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Noticeably Improve Your Macro Photography with a Cheap Plastic Cup



Hand-held macro photography presents a lot of challenges, but three of the most prevalent are: subject movement, camera shake, and harsh shadows. Fortunately, you don't have to carry around a bunch of gear to solve these issues. In fact, a cheap plastic cup will do the trick all by itself!

In a fantastic tip shared over on Lynda, photographer Joseph Linaschke explains how a cheap, frosted plastic cup solved each of these three issues for him.

First, the setup. You'll need some plastic cups, scissors, your camera, and (optional) some gaffer's tape:

Once you have all that, just cut a hole in the bottom of the cup that is big enough to just barely fit over your lens. If you do a good job, says Linaschke, it'll snap right now!

He chose to use some gaffer's tape because the cup cracked after repeatedly snapping it onto and off of his Panasonic LUMIX 45mm f/2.8 lens, but it's up to you whether or not you want to copy him there.



Once it's attached, you can get to shooting. Just set the cup over your subject and snap away — all three of your problems are solved. If the subject is moving, they're now trapped; if you're shaking, you now have an extra point of stabilization without lugging around a tripod; and the clear cup acts as a diffuser that softens any harsh light:



Test Your Camera – ISO Performance

Knowing the maximum ISO your camera can handle is an essential piece of information.

- In the worst case scenarios, it's better to increase your ISO & capture a sharp image with slight noise, than to keep your ISO low & have a blurry image without noise.

It's possible to fix high ISO noise with noise reduction software. It's impossible to fix a blurry image.

Out of focus images are NEVER useable where high ISO images many times are.

Knowing the maximum ISO your camera can handle, while providing acceptable image quality, will allow you to easily increase your ISO while shooting, without worry.

Here are the steps to find your maximum ISO value:

1. Setup your camera during the day.
2. Pick a random composition.
3. Focus your composition.
4. Take 1 image at your base ISO setting. This varies camera by camera.
5. Take another image at ISO200
6. Take Another Image at ISO400
7. Continue to increase the ISO by 1 stop intervals taking pictures at each.
8. Repeat with 10 or more images until you reach your maximum ISO setting.
9. Load all images into Lightroom or Camera RAW.
10. Compare images at 100% zoom / resolution.
11. Determine the highest ISO which you deem acceptable and remember this value.

For all images after the value apply noise reduction.

Determine the highest ISO setting which provides acceptable image quality, with noise reduction applied.

Now you know the maximum ISO, which can be used in the field, without having to sacrifice image quality.

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Links of Interest:

Shooting by Moonlight - http://www.macworld.com/article/142209/2009/08/snapshot_moonlight.html?

PhotoStartSheet.com - <http://www.photostartsheet.com/>

Federation of Camera Clubs [NSW] - <http://www.photographyNSW.org.au/>

Australian Photographic Society - <http://www.a-p-s.org.au/>

Gurushots - <https://gurushots.com/>

Free Lessons with Serge Ramelli - <http://photoserge.com/free-lessons/all>

Emotional Impact of Colour in Landscape Photography

By Charlotte Gibb



What goes into creating an emotionally compelling colour landscape photograph? Certainly, subject matter is very important, as well as composition and light, but purposeful and intelligent use of colour in landscape photography can bring a deeper meaning to your images and create more emotional impact.

The cool tones of granite are contrasted with the golden tones of reflected light from above on the shallow creek bed below.

The great painters understood how to use colour to create a specific mood and evoke a desired emotional response. For example, Abstract Expressionists, such as Clyfford Still (1904-1980), relied entirely on colour to convey emotion in their paintings. But although painters create art with paint, we landscape photographers make art with light, and only with the light that is available to us in nature. So, how can you use the symbolic power of color to give your images more emotional impact?

First, we need to understand how we perceive specific colours, how the physical mechanics of color perception function, and how our cultural and gender biases come into play. There's a lot to this topic, so let's just start with the primary colours: blue, yellow, and red.

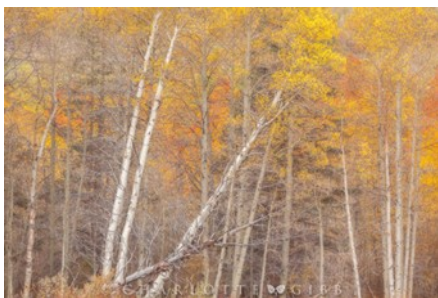
Blue

On this morning, the whole world seemed to be a soft shade of blue. I used horizontal lines of the waves to emphasize the peacefulness of the scene.

Blue is certainly a very common colour in landscape photography, as it is the colour of the sky and water. Blue has a calming effect on people because we tend to associate blue with trust, strength and purity, as in the ocean. Dark blue signifies dignity and intelligence, while light blue evokes feelings of serenity and peace. It is a spiritual colour too, used in ancient art to represent the heavens. The coolest of all colours, it tends to recede because of how our eyes perceive it. It is also interesting to note that blue is the number one favourite colour in the world.



Yellow



The yellow-ness of this ancient grove of Aspen struck me as cheerful dancers, two of the trees locked in a dipping swoon.

The most luminous and visible in the entire spectrum, yellow is the one colour that catches our attention more than any other because our eyes process yellow first before other colours. As such, it can seem a secondary light source when it is present. It is a happy colour, full of energy, optimism, and imagination. In just about every culture, yellow represents sunshine and warmth, and in many religions, it is the colour that is most often associated with the divine. Men, interestingly, tend to regard yellow as a child-like colour.



Red

As if El Capitan in Yosemite is not dramatic enough, the clouds swirling around her summit lit up bright red at sunset, giving the scene a sense of excitement. A vertical orientation accentuates dramatic lines of the cliff and the clouds.

Red is the colour of action, danger, and adventure. It is associated with courage and bravery. Landscape photos with red in them demand attention. Our primal selves react to red because it is the colour of fire and blood, yet red is considered good luck in Asia and is the most popular colour in China. In fact, red is one of the top two favourite colours of all people, only after blue. Red is probably the most stimulating of colours, evoking intense, strong emotional responses. Some studies have even shown that red can elevate blood pressure, increase respiratory rates and raise confidence. Because of the way our eyes physically adapt to process red, we perceive red as advancing.

I made this photograph during “the blue hour” – that magical time of day between day and night when the little light that is still visible is a pleasing shade of blue.

Developing an eye for colour in landscape photography takes time and practice. Start by training yourself to recognize and see colour in natural scenes as design elements, noting what emotions colour is evoking in yourself.



Blue is a calming colour and is frequently used in landscape photography. Reflections, because they represent stability, contribute to the overall peacefulness of this image. Placing key elements in the centre of the frame and placing the horizon in the middle creates a sense of balance, adding to the feeling of serenity.



Does a blue sky reflected in blue water give you a feeling of peace and tranquillity? What can you do compositionally to accentuate the blue-ness and peacefulness of the scene?

In contrast to the image above, this red sunset against looming storm clouds create a sense of danger and excitement. By placing the horizon in the lower quadrant of the image, the dramatic clouds and red in the scene are emphasized.

Does red in a scene create emotional excitement? How can you place key colour elements in your composition to create focus and impact?

https://visualwilderness.com/composition-creativity/color-landscape-photography-1?utm_source=InFocus+Newsletter&utm_campaign=2b7b2b781f-%2386R+-+Emotional+Impact+of+Color&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_3ccc283110-2b7b2b781f-124216473&mc_cid=2b7b2b781f&mc_eid=a79ad7180a

The Best Method For Fireworks

By Levi Sim

Making a good fireworks picture is satisfying and difficult. So here are two tips for making great fireworks photos.

f/8, 3 Seconds, ISO 400 on a Tripod

Use a tripod for this technique. It doesn't have to be fancy. I used the Platypod Ultra with a Vanguard TBH-50 head for all the pictures in this post.

Try those settings (f/8, 3 Seconds, ISO 400) and you can't go wrong. To adjust how bright the fireworks streams are, change the aperture. A smaller aperture, like f/11, will make the fireworks darker, f/5.6 will make them brighter. f/8 is a good starting point. If you make them too bright, you'll lose colour intensity.

If you want to adjust how long the streams are, change the shutter speed. Longer speeds, like 5 seconds, will make longer trails, but it will also make bunches of bursts brighter. That is to say, when many rockets go up at the same time, a longer shutter speed will record all those launches and they will be recorded on top of each other and you'll end up with a really bright spot where they overlap, as in this picture.



If you want to lift the brightness of the whole picture, you can turn up the ISO. Don't be shy about it, either. High ISO is your friend, and I doubt you'll need to go above 1600. If you raise the ISO, you may want to close the aperture a little more to darken the streams of sparks back to where they were.

Please remember: you're shooting a black sky and un-lit foreground at night time. It's supposed to be dark. This picture will look mostly black with highlights of fireworks. Your histogram will look terrible, like a U with an empty centre. It's fine. It's night time.

Shoot a Time lapse

A time-lapse video speeds up time and shows change very quickly. In this case, you should just shoot the frames for a time-lapse, not a video. Many Nikons have this ability, but you should choose Interval Shooting, not Time lapse (this setting makes the video only). All Lumix cameras can shoot a time-lapse sequence and leave you with all the individual pictures, and your camera may have a built-in intervalometer, too.

Set your interval to the minimum, which is usually 1 second. That means it will take pictures with a 1-second space between frames. Set the number of shots to something very high, like 9999 so that you don't have to worry about it stopping in the middle of the show.

If you don't have a built-in setting, you can buy an external intervalometer to control your camera and make pictures over time. You can buy an expensive branded one or an inexpensive off-brand tool. I'd go with the off-brand tool, just make sure you buy the one designed to mate with your camera model so it's got the right kind of plug.

The benefit to using an intervalometer to shoot a time-lapse sequence is that you won't miss any

shots and you can just sit back and enjoy the show with your friends and family while your camera is working away making great pictures.



Frame, Focus, Format, Let ‘er Rip

To get setup, just frame your shot how you like. If it’s already dark outside, you can turn the ISO up as high as possible and make a picture at a faster shutter speed, like 1/20th of a second, to see what your composition looks like. Once you’ve got the correct framing, drop the settings back down to f/8, 3 seconds, ISO 400.

You’ll need to switch to manual focus so the camera doesn’t have trouble hunting for focus while shooting your interval. First, use autofocus to focus on something about the same distance away as the fireworks will be. If it’s dark, use the center-most focus point and focus on a light source.



You’ll be making a lot of pictures, so be sure to format your memory card before starting. Try to use a fast card, too. If your card is too slow, the camera won’t be able to record more pictures until some are written to the card and you’ll miss a few pictures here and there.

Now just start the interval and enjoy the show. Best of all, you can use the pictures to make a time-lapse video if you like.

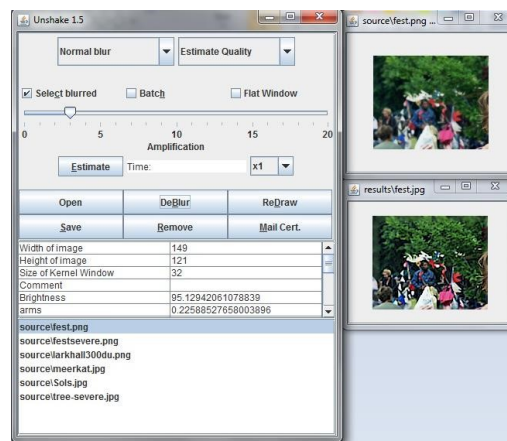
Conclusion

These simple exposure settings will give you good basic results for shooting fireworks. Use an intervalometer to let the camera work automatically and you can enjoy the show and make fun pictures at the same time.

Unshake Version 1.5

To get the best out of Unshake you need to do quite a bit of trial and error testing to determine which parameter settings yield the most acceptable results. Most of the time the improvement is considerably better than that obtainable by using simple sharpening filters like those that can be found in digital editing software such as Photoshop; it all depends on the nature of the blur in a particular photograph.

Unshake does not require installing as it's a Java program and will run on any computer including Windows, Macs and Linux boxes that have Sun Java installed.

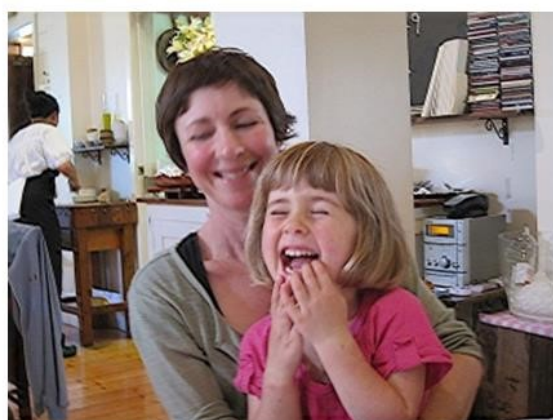


On a Windows PC you need to unzip the download file to a folder then run the program called "launch" from that folder.

Original Photo



After deblurring with Unshake



Here is a before and after sample photo I processed with Unshake.

Here is a before and after sample photo I processed with Unshake.

Unshake is not a tool that you will use everyday but is a handy addition to your toolkit should you need to improve a valuable photograph that can not be replaced.

So next time you find a wonderful photo that's been blurred by movement, do try Unshake. You may be pleasantly surprised at the results.

Unshake Version 1.5 Release 1

Download link: <https://unshake.en.softonic.com/> (0.99MB)

System requirements: Works on any Windows, with Sun Java installed.
Free for non-commercial use

WISH.com

<https://www.wish.com/>

Wish.com is an online shopping “bazaar” that gives members access to thousands of different products across multiple categories, all at ultra-low prices. You can log in with your Facebook ID and type in what you are looking for, eg. Photography, and get 1.000’s of entries to view. Be warned that because the prices are low it can be addictive. Below is a sample from the site.



Handheld Video Stabilizer System for DSLR, DV, SLR, Digital Camera, Camcorder and Smartphones Like Apple iPhone5, 5S, 6, 6S, 7 (Regular & Plus), Android Smartphones (Color: Red)

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Description

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High Quality Combination With a flexible handle and universal head, comfortable non-slip hand, aluminum alloy material, lightweight and durable. The above features can be arbitrarily chosen fixed handle screw holes, allowing users to easily make the camera equilibrium and stable shooting.

Flexible Adjustment The curved design, a simple adjustment effort is good. Two counterweight weights, random deletions.

Better Protection Turn the knob is very flexible and smooth, with a main bracket rubber pad to protect the camera dock is not worn.

Voice-controlled photo editing: coming soon to Photoshop?

Adobe Research is experimenting with a voice-controlled photo editing virtual assistant. A demo video uploaded to Adobe's YouTube account shows how the tool might function, performing and undoing basic edits to an image, and exporting the final product to Facebook – all achieved through spoken commands.

The demo site shows this feature being used for extremely basic editing functions (cropping, flipping an image), which Adobe calls 'a first step towards a robust multimodal voice-based interface' for its mobile applications.

Given that voice control is popping up in just about every gadget you can think of, it seems logical for Adobe to be considering adding voice control to its apps. The Internet of Things is rapidly turning out to be the Internet of Shouting at Things, so voice-controlled photo editing seems inevitable. https://www.dpreview.com/news/8492694517/adobe-researching-voice-controlled-photo-editing?ref_=pe_1822230_223399600_dpr_nl_242_67

How to Use AutoFocus on Your Digital SLR

By [Robert Correll](#)

To autofocus (AF) using the viewfinder, compose the scene, then press and hold the shutter button on your dSLR halfway down. It's pretty simple. If you like, you can customize the autofocus system to meet your needs or to deal with more difficult situations.

AF points on a dSLR

While *AF points* are the specific spot in the camera's viewfinder that's used to focus. The AF points that come up in your viewfinder aren't just there for show. The camera uses them to identify the subject and focus. You may need to take control and select the AF point yourself. Your two AF point selection options follow:

Automatic AF point selection: You let the camera decide which points to use. Most of the time, it does a pretty good job. However, it does have a tendency to focus on the closest object, whether that's what you intend or not.

Automatic AF point selection may not be precise enough when you're working with extremely shallow depths of field (the area that appears in focus) or when needing to focus on one of several objects at different distances.

Manual AF point selection: You select the AF point yourself. You generally have to press an AF Point Selection button or make a menu choice to make your selection. Depending on your camera, you may be able to choose a point, a zone, a group of points, a dynamic group of points, or other AF point selection methods.

AF modes on a dSLR

Your camera also has *AF modes*, which determine whether the camera focuses once and then beeps or continues to focus (which is helpful for moving subjects). You may be able to choose from these different AF modes:

- **Single focus:** The camera focuses once and beeps at you. The AF point used might light up in the viewfinder. This works well for portraits and other non-moving subjects. Also called *one shot* or *single-servo AF*.
- **Continuous focus:** The camera focuses continually for as long as you hold the shutter halfway down. Use this mode to track moving subjects, or if you're moving. Continuous focus is also called *AI servo* or *continuous-servo AF*.

Automatic switching: In this mode, the camera automatically switches between single focus and continuous focus as the need arises. Also called *AI focus* or *auto-servo AF*.

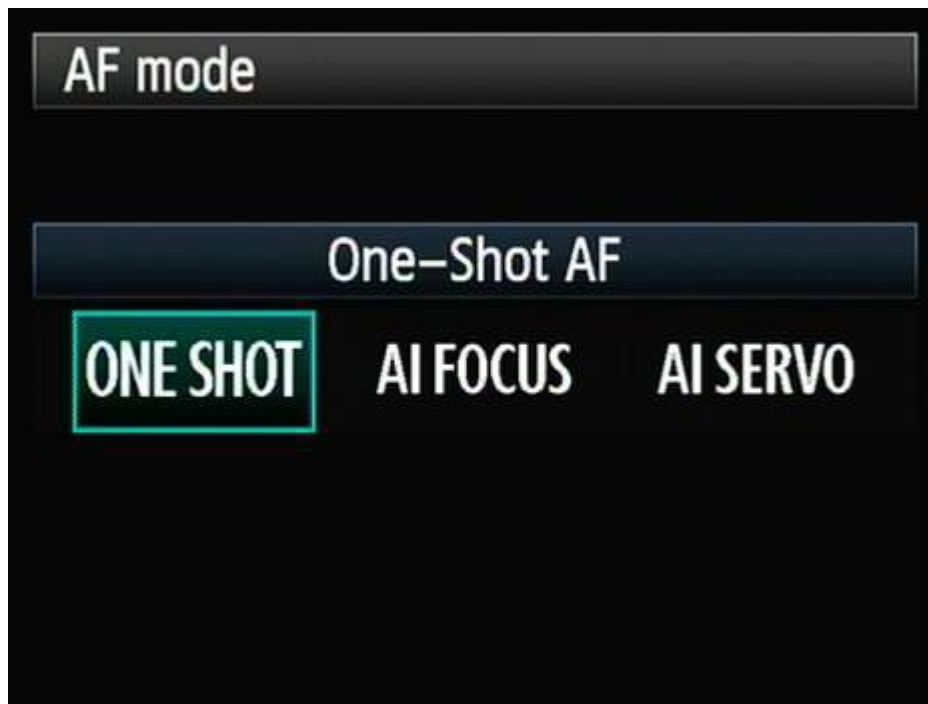
Autofocus can work differently when you're in Live view mode. With some cameras, and in some modes, you basically point and shoot. At times, however, you have to use focusing tools specifically designed for Live view.

Canon cameras, for instance, offer three Live view AF modes: Live mode, Face Detection Live mode, and Quick mode. They all have their pros, cons, and quirks. New Nikon cameras like the D3200, on the other hand, offer four AF area modes when in Live view: Face-priority AF, Wide-area AF, Normal-area AF, and Subject-tracking AF.

Keep these tips in mind when using autofocus:

- **Check focus:** One really cool thing about focusing in Live view is that you can often zoom in and check your focus very precisely.
- **Buttons and functions:** You may be able to press another button (instead of the Shutter button) to autofocus. This reduces the chances of accidentally taking photos when focusing. You may also be able to change button assignments.

Low light: In low light, you may have an AF-Assist beam shine out from the camera or flash to help the camera lock onto the target. If this bothers you, you may be able to disable it. Other cameras use a pulse from the built-in flash to help autofocus.



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<http://www.dummies.com/photography/digital-photography/how-to-use-autofocus-on-your-digital-slr/>

Newsletter Archive.

Just a reminder that our Newsletter is Archived on our Website, So if you wanted to refer back to an article that we have run, you could do so there.

Sell my Photos, Who to.

Photography is a hard business to break into, especially the upper brackets. But the internet does make it possible to earn a few dollars off of your photos — especially if you've found some great shots. More and more people have what amount to high-quality digital cameras these days and, if you're one of them, at least a few of your photos may be able to make you a little money as stock photos. There are many sites that will allow you to upload your photos and sell them as stock photography.

I wouldn't suggest stock photography as a 'get rich quick scheme,' of course. Most sites are looking for a certain level of work, which isn't out of reach for amateur photographers but does require a little extra effort. If you do want to make more than a few dollars through selling stock photography, it's a good idea to practice beyond your family snapshots. A quick head's up: most sites have been inundated with everyone's travel and family photos for the past ten years. You're more likely to sell if you've got something a little different.

5 Stock Photography Sites

iStockphoto As far as stock photography sites go, iStockphoto is pretty well known. They've been in business since 2001 and have an extensive collection of stock photography to sell. In order to contribute your work, you'll need to sign up for a free iStockphoto account. You'll also be asked to read a manual on the site's quality standards and answer a short quiz. Lastly, iStockphoto wants to see three samples of your best photography. It may sound like a lot of work, but if your photos pass iStockphoto's standards, it's one of the best options for selling stock photography. iStockphoto has much higher traffic than many other stock photography site and sells more photos. You'll get 20 to 40 percent of all downloads of your photos.

Stockxpert Stockxpert offers a respectable reach: it's paired with [stock.xchng](http://stock.xchng.com), a site where a huge number of people look for free photos. Stockxpert offers low-priced stock photos to both stock.xchng's members as well as the rest of the internet. Just like iStockphoto, Stockxpert requires that you sign up for a free account and then apply to be a seller and requires a few sample photos. You'll receive 50 percent of the price of each photo you sell.

Fotolia If you're more concerned about the percentage of royalties than anything else, Fotolia might be a good option. This site offers photographers 64 percent of sales and has a record of accepting far more photos than most other stock photography sites. It isn't necessarily my first pick: Fotolia doesn't have as much traffic as other sites. But for the right photographer, Fotolia is a good fit.

Crestock Crestock does require you to register for a free account before you really get to look at the site's terms, but the terms aren't really unusual. You'll receive 30 percent of the price of every image you sell through Crestock. Sign up is simple — that registration takes care of most of the site's requirements. As soon as you're registered, you can start uploading photos immediately. Crestock staff then review them and make them available for purchase.

Other Options

There are plenty of sites like [CafePress](http://CafePress.com) and [Photrade](http://Photrade.com) that offer you the opportunity to put your photographs on t-shirts, mugs and other items up for sale. While some people can have a lot of success selling products through such sites, that route requires a lot of marketing, as well as some pretty great photos. In contrast, the sites above pretty much require users to upload photos and walk away. Actually taking the photographs is the main area you'll need to work on; sites like iStockphoto and Stockxpert take care of marketing your work to all the designers looking for stock photography. You might find yourself doing some photo editing, of course, but you won't be expected to pay for an ad for your own work.

Like I said before, stock photography isn't a fast way to get rich. With a little work, you can post images that keep bringing in a little money long after you've submitted the file.

<http://www.lifehack.org/articles/featured/5-sites-where-you-can-sell-your-photos.html>

Photography Outings.

Bass Point Reserve - Shellharbour

Bass Point Reserve is a 72 hectare coastal jewel, located just south of Shellharbour Village and contains one of the few littoral rainforest areas in the Illawarra. The reserve is recognized as one of the most important archaeological sites on the NSW coast and is listed on the Australian Heritage Commission register. You will always be able to find something to photograph here.



Photographing Light trails [star trails]

Star Trails, Set up an ultra-long exposure, position your camera on a Tripod, point it up at a clear night sky and see the path that the stars make once your image is developed.



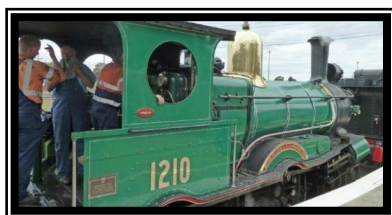
For the first time, the Fox Rollercoaster #Superflow Series 2017 sealed by Stan's will come to the hottest new gravity mountain biking venues in NSW: Green Valleys MTB Park.

The race tracks are picked so that they give the riders that "super flowy" feeling! Each track will demand different skill sets of the riders - from tricky sections around rocks and tight corners to flowy berms and quick stints that needed pedal power and endurance. This is a mountain bike event that is a competitive race but still very social - you will ride in neutral to the starts of the three race tracks and the combined race times will count.

A great chance to take some great photos.

Illawarra Light Railway Museum - Albion Park

The whole family will love cheering and waving from the steam train as it travels past the station and navigates its way through the quiet bushland setting in Albion Park. The museum also has tram and miniature train rides that let the children experience a piece of history that was enjoyed at fairs-grounds by their parents and grandparents alike.



WEBSITE of the MONTH

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Does your Canon camera have the latest firmware?

This topic is one that I often find myself explaining in more detail, and one that many people aren't even aware that they can update their camera's firmware, and how this may affect their digital camera. An analogy is to updating the version of software on your smart phone.

What is firmware and why is it important?

Inside your camera is a microprocessor (small computer), that uses software stored on non-removable flash memory inside your camera. This is called firmware and is the operating system of your camera which allows you to control the features and functions, with the camera's menus and buttons. Firmware also controls autofocus, exposure, image processing, noise reduction and other important functions within your camera. Without firmware your camera would not be able to operate.

Why check for firmware updates?

Updates generally contain fixes or feature enhancements. Firmware updates aren't always necessary – some cameras never have updates.

Where do I find the latest Firmware?

Canon EOS DSLR original firmwares

<http://pel.hu/eoscard/>

Go to the bottom of Home page on the site and you will find a listing of many of the Canon cameras.

<https://www.canon.com.au/support/support-news/firmware-updates>

For Info or Contact - dcc.newsletter.editor@gmail.com