduated neutral density (GND) filters are designed to balance exposure between bright and dark areas of a scene by darkening only part of the filter, allowing different parts of the frame to be adjusted separately. Available in

a variety of transition types and strengths, GND filters remain one of the most effective tools for controlling dynamic range in landscape photography.

Of these, the Soft GND filter is the most versatile. Its gradual transition naturally blends into uneven horizons, making it

useful for mountains, forests, seaside and rolling countryside. The softer edge is more forgiving when precise filter positioning is difficult, helping to maintain a natural tonal balance without accentuating the transition itself. In many landscape situations, it is the first GND filter worth reaching for.



PRO SHOT Svöðufoss, Iceland

The Soft GND8 filter worked perfectly for this image, as the soft

gradient smoothly transitioned across the uneven terrain and darkened only the sky, preventing the clouds from becoming overexposed and preserving their dramatic structure. Without the filter, I'd have had to underexpose the rest of the frame, losing detail in, for example, the dark sections of the rocks.





8 FROM VISION TO CAPTURE

Follow a structured workflow to plan, combine and refine filters with confidence in the field

Thoughtful filter use relies as much on preparation as it does on filter choice. Before heading into the field, ensure that essential accessories such as a sturdy tripod, remote release and exposure calculator are readily available, particularly when working with longer shutter speeds. Whenever possible, arrive early to explore potential compositions and identify how changing light may influence the scene. Keeping filters clean and easily accessible can also prevent unnecessary delays when conditions change rapidly. A methodical approach helps streamline decision-making on location, allowing greater focus on composition and changing conditions rather than equipment management.

The setup used for this image included an adapter ring matched to the lens diameter, a dedicated M100 circular polariser, an M100 Marumi Magnetic filter holder, a Magnetic Square ND64 filter and a Magnetic Square Soft GND8 filter. The CPL reduced reflections on the wet rocks and enhanced the colour and clarity of the water. The ND64 was used to lengthen the exposure and capture the motion of water washing around the rocks, while the Soft GND8 reduced the brightness difference between the sky and the darker rock formations.

The magnetic holder allows ND and GND filters to be mounted quickly and adjusted independently, making it easier to respond to changing light conditions without interrupting the shooting process.



The workflow

Six steps to improve the way you work

1

Assess the scene

Before selecting any filters, assess the landscape objectively.

Observe brightness differences, reflections, movement, weather conditions and the overall distribution of light throughout the frame. Identifying the scene's visual characteristics provides a clear understanding of both its challenges and opportunities.

2

Define the outcome

Consider how the scene should be interpreted in the final image.

Decide whether the objective is a natural representation of the landscape or a more stylised interpretation shaped by atmosphere, movement and light. Establishing this intention beforehand helps ensure that every technical choice supports the final image.

3

Build the setup

Determine whether a single filter is sufficient or if multiple adjustments are needed to achieve the intended result.

Combining filters can provide greater creative control, but every element should serve a specific purpose. Build the setup around the requirements of the scene rather than applying filters simply because they are available.



PRO SHOT Malin Head, Ireland

The extended exposure simplified the movement of the ocean into flowing shapes, helping emphasise the structure and scale of the coastal landscape.

4

Stack with purpose

When combining filters, order matters. A circular polariser is typically mounted closest to the lens, followed by an ND filter, while graduated filters sit at the front of the holder. Once the filters are in place, avoid significant compositional changes, as shifts in framing can alter polarisation and misalign graduated transitions.

5

Shoot a test frame

Capture a test image and evaluate both the preview and histogram carefully. Confirm that highlights are retained, shadows contain sufficient detail and the exposure is distributed as intended. Check the overall interaction between the filters and the scene, ensuring that each change supports the expected result.

6

Verify the result

Use the test frame to determine whether the image reflects the intended visual outcome. As conditions evolve, consider whether the current filter combination continues to support that goal. No single setup suits every landscape or lighting scenario, and successful filter use relies on selecting only the tools that strengthen the final photograph.

9 PAINT WITH WIND

Introduce selective motion to contrast stable subjects with softer, wind-blurred detail

The combination of wind and an ND filter can create a layer of motion that contrasts with stable subjects elsewhere in the frame, introducing energy without overwhelming the composition. Grasses, flowers and tree canopies each respond differently to changing gusts, allowing blur to appear only within chosen areas of the image.

By extending the exposure using a lower-density filter, this movement becomes an intentional part of the composition, with static elements placed against softer wind-blurred textures. Moderate exposure lengths produce the most natural-looking results, preserving enough texture within the vegetation to maintain a sense of depth within the image. As a starting point, exposures from 0.5 to 5 seconds often work well for grasses, while trees and larger foliage typically require exposures of several seconds to record more movement.

PRO TIP

Consider the foreground

Vegetation positioned close to the lens often allows you to capture stronger blur than distant foliage, increasing the contrast between soft motion and sharper background elements.



PRO SHOT Kuznica, Poland

Blurred elements in the foreground were supposed to give the image a fairy-tale vibe and lightness, in contrast to the static boats moored at the shore.

Filter: Marumi Magnetic Square ND1000 and Hard GND4

10 BLEND SURFACE AND TEXTURE

Balance reflection and transparency for multi-layered images

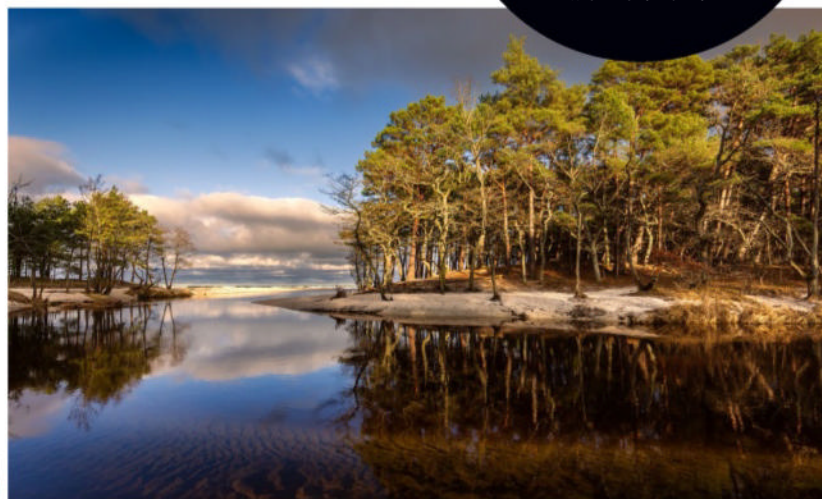
A circular polariser does not need to eliminate reflections completely. In many situations, a stronger image emerges when reflections are only partially reduced, allowing surface reflections and underlying details to coexist within the same composition. Rotating the filter gradually while observing the scene enables precise control over this balance. Water, wet sand, puddles and other reflective surfaces can simultaneously reveal submerged textures, reflected skies and surrounding colours, creating a layered image that records more than a single visual plane. Small adjustments often produce surprisingly different results, making experimentation essential. The effect is often strongest when photographing at an oblique angle to the reflective surface, where reflections remain visible across parts of the frame while transparency increases in others.



PRO TIP

Go low for impact

Shooting from a lower camera position often increases the separation between surface reflections and submerged textures, making layered details easier to control within the frame.



PRO SHOT The mouth of the Piasnica River, Poland

This photo was all about showing multi-dimensional layers – the calm surface of the river, reflecting the trees and clouds like a mirror and the sandy texture of the bottom, illuminated by the light coming from the side.

Filter: Marumi Prime Plasma Sputtering CPL (left)

PRO TIP

Go wide for depth

Use a wide-angle lens purposely, as wider focal lengths often exaggerate converging cloud lines and enhance the sense of depth created by atmospheric movement.



11 REDRAW THE SKY

Transform moving clouds into powerful leading lines that strengthen directional flow

B

eyond shaping atmosphere and simplifying movement, high-density filters can also become powerful compositional tools, allowing cloud movement to add rhythm to a scene. Slower shutter speeds allow these atmospheric patterns to merge into continuous lines, connecting different areas of the composition. The best results are achieved when shifting cloud formations create converging lines that complement existing landscape features, guiding attention towards important elements in the frame. Before applying a neutral density filter, carefully observe wind direction and consider how cloud flow will affect

the chosen composition. Movement directed into the frame often produces more immersive converging lines than when parallel to the horizon. Choose an exposure time that preserves some variation in the clouds, as it creates stronger directional paths.

PRO SHOT Dębki, Poland (above)

The standard exposure preserves individual cloud formations, leaving the frame monotonous, while the longer exposure captures their movement as continuous streaks that give direction to the entire composition.

Filter: Marumi Magnetic Square ND1000 and Soft GND8

12 EMBRACE ABSTRACTION

Create painterly interpretations through controlled movements

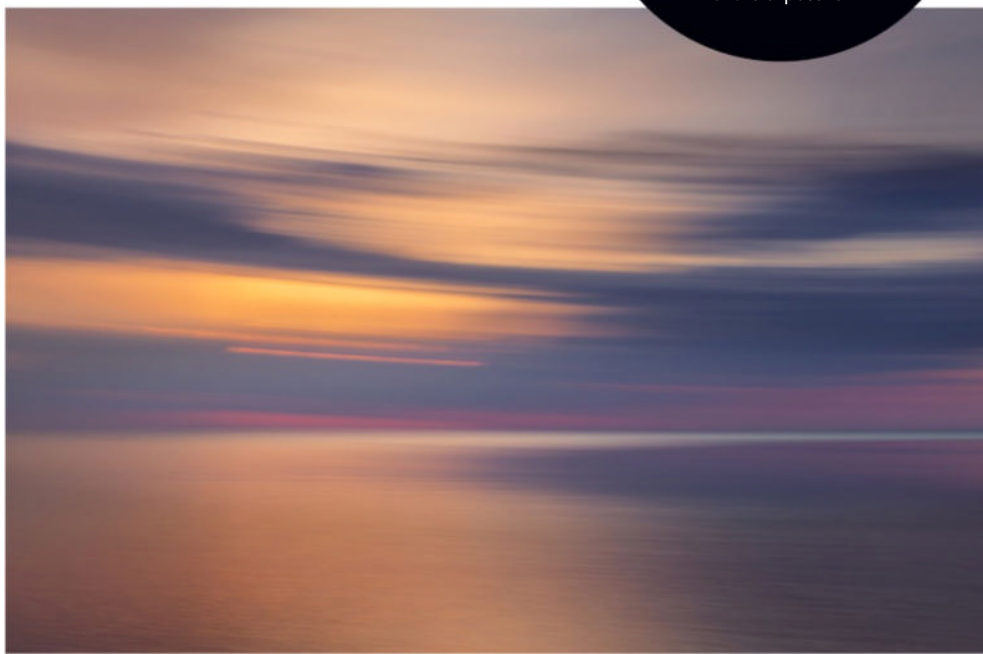
T

he intentional camera movement (ICM) technique transforms a recognisable scene into an abstract arrangement of colour, tone and form. To create the effect, use a neutral density filter to extend shutter speeds to between 0.25 and 2 seconds, then move the camera during the exposure. The direction of movement should complement the structure of the scene; vertical motion often works well with trees, cliffs and waves, while horizontal movement can simplify layered landscapes into bands of colour and texture. Consistent movement will produce more harmonious results than abrupt changes in speed or direction. Simpler compositions often work best, allowing shapes to remain recognisable while introducing a more expressive and interpretive rendering of the landscape.

PRO SHOT Seaside

Photographed before sunrise, when subtle colour gradients across the sky provide a rich palette of tones that blend naturally during camera movement.

Filter: Marumi Magnetic Slim ND4



PRO TIP

Get ahead

Start moving the camera before the shutter opens, using a short self-timer. This creates a smoother motion pattern and helps avoid unwanted sharp areas at the beginning of the exposure.

Hotshots

Our showcase of category winners from
the Event Photography Awards 2026





**WINNER: MUSIC
EVENTS – AUDIENCE
'Slayer Fans'
Brian Robinson**

"Slayer fans are passionate," says Brian. "This was the front row at Slayer's Finsbury Park show in London, when I was shooting with Crashburn."

Brian Robinson / EPA 2026

David Parry / EPA 2026



WINNER, A-LISTERS & OVERALL WINNER
'Train to Glastonbury'

David Parry

"Sam Ryder performs an impromptu gig on board a train service travelling from London Paddington station to Glastonbury, ahead of his Saturday set at the music festival. The surprise performance was part of the 'I came by train' campaign supported by Trainline, which encourages sustainable travel to the Glastonbury festival."

WINNER: BEHIND THE SCENES
'Headless Chicken'
Marc James

"Behind the scenes at the World Halal Food Festival. A performer escapes the heat of their chicken mascot costume by cooling off in a refrigeration truck with a glass of water, costume head resting on a nearby chair."



Marc James / EPA 2026



Chris Morgan / EPA 2026

WINNER: PORTRAITS

'Chaotic Energy'

Chris Morgan

"A fancy dress party at the Royal Dublin Society for Red Robin Events. Taken on a Canon EOS 5D Mark III with a Lensbaby fisheye."



Claire Hannan / EPA 2026

WINNER: CATERING

'Three Waiters'

Claire Hannan

"Three waiters weave their way through seated guests with starter plates during dinner service at The British Museum."

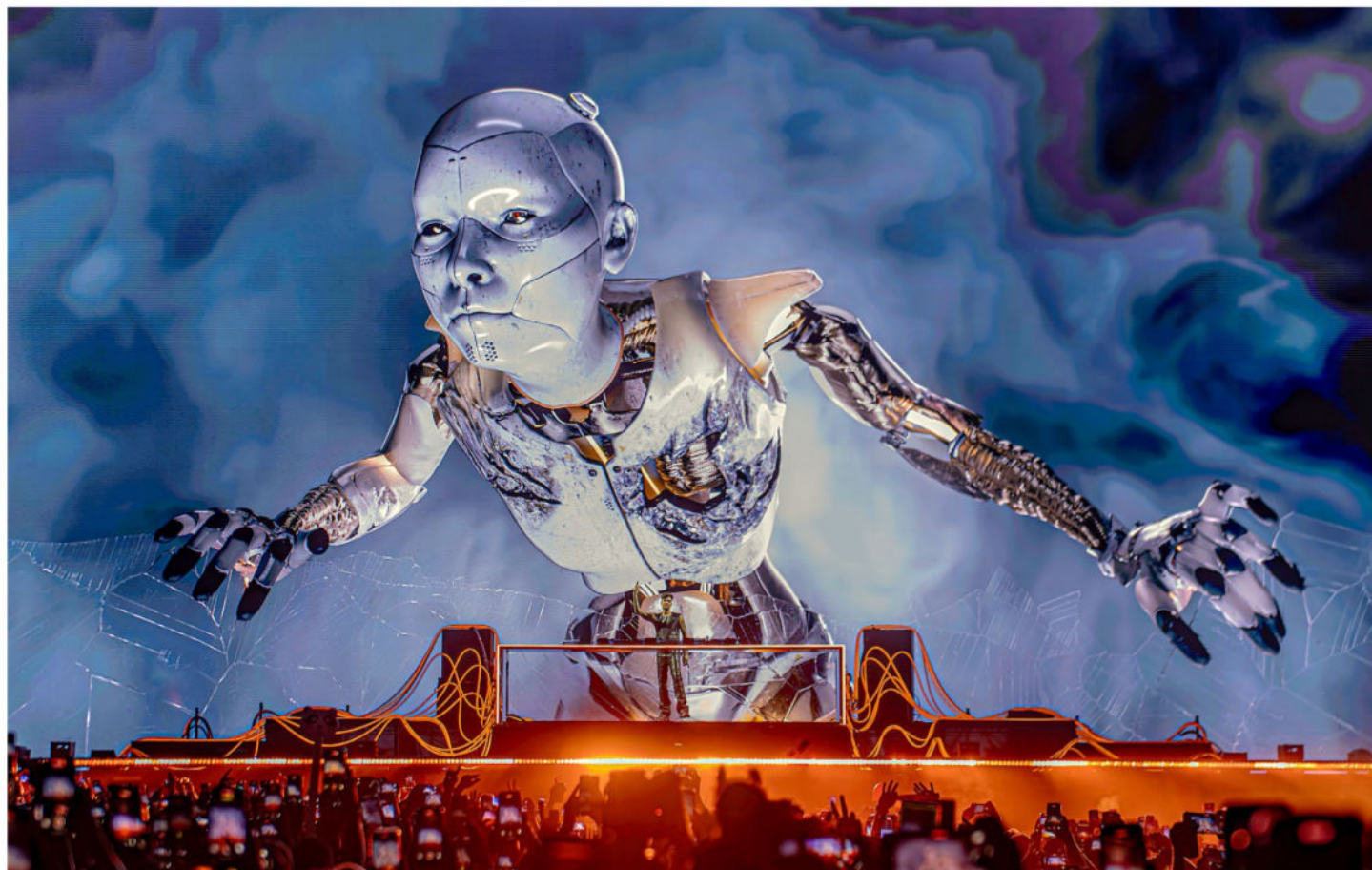


Afra Gerthoeffer-Gruetz / EPA 2006

WINNER:
BLACK & WHITE
'Black Ink'

Afra Gerthoeffer-Gruetz

"A close-up of Evan Seinfeld of Biohazard, placed in a perfect halo that matches the artist's tattoos."



Anthony Black / EPA 2026

WINNER: BEST AMATEUR

'The End of Genesys'

Anthony Black

"This photo was taken during DJ Anyma's set, which is accompanied by totally amazing visuals throughout. This image is just one of many I captured."



Luke Dyson / EPA 2026

**WINNER: BRAND
ACTIVATIONS AND
EXPERIMENTAL EVENTS**

'Beneath the Glacier'

Luke Dyson

"Photographing the Amazon Influencer Program in Iceland for Bryant, I captured guests exploring a glacier cave illuminated from within. The experience brought creators into an extraordinary natural environment, transforming a campaign trip into an immersive adventure far removed from traditional event spaces."



WINNER: ROYAL OCCASIONS
'Neck-craning Royals at Trooping the Colour'
Samir Hussein

The Prince and Princess of Wales and their children, Prince George, Prince Louis and Princess Charlotte, pictured on the balcony of Buckingham Palace in London, after the annual military parade that celebrates the official birthday of the United Kingdom's sovereign.

WINNER: VENUES
'Pavarotti's Place'
Stephen Cain

Teatro Comunale di Modena.
 In 2007, the Municipal Theatre in the town of Modena, Italy, was named after the famous Italian operatic tenor Luciano Pavarotti.





WINNER: WEDDINGS

'Bounce!'

Steve Grogan

"The bride and groom on Space Hopper inflatables during their wedding at Owen House Barn in Cheshire, UK."



WINNER: TRADE SHOW

'Pluck'

Alistair Veryard

"During a much-needed wellness experience at the British Insurance Brokers' Association (BIBA) conference, a cheeky little Labrador takes the opportunity to acquire a new play toy."

About the competition

Founded in 2014, the Event Photography Awards celebrates photographers in the events industry. The judging panel consists of over 60 industry leaders, plus editors of trade and photography magazines, including *Digital Camera*. EPA 2026 attracted over 2,300 entries from around the world.
www.eventphotographyawards.com

CAMERA CLINIC

Master the art of modern photography

This month: Long exposures

Keep the shutter open and see the world differently



Exploring long exposures can be a challenge, but they are also a great way to express yourself through photography.

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

Shooting long exposures for deliberate blur is not for everyone. Some photographers prefer their clouds fluffy and their water sharp and crisp. Of course, that's one opinion, but there's no denying that exploring long exposures is a wonderful way of expressing yourself.

What is a long exposure? Most of our photographic life is spent shooting at 1/125 sec and faster, so for the sake of argument, let's say shutter speeds from 0.5 to 4 secs are 'short' long exposures, 8 secs to 30 secs are long exposures and above that is an extreme long exposure.

Good camera technique is essential for successful shooting at slower speeds, but it becomes more challenging as exposures get longer. The whole procedure for extreme exposure shooting is a challenge, and you need extra kit, namely strong neutral density (ND) filters. You also have to learn to identify what scenes work and

what don't; then there are the various technical aspects to be considered. While there is nothing too difficult, the process is more involved than normal photography. Miss a step, and you could find that the four-minute exposure you've just finished was a complete waste of time (see the Get the Knowledge panel opposite).

Making an exposure of a few seconds is quite painless, but get to 30 seconds and beyond, there's the small matter of keeping yourself occupied. One, two and four minutes isn't a long time, but it can seem an eternity when you're standing behind the camera on a cold, windy day. You could use the time for some quiet reflection, plan out your next shot or just be thankful for our smart devices. Whatever your tactic while you wait for the shutter to close, there's the anticipation of a successful image, and when it comes out well, all the effort is worthwhile.

Get the knowledge

Long-exposure success starts with an organised workflow

Shooting long exposures is a chain of events. With the camera set up on a tripod, the lens focused manually, IS and noise reduction switched off, and the composition decided, you can then determine the correct exposure for the unfiltered scene. The key setting is the shutter speed, so that's what to input into a long exposure app for the new setting with your ND filter. If that speed is too long or

not long enough, adjust the ISO, f/stop or both, until you get the desired shutter time. Add the filter, taking care not to alter focus. In a slot system, use the groove nearest the lens and ensure the foam gasket is correctly seated. Select the time, or for longer exposures, set B and the time, or fit a remote release to do it manually. Now make the exposure.

Filter factors

A trio of neutral density filters to cover all creative bases



3- OR 6-STOP ND

When light levels drop, there is a point where no filter is needed for long exposures. Until then, a 3- or 6-stop ND can help you achieve the required exposure time. For example, if the scene needs a 1 sec shutter speed, fitting a 6-stop ND increases the exposure time to 64 secs while a 3-stop ND allows 8 secs. Weaker NDs are colour neutral and transmit enough light to make them easy to use.

10-STOP ND

If you are starting with a filter for long exposures, make it a 10-stop ND. In low light, achieving exposures of several minutes is easy, but it can be more of a struggle when it's bright. Juggling with a low ISO and smaller f/stops might get you to 30 or even 60 secs but that might not be enough. Nevertheless, the 10-stop ND is a great start, and you get 11- or 12-stops by adding a polariser.



15- OR 16-STOP ND

If your aim is exposures running into several minutes on bright days or with wide lens apertures, you'll need a dense ND, such as a 15- or 16-stop.

Filters of this type mean you can enjoy exceptionally lengthy exposures – even running into hours, should you have the need. Be warned, though; super-long exposures mean that you have to get everything right in the preparation, otherwise, it is a serious waste of effort.

Essential kit for long shots

You need more than filters to make the most of long shutter speeds

A SOLID FOUNDATION

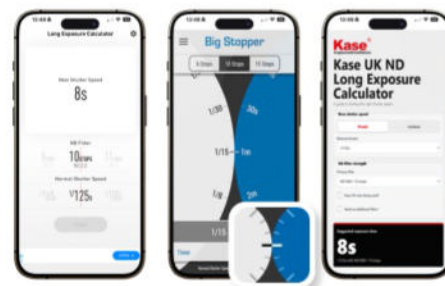
In these pages, we regularly suggest a tripod as a useful extra. Here, it's essential. Thanks to image stabilisation, you may be able to shoot sharp handheld shots at one or two seconds, but it's a different matter with exposures running into many seconds, so a robust tripod is a must. Lightweight tripods with minimal extension can work if conditions are calm, but generally a heavier tripod is better.

HANDS-FREE RELEASE

For starting the exposure and keeping the shutter open for a set time, a remote release is useful, although it's not essential. Many cameras can be triggered with a smartphone app or by going into the menus and setting a self-timer. If you choose a separate release, use a piece of Velcro to attach it to the tripod leg or head, rather than letting it swing around during long exposures.

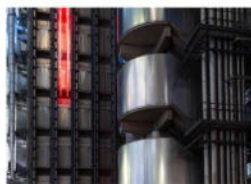
LONG EXPOSURE APP

Take the work out of calculating the required exposure time with a long exposure app. There are free options for Android (Exposure Calculator) and iOS (Long Exposure Calculator), plus those from Kase Filters and Lee Filters. Start by taking a test shot, then input the shutter speed into the app, dial in the strength of the ND filter, and get your new speed. Many apps will time the exposure for you.



Perfect examples of long exposure photography

There's great fun – and photos – to be had by keeping the shutter open

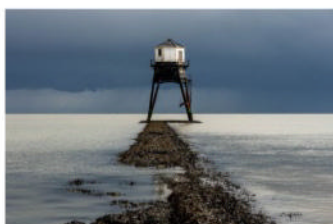


RED LIGHT DELIGHT

Long exposures are not all about clouds and water, and plenty of other moving objects can make for fascinating photos. The lifts at the back of the Lloyd's building in the City of London kept me occupied for quite a while. It was early evening and daylight had almost gone, but the twilight was enough to show detail in the building. It was also dark enough for the red lights to register as colourful streaks as the lifts travelled up and down. I experimented with shutter speeds and waited for the right combination of moving and static lifts. Obviously, because I had no control over which lift was going to move or stay still at any given time, luck and patience were major factors here.

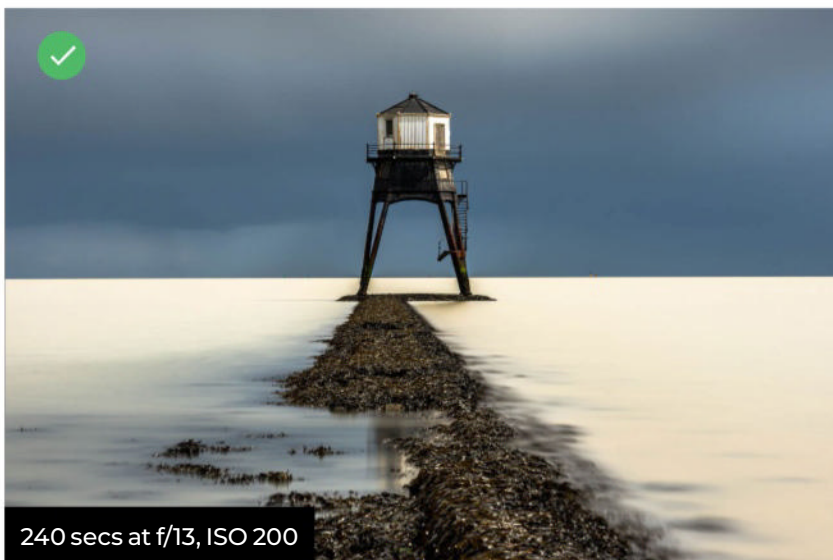


Will Cheung

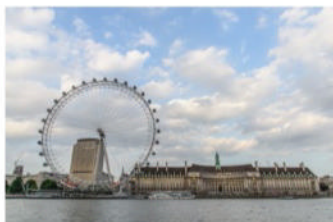


THE LIGHT IS RIGHT

A causeway links the two Dovercourt Lighthouses near Harwich in Essex, and the popular approach is to shoot at high tide when it is underwater, making the sea-bound lighthouse the focal point. I took a few shots, but it was rainy, and the clouds weren't interesting. With changeable weather, I stuck around, and as the tide receded, the causeway was revealed. The sun came out and lit the lighthouse against the dark sky as the sea took on a creamy hue. I took a few shots of this tonal inversion before fitting the 16-stop ND and giving the scene a four-minute exposure. I got two shots before the conditions changed again.



Will Cheung



ICON OF OUR TIMES

The London Eye is widely photographed, but rather than adopt the usual pictorial approach, and encouraged by an attractive sky, I decided on a long exposure with a 10-stop ND. With the help of a long exposure app, I determined that the filter would allow an exposure of 60 secs, which was enough to blur the Eye. However, the clouds weren't moving much, so that was probably going to be insufficient to blur the sky. I gained an extra f/stop by adding a polariser, which took the exposure to just over two minutes. The 10-stop ND added a warm colour cast to the image, but I liked the effect, so left it uncorrected.



Will Cheung



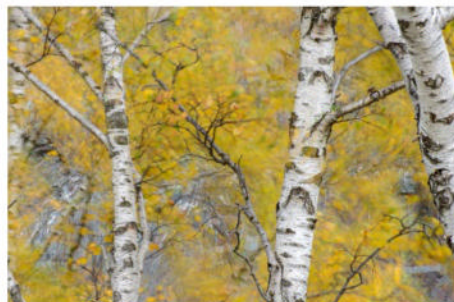
How to capture long exposures

A world of creativity awaits the adventurous shooter

At one extreme, shutter speeds of 1/32,000 sec and faster can freeze the fiercest action, while at the other end of the scale, long exposures can last seconds, minutes and even hours. The good news is that it doesn't take too much effort to unlock their potential. However, you will need the right kit, including a filter or two and a tripod.

For brief long exposures, you might not need anything extra at all, except some inspiration to get you thinking about the potential of this technique. There are many creative avenues waiting to be explored, so if this area of photography is new to you, it's time to find your long exposure mojo...

Nine long exposure essential subjects to shoot



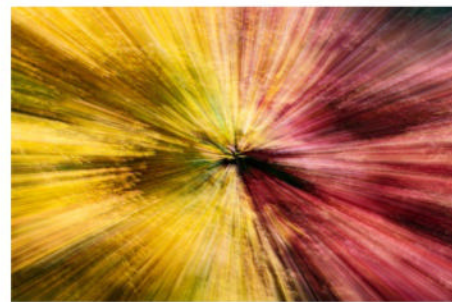
BLUR TREES

On windy days, get creative with trees. How long you need depends on the situation – on breezy days, speeds of several seconds is enough to get nice blur. Autumn is a great time to try this technique, with vibrant colours adding an extra dimension.



SHOOT THE SKYLINE

Sky detail is crucial for this approach. Totally blue skies or flat grey skies don't work because there's no detail to blur. With slow-moving skies, exposures of several minutes will be needed, so find a position out of the wind. A soft graduated ND can also help.



ZOOM FOR IMPACT

Using the zoom during a long exposure works well with colourful subjects, such as flowers, trees or stained glass windows. Try zooming in or out and varying the movement. Using a 4 sec exposure, start zooming after 2 secs to mix the sharpness and blur.



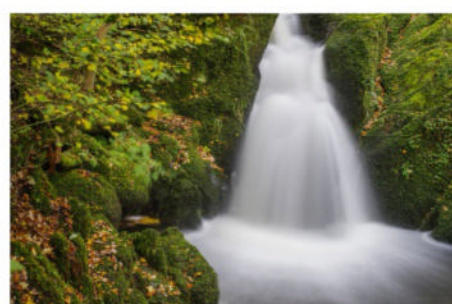
LINE OF LIGHT

Light trails are a great night topic. The shutter speed depends on the traffic, so assess each situation on its merits. With a steady flow of traffic, start with 15 or 20 secs, balancing the aperture and ISO for the correct exposure. Don't use ND filters for light trails.



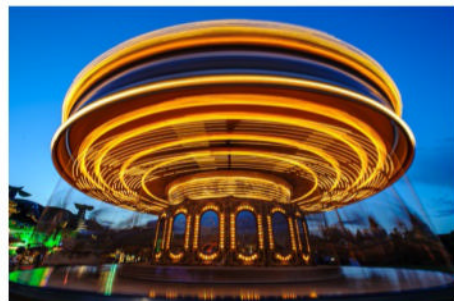
TIDAL MOVES

When it comes to blurring the sea, the tide and how it interacts with the subject is key. It's also a factor when it comes to setting up the tripod, so if you're shooting a long exposure close to the water's edge, consider the incoming tide to avoid wet feet.



FALLING FOR WATER

Large bodies of water blur nicely in long exposures, but waterfalls and cascades also work. Depending on the force, you can get a decent blur with shutter speeds of 1 or 2 secs without ND filters. Shooting on cloudy days also means contrast is manageable.



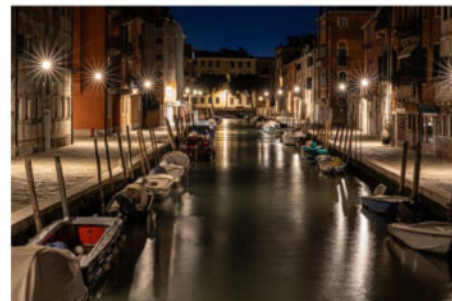
FAIR GAME

Bright, colourful lights make fairground rides good subjects for long exposures. Which speed works best depends, so wait until the ride reaches full speed before shooting. Times of 1 or 2 secs work well and are manageable with a handheld camera.



HEAVENLY CLOUDS

Breezy days with clouds racing across the sky are a great time for long-exposure photography. Find some good foreground and make sure the tripod is securely set up to minimise the risk of wind judder. Stand close to the camera to act as a windbreak.



NIGHT MANOEUVRES

Night and long exposures go hand in hand. One benefit is that you can make people 'vanish'. Ideally, you need an exposure of several minutes, so that everybody who is moving won't show up. Of course, people moving slowly, or not at all, will still appear.

Pros and cons

Making the most of long shutter speeds

Extreme exposures require planning and patience

Super-long exposures don't suit every scene. The two vital ingredients are movement and a shutter speed long enough to blur whatever is moving. On days with slow-moving clouds, you will need exposures of several minutes. Even then, if there's little detail in those clouds, it may not be worth the effort. Sunny days can also be a problem with contrast, and bright details can burn out, so they need to be approached carefully. Practice and experience will tell you what works.

✓ No need for NR

Turn off in-camera noise reduction for both long exposure and high ISO. Long exposure NR takes the same time (in most cameras) as the exposure itself, and the camera is inoperable during that period. With raw formats, there's no benefit to in-camera NR, so do your denoising in editing.

✓ Shutter limits

When you're setting up for a long exposure and find that you can't set a shutter speed longer than, say, 0.5 sec, it's likely because the electronic or silent shutter is selected. Go into the menu and switch to the mechanical shutter instead.

✓ Focus tip

The camera might struggle to focus through a strong ND filter. Also, you don't want the camera to attempt to focus when you touch the shutter

release. The best thing is to switch to manual and focus before adding the ND filter.

✓ Beat the breeze

On windy days, shoot from a sheltered position, if possible. However, if you don't have the choice, stand as close as you can and use your body to shield the camera from wind judder.

✗ Colour shift

Extreme ND filters often give a colour cast. Shoot raw, and any excessive warmth or coolness can be corrected in editing. Or take the time to take a custom white-balance reading for the filter.

✗ Turn off the stabiliser

Most modern cameras – and many lenses, too – have image stabilisers (IS). These can cause blurred images during long exposures, so it's best to turn the function off. Some IS systems can automatically detect when the camera is on a tripod, but turning it off takes away any jeopardy.

✗ Flare attack

In DSLR cameras, there can be light leaks during very long exposures, even if the ND filter is being used correctly. This might be because of light seepage via the optical viewfinder and mirror mechanism. If your camera has one, use the viewfinder blind – if not, place a dark hat or cloth over the viewfinder eyepiece and filter holder. A small piece of black gaffer tape also works.

Focus by eye

With strong ND filters, use manual focusing.

Filter know-how

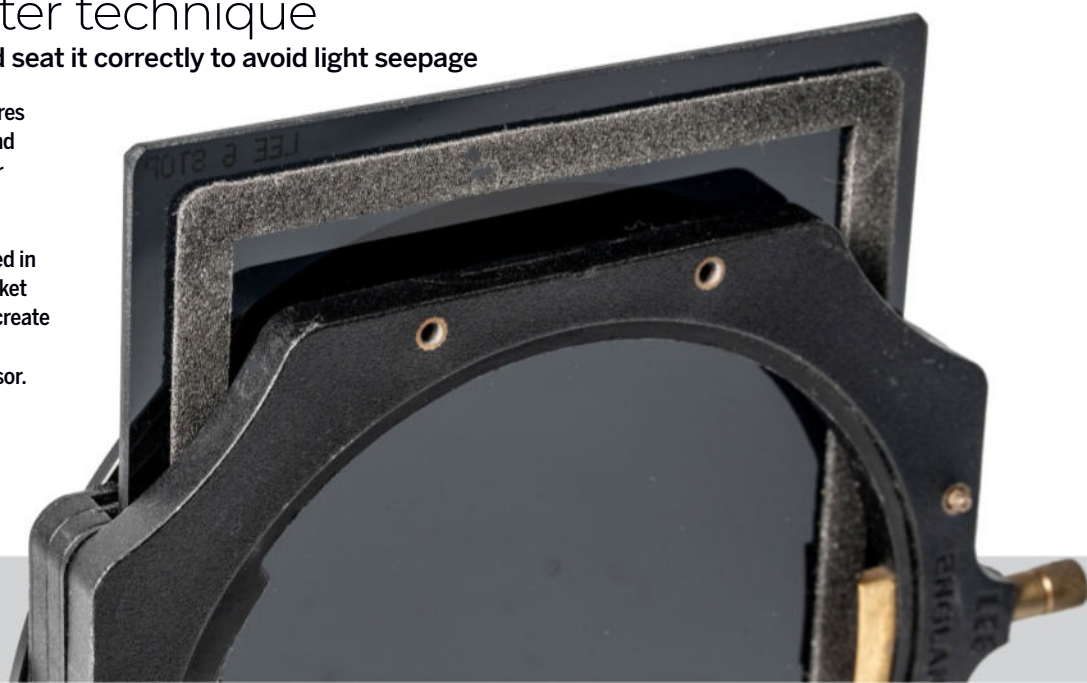
Extreme ND filter technique

Use the correct filter slot and seat it correctly to avoid light seepage

Shooting extremely long exposures in direct sunlight with 10-stop and stronger NDs can result in light leaks or severe flare, so such filters are usually fitted or supplied with foam gaskets.

Always make sure the ND filter is used in the slot closest to the lens, and the gasket will press snugly against the holder to create a light-tight seal to stop any light from bouncing around and reaching the sensor.

With repeated use, the foam gasket will eventually wear out. While generic replacement gaskets are available to buy, you could make your own, using thin sticky-backed foam instead.



Vary the blur
Experiment with different exposure times.

Stable mate
A solid tripod is essential for long-exposure images.



Will Cheung

Filter tech The case for variable ND filters

One filter to replace several sounds like a great idea, but it's not quite that simple

On the face of it, a variable ND (VND) sounds like a good proposition. They are essential for capturing video, where you have to use a relatively slow shutter speed (double that of the frame rate). Here, a VND filter is ideal for precise exposure control because it allows the use of wide f/stops for shallow depth of field.

For stills photography, a VND is a cost-effective and convenient method of applying a range of ND values. However, the extra glass needed in such filters can affect image quality, and there's the risk of an X-pattern around the filter's maximum density, which results in uneven skies.

Another challenge is knowing the precise ND value to use when calculating exposure. VND filters usually have ND values etched on the rim, but accuracy can be an issue. Generally, fixed-value NDs are the better option for long-exposure stills.



Shoot photos like a pro

Follow our simple advice and astonishing photos are yours for the taking

Prepare to shoot a long exposure, and your mind turns to low ISOs and small f/stops to enable slow shutter speeds. From there, you can achieve longer exposures by adding an ND filter. However, there are downsides to using f/22 and f/32. Firstly, diffraction occurs at small f/stops and that impacts the sharpness.

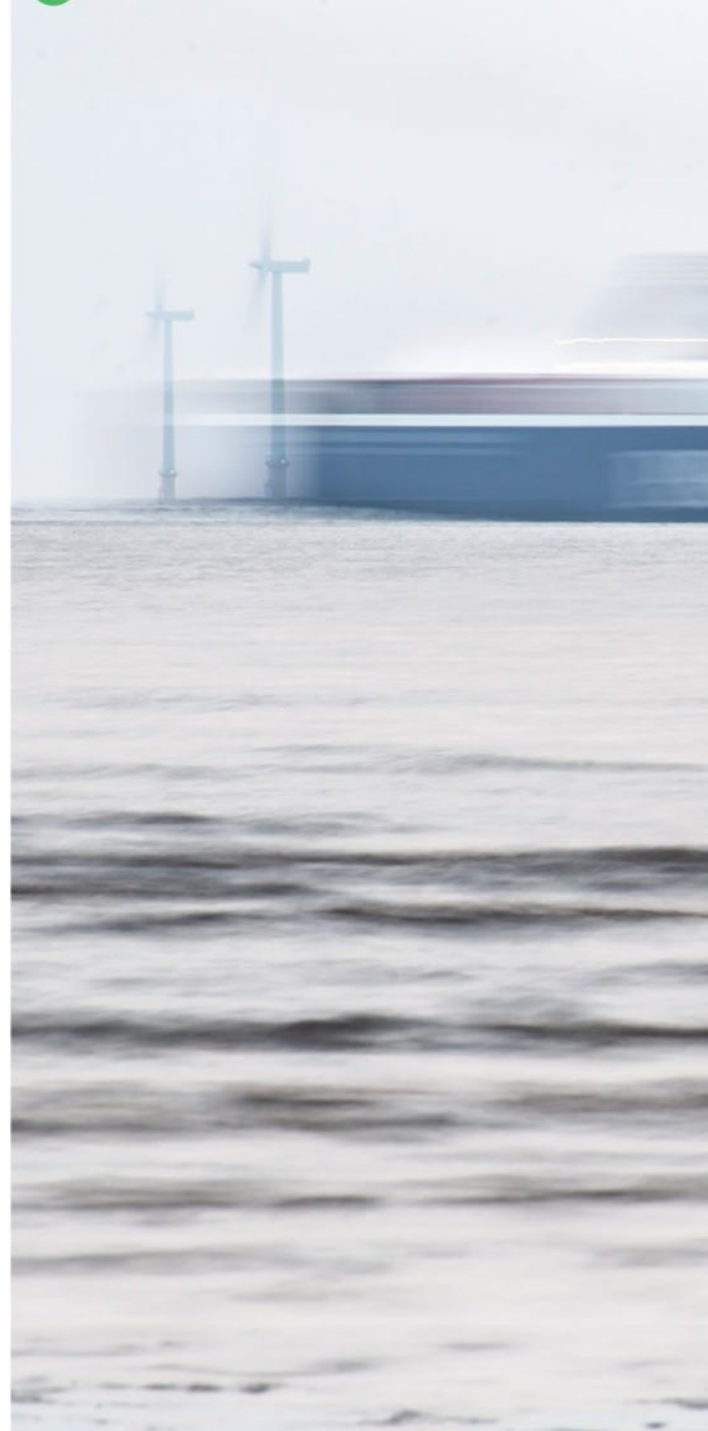
Secondly, sensor dust spots will be more evident, which means time spent cloning, although the latest software does a great job. A clean sensor is the solution, and while kit is available to do it yourself, most photo dealers offer a cleaning service. Or avoid small apertures altogether and shoot at f/5.6 and f/8 using a 15- or 16-stop ND.

All shipshape

It was such a dull, flat day at Another Place on Crosby Beach near Liverpool that no filters were needed, just a low ISO and a small f/stop. With not much colour and little contrast, I was struggling for decent pictures. Luckily, a passing ferry (I think!) made all the difference, adding some background interest and colour to the scene. I used a slow exposure to blur the ship, but it remains recognisable.

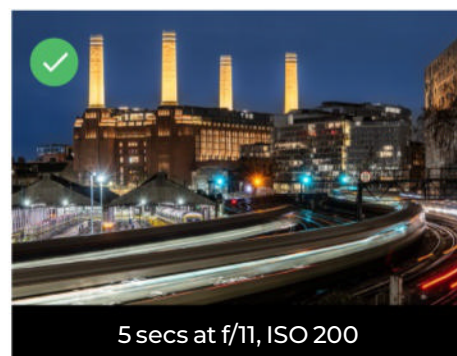
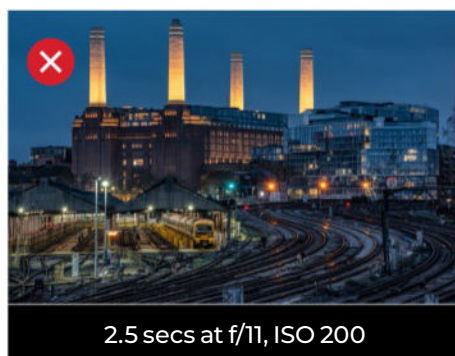


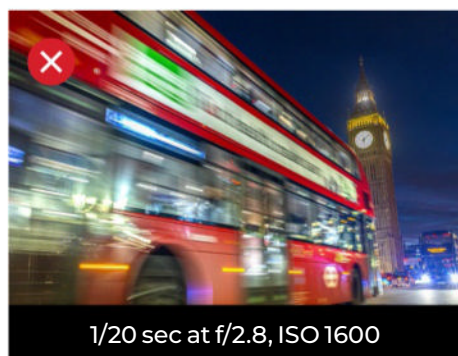
3 secs at f/19, ISO 50



Busy Battersea

Long shutter speeds are essential when natural daylight fades, and you won't need any filters for lengthy exposures. Anything that moves during a long exposure will come out blurred, which can add to the overall effect. For these shots of Battersea Power Station, it was dark enough to shoot at longer shutter speeds, but I kept exposures to a few seconds, opening the shutter as trains entered the scene.





1/20 sec at f/2.8, ISO 1600



0.3 sec at f/2.8, ISO 400

Will Cheung

Catch the bus right

Getting the right amount of blur takes practice and experience, so don't expect to get it right the first time. In this example, I knew that using a slow shutter speed would blur the moving bus, but the first attempt at 1/20 sec was still too sharp for my taste. So, I lowered the ISO to allow a shutter speed of 0.3 sec, which was more successful. The camera was held still as the buses passed.



Impressions of Venice

Venturing into the realm of slow shutter speeds is fun. There is no right or wrong way here, so feel free to try different speeds and directions of movement – up, down, sideways – until you get a result you like. This Venetian Lagoon view is photographed thousands of times every day, so the challenge was to get something more personal. In this example, I panned the camera upwards during the exposure.



The shape of water

Using slow shutter speeds for waterfalls gives a very different interpretation compared with fast shutter speeds. Both approaches work in different ways, so it really depends on your personal taste. When faced with photographing a waterfall, it's worth trying shots at a range of shutter speeds. You may have to juggle with the ISO and aperture settings to enable different speeds, and if you need very slow speeds, an ND filter and tripod will be required.

Camera skills Exploring shutter speeds

How to set up the camera for super-long exposures

Cameras have timed shutter speeds down to 30 secs and more. For longer exposures, there's B (bulb) and the less common T (time), which are usually only available with the camera's mechanical shutter. Traditionally, with B, the shutter was open while the shutter button was held down; with T, one push opened the shutter and the next closed it. Timing was done manually.

In modern cameras, with B or T, a specific time can be dialled in so there's no need for a stopwatch. With the self-timer, hands-free long exposure photography is easy, although you'll have to guess exposures. Take a meter reading in Manual or Auto and extrapolate a time as a starting point.

Finally, it's worth mentioning that OM System cameras have unique long exposure modes, Live Bulb/Time and Live Composite, where you can see a long exposure build up in real-time.





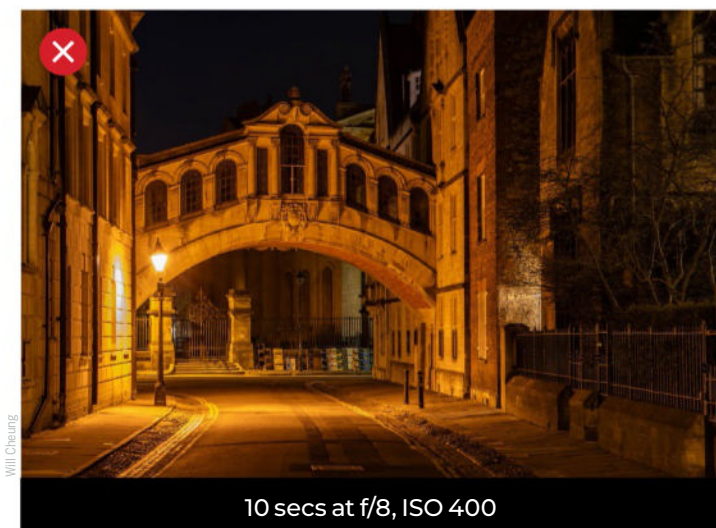
1/60 sec at f/22, ISO 100



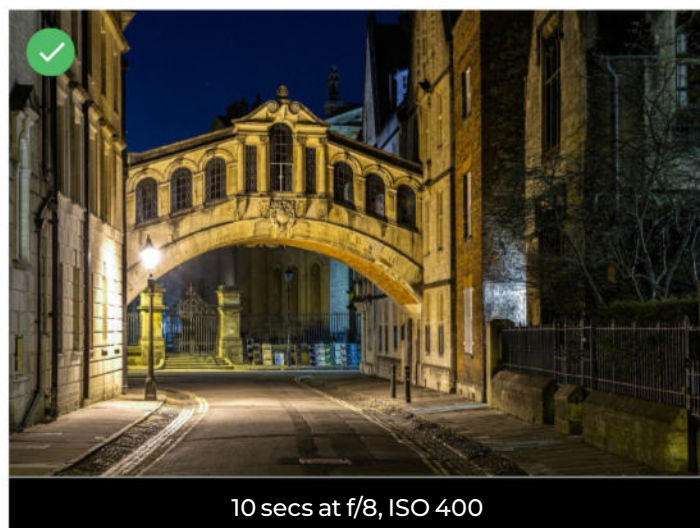
210 secs at f/22, ISO 100

The sky's on the move

A day of fluffy clouds is a great time to try long exposures, although it's true that if the sun is shining, there is the risk of the clouds coming out too contrasty or even blown out. In the case of these shots of the Westbury White Horse, I timed the shots when the sun was behind the clouds, so I had the benefit of an attractive sky but without risking high contrast. The mono conversion finished off the photo perfectly.



10 secs at f/8, ISO 400



10 secs at f/8, ISO 400

Correcting colour easily

Use long exposures for buildings at night, and you're going to have to deal with artificial lighting. The streetlights around the Bridge of Sighs in Oxford made the scene particularly orange, with the camera set to Auto White Balance. I could have tried a manual Kelvin setting, but I was shooting in raw format, so I knew that I had some degree of latitude to correct the image in editing. In Adobe Lightroom Classic, the white-balance slider was moved to 2000K for an acceptable result.

Pro tip Tripod hints and tips

If you're gearing up for a long exposure, don't overlook tripod setup

Whenever the tripod is set up, you'll consider the terrain, extension and the order in which the legs are deployed – the thinnest sections should be extended last. But if you're setting up for a long exposure, be extra vigilant. Shoot from a sheltered spot if it's windy; on a beach, push the legs firmly into the sand and allow plenty of space for the incoming tide; on uneven terrain, splay the legs for stability; and give all the locks an extra firm twist to ensure nothing moves.



QUICK TIP

Use a small piece of Velcro to attach the remote release to the tripod leg.





Gary Bhaztara
Photographer

Title: 'Kelumbayan'

Location: Sumatra Island, Indonesia

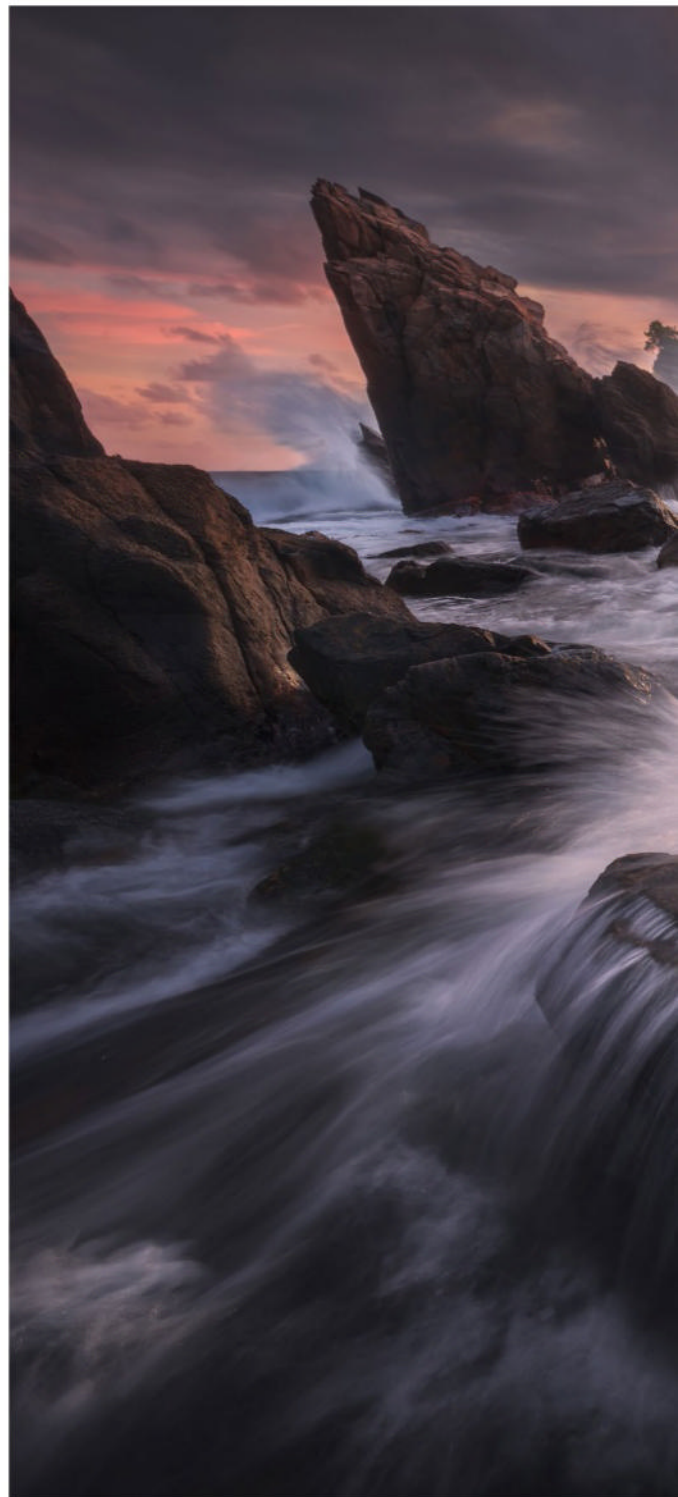
Camera: Sony A7R III and Sony FE 12-24mm F2.8 G Master lens with a Haida Rear ND filter 0.9 (3 stops)

Exposure: 1/4 sec at f/20, ISO 100

Instagram: @garybhaztara

Shot of the month

Gary Bhaztara explains how he achieved the superb capture that features on the cover of this magazine



G

ary is an Indonesian landscape photographer who began his professional photography career in 2017. Before that, he had a passion for capturing

the beauty of nature, as he explains.

"Around 20 years ago, I developed a deep interest in cinematography and visual storytelling, inspired particularly by the 'Best Picture' awards bestowed on feature films. This early fascination with cinematic imagery eventually shaped the way I see and photograph landscapes today.

"Since becoming a professional photographer, I have continued to explore,

study, and develop my approach to photography, always seeking to capture the beauty, atmosphere and emotions found in the natural world.

"Over the years, my photographs have received dozens of international awards in prestigious photography competitions, and I have also had the opportunity to be a judge for landscape photography competitions.

"I collaborate with photography brands such as Lowepro Indonesia as a brand ambassador, Artcise Tripod, Haida Filters and others. In collaboration with Greatshotz Photography (@greatshotz) and Bursa Kamera Profesional (@bursakameraprof), I also lead photography tours and workshops

in Indonesia. Through this, I have the privilege of sharing Indonesia's incredible landscapes with photographers around the world.

"Indonesia is home to an extraordinary diversity of landscapes, from volcanic mountains and dramatic coastlines to remote islands. If you are looking to explore, I'd be delighted to share the journey with you.

"This image was taken on Sumatra Island, at the Gigi Hiu [Shark Teeth] beach, the southernmost one on the island. I was drawn to the scene because of the dramatic rock formations with bleeding light. The movement of the waves made the landscape feel alive, while the rocks created a strong and timeless feeling.

More than 40 long-exposure captures were blended to tell the complete story of Gary's visit to Shark Teeth Beach.



Gary Bhaztara

"The light changed quickly, so I had only a short window to capture the moment. I wanted the photograph to show not only the beauty of the place, but also the atmosphere and emotion I felt while standing there.

"I waited for almost two hours without moving my tripod or camera, watching carefully for the right combination of light, waves and atmosphere. I wanted to capture the best moments as the sunlight moved across the rocks, water and clouds. I took around 40 frames while waiting for everything to come together.

"The timing was tricky because the tide was still high enough to create the waterfall effect over the foreground rocks. I knew that

within 30-40 minutes, the tide would fall and the water would no longer reach the rocks. So I had to capture the foreground at the right moment, before the scene changed.

"This image was created using a time-blending technique, combining more than 40 frames that were captured while I waited for each moment to occur naturally: the changing light, the movement of the waves and the shifting atmosphere. The images were edited in Adobe Photoshop and Camera Raw, then blended together to tell the complete story of that moment." ●

To see more of Gary's work and browse his selection of prints to order, visit his website: www.garybhaztara.com



Gary gets immersed in the moment to capture his multi-award-winning landscape and seascape photography.

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city streets



6 Lightweight
GAMING LAPTOPS

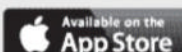
BOSE'S 5-STAR
TRAVEL CANS



Search for 'T3' in your device's App Store

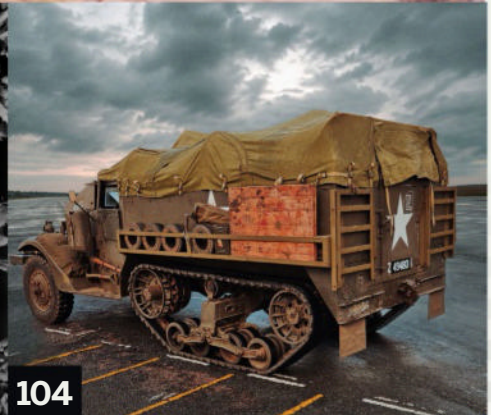
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Digital Darkroom

Transform your photos with our easy, effective guides



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Photoshop

Create water reflections on your shots with these Displacement Maps.

PAGE 98

Lightroom

Edit your photos taken at distance after sunset for maximum impact.

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Photoshop

Autumnal Actions with four simple ways to add a dramatic effect.

PAGE 102

Affinity

Turn your daylight shots into spooky flyers for your Halloween party.

PAGE 104

Affinity

Cut out your subjects to match the perspective of a scene the easy way.

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



After

A moment of reflection

Use your free Displacement Maps from this month's downloads to create realistic water reflections in Photoshop, says **Dan Mold**

W

hat's better than one focal point – two, of course! A stunning reflection of a body of water is a great way to give your pictures more interest and a shimmering foreground. However, finding a suitable one isn't always possible at your desired location.

Having been born not long after the original Photoshop 1.0 was launched, I consider myself both a digital artist and a photographer. The great thing about Photoshop is that we're not bound to the real world, so we can make our dreams come to life with digital editing trickery.

Of course, making a digital 'collage' in this way is just a bit of fun, and I'm in no way suggesting you try to pass the results off as 'real' images. However, they're fun to make, and it's a great way to learn new editing tools, tricks and tips.

In this tutorial, I'll show you how to create a reflection on an image of the Gibbs Building at King's College, Cambridge. Download the Start.jpg image (or use one of your own) and the free displacement maps, read this step-by-step guide and watch the accompanying video to see how it's done in real time.

Expand your canvas

Before you start, you may find that you need to extend your canvas in Photoshop to create enough space for the water reflections to be added later on. This is easily done: simply duplicate your background layer by hitting Ctrl/Cmd+J, then grab the Crop Tool from the Toolbox. You'll now see the crop bounding box appear around your image – all you need to do is grab the central bottom point of the bounding box and pull it downwards until you've created enough space for the reflections, then hit OK to complete the canvas extension.

Download your files

www.digitalcameraworld.com/dc313
Download your files and video tutorial from the folder titled 'Photoshop_Water Reflections'.



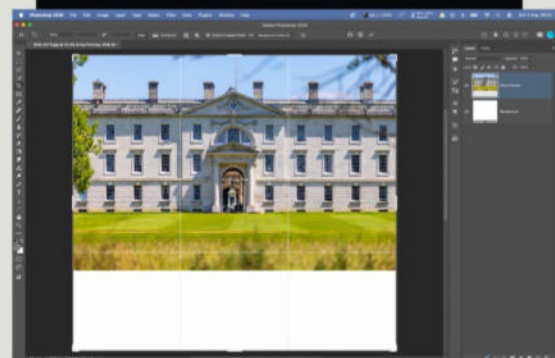
4 Photoshop displacement maps

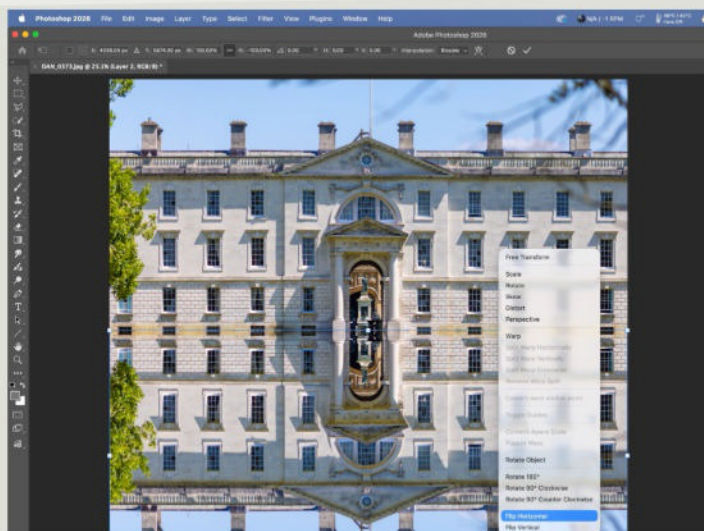


8-minute video tutorial



Project files and instructions

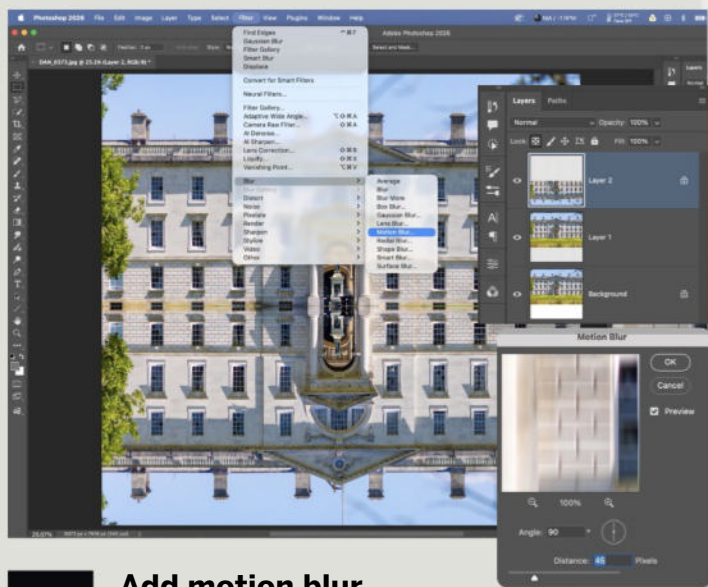
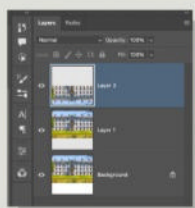




1

Copy and flip your image

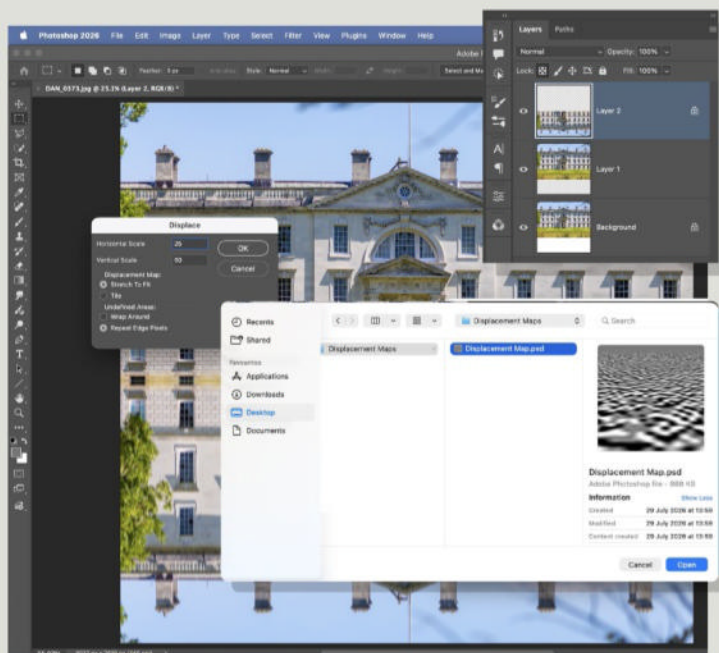
Open your image in Photoshop and grab the Polygonal Lasso tool from the Toolbox. Then draw around the top half of your image as well as the horizon line where you want the water level to start. When you've finished your selection and the marching ants appear, hit Ctrl/Cmd+J to duplicate and paste it onto a new layer, then hit Ctrl/Cmd+T to put it into Free Transform mode – right-click on it and choose Flip Vertical, then drag it down to line it up with where you'd like the water level to be.



2

Add motion blur

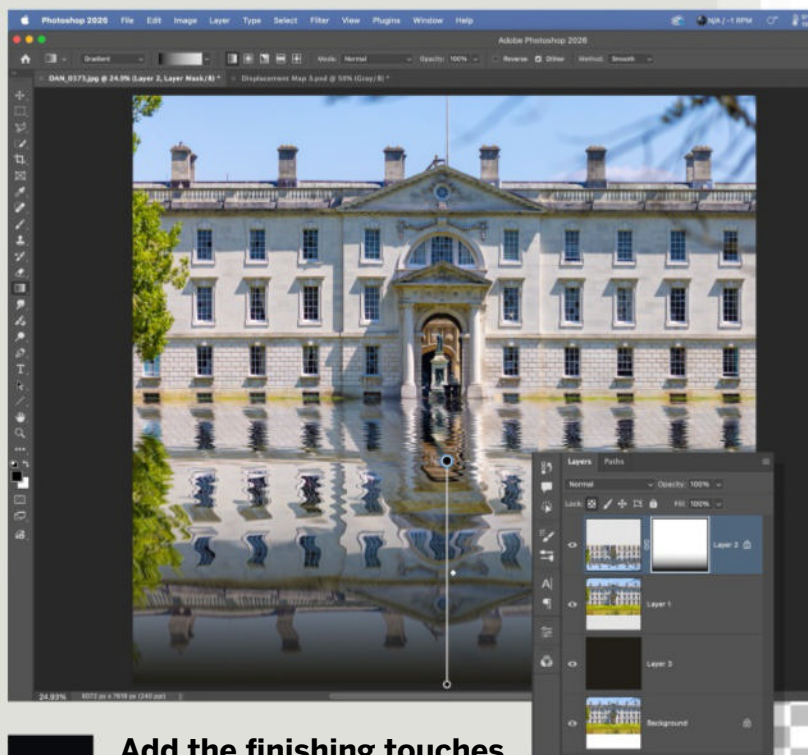
Still working on the reflection layer, head to the Layers panel (Window > Layers) and click the Lock Transparent Pixels icon, then head to Filter > Blur > Motion Blur. In the Motion Blur panel that appears, set the Angle to 90° and the Distance to 45px. Feel free to tweak these settings, because they may require a stronger or weaker effect, depending on your specific image – for example, a very high-resolution image will require a stronger effect with a higher distance setting. Hit OK when you're done. Finally, untick the Lock Transparent Pixels icon to unlock them.



3

Use displacement maps

Now it's time to displace the pixels in the mirror image we've created by using one of the free displacement maps provided with this month's software extras. Head to Filter > Distort > Displace, and in the Displace menu, keep Displacement Map set to Stretch to Fit and Undefined Areas set to Repeat Edge Pixels. Now set the Horizontal Scale to 25 and Vertical Scale to 50 – when prompted, open the Displacement Map.psd file from your download folder. If the result is too strong or not strong enough, hit Ctrl/Cmd+Z to undo and try again, this time entering different Horizontal and Vertical Scale values to see if you get a better result, or use a different Displacement Map file.



4

Add the finishing touches

The last step is to darken the water a little to make it look more realistic. Add a new blank layer and drag it to the bottom of your layers stack, then with the Paint Bucket Tool active, hold the ALT key and click to sample a naturally dark part of your photo. Then click to fill the layer with this colour. On your reflection layer, add a layer mask and then grab the Gradient Tool. Make sure the Black to Transparent preset is chosen in the Tool Options, then drag up from the bottom of the image to mask it off, revealing the dark layer beneath and making the image look more realistic.



Enhance distant scenes

Sean McCormack explains how to use Lightroom to bring a photo to life when the sun has gone down

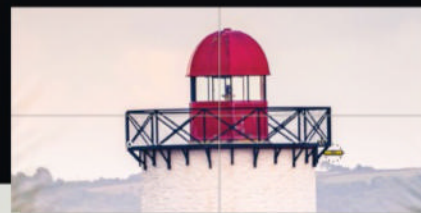
When you think of landscape photos, what often comes to mind are images shot on a wide lens, between 16mm and 24mm on a full-frame camera, taking in entire vistas. But that's only part of landscape photography. Sometimes, a scene might be beautiful to look at, but the sky doesn't have enough interest, or the foreground is continuous with no breaks or leading lines. That's when you need to break out the longer lens.

I've learned to travel with a 70-300mm lens, because sometimes it's perfect for picking out interesting parts of the wider landscape. On this trip to Burry Port in Wales, I had gone one step further and brought my 150-600mm lens because there were also opportunities for birds and offshore interest. Now, the 70-300mm would have worked here as I was using a focal length of 238mm, but I did shoot longer as well.

This image was taken on a tripod with settings of 1/30 sec at f/9 and ISO 200. But even if I'd used f/16, I wouldn't have had the foreground and background in focus. The only solution here would be to focus stack for front-to-back focus. However, I actually liked how the grass blurred to frame the lighthouse. The only thing left to do was to increase the impact in Lightroom...

Straighten and clean-up

Remove the houses behind the lighthouse by clicking on the Eraser icon. Choose the second option, Heal, and click, or click and drag on the houses to remove them. Move the sources if you need. To straighten, press R for Crop. Hold Command (Mac) or Control (PC) and click on one side of the bottom of the balcony, then drag and click the other side.



Download your files

www.digitalcameraworld.com/dc313
Download your files and video tutorial from the folder titled 'Lightroom_Distant Scenes'.



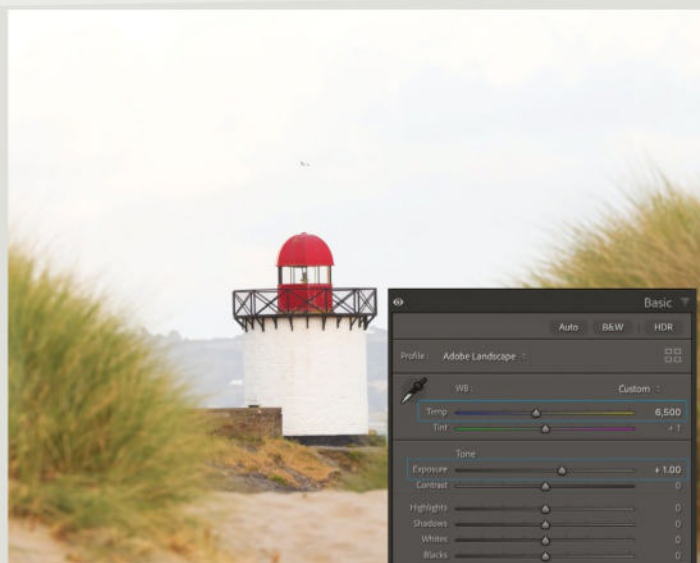
7
Lightroom
presets



15-minute
video
tutorial



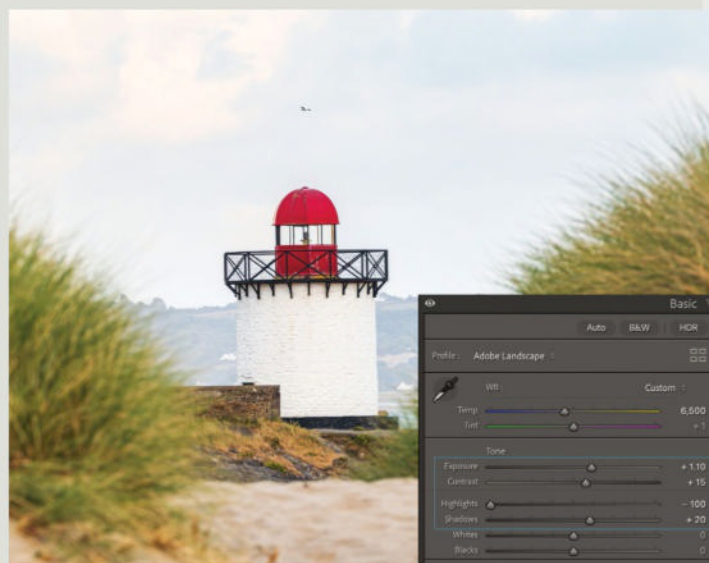
Project
files and
instructions



1

Bring back light

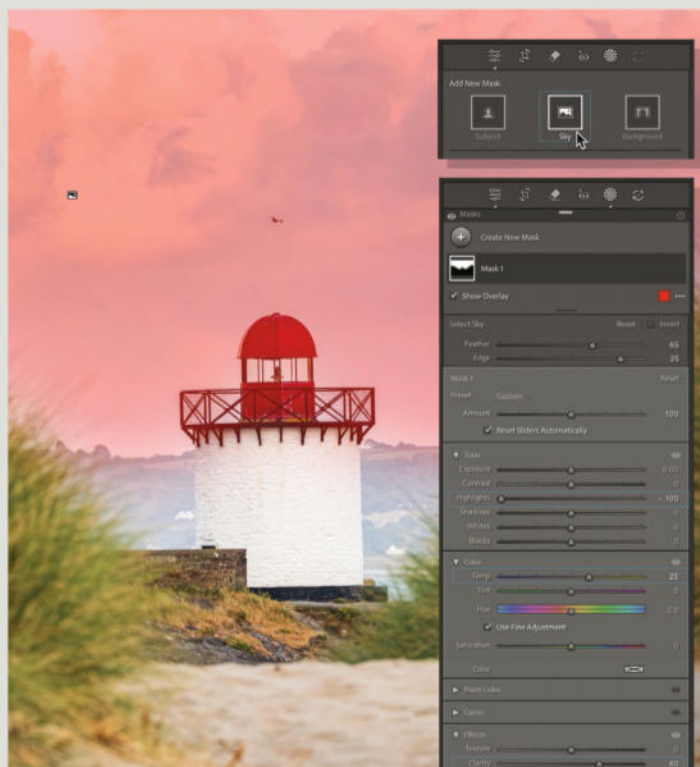
While not quite sunset, the sun had dropped behind the dunes, so the light was gone on the land, but not in the sky. First, set your profile to a better one. I chose Adobe Landscape, but Velvia would also work. I set White Balance Temperature to 6500K, but I wanted a whiter lighthouse, so I increased exposure by +1 stop to make it closer to white.



2

Contrast control

Getting the lighthouse right has lightened other parts and reduced contrast. For the sky, bring Highlights back to -100 and set Contrast to 15. In Presence, set Texture to 40 for detail and Clarity to 35 for more punch, while Dehaze adds both contrast and saturation. This darkens the photo, so increase Exposure to 1.10 and bring Shadows up to +20.



3

Boost the sky

The sky is still too bright, so go to the Masking icon in the toolbar and choose Select Sky. Set Clarity to 40 for more range in the clouds. Dehaze of 25 brings more contrast. Recover some detail by setting Highlights to -100. Boost the temperature to 25 for a warm sky, and refine the mask Feather (edge softness) and Edge by trying 65 and 35.



4

Retro colours

Finish off by adding creative colour using the Color Grading panel. Let's start by cooling the shadows, setting Shadows to Hue 245 and Saturation to 58. Then set Luminance to 17, which gives everything a lift. Warm the Highlights with a Hue of 29 and a subtle Saturation of 20. Because we aren't using Midtones, try setting Blending to 80 so that more areas are affected.



Before



Give autumn shots a blast of colour

James Abbott uses these four simple Photoshop techniques to give his golden season shots a colourful boost

Autumn is one of the most popular seasons in the photographer's calendar, thanks to the range of explosive bright colours we experience in the landscape.

Whether you're shooting macro or wider scenic, you can't get away from the amazing yellows, oranges and reds in the landscape. Once you've got your shots in the bag, ideally before the wind strips the trees bare of all their leaves, it's time to edit all of your autumnal gems.

Processing autumn images is, for the most part, the same as any other type of outdoor photography. But there are several techniques and approaches that are particularly well suited to scenes made up of yellows, oranges and reds, and we're going to explore four of them now. Some of these effects can be stacked to achieve more creative results, particularly when one effect focuses on pixels while another focuses on colours, although some colour effects can also be stacked.

Download your files

www.digitalcameraworld.com/dc313
Download your files and video tutorial from the folder titled 'Photoshop_Autumn Blast'.



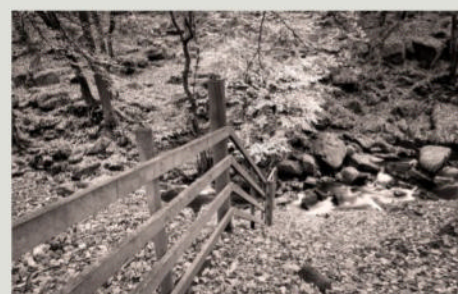
Four
Actions for
Photoshop



4-minute
video
tutorial



Project
files and
instructions

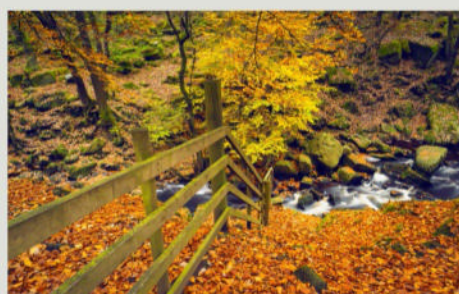
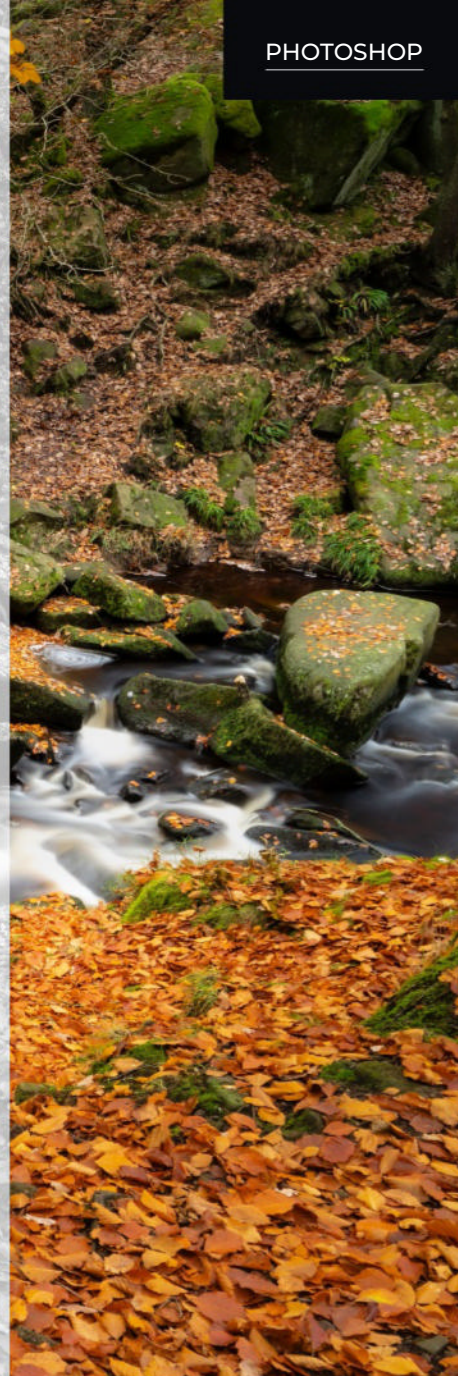
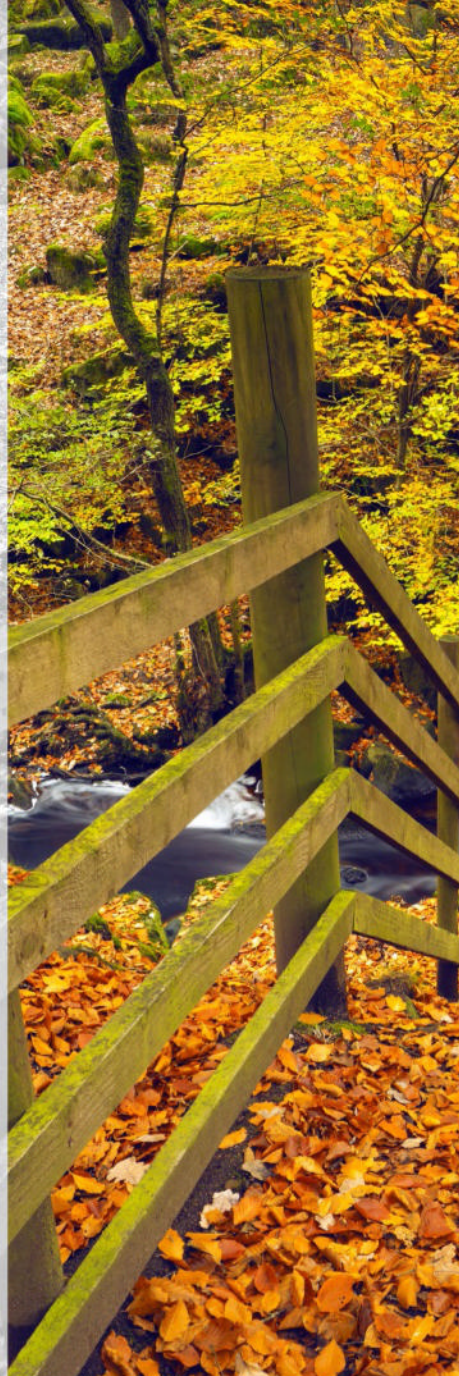


1

Autumn black and white

Black and white isn't an obvious autumn technique, but a custom conversion works well. Click on

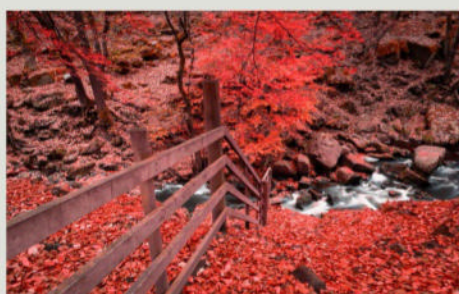
the Create new fill or adjustment layer icon at the bottom of the layers panel and select Black & White. When the dialog opens, set Reds to 60 and Yellows to 100 before closing it. Now create a Levels Adjustment Layer, set the black point to 15, the white point to 250 and close the dialog. Finally – and this is optional – create a Photo Filter and set Filter to Sepia with Density at 30 per cent.



2

Light colour grading

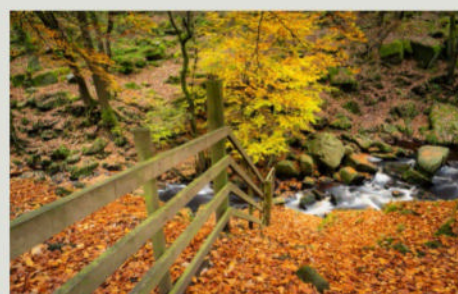
Click on the Create new fill or adjustment layer icon at the bottom of the layers panel and choose Selective Color. Click on the Colors dropdown menu, select yellows, set magenta to +10 per cent and Yellows to +70 per cent. Select Whites and set Yellows to +15 per cent, then select Blacks and set Yellows to -20 per cent. This boosts autumnal colour, adds blue to the shadows and yellow to highlights for a light colour grading effect, as well as boosting yellows and oranges in the scene.



3

Inject surreal pink

Click on the Create new fill or adjustment layer icon at the bottom of the layers panel and select Hue/Saturation. When the dialog opens, click on the yellow channel and drag the Hue slider left to -70 to change the yellows in the scene to pink. The effect will be too strong at this point, so close the dialog box and change the Opacity of the Layer to 70 per cent. The effect remains strong, but it will be less oversaturated. Reducing Opacity further ultimately stops the effect from working.



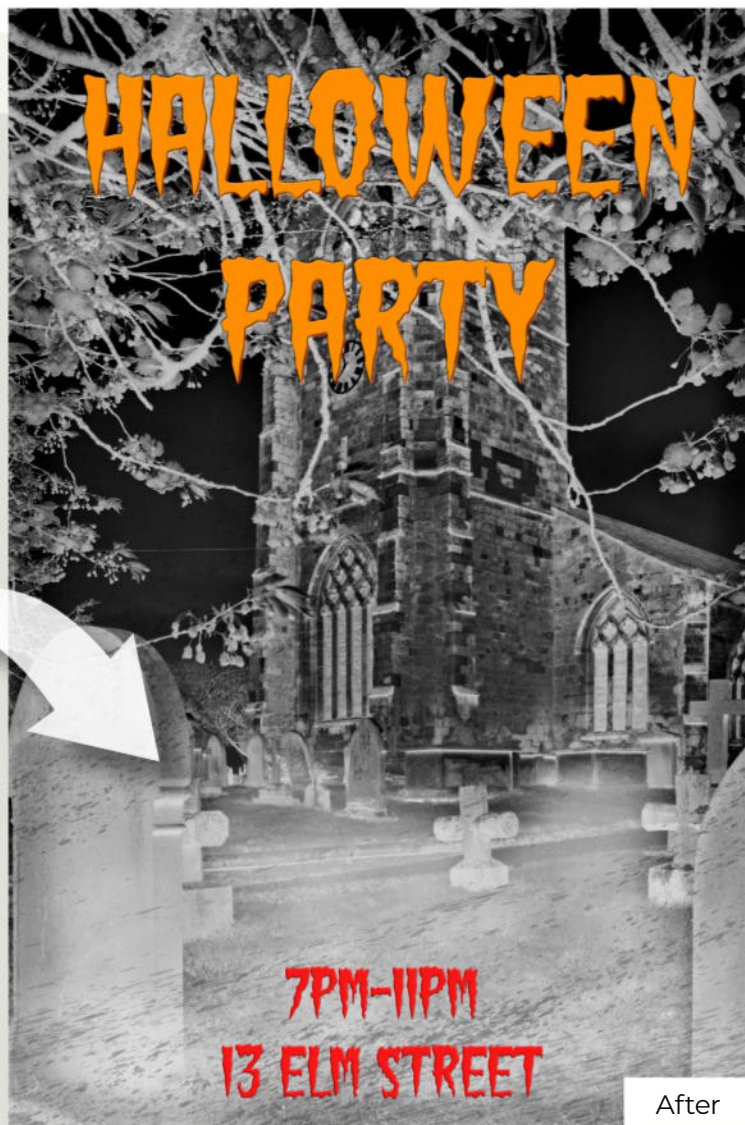
4

Easy Orton effect

With the Background Layer active, press Ctrl/Cmd+J to make a copy to work on. Now go to Filter > Convert to Smart Filters to make Filters editable, then go to Filter > Camera Raw Filter. When the dialog opens, scroll down to Effect and expand it if it's minimised. Now drag the Texture and Clarity sliders to -30, and you'll get that iconic blend of surface blur and sharpness that works well for landscapes in general, but also for autumnal scenes like this one, of course, and even detail shots.



Before



After

Wendy Evans

How to create a spooky image

Turn a daytime photo into night in Affinity, with **Wendy Evans**

Here's the basis of a fun project this month. You can either convert it into a spooky image or take it further and

make your own Halloween poster. The starting point is a gloomy shot of a graveyard with a church in the background. It's best to avoid using one with sunshine because although it's quite easy to make the sky black, there will be too many bright areas. The idea here is to invert the image, then convert it to black and white. Add some ghostly fog and finish off with some text and graphics.

The font used is Green Fuz, which is free to use from www.1001fonts.com. If you are going for a poster, then consider adding some clip art with pumpkins and a moon as well.

How to make a poster

So that's our spooky image done. If you want to make it into a poster, download the Green Fuz font as mentioned, and use the text tool to add a title and some details. Once the text layer is created, click on the FX symbol to add a layer effect, which you can use to give the text shadows or a 3D effect.

Download your files

www.digitalcameraworld.com/dc313
Download your project files and borders from the folder titled 'Affinity_Halloween Poster'.



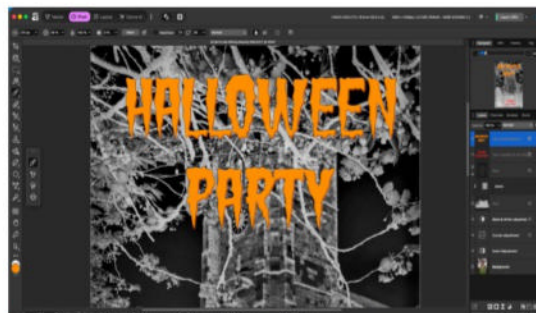
10 grungy
photo
borders



5-minute
video
tutorial



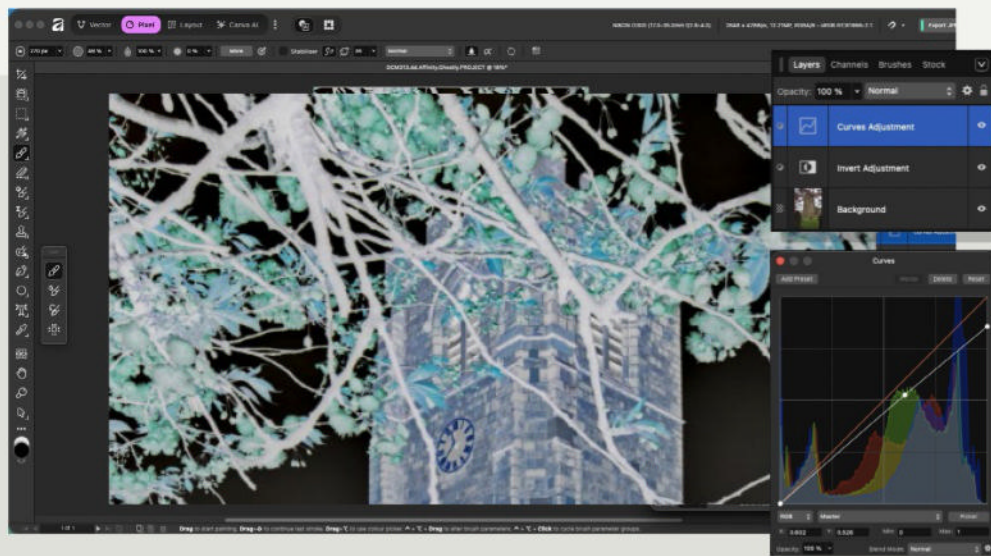
Project
files to
follow along



1

Invert for effect

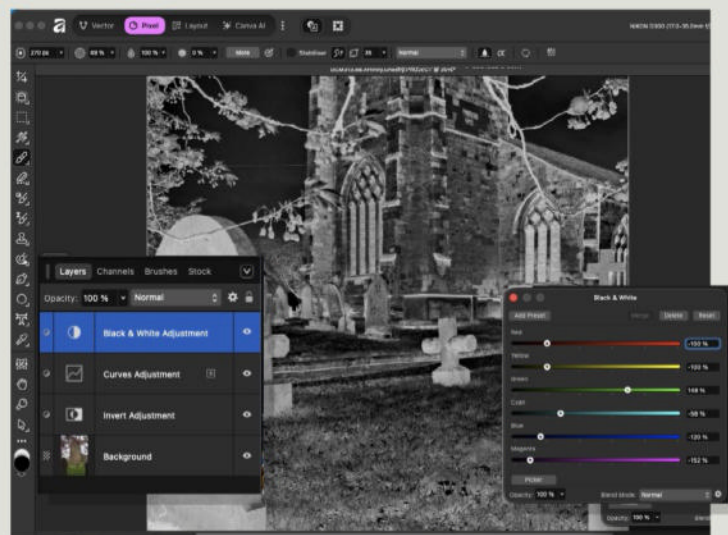
The first step is to load the image and add an Invert adjustment layer. The gravestones and trees are a little too bright, so add a Curves adjustment layer and move the control point on the top right, downwards to dull those highlights.



2

Let's go black and white

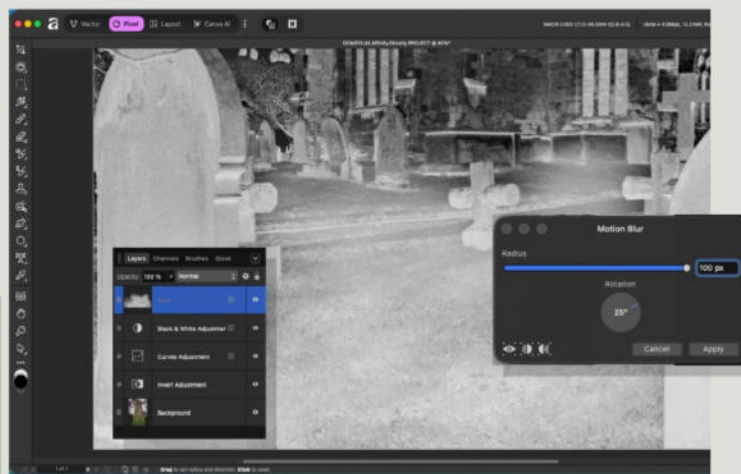
Now add a Black & White adjustment layer. Set Red and Yellow to -100 per cent, Green to +148 per cent, Cyan to -58 per cent, Blue to -120 per cent and Magenta to -158 per cent. The settings vary for your image, but the aim is to turn the sky black and make the rest look otherworldly.



3

Add some mist

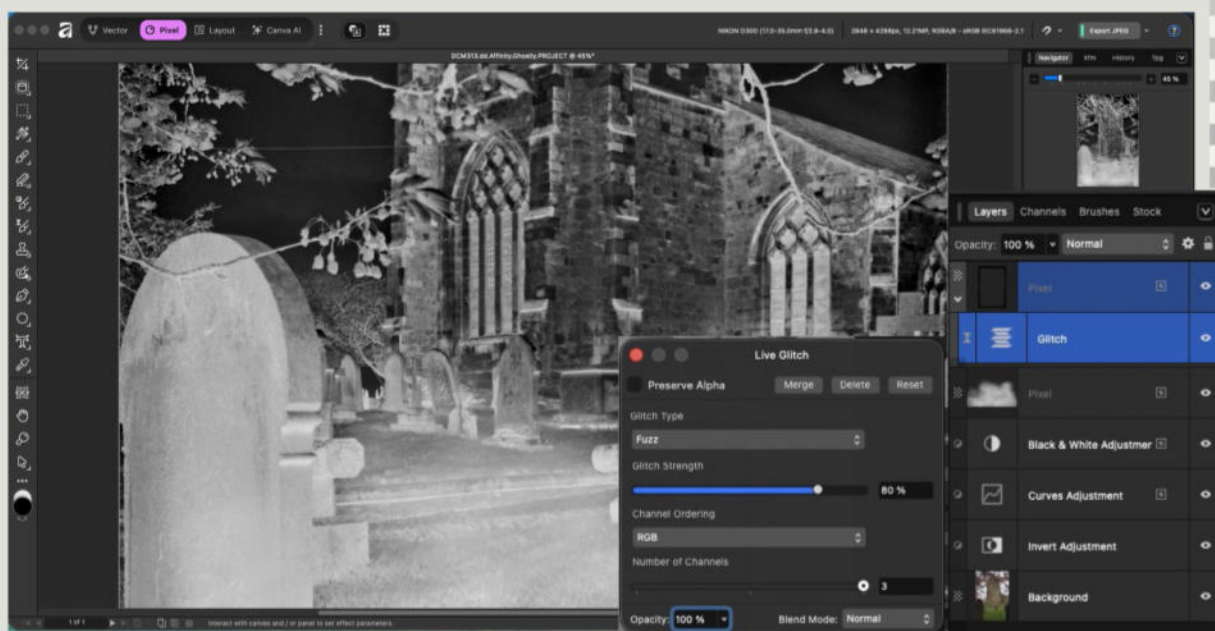
In the Layers Palette, click on the Add Pixel Layer icon. Then select the Paintbrush and set the Hardness to 0 per cent and the Opacity to 15 per cent with the colour as white. Paint over the ground area, building up the coverage of the mist and making it irregular. Next, go to Pixel > Filters > Blur > Motion Blur. Set the Rotation to 25 degrees and the Radius to 100px.



4

Fuzzy edges

Add another Pixel layer and switch the colour to Black. Reduce the Opacity to about 35-45 per cent and paint around the edges of the image. Select a Live Adjustment Layer with our friend Glitch from last month. Set the Type to Fuzz, Strength to 80 per cent and the blend mode for the layer to Soft Light.





Before



After

Army manoeuvres

Wendy Evans explains how to use the Pen tool to make selections in Affinity

It's something we've all encountered – a great-looking vehicle or person, but the background is either uninteresting or, worse, it's a distraction. The solution is to cut it out or cut the background out, and drop in something more aesthetically pleasing. But how do you do it? Standard straight-line selections are fine for rigid features, straight lines and corners, but not very good for curves. A better, but more difficult way of doing it is to use the Pen tool to create the path and then turn that into the selection. Learning to use the Pen tool is an exercise in itself, and has far more options than can be covered in a single tutorial. Not all of these options are entirely necessary either, and the basic functions of the Pen tool will suit almost everything you need to use it for.

Download your files

www.digitalcameraworld.com/dc313
Download your project files and LUTs from the folder titled 'Affinity_Background Removal'.



4 LUTs for military vehicles



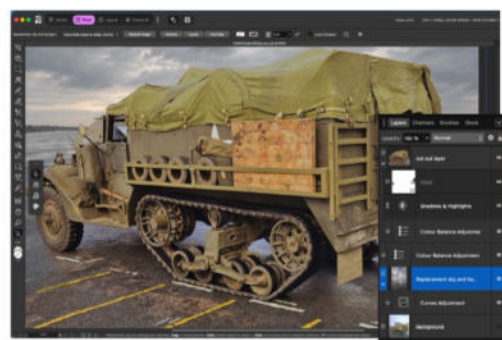
5-minute video tutorial



Project files to follow along

Matching the images

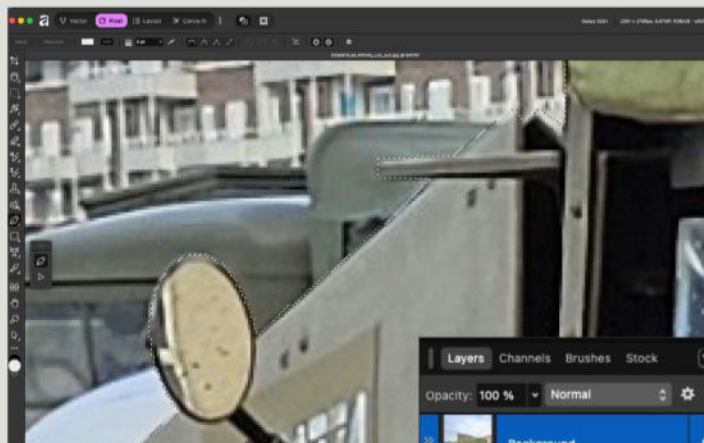
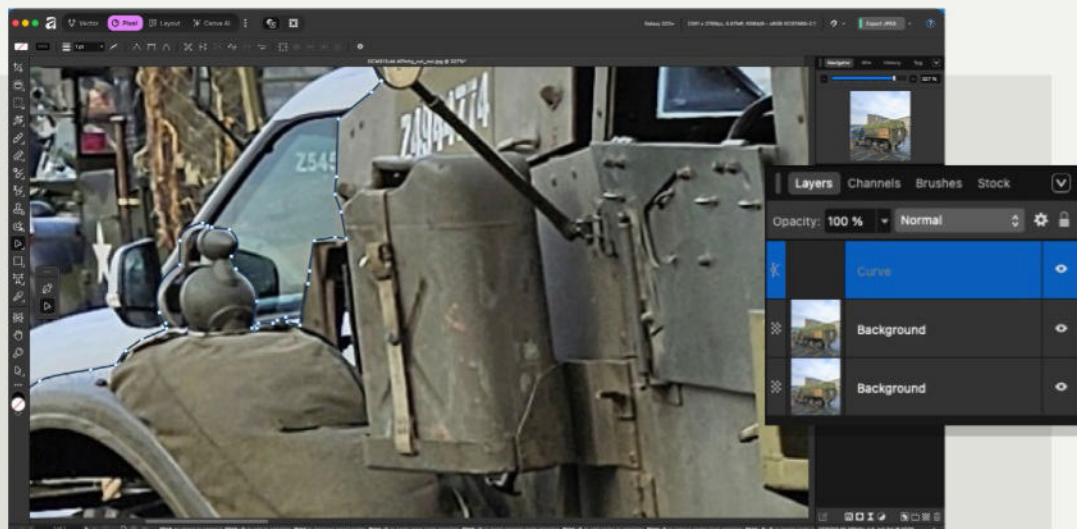
This is a process in itself. The foreground used a Shadows & Highlights Live adjustment layer to knock back the highlights and a Colour Balance adjustment layer to remove much of the blue cast. The sky layer had a Curves adjustment layer to brighten up the Tarmac to match the foreground. The project file has all these adjustment layers in it. A final touch is to merge all the layers and then add a small amount of grain over the top, or use something like DxO FilmPack to give it a more retro feel – which is what I then used.



1

Start the outline

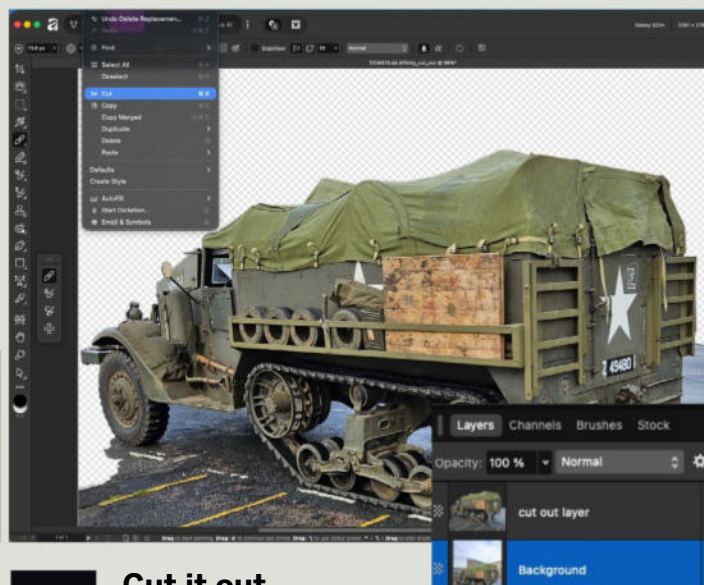
Select the Pen tool (P) and work out where you are going to make the path. Click and drag to start creating it. As you click to add more control nodes, handles will appear that let you bend the path into curves. If you find that the next part of the curve is going in the wrong direction, click on the mode again to remove the second part of the control arm.



2

Tidy it up

Once you've gone round the entire path, finish by clicking back on the start node. Now zoom in to see how accurate the path is. Select the Node tool (A) and use it to move nodes into more accurate positions, refine the curves or, if required, add new nodes. To do this, click on an empty part of the path. When finished, go back to the Pen tool so that Selection appears in the contextual bar at the top. Click on this to convert the path to a selection.



3

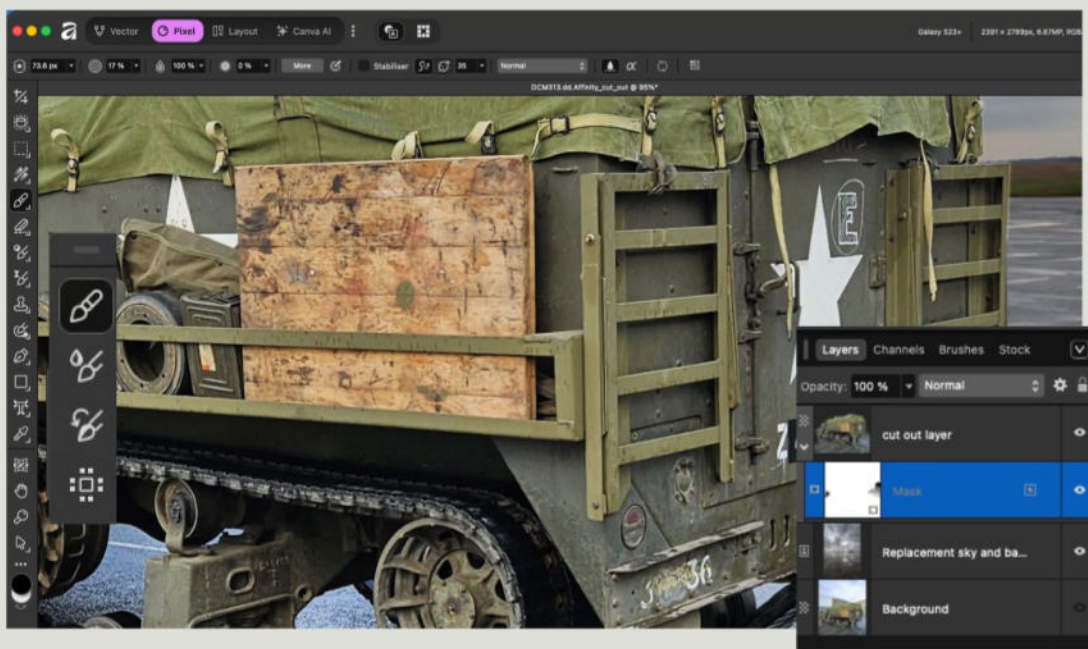
Cut it out

Go to Pixel > Pixel Selection > Feather and enter a value of 3px to feather the edge. There are several other options, depending on how accurately your selection is, including Grow/Shrink and Smooth. However, we're going to go to Pixel > Pixel Selection > Invert to select the background and then Edit > Cut to remove it.

4

Add replacement background

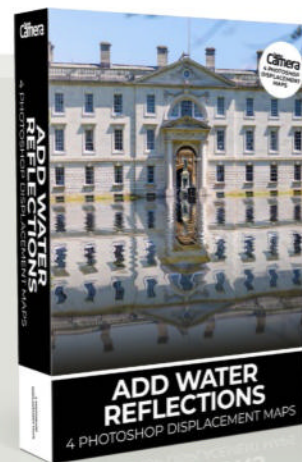
Now you can add a replacement background. Note that the 5.4mm focal length on the Galaxy S23 used for the image is the 35mm equivalent of 23mm, so any replacement images should be shot at that focal length. I've added a background created with ChatGPT, but the foreground was too blue, and where the images joined, the difference in brightness was apparent. So add a mask to the vehicle layer to blend them in – see the box (left) for more details.



THIS MONTH'S SOFTWARE EXTRAS

29 Actions, LUTs presets and more

All these extras can be used with the tutorials or on your own images



4 DISPLACEMENT MAPS

Software: Photoshop
(Version 25.5 or higher)

Adding water reflections to an image isn't the easiest thing to get right, which is why we have these four displacement maps for you. They can be used to give the reflected water layer a rippled surface, making the effect look more realistic.

This month, we are giving away four Displacement Maps and four Actions for Photoshop, seven presets for Lightroom, 10 grungy borders and four military-themed LUTs for Affinity. The Displacement Maps can be used to create water reflections, as though a biblical flood has inundated the city. The presets will enhance

skies and landscapes, while adding various colour grades. The grungy borders are for your spooky images. The Actions will run a range of effects to enhance your autumn photos, tone them and even turn them into black and white. Finally, for Affinity users, we have four lookup tables designed around typical military vehicle colours – these will also work with Photoshop.

How to use your software extras

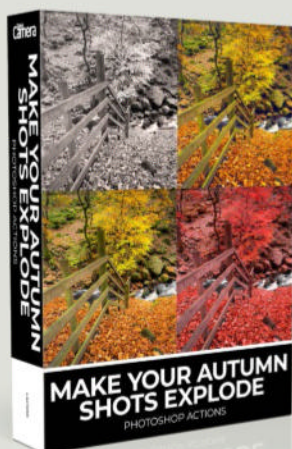
Once you have downloaded the 'dcm313-files.zip' file to your computer, extract it and put the folders where you can easily access them. These folders contain the software, project files and a PDF with installation instructions.



7 GRADING PRESETS

Software: Lightroom

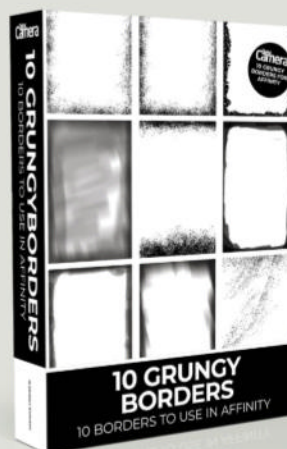
Make your post-sunset shots come alive with this set of presets for Lightroom. One contains all the adjustments in the tutorial; then there are four landscape-oriented ones, plus two that replicate either the tutorial effects on the sky or on the landscape. Install them to have a go.



4 PHOTOSHOP ACTIONS

Software: Photoshop
(Version 25.5 or higher)

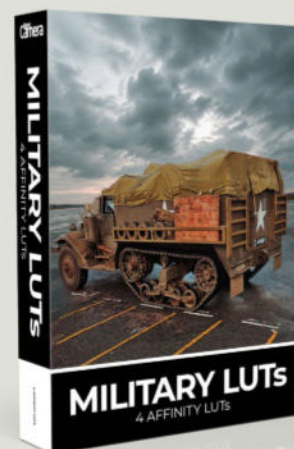
Autumn is here, so take a look at these four Actions that can enhance your photos. Two of them boost the colours to make the images look more vibrant, while a third gives the image a red toning effect. The last one is a mono conversion Action to turn the image into something dramatic.



10 GRUNGY BORDERS

Software: Affinity/ Photoshop

Here are 10 grungy borders to go with the tutorial on turning your daytime photos into something spooky at night. They are PNG files with transparency, so all you have to do is drop them over the top of your image. They will also work in any software that supports layers.



4 MILITARY- THEMED LUTs

Software: Affinity

The final touch of the tutorial was to give the entire image a colour grade. That's what we have here, with four LUTs that can be used as adjustment layers. They are specifically designed for images featuring military vehicles with camouflage-style paintwork. Try them out!

Download all five packs from: www.digitalcameraworld.com/dc313

KitZone

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



108 **Sony RX10 V** _ Update to bridge camera brings a raft of improvements



112 **Tamron 16-30mm F2.8 Di III VXD G2** _ New wide zoom for Nikon Z and Sony E



114 **ON1 Photo RAW 2026** _ Super-versatile all-in-one photo organiser and editor



116 **Help me buy a... lens filter** _ Best-in-class ND, ND grads and polarisers



Just when we thought the bridge camera scene had gone a bit quiet, Sony decided to update the RX 10. The fifth iteration keeps the same sensor and 24-600mm equivalent zoom lens but receives some timely updates in the image processing and autofocus departments, plus some improvements to the handling to bring it more in line with other Alpha cameras. The RX 10 V doesn't extend to the whopping 3000mm equivalent focal length offered by Nikon's Coolpix P1100 (issue 294), but for travellers

and explorers with limited luggage space, this new Sony could be just the ticket.

Also this month, we test a new wide-angle zoom from Tamron that's wider and longer than its impressive 17-28mm forebear. Can the brand repeat the trick with its new lens? Plus, we assess the extensive capabilities of ON1 Photo RAW 2026, an image editor that literally does it all. And to complement this month's filters masterclass cover feature, we've rounded up the best-performing – and best-value – options for neutral density and graduated neutral density filters, and circular polarisers. **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

Bridge camera Sony RX10 V



1 The RX10 V looks more modern and appealing than the RX10 IV, released in 2017.

2 The RX10 V keeps the same 20.1MP 1-inch Exmor RS sensor, but gets a new processor.

3 The 24-600mm f/2.4-4 zoom lens from the RX10 IV has been retained for the RX10 V.

Sony RX10 V

£2,200/\$2,300

Superzoom bridge camera gets a range of improvements

www.sony.co.uk

Specifications

Lens: Zeiss Vario 24-600mm equivalent f/2.4-4
Sensor: 1-inch stacked Exmor RS CMOS, 20.1MP
Image processor: BIONZ XR plus AI processing unit ISO range: 64-12,800
Stabilisation: Optical. In-body stabilisation: None
Max burst: 10fps mechanical shutter, 30fps electronic shutter
Viewfinder: 0.5-type EVF, 3.686m-dot, 60fps or 120fps refresh
LCD: 3.0-inch, 3:2, 1.62m-dot tilting display with vertical display support
Max image size: 5472 x 3648px
Video: 4K60p, 4K120p (cropped) oversampled from 5.2K, Full HD 240p, S-Log3, S-Cinetone and LUT support
Storage: 1x UHS-II SD card
Battery/shots: Sony NP-FZ100, approx 630 (LCD)
Connectivity: Wi-Fi, Bluetooth, USB-C, Micro-USB, Micro-HDMI, 3.5mm headphone and microphone jacks
Dimensions (W x H x D): 136.4 x 94.5 x 151.3mm
Weight: 1,111g (incl battery and SD card)

Sony's RX lineup is all about packing serious hardware into fixed-lens camera bodies. The RX1 line covers compact full-frame cameras, the RX100 series handles pocket-sized compacts, and the RX10 range is the all-purpose superzoom option. The Sony RX10 V arrives nine years after the RX10 IV in 2017.

Sony's tagline for this camera is 'Reach Further, Carry Less', and that sums up the RX10 V neatly. This is a camera for anyone who wants a huge zoom range without committing to an interchangeable-lens system. Wildlife, birding, travel, sports, train and plane spotting and general outdoor photography are all obvious targets.

A 24-600mm equivalent f/2.4-4 lens in a single body is still the RX10's main selling point – few cameras offer that kind of reach with the same speed, autofocus and optical quality.

The RX10 V keeps the same 20.1MP 1-inch Exmor RS sensor and Zeiss Vario 24-600mm lens as its predecessor. But

Sony has updated the camera where it matters, with a redesigned body, BIONZ XR processor, dedicated AI processing unit, improved subject recognition, better viewfinder, higher-resolution screen and more modern controls.

Build and handling

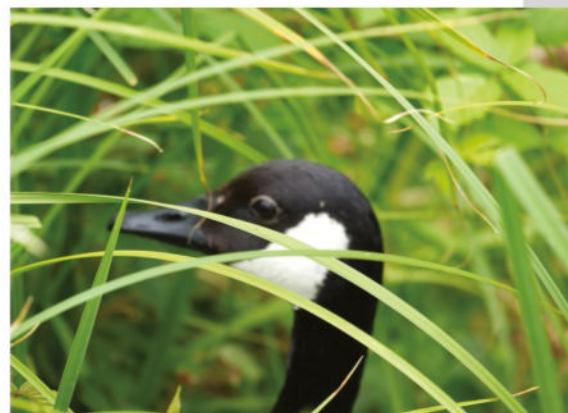
The RX10 V has been almost completely redesigned with a clear Alpha influence, particularly around the controls. It still has the sloped top of a bridge camera alongside that girthy lens. It looks more modern than the RX10 IV, but doesn't quite have the appeal of Sony's latest mirrorless bodies. A 24-600mm f/2.4-4 zoom lens, a built-in EVF, a proper grip, a full control layout and a larger battery aren't going to disappear into something pocketable. This is still a bulky camera.

The biggest practical improvement is the control layout. Sony has moved the mode dial to a more familiar position on the right of the viewfinder, alongside dual command wheels, which makes the RX10 V feel more like the company's recent Alpha cameras. The trade-off is

Sony RX10 V Bridge camera



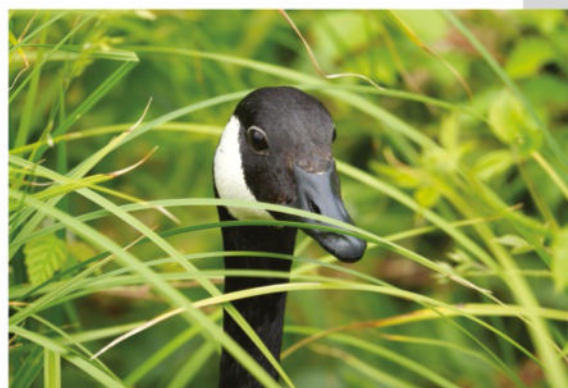
Gareth Bevan



In 'Auto' mode, the Sony RX10 V occasionally struggled to autofocus on birds and insects when they were hidden behind foliage.



Gareth Bevan



When the eye was clearer, the camera managed to nail autofocus. Exposure: 1/250 sec at f/4, ISO 200. Focal length: 360mm (full-frame equivalent).

4

The rear LCD is a 3.0-inch, 3:2, 1.62m-dot tilting display with vertical display support.

6

A joystick has been added for selecting the focus point, and there's now an AF-ON button.

8

... the trade-off is that the top information screen from the RX10 IV (it was here!) is gone.

5

The photo, movie and S&Q modes are now separated using this sub-dial.

7

The mode dial has moved to a more familiar position on the right of the viewfinder...

9

Dual command wheels make the RX10 V feel closer to Sony's recent Alpha bodies.

that the top information screen from the RX10 IV has gone. Photo, movie and S&Q modes are now separated using the sub-dial around the mode dial, like on recent Alpha bodies. Here, each shooting mode gets its own menu setup.

The rear layout has also been improved, with a joystick for selecting the focus point. Sony has added an AF-ON button, which will please anyone

who uses back button focusing. Alongside that, you get the familiar control wheel and rear record button.

The screen is now a 3-inch, 1.62m-dot display, and is sharp and bright enough in harsh sunlight. Sony has kept the same basic screen mechanism as the previous model, so it flips up, but not to the side, like many of Sony's creator-focused Alpha bodies.

The electronic viewfinder is another welcome upgrade. It is now a 0.5-type, 3.686m-dot EVF with 60fps or 120fps refresh options. In use, it is bright, with camera settings easy to read. It protrudes noticeably from the rear of the body, to the extent that you can hold the camera by it.

Elsewhere, the RX10 V is dust- and moisture-resistant, uses Sony's Z battery, has micro-HDMI, USB-C 3.2 Gen 2 10Gbps and supports 4K30p live streaming. There is no built-in flash, but external flashes sync up to 1/2000 sec thanks to the leaf shutter. The SD card is in the battery compartment.

Because Sony has retained the same lens as the RX10 IV, the barrel's length, diameter and overall extension are unchanged from the previous model. It is still a substantial piece of glass, and the camera takes up far more space in use than its body might suggest. At full zoom, the RX10 V looks and feels every bit like a large bridge camera.

When switched off, the camera retracts the lens slightly, making the camera a little more portable. Powering it up extends the lens a couple of centimetres to the 24mm starting position. From there, it extends a considerable distance from the

Bridge camera Sony RX10 V



Gareth Bevan

An example of Clear Image Zoom, which our tester found surprisingly good. It extends reach to around 2x, and full-size images still look decent. Zooming in and pixel-peeping reveals that there is some loss of fine detail and clarity, so you might not want to crop the files much further, but the results are usable.

body as you zoom toward 600mm. You can control it precisely by turning the lens barrel or using the zoom rocker around the shutter button, which is a faster way to jump through the focal range. For precise focusing, there is a manual focus control on the lens barrel.

Performance

The RX10 V uses the same 20.1MP 1-inch stacked sensor as before, and the same Zeiss Vario 24-600mm f/2.4-4 lens. That

might sound disappointing after such a long gap between models, but neither part was in desperate need of replacing. The sensor still performs well, and the lens engineering is one of the reasons this camera exists.

Image quality is excellent, with the RX10 V pulling out an impressive amount of detail in close-ups, especially when photographing birds and insects. Fine feather detail was clearly visible, and in macro-style shots, I could see the tiny hairs on a bee. For 20MP

and a 600mm equivalent zoom lens, it is a strong performance. Anyone worried about depth of field from a 1-inch sensor shouldn't be too concerned. At these kinds of focal lengths, compression does a lot. You can still get excellent subject isolation and pleasing background blur, particularly when shooting at the longer end of the zoom.

The lens isn't the longest superzoom out there – the Nikon Coolpix P1100 (reviewed in the May 2025 issue, 294) has a 24-3000mm equivalent zoom range – but with 24-600mm in a single camera, you can move from wide travel scenes to tight compositions without changing lenses. Optical stabilisation is built in and performs well for stills.

If you need to go beyond the 600mm optical limit of the lens, Sony has a few solutions, including its proprietary Clear Image Zoom technology, which is surprisingly good. This digital zoom mode extends reach to around 2x, and full-size images still look good. Although it extends up to 4x, where there is a clear loss of fine detail, I found it useful for getting the final framing right straight out of the camera.

Finally, Zoom Assist lets you quickly zoom out to find a subject, then return to the zoomed-in range. Anyone who has tried to track a small bird or aircraft at 600mm will understand why that might be useful.

Rival cameras



Lumix FZ80D/FZ82D
£429/\$477

Accurate autofocus and metering, and fast burst rates for stills, but images look grainy and lacking in resolution.

Reviewed: issue 291



Nikon Coolpix P1100
£1,049/\$1,098

Image quality under low lighting and high ISO settings is disappointing, but the P1100 performs well in sunny conditions.

Reviewed: issue 294



Sony RX10 IV
£1,500/\$1,700

Adds touchscreen functionality and swifter AF performance to an already capable all-in-one bridge camera offering.

www.bit.ly/dcm291_rx10iv



Gareth Bevan



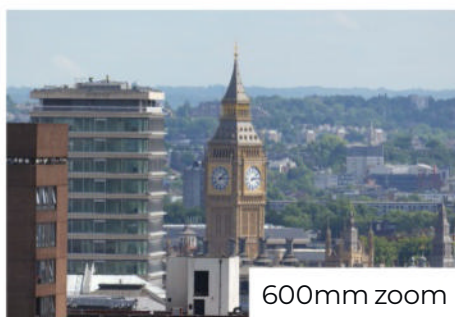
Photographed at the widest setting of the lens, London's Elizabeth Tower (which houses the Great Bell, known as Big Ben) can be seen in the centre of the frame. Exposure: 1/1000 sec at f/4.5, ISO 100.

Close focusing isn't always a strength of a superzoom lens, but the RX10 V can focus as close as 3cm at the wide end and 72cm at the telephoto end, with close to half-size macro magnification at the long end. You are not going to capture microscopic details, but it is particularly useful for insects.

The biggest upgrade from the new processor is autofocus. The BIONZ XR processor and AI processing unit bring the RX10 V more up to date with Sony's current Alpha cameras. The RX10 V can shoot at up to 30fps with AF/AE calculations 60 times per second, while the mechanical shutter tops out at 10fps. It also has Sony's continuous speed boost for going between faster and slower bursts when needed.

Autofocus is excellent overall. Sony has increased the number of AF points from 315 to 575, with 70.6 per cent frame coverage, and there are new focus spot sizes, plus custom focus sizing. Combined with the new joystick and AF-ON button, the focusing experience is far better than before.

Sony's autofocus is incredibly fast, and subject recognition is outstanding. The RX10 V recognises a broader range of subjects, and there is an Auto subject recognition mode. However, this failed to pick up more birds and insects than was ideal; but if you manually select the relevant subject type, the RX10 V does much better.



This is how close you can get just using the RX10 V's optical zoom. Captured on a hot June day, a heat haze is affecting the image quality.

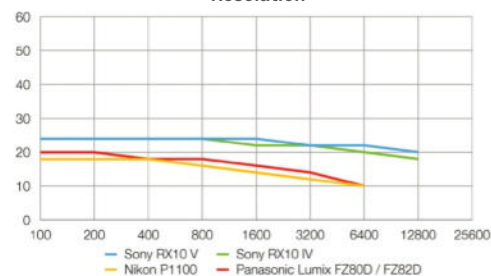
Video is better than expected. The RX10 V can shoot 4K 60p with no crop, 4K 120p with a crop, and 4K is oversampled from 5.2K. There is also Full HD up to 240p. It also includes S-Log3, S-Cinetone, LUT support, in-camera time lapses, a tally lamp, and 4K30p live streaming. For video, there is no IBIS, but Sony combines optical stabilisation with its electronic SteadyShot, and I was genuinely surprised by how well it did.

This isn't a true hybrid camera in the way Sony tends to describe most of its new models. The non-fully articulating screen, lack of IBIS and the fixed superzoom lens make it feel more like a stills-first camera that can capture excellent footage.

Gareth Bevan

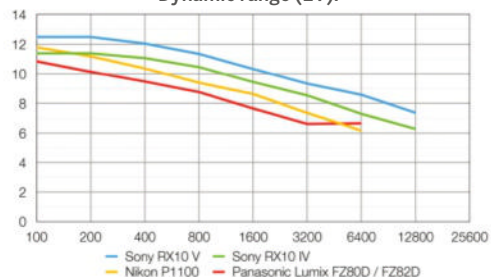
"The RX10 V has been redesigned with a clear Alpha influence, but it doesn't have the appeal of Sony's latest mirrorless bodies"

Resolution



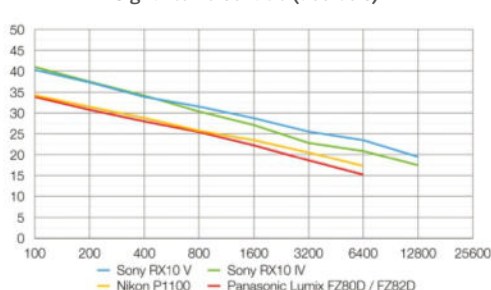
The RX10 V matches the RX10 IV for detail capture. The other two use lower-resolution sensors, making them more susceptible to noise at higher sensitivities.

Dynamic range (EV):



The RX10 V uses the same-sized sensor as the older version, but captures more dynamic range. It also outperforms the Nikon and Panasonic cameras.

Signal to noise ratio (decibels):



With a larger image sensor, both RX10 cameras generate less noise than the Nikon and Panasonic cameras with their tiny 1/2.3-inch sensors.

Digital Camera verdict



A fixed-lens bridge camera with a 1-inch sensor isn't the newest concept, but if the market is to be revived, the Sony RX10 V is just the sort of camera to do it. A 24-600mm f/2.4-4 lens, fast autofocus, 30fps shooting, stabilisation and improved 4K video make it a compelling proposition. It's rather pricey to be locked into using one lens, albeit an incredibly good superzoom. But Sony has produced the best-looking bridge camera yet. While Auto mode autofocus is a little unreliable, single subject recognition is outstanding. And though video is improved, the RX10 V still isn't a serious hybrid camera. However, as a wildlife, travel, sports and general outdoor camera, it's the best bridge camera around.

Zoom lens Tamron 16-30mm F2.8 Di III VXD G2



Tamron 16-30mm F2.8 Di III VXD G2

£849/\$929

Wider and longer than its 17-28mm forebear, and also available for Nikon Z

www.tamron.eu

Back in 2019, the Tamron 17-28mm F2.8 Di III RXD was a revelation. Made exclusively for Sony E-mount mirrorless cameras, this 'alternative trinity' wide-angle zoom was relatively compact, lightweight and affordable. I was so impressed that I gave it a five-star review rating, and Nikon liked it so much they adopted the lens as one of their own, badging it as the Nikon Z 17-28mm f/2.8 in 2022.

Tamron has since updated its other two compact, alternative trinity zooms to 'Generation 2' editions, while also making them available in Nikon Z mount instead of only for Sony E-mount cameras. Those updated lenses are the Tamron 28-75mm F2.8 Di III RXD G2 standard zoom and the Tamron 70-180mm F2.8 Di III VC VXD G2 telephoto zoom. It's worth noting that Nikon copied the original versions of these two Tamron lenses as well, although the Tamron G2 versions represent significant upgrades.

Rather than revamping the original 17-28mm lens, Tamron released the all-new 16-30mm F2.8 Di III VXD G2 in July 2025, beating the original lens's zoom range at both ends and bringing other upgrades like a faster autofocus system. The Tamron 16-30mm aims to be one of the best wide-angle lenses for Nikon and Sony mirrorless cameras.

Build and handling

This lens isn't one of the most ultra-wide-angle zooms on the market, lacking a minimum focal length that shrinks to as little as 14mm or even 12mm. Even so, I generally find that 16mm is sufficiently 'ultra-wide' for almost any shooting scenario, and there's a significant upside. Most lenses that give an even wider perspective tend to have a bulbous front element that requires an integral, fixed hood for protection.



A USB-C socket allows compatibility with the Lens Utility app and Tamron-Link Bluetooth adapter.

The integral hood typically equates to the lack of a front filter attachment thread, making it difficult or impossible to fit the kind of filter you'd use for landscape photography, like one of the best ND grads or the best high-density ND filters (see page 116). You might also use circular polariser filters, but they don't tend to work with ultra-wide-angle lenses, as the polarising effect becomes uneven across the image frame.

The lens retains its compact dimensions throughout its entire zoom range. Whether or not it has an 'internal zoom' mechanism is debatable, as it does have an inner barrel that extends as you sweep from the longest setting of 30mm down to the minimum of 16mm. However, the inner barrel remains within the boundary of the outer barrel at all zoom settings, merely coming closer towards the front at its shortest focal length.

Unlike the mechanically coupled zoom ring at the rear, the manual focus ring at the front is coupled electronically, as required by the VXD (Voice-coil eXtreme-torque Drive) autofocus motor. Going a step ahead of the autofocus system fitted in the previous 17-28mm lens, the new one is rapid and virtually silent. It also enables super-smooth autofocus transitions when shooting video, as well as ensuring fast and accurate subject tracking when shooting stills.

Teaming up with the autofocus system, there's a customisable function button positioned on the side of the lens barrel, which acts as an AF-Hold button by default. The separate bayonet-fit hood is a bonus, compared with the integral hoods of many ultra-wide-angle lenses. It can be reversed for compact stowage and enables the inclusion of a front filter attachment thread.

Time rarely stands still in the design of camera bodies and lenses, so I'm pleased that a degree of future-proofing is added in the shape of a USB-C port. This enables the use of the Tamron Lens Utility app with the lens, for customisation, fine-tuning and applying firmware updates if and when needed. Alternatively, you can use the optional Tamron-Link Bluetooth adapter (sold separately) with Tamron's mobile app.

1

The manual focus ring is fairly large, grippy and very tactile.

2

The zoom ring is marked at 16mm, 20mm, 24mm and 30mm focal lengths.

3

The rubber gasket fitted to the mounting plate is one of several weather-seals.





For close-range shooting, the Tamron 16-30mm F2.8 Di III VXD G2's f/2.8 aperture enables a reasonably tight depth of field and the possibility of blurring the background, along with pleasantly smooth bokeh.



The shortest focal length (left) gives a wide viewing angle, even when photographed from close by. The 30mm shot (right) was taken from the same position. Both images were captured at f/5.6.

Finishing at the back end, the lens has a sturdy metal mounting plate with gold-plated electronic contacts. The plate also features a weather-seal gasket, and further weather-seals are fitted along the entire length of the lens around critical joints to ensure a splash-proof construction.

Performance

Like when you're eyeing up a potential car purchase, one of the questions that might come to mind about this lens is 'how fast does it go'? Well, f/2.8 is about as fast as you'll get from a wide-angle zoom lens, but the other question that needs answering is 'how wide does it go'? The 16mm minimum focal length gives a satisfyingly expansive angle of view on full-frame cameras (see the images above), which should work well for anything from sweeping landscape vistas to cityscapes and architectural interiors.

The Tamron's 16-30mm is generous. Not only does the short end of 16mm give a properly expansive view, but the long end of 30mm delivers plenty of overlap with my 24-70mm standard zoom lens. The net result is that the Tamron is versatile, and so you won't need to keep swapping between wide-angle and standard zooms.

One thing for which ultra-wide-angle lenses are somewhat notorious is that they often fail to deliver good edge-to-edge sharpness across the entire image frame.

The Tamron 16-30mm has real star quality in delivering excellent sharpness from the centre of the frame right out to the extreme edges and corners, throughout its entire zoom range. That's no mean feat for an 'alternative' wide-angle zoom with a compact and lightweight build, and a relatively affordable price tag. Resistance to ghosting and flare is similarly impressive.

Ultra-wide lenses are definitely not the obvious choice when bokeh is on the agenda, but the Tamron's close-focusing abilities and its relatively fast f/2.8 aperture enable a reasonably tight depth of field and an opportunity to isolate subjects within a scene by blurring the background (see the image at the top of the page).

I've tested and reviewed many compact and lightweight lenses designed for mirrorless cameras. One thing that almost always holds true, especially for wide-angle lenses, is a reliance on automatic in-camera correction for distortion, which can't be disabled in camera menus. Therefore, I was surprised to see that auto correction for distortion, along with corrections for other aberrations, wasn't 'forced on' when using the Tamron, and that the optical performance of the lens is again impressive in these respects without being propped up by in-camera corrections – again, that holds true throughout the entire zoom range.

Matthew Richards

Zoom lens

Specifications

Mount options: Nikon Z (FX), Sony E (FE)

Full-frame: Yes

Autofocus: Yes

Image stabilisation: No

Lens construction: 16 elements in 12 groups

Angle of view: 107-71.5°

Max aperture: f/2.8

Min aperture: f/16

Diaphragm blades: 9

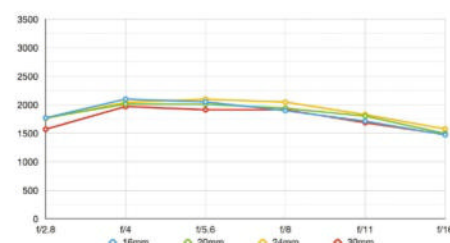
Min focus distance: 0.19m (W) 0.3m (T)

Max magnification ratio: 0.16x (W) 0.14x (T)

Filter size: 67mm

Dimensions (L x D): 104 x 75mm

Weight: 450g



Sharpness:

For a wide-angle lens, centre-to-mid sharpness is good wide-open at f/2.8, and even better when narrowing the aperture. Extreme edge/corner-sharpness is average, but that's common for these lenses. In 'real-world' shooting, the Tamron proved sharp out to the edges.

Fringing: **Short 0.47 Long 0.57**

Colour fringing is negligible, not just in the centre of the frame but right out at the edges and corners. Performance is excellent in this respect, throughout the entire zoom range and at all aperture settings.

Distortion: **Short -1.35 Long 3.96**

Barrel distortion is minimal at the most wide-angle setting of 16mm. Pincushion distortion can be more noticeable in the 24-30mm sector, but there's relatively little reliance on automatic in-camera correction, which can actually be disabled in camera menus.

Digital Camera verdict

5.0 ★★★★★ A best-in-class product



The Tamron 16-30mm F2.8 Di III VXD G2 is a worthy upgrade over the preceding 17-28mm lens. It goes wider and longer, boosting the zoom range in both directions, while featuring an upgraded voice-coil motor autofocus system, enhanced handling and terrific all-round performance. It does this in a compact and lightweight, yet weather-sealed construction, and you can fit landscape-friendly filters via a modest 67mm front attachment thread. All in all, it's a cracking lens at a reasonable price.

Software ON1 Photo RAW 2026

1 ON1 Photo RAW 2026 now features a Home screen to help simplify the user experience.

2 It has buttons for opening photos, browsing folders or importing images.

3 Sky replacement and portrait enhancement functions both have dedicated Sky tabs.



4 Double-click on an image and the editing tools in the right sidebar come into play.

5 ON1's selection of presets is displayed in the left sidebar and can be applied with a click.

6 Tabs include Develop, Local Effects, Sky and Portrait – once figured out, it's logical enough.

ON1 Photo RAW 2026

From £93/\$99 (regular) or £158/\$199 (MAX edition)

Versatile all-in-one photo organiser, editor and effects tool

www.on1.com

System requirements

Windows and macOS

Processor: Four-Core processor with 64-bit support; 2 GHz or faster processor with SSE 4.2 or Neon. Or Four-Core Intel processor or Apple Silicon

Operating system: Windows 11 x86 or ARM version (current maintenance releases, 64 bit only). macOS 12 and above

Memory: 8GB (16GB if shared with the GPU). Hard drive space: 6GB

Graphics: Windows – DirectX 12, DirectML, Vulkan 1.1 and OpenGL 4.2 compatible video card with 4GB VRAM, 1920 x 1080 resolution (at 100% scale factor). macOS – Metal, Vulkan 1.1 and OpenGL 4.2 compatible video card with 4GB VRAM, 1920 x 1080 resolution (at 100% scale factor)



ON1 Photo RAW does a little bit of everything. Actually, it does quite a lot of everything. It's a pretty competent photo organiser, offering live folder browsing as a catalogue option for more advanced searches – though it's a bit confusing having both side by side – and it uses AI tools extensively, including within the organiser, where it can automatically generate keywords for your photos.

It's also a decent raw file processor, offering local adjustments, a choice of profiles, AI noise reduction, lens and perspective corrections, tone and colour adjustments, and many of the tools found in Lightroom and Adobe Camera Raw. You can create AI subject and background masks, sky masks, luminosity masks, new depth masks and more. And that's just the Develop panel.

The real jewel in the crown is ON1 Photo RAW's Effects module, where you can browse and apply a wide range of

striking and inspirational preset effects or mix and match around 50 individual filters to make your own. Keep in mind that this is all part of a non-destructive workflow, so you can rework or replace effects at any time, including borders, textures and blur effects.

ON1 Photo RAW can carry out sky replacements using a selection of templates organised into categories, and there's also a dedicated Portrait mode with AI-powered tools for skin tones, face shape, eyes, lips, teeth and more. If that's not enough, you can create Photoshop-style layered images with masks and blend modes, though this creates a new file within ON1 Photo RAW's non-destructive workflow.

The regular edition of ON1 Photo RAW 2026 costs £93 (\$99), while the MAX edition costs £158 (\$199). At that price, ON1 Photo RAW 2026 costs less than half of a year of the Adobe Photography Plan. Even the MAX edition, with its Adobe-compatible ON1 Resize AI, ON1

ON1 Photo RAW 2026 Software



Rod Lawton

The masking options can be confusing. In the Local (adjustment) tab, for example, there are two visually identical sets of mask buttons: at the top (highlighted) and lower down in the Local panel.



Rod Lawton

The AI subject masking isn't the most reliable. For example, it couldn't figure out that this church was the main subject in the photo. However, using the AI mask eyedropper tool worked fine.

NoNoise AI, ON1 Portrait AI and ON1 Effects plug-ins and its remarkable Restore AI tool, is cheaper than the Adobe alternative, and for a perpetual licence. ON1 also offers subscription packages, including both programs, additional content and cloud storage.

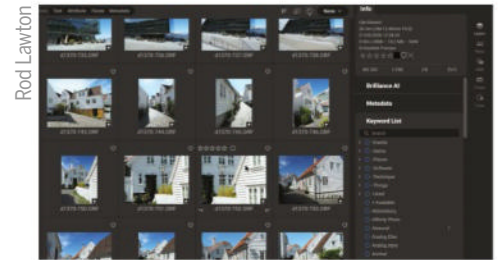
Interface and usability

To edit an image, double-click on it and the tools in the right sidebar come into play (also ON1's selection of presets in the left sidebar). The Develop tab is where you fix up your raw files and make general adjustments. The Local tab is for local adjustments and masking, while the Effects tab is for viewing and adjusting filters used by ON1 presets. And logically, the Sky and Portrait tabs are for dedicated sky replacement and portrait-enhancement workspaces.

A key distinction is that the Develop tab is for regular image adjustments, while the Effects tab is for ON1 Photo RAW's effects filters. The masking options are powerful, but confusing. There's a set of AI masking tools at the top of the right sidebar, and a Mask button in the left tool panel that displays regular non-AI masking controls on a top bar. Use masks in the Local tab for overall image adjustments and create masks for individual filters in the Effects tab and layers when editing composite images.

Performance

ON1's RAW processing is pretty good, and although it's not quite on a par with Capture One or DxO PhotoLab 9, two things really stand out in ON1 Photo RAW 2026. The first is its catalogue of preset effects. These are previewed



Rod Lawton

ON1 can handle your workflow, from browsing and organising, through local adjustments, image effects and HDR merging to layered composites.

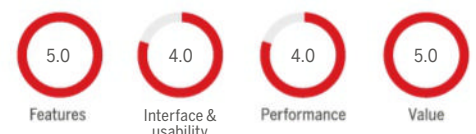
directly on the image you're working on and can be applied with a single click. Once done, you can inspect the filters and settings used in the right sidebar and modify as necessary. ON1 Photo RAW's effects make an interesting comparison with the DxO Nik Collection, as they cover the same range of effects, but within a single module rather than spread across several plug-ins.

The new Restore AI process, available in the MAX edition, also deserves a mention. It appears to use cloud-based processing, but the results are outstanding. Restored images are upscaled to 4K UHD resolution, even from lower-resolution scans; creases and spots are removed as if by magic, detail is restored convincingly, and face recovery is amazing. The likeness isn't always right, mostly when the original is small or blurred, but you can adjust the strength of each face restoration for a better likeness.

The results from ON1 Photo RAW 2026 aren't always great without a little more work, and some of the presets are way over the top for sharpening, saturation and 'hyper-reality', but at other times, the preset effects can transform your images or give you ideas you might never have had. The range of effects and scope of this program are pretty extraordinary. **Rod Lawton**

Digital Camera verdict

4.5 ★★★★★ Outstanding



ON1 Photo RAW does so much that you might be wondering what the catch is. Not all of its processes are best-in-class, and though the masking tools are effective, they're also pretty confusing. The standout features here are the creative effects and presets, the easy image browsing and the fully non-destructive workflow. The regular ON1 Photo RAW 2026 version is the best value, but if you want to restore old photos or use ON1's tools as plug-ins for Adobe software, then try the MAX edition.

“ON1 Photo RAW's preset effects can transform your images or give you ideas you might otherwise never have had”

Help me buy a... lens filter

To open up a world of creative in-camera effects, you'll need an accessory to modify the level and quality of light hitting your lens

As referenced in this month's cover feature, the difference between the brightest and darkest parts of a scene (dynamic range) can go beyond

what a camera sensor can capture. While shooting frames at different exposures (bracketing) then merging them together in editing is a workaround, it will mean more time at the computer. The other solution is to use a **Neutral Density (ND)** filter at the time of capture. NDs come in different strengths and act like sunglasses for lenses – they reduce the amount of light entering the lens, enable longer exposure times and offer a range of creative possibilities.

Graduated NDs are ND filters with a transition from the dark area to clear glass – different strengths and transition types are available. Another essential filter for landscape photographers is a **polariser**. These boost the vibrancy and contrast in images by reducing unwanted reflections

and cutting out haze in the sky. Over the next three pages, we present a pair of best-buys for ND, ND grads and polarising filters, so read on for what's right for you...

1 Square vs circular

There are two different types of filters: square filters slot into holders, which come in a series of standard sizes and can be used on any lens via an inexpensive adapter ring. Circular filters screw directly onto your lens's filter ring and have to be purchased in the correct size.

2 Glass vs resin

Glass filters offer better optical quality, light transmission and colour fidelity, but need to be handled carefully. Affordable ND filters are made of resin, which tends not to offer the same clarity, sharpness and neutrality as upmarket glass filters. Over time, the dyes used in resin filters can degrade or shift in colour, and resin filters may warp or scratch more easily.

3 Filter size

Filter threads on lenses accept screw-in circular filters. Square filter holders can fit different lenses via adapters, but you need to get a holder large enough to match your cameras and lenses. 100mm is the usual size for square systems.

4 Filter strength

Confusingly, different filter manufacturers quote the strengths of their ND filters in different ways. For example, Cokin and Hoya use exposure 'multiples', so 'ND8' is three stops. Others use decimals, where a three-stop reduction is 'ND0.9'. Both have a sound mathematical basis, but most makers also quote the EV/f-stop equivalent, making shopping for filters a little easier.

5 Filter coatings

Filters need coatings for the same reason lenses do – to reduce reflections and improve light transmission. With ND filters, coatings also offer the benefit of filtering out unwanted infrared and ultraviolet light, which can cause unwanted colour shifts in long exposures. The best filters also have water-, oil- and scratch-resistant coatings.

6 Colour fidelity

Filter materials and coatings can all help reduce colour shifts with long exposures, but ultimately, it's down to the particular filter brand's own manufacturing processes, coating, dyeing technologies and choice of materials (glass or resin).

7 Circular polarisers

Here, 'circular' doesn't refer to the shape. Linear filters are suitable for film or manual cameras; developed for digital cameras, circular polarisers allow autofocus and metering systems to operate correctly. ●

Lens filter systems

Which of the three types will be best for you?



James Abbott

Screw-in filters

Screw-in filters are a great budget option for beginners and the easiest filter type to work with. They don't stack well, though, so it's often best to only use one filter type at a time.



James Abbott

Magnetic filters

Circular magnetic filters are low-profile and multiple filters can be stacked well, even with a wide-angle lens. Their main downside is that ND grads aren't available in this format.



James Abbott

Square filters

Square filters are the most versatile option and are used with a dedicated filter holder. However, they are also the most expensive and heaviest, and take up the most space in your kit bag.



Cokin Nuances Extreme ND

From £224/\$359 (kit)

These filters are hard to fault

www.cokin.com

I have been hugely impressed by Cokin's Nuances Extreme ND filters, which is why I would make them my number one pick for the best ND filters you can buy.

Made with tempered mineral glass, these high-quality filters provide flawless colour accuracy and pitch-perfect sharpness in all corners of the frame. This is thanks to both the nano metallic alloy coating and the quality of the glass.

My testing proved that the filters were as good as their marketing promised. The filters also precisely matched their f-stop light reduction range, so you know exactly what you're getting when you fix one onto your lens. The 'Extreme' designation is there because the lenses are hardy and drop-resistant, a quality

Specifications

Size: 84 x 100mm, 100 x 100mm, 130 x 130mm
Mount: 100mm holder, Cokin NX-series holder
Construction: Tempered mineral glass

complemented by the Cokin EVO filter holder, which has an effective foam gasket to guard against light leaks.

These aren't the cheapest options for ND filters, but they really are superb. The Nuances Extreme ND filters come in 6-stop and 10-stop densities, and are available in three sizes: P-size (84 x 100mm), Z-Pro (100 x 100mm), and X-Pro (130 x 130mm).

PROS Flawless colour accuracy; No reduction in sharpness; perfect f-stop accuracy

CONS Cokin's filter holder is relatively expensive

Digital Camera verdict

These filters deliver flawless colour accuracy, perfect sharpness, and rugged drop resistance. Available in multiple sizes, their premium performance makes them the ultimate choice despite the expensive holder.

5.0 ★★★★★
A best-in-class product

Help me buy a... lens filter



Kase Wolverine

From £150/\$200 (filter)

The best large square NDs

kasefilters.com

Kase's Wolverine range of filters is named to suggest toughness: each filter is coated to make it scratch-resistant, as well as water-repellent and anti-reflective.

Overall, the Wolverine range offers an excellent set of filters, with outstanding image quality and a rugged, durable design. Ease of use is one of its main selling points, with the magnetic application making it easy to attach filters on the fly.

These filters come in several sizes – some square, some rectangular – that go right up to 150 x 150mm, which can accommodate the broader field of view in a wide-angle lens. There's a choice of five densities between three stops and a massive 16 stops, which means that there is something for almost everyone.

Specifications

Size: 100 x 100mm, 100 x 150mm, 150 x 150mm
Mount: 100mm holder
Construction: Glass

The filters fit into any standard holder of the correct size, but Kase chooses to place the light seal on the filter holder rather than the filter – so if you use another company's holder that doesn't have a seal, you could let some light in. During testing, I noticed a slight colour cast that is easily corrected, but no lessening of detail. I also liked the tough feel of the filters and that they are easy to clean.

PROS Good selection of densities and sizes; minimal colour cast; durable glass

CONS There's no light seal unless you use the Kase holder

Digital Camera verdict

Kase's Wolverine 100mm ND1000 filter offers excellent durability and easy cleaning. The 100 x 150mm design allows precise positioning, while the colour cast is easily corrected, delivering exceptional optical performance.

5.0 ★★★★★
A best-in-class product

Help me buy a... lens filter



Cokin Z-Pro Nuances Extreme ND Grads

£130/\$150 each

Versatile and performs superbly

www.cokin.com

While Cokin is mainly associated with affordable resin filters, the Z-Pro Nuances Extreme Graduated ND filters line uses high-end tempered mineral glass (Schott glass), said to be four times stronger than previous versions. In testing, the filters were almost indestructible, surviving drops of 1.5 metres onto concrete and resisting scratches from sharp objects. They are a great option for photographers working in outdoor environments.

Optical performance is outstanding, with the filters maintaining high resolution on 45MP sensors. A nano-metallic alloy coating prevents the colour casts seen in cheaper filters; flare and ghosting are well-controlled, and the filters accurately cut the specified light (available in two-, three- and four-stop strengths).

Specifications

Size: 84 x 100mm, 100 x 150mm, 130 x 170mm
Mount: 100mm holder, Cokin NX-series holder
Construction: Tempered mineral glass

The filters work in standard 100mm holders, but they are optimised for the Cokin NX-series holder. This system uses a unique ball-joint track and requires filters to be mounted in dedicated metal frames, which provide protection and make handling easier.

In addition to the Z-Pro 100mm-wide filters, Nuances Extreme ND grads also come in P-Series (84mm-wide) and X-Pro (130mm-wide) sizes.

PROS Optically flawless filters; tank-like build; easy to clean

CONS Expensive; can only stack two square filters; no hard or medium graduation options

Digital Camera verdict

This system combines highly durable tempered mineral glass filters with a premium metal NX holder. It delivers exceptional optical clarity and ruggedness, making it a worthwhile investment for professionals.

5.0 ★★★★★
A best-in-class product



K&F Concept Nano-Xcel Pro GND 100mm

£99/\$110 each

Great value filters

www.kentfaith.co.uk

These 100mm filters are designed specifically for K&F's award-winning X-Pro filter holder. The 100 x 150mm glass filters are encased in protective plastic frames featuring tabs at the top and bottom, which allow the filters to slide into the holder without ever touching the optical glass. This effectively eliminates the danger of getting greasy fingerprints on the filter.

The filters are constructed from high-quality optical glass and treated with a 36-layer nanocoating on both sides, providing excellent resistance against water, oil, and dust, while also acting as an anti-reflective film to minimise glare. The hydrophobic coating allows water to bead off the filters effortlessly, and the surface proved exceptionally scratch-resistant,

Specifications

Size: 100 x 150mm (115 x 192mm with frame)
Mount: 100mm holder
Construction: Glass

even when subjected to pressure from metal tools.

They are a top-quality choice that delivers stellar image quality and thoughtful ergonomic design without the prohibitive cost of industry-leading brands, making them one of the best value-for-money options on the market. However, the filters are only available in a limited range of transition types and densities.

PROS Affordable; award-winning design; quality optical glass construction; various coatings

CONS Limited range of strengths and transitions; only four adapter ring sizes for the X-Pro holder

Digital Camera verdict

K&F's GND filters offer excellent value, featuring a 36-layer nanocoating for water and scratch resistance. The high-quality glass and award-winning filter holder deliver premium performance at an affordable price.

5.0 ★★★★★
A best-in-class product



Cokin NX Series CPL

£80/\$80

Ahead of the pack
www.cokin.com



Hoya Fusion One Next Cir-PL

£50-125/\$65-163

Affordable and reliable
www.hoyafilter.com

The NX Series is a new filter system that is compatible with the 100mm square and rectangular filters.

Cokin makes the NX-Series Holder from aluminium, so it is strong and lightweight. It can also hold the NX-Series CPL filter so that it's the closest filter to the lens, while a metal wheel allows the filter to be rotated.

Cokin sells the NX-Series Holder and CPL filter separately, but they are available together in a range of kits, including the NX-Series Starter Kit, which includes 72mm, 77mm and 82mm adapter rings, plus a 100 x 100mm frame and a 100 x 143.5mm frame.

The Schott B270 high-resolution mineral glass of the Cokin NX-Series CPL is held in an aluminium frame, which is narrower on the side closest

Specifications

Size: 100mm
Mount: via Cokin NX-Series Holder
Construction: Aluminium and glass

to the lens. This enables the filter to be snapped into the NX-Series Holder. The teeth of the cog-like wheel in the holder fit into the ridges on the filter frame, so the wheel can drive the filter around.

Mounting the Cokin NX-Series CPL reduces the exposure by around a stop, but there's no noticeable impact on the image quality. There's also no sign of vignetting with wide lenses, but as well as increased saturation, images are warmer with the filter.

PROS Aluminium holder; uses a polarisation adjustment wheel

CONS Only works with NX-Series Holder; tricky to remove

Digital Camera verdict

The Cokin NX Series CPL integrates well into the NX Series system. It also offers a neat means of adjusting the degree of polarisation, making the system a little more advanced than some of the competition.

5.0 ★★★★★
A best-in-class product

Hoya's Fusion One Next series was introduced in August 2021. It includes a Protector, UV and Circular Polariser, each being available in a wide range of sizes.

Hoya applies an 18-layer coating to both sides to reduce flare and ghosting. Meanwhile, the low-profile filter frame is made from aluminium and features a front thread to enable other filters to be attached.

The rear mounting ring is larger than the broader adjustment ring. There's a little less resistance in the adjustment ring's movement than with the Lee Elements filter, and it doesn't feel quite so smooth, but it's unlikely to shift accidentally.

We tested the 82mm Fusion One Next Cir-PL, which meant it could be mounted with step-up rings on lenses with filter sizes

Specifications

Size: 37-82mm
Mount: Screw-in
Construction: Aluminium and glass

under 82mm. Mounted directly on to a lens with an 82mm thread, we were unable to spot an increase in vignetting at 24mm.

When we tested the Fusion One Next Cir-PL on a Nikon Z 24-70mm f/4 S mounted on the 45.7MP Nikon Z 7II, we couldn't detect any difference in the image quality apart from an increase in saturation and a slight warming of the colours. Overall, this is light, easy to use and available in a range of sizes.

PROS Attractively priced; no holder required

CONS Not very smooth; image warming may not be wanted

Digital Camera verdict

The Fusion One Next Cir-PL strikes a good balance between affordability and quality. Optically, it's very good, but the frame build and action aren't quite up to the same standard as some more expensive options out there.

4.0 ★★★★★
Excellent

Peter Dazeley

His new book *London: Secret and Hidden Places* is on sale now. We go behind the scenes with **Niall Hampton**

Indi 4



Peter Dazeley
Photographer

Peter Dazeley, known as 'Dazeley', is a celebrated London photographer renowned for fine-art and advertising photography.

In a career spanning several decades, his work has won awards from various organisations worldwide.

These include the Association of Photographers and the Royal Photographic Society in the UK, and Graphis Inc. in the USA.

Dazeley is a member of the Association of Photographers and a fellow of the Royal Photographic Society.

www.peterdazeley.com



How well does anyone actually know London? In a succession of photo books, Peter Dazeley has been exposing some of the city's lesser-seen nooks and crannies, and the latest volume has just gone on sale. *London: Secret and*

Hidden Places joins previous books *London Explored*, *Unseen London* and *London Uncovered*, in which the fine-art and advertising photographer ventures into a variety of spaces in the capital city, many of them inaccessible to the public. It all came about because, despite having lived in London all his life, Dazeley still comes across buildings that are new to him.

Over 80 locations feature in *London: Secret and Hidden Places*. The reader gets access to historic houses and private clubs, abandoned underground shelters and working industrial sites, and goes backstage at landmark theatres... and all this exploration can be done without leaving home.

The book sees Dazeley collaborate once again with the writer Mark Daly – Mark provides illuminating commentary on the locations that Dazeley has explored with his trusty Nikon D800 DSLR.

How would you describe your photographic journey up to this point?

I am wildly dyslexic and struggled hopelessly at school. I went to Holland Park Comprehensive in London, which

Peter Dazeley



is now known as the 'Socialist Eton', where they have a swimming pool, three gyms, woodwork, metalwork, domestic science, engineering, a technical drawing office, a language laboratory – amazing facilities – but they also had photography studios and darkrooms.

My results were terrible. I struggled so badly that during an Easter holiday, I saw an advert in the [London] *Evening Standard* to work for an advertising studio at the bottom of Fleet Street. So at the age of 15, I went along for an interview with my mum; they gave me a job, and I never went back to school. Even at school, I was taught on glass plate cameras, so I've been through all photography's wet processes and then on to digital. There were lots of facilities at the advertising studio... from paste-up to hot metal in the middle of the studio,



a litho letterpress, hand-lettering artists, retouchers, illustrators – most of those skills have now disappeared.

And you went from working in the advertising studio to being an advertising photographer.

Yes, and I've had a wonderful career. I was always looking for interesting projects and things to excite art directors with. I have a flat on the river between Battersea and Chelsea bridges and could see Battersea Power Station being redeveloped. I managed to blag my way in and shoot some pictures. My agent put them online, and they took off, but then people started stealing them, which wasn't much fun.

That was back in 2010, and it set me on a mission to record London as it stood in the 21st century.

I'm a Londoner born and bred; I thought I knew the city really well, but I'm continuing to find new things – much to my amazement. In fact, I recently discovered a working windmill in Brixton [a district of inner London].

This isn't your first book of photographs – how many have you published now?

Four – three different ones on London, from 'unseen' to 'explored' and 'discovered', and a book about London theatres, with a foreword by the actor and director Sir Mark Rylance, which has been incredibly successful. Three of my books have had second editions published, which has been fantastic. People have told me that only one book in a hundred makes back its advance, so I seem to have done quite well. →

Above: The graffiti that decorates the Undercroft Skate Space on the Southbank is constantly changing.



Above: The £60 million refurbishment of Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber's Theatre Royal Drury Lane.

How do you find the locations to photograph?

Quite often it comes from something I've read in the newspapers. I don't know how many more I'll be able to put into books, but I still have quite a large list of possibilities. Sometimes access can be difficult, though. I wanted to take some photos about democracy and was trying to get the House of Lords and the House of Commons to let me take a picture in the public galleries. I fought for it for years, but they wouldn't allow me to do it; perhaps they saw it as me just trying to make money. I thought it would have been lovely to encourage people to go to Parliament and watch what actually goes on and see how democracy happens.

When photographing some pretty large spaces, what kind of lighting did you use?

It tends to be whatever ambient light there is. There are two things I try to avoid: one is people, and the other one is using artificial light. I can remember shooting at a theatre that's high up in the gods, and it was so dark. I think my exposure was around 30 seconds. With digital photography, if there's a big contrast between light and dark, I'll shoot a few extra frames and will put it all together in editing afterwards.

Having to do that wasn't so much fun, but the thing about theatres is we don't see the beauty of them. We buy our ticket, we sit down in the dark and look forward. So when trying to recapture the feel and the lighting, it's so important not to put any lights on at all.

Were you shooting bracketed exposures, then merging the frames in editing?

I don't do a lot of exposure bracketing. Digital cameras are mind-boggling; you can literally cut yourself on the focus. The way they deal with mixed lighting is amazing; in the old days of film, this was a really huge problem to overcome. Shooting long exposures is a way around it.

Which locations that appear in *London: Secret and Hidden Places* were the most challenging to get into and photograph?

The Tottenham Hotspur Stadium [the largest football club ground in London] was one. Getting access to the Hatton Garden vault [London's jewellery quarter and the location of a £14 million heist in 2019] came about through a contact of somebody at Tottenham Hotspur who knew the people who looked after the safe deposit centre. The crime scene was completely untouched for a long time, with everything tipped upside down.

The photograph doesn't quite show it, but the hole is incredibly small – it's not very easy for someone to get in and out of. The wonderful thing about it all is that the London Museum is going to display it, so this chunk of criminality will be uprooted and taken to the museum's new site in Smithfield.

"I try to avoid two things when taking photographs: one is people, and the other is using artificial light"



Peter Dazeley

One of the most difficult places to photograph was Henry VIII's wine cellar, the remaining part of Whitehall Palace that was physically moved underneath the Ministry of Defence building. They gave me permission, then withdrew it, saying they had to find someone who knew me. At the time, I was friends with a politician, so I asked if they could get me into Downing Street. I met a policeman there and told him that they wouldn't let me into the Ministry of Defence. He said he could sort that out for me, and two weeks later, I managed to get in. The wine cellar is really strange because it's encased by windows and walls, none of which relate to the interior. So, having worked with a lot of friends and clients over the years, they have helped me in different ways, which has been an asset for this series of books.

The *London: Secret and Hidden Places* cover photo is a good one. It's inside a corner of St Paul's Cathedral, called the Dean's Staircase, and you'd really have to fall across it to find it. It has 88 steps and is cantilevered, just hanging there. It's such a beautiful photo, and it was one of the images I got past the publisher because I said it was a great space for the title of the book to go in. It also featured in the *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* film. It's a great thing for people to go and discover for themselves.

The picture of the Theatre Royal Drury Lane is a new one. It was taken after a £60 million (\$81m) restoration by Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber, completed in 2021. It is so beautifully done, and such a vast amount of money has restored its Regency grandeur. I think it's the only theatre that has two royal boxes, because George III fell

out with his son, the Prince of Wales [who succeeded him as George IV]. The King's box is really beautiful.

The Bloomberg Building in the City of London [financial district] is remarkable. The section of the lobby is a three-walled hallway called a vortex, a leaning, twisted wood-panelled structure in the set of a spiral ramp that rises in a triple helix to span six floors. Around 4,500 people work in the building, which is Bloomberg's brand new headquarters.

There's also a picture of the cloisters in the Charterhouse, which was part of Charterhouse School [a leading English public school], and it is believed to have contributed to the formulation of the rules of association football. Students at Charterhouse →

Above: The hole cut by the robbers during the Hatton Garden Safe Deposit heist.

Below: Large floor-standing globe spheres at the studios of Bellerby & Co in Stoke Newington.



Peter Dazeley



Peter Dazeley



Peter Dazeley

Left: The Beavertown craft brewery located under the South Stand of the Tottenham Hotspur Stadium.

Above: The south-west corner, looking north. The South Stand to the right is a defining feature.

played football inside the cloisters; when the ball was kicked out of one of the windows, a player was allowed to leave and return it to play by throwing it in an action which was incorporated into the rules of the game. Players who tried to gain an advantage by jumping out of the cloisters and running in front of the ball were penalised – the first application of the offside rule. That may be a myth, but if you look at the picture, it makes sense.

God's Own Junkyard in East London is an enormous building full of retro signs and neon signs – they will even make you one and sell you one. You can have a party there, you can get married there, and there are hanging signs from films including *Batman*, *Mission*



Peter Dazeley



Peter Dazeley

Impossible, *Tomb Raider*, *Mona Lisa* and *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. Visiting is quite a fun experience. Queen's Club [a private sporting club in London] is a favourite of mine. It started in 1886 and apart from the tennis courts, it has squash courts and real tennis courts, games that are played with handmade balls and handmade rackets. There are two real tennis courts at Lord's [cricket ground], and there's one at Hampton Court. It's where tennis began – it's a big room with roofs; you serve the ball up onto the roof, and when it comes down, it's in play – it's quite a fascinating game. And there's also a game called rackets, played in a large squash court, which is painted black. The ball is very similar to a marble as it ricochets around at huge speed.

Tottenham Hotspur Stadium, which is one of the new pictures in *London: Secret and Hidden Places*, is fascinating. There are 32 lifts, seven escalators, a microbrewery and a kart track. The brewery is fantastic: the glasses are filled 'bottom-up' from a hole in the

base. The stadium also has a second pitch, which sits underneath the football pitch. It has an NFL [American National Football League] field of artificial turf that takes about 25 minutes to roll out. Again, the stadium cost an enormous amount of money to develop.

Is trying to capture the magnificence of these spaces your aesthetic approach when taking the photographs?

Yes, I'm trying to capture the feel of it. I quite often do a search online before I set off to see what other photographers have done, because I'm careful not to copy other people's work. It's good to see what other photographers have done, then think about how I can do it better or differently.

I also have to mention the wonderful digital retouching [service] that adds value to my photography. The images aren't enhanced too much, though, just a few adjustments to bring them to life.

Above (top): The drawing room in Emery Walker House with a portrait of Emery Walker over the fireplace.

Above: A recreated drawing room of 1830, based on several first-floor spaces of the period, in the Museum of the Home in Hoxton.



Peter Dazeley

When you arrive at a space you haven't visited before, is it obvious where you need to stand for the best view, or do you try a series of different options?

At most locations, I would have taken way more pictures than were ever used. I don't quite know how to describe my process: I just know when it feels right. And that's the way I've always worked.

Which photos that appear in *London: Secret and Hidden Places* are you most pleased with?

I love the Theatre Royal Drury Lane picture because it's such an important theatre, and it's mind-boggling how expensive the refurbishment was. The Bloomberg Building is an amazing piece of architecture in the middle of the City of London – I think it's beautiful.

And you managed to include the Crystal Palace Subway in the book, too...

Yes, this was on the cover of one of the previous books, *London Explored*. It was one of the more difficult locations to photograph because access had to be agreed with the local council and the local community, which took a long time. When I eventually managed to get in, I was amazed. The subway takes you back in

time, because it was built so that first-class passengers could get into the Crystal Palace [a Victorian exhibition venue in south London that burned down in 1936] in the shortest possible time, whereas all the other passengers had to clamber out of the station and cross a busy road [Crystal Palace Parade]. The subway was very much of its time – all about social class.

How many of the locations in the book can be visited by members of the public?

You can get access to a lot of them, I believe. Every September, the Open House Festival weekend offers a programme of guided tours of some of London's historic buildings, as well as drop-in visits to them, and there are walking tours of districts across the capital.

You've said that dyslexia has helped you succeed as a photographer. Could you tell us more?

A friend of mine is a photography journalist, and we've been doing some research on this, trying to argue that dyslexia is a superpower for problem-solving. As a photographer, I think dyslexia has had a huge impact on my life. And I was talking to her about the number of photographers – very successful ones – who are dyslexic. I find that it's tough for dyslexics to make their way in life, so I talk to schools and try to push the fact that dyslexics have a different way of looking at things, just as photographers have a different way of seeing, and dyslexia can be beneficial for this. Some people won't agree with me, but I believe dyslexia can be more of an asset than people imagine. ●

Above: The central ramp in the Bloomberg London office building, part of a triple helix spiralling over six floors.



Peter Dazeley

London: Secret and Hidden Places by Peter Dazeley, with text by Mark Daly, is published by Frances Lincoln (ISBN 978-1-80570-545-1), priced £40/\$50, and is on sale now. www.quarto.com

"I like to see what other photographers have done, then think about how I can do it better"

Next month

ON TEST

OM System PEN
Sony FE 400mm
F4.5 GM OSS
DxO Nik
Collection 9

REGULARS

Photo Skills
Camera Clinic
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HOW TO SHOOT WOODLANDS

How to capture flora and fungi photos like a pro

✔ Technique ✔ Settings ✔ Kit tips

ON SALE Thursday 5 Nov

Contents subject to change

A Canon EOS R6 Mark II camera body is shown from a front-three-quarter view, with its lens mount open, revealing the sensor. A Canon RF lens is shown in the top right corner, angled towards the camera body. The background is a solid dark green.

Your

Black

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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!



Evening Standard / Stringer/ Getty

- 7 Which genre is Art Wolfe best known for photographing?
☐ A Portraits
☐ B Food
☐ C Sports
☐ D Nature
- 8 What does the small button that's found on the base of many 35mm film cameras do?
☐ A Releases the lens
☐ B Allows you to rewind the film
☐ C Depth of field preview
☐ D Turns on the light meter
- 9 Which superhero has an alter-ego who works as a freelance photographer for a newspaper?
☐ A Batman
☐ B Superman
☐ C Spider-Man
☐ D Black Panther
- 10 Who invented the Polaroid camera (below)?
☐ A Edwin Land
☐ B Oskar Barnack
☐ C George Eastman
☐ D Henry Polaro



Bettmann / Getty

- 1 Who is the photographer in this picture?
☐ A Lord Lichfield
☐ B Lord Snowdon
☐ C Duke of Richmond
☐ D Duke of Gloucester
- 2 How old is the Ricoh GR series this year?
☐ A 20 years
☐ B 25 years
☐ C 30 years
☐ D 40 years
- 3 Who had a hit with a song that has the lyrics 'aperture lets the light in'?
☐ A Ed Sheeran
☐ B Harry Styles
☐ C Shawn Mendes
☐ D Benson Boone
- 4 Which company has just launched its second Pal compact camera?
☐ A Canon
☐ B Fujifilm
☐ C Kodak
☐ D Yashica
- 5 What is the latest Dyson device to feature a built-in camera?
☐ A Hand drier
☐ B Cordless vacuum cleaner
☐ C Washing machine
☐ D Toothbrush
- 6 Which brand pioneered pre-capture on mirrorless cameras?
☐ A Olympus
☐ B Panasonic
☐ C Nikon
☐ D Sony



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 1B,2C,3B,4B,5D,6A,7D,8B,9C,10A

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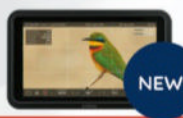
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