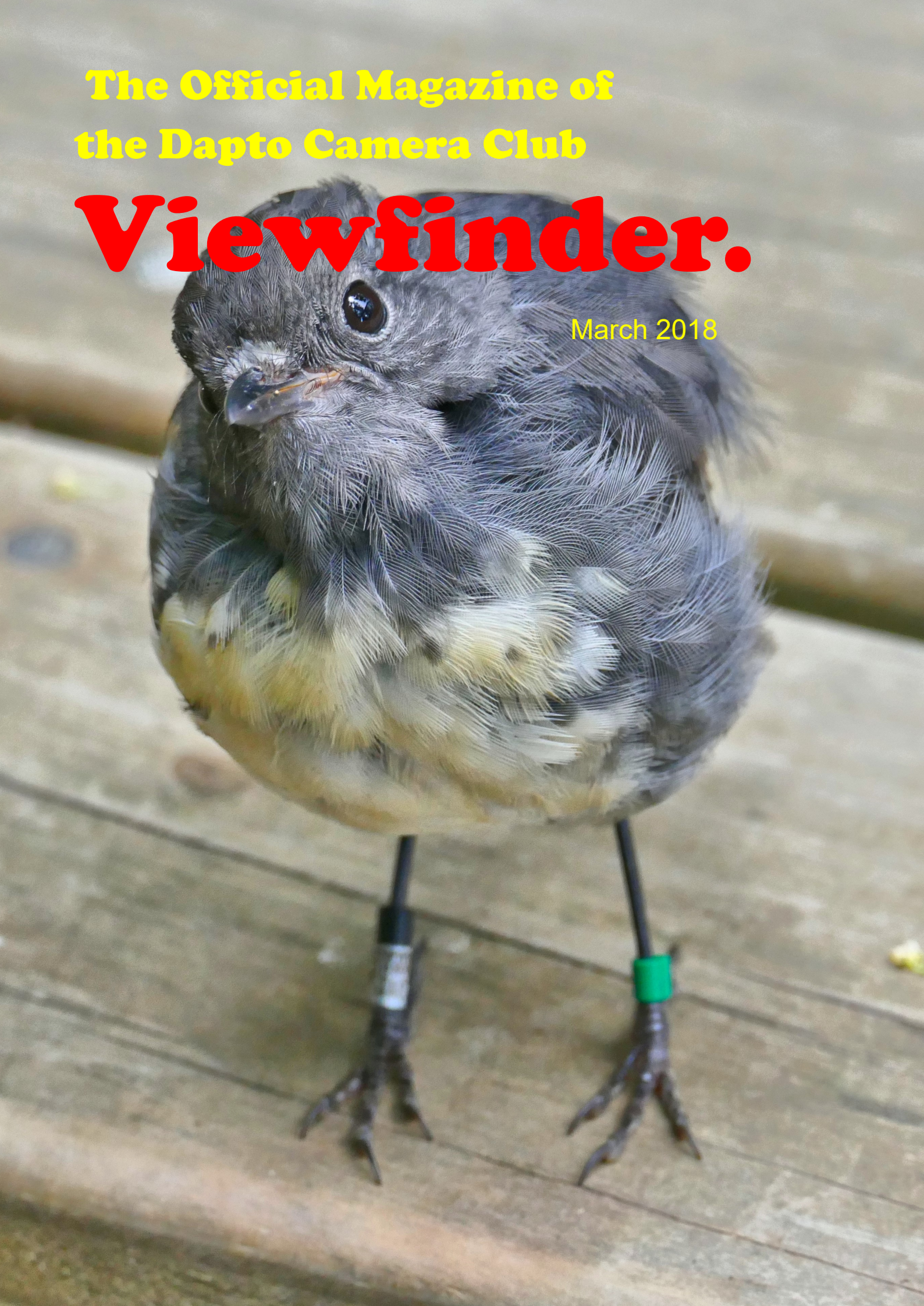
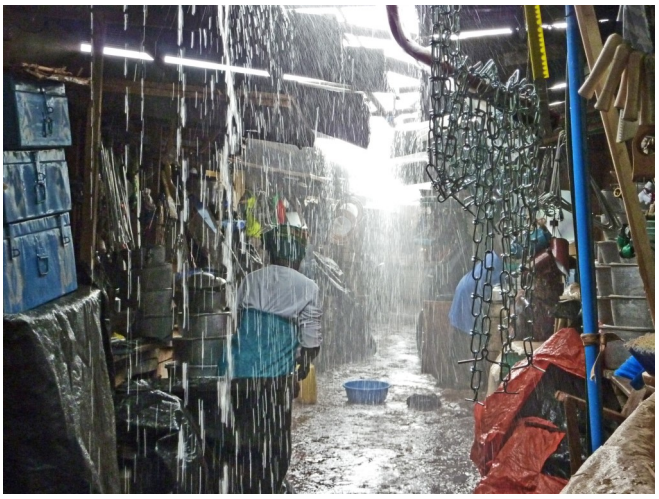
The Official Magazine of
the Dapto Camera Club

Viewfinder.

March 2018



VIEWFINDER INDEX



Winner of the Set Subject of RAIN for March was

Majorie Carvell - Storm In Market.

This months Viewfinder Cover

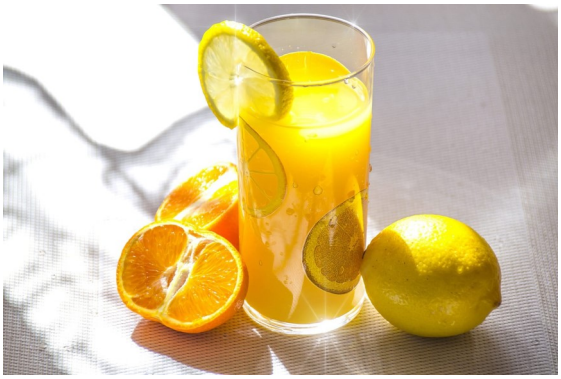
This month our cover is the overall winner of the Colour section for March Ed Higgins – Motuara Bird 1

How to Successfully Reduce Glare in Your Photos

by Christina Harman

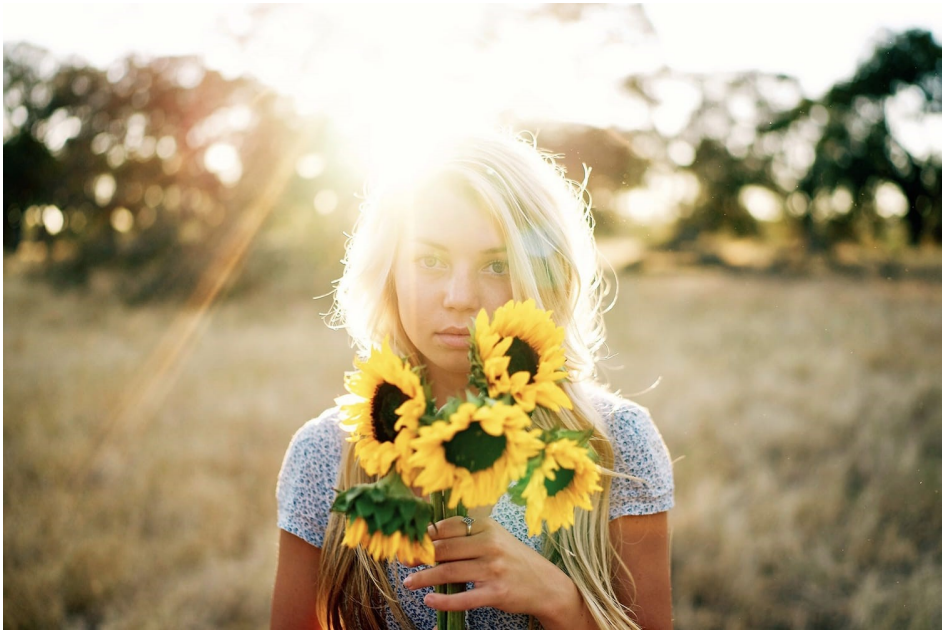
When it comes to photography, one of the most annoying issues is unsightly glare that pops up at the most inopportune moments.

Glare, essentially, is caused when a source of light hits a reflective surface. This can be seen on anything from glare on a pair of glasses when you're capturing portraits, to reflections on the surface of a body of water. Glare also commonly appears on windows, something that you've undoubtedly discovered if you've even tried taking an image through a car window!



Regardless of why it appears though, unintentional glare can ruin even the best photographs. Fortunately though, there are a number of different ways to work around, reduce, and even eliminate glare to make your images a little less, well, glaring!

With this in mind, here's a look at some tips for reducing glare in your images.



Filter the Light

If harsh sunlight is causing glare in your portraits or close-up images, consider diffusing the light. Bringing along a diffuser or even a large white sheet can help you to softly filter some of that harsh sunlight out. You may also want to use a reflector or even a fill flash, to bounce some light back onto your subjects, helping to fill in any dark shadows.

Bounce the Light

If you're shooting with a flash or external light source, bouncing the light off of another surface, instead of your subject itself, can help to reduce glare. If you're using your on-camera flash, and can't angle it in another direction, you'll want to bring along a piece of white paper or cardstock to use to bounce the light; making it softer and more appealing.

Change Positions

If you're photographing a specific subject, consider adjusting your position to see if that helps. Sometimes moving slightly so that the sun's behind your shoulder, instead of shooting directly into it, can help to reduce unwanted glare. You may also try moving your subject, so that they're more shaded from the sun or light source. Or, position them with the sun behind them for beautiful backlighting, or to their side, for more interesting lighting with fewer harsh shadows. In the case of glasses, consider having your subject angle their head slightly away from the light source, to reduce the chance of reflections on their lenses.

Consider a Different Time of Day

If the lighting in question is natural lighting, and adjusting your position isn't working, you might consider coming back when the lighting's improved. Taking photos in the middle of a bright, sun-

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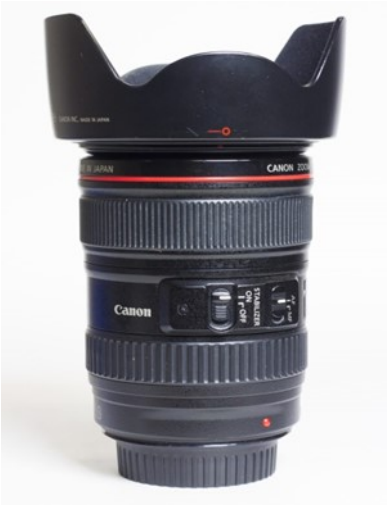
ny day for example, is a time that will be rife with glare and reflections. Instead, wait until the sun's gone down a bit in the sky for optimal lighting that's a lot easier to work with. Or, watch the skies. Clouds are your best friend when it comes to lighting, and can help to diffuse the light so there's less chance of glare.

Use a Polarizer

A polarizer can help to reduce reflections and glare, and can result in brighter, more saturated colors as well. If you have glare on the surface of the water, some foliage, rocks, or even a storefront window, try popping a circular polarizer on and rotating it until the glare disappears. If you're taking pictures of a sunset, you might consider a half-polarized filter. With this filter, you can position the polarized section over the area with glare and the non-polarized section over the sky, allowing you to preserve the vibrant colors.



Use a Lens Hood

A lens hood can be a good way to reduce one type of glare; lens flare. These hoods are designed to eliminate sunspots while still allowing in as much light in as possible. If you've got a zoom lens, using a different focal length is another simple way to decrease the impact of sunspots in your photo.

Embrace It

If you can't eliminate it, you might be able to work it into your image. Sometimes a little extra light can help to add a sense of drama and intrigue to your shots and in some cases, can add an unexpected and artistic twist as well. Just make sure the glare that you incorporate is intentional, and used to enhance the overall composition.

Create a Composite Image

If you're struggling with glare, consider taking two images with different exposures, and blending them together to create a composite image. Expose one image for the highlights, and the other for the rest of the scene. Just make sure you use a tripod and take the images in the exact same place. Then combine the two in post-processing using layers.

Remove It in Post-Processing

Finally, as a last resort you may be able to eliminate the glare in post-processing. While you can't do this if the glare is covering the subject's face or a key section of the image, if it's off to the side then you should be able to remove it fairly easily using the healing and cloning tools.

While glare can be a challenge, being able to work with and eliminate glare can help you to ensure that you don't miss out on exciting photo opportunities, just because the lighting's difficult. Take these tips into consideration, then saddle up with some extra patience and get out there. You'll be glad you did!

Tips for Using Perspective and Scale in Photography

By Wayne Turner.

The world we live in is three dimensional. We see in three dimensions, yet when we photograph, we see only two dimensions. In order to create images that add a third dimension, we need to add some perspective or depth. The big question is *what is perspective and how do we add it?*

Photo by aotaro; ISO 250, f/0, 1/60-second exposure.

Because we can't see a third dimension in our images, we need to create an impression that there is depth to the photograph. This is created by the relationship between elements in the image—showing the space between them and giving a sense of depth. Our brains need to discern which elements are near and which are far away. If we can do this, then the sense of perspective is created and the third dimension is added. So what types of perspective can be created to give this sense of depth and scale?

1. Lens perspective

Your choice of lens, whether wide angle or telephoto zoom, will determine the amount of perspective created in your photo. Although perspective doesn't actually change, you can get the impression that it does by your choice of lens. Real depth and perspective is created by wide angle lenses with elements appearing at a greater distance from each other. Telephoto lenses compress thereby giving a more crowded feeling. So lens choice is vital to creating those images with real depth.

2. Lines and perspective

Parallel lines in an image fool the brain into believing that they are moving away from the viewer. Here's how it works. Imagine looking down a row of crops or a railway line that disappears into the distance. The parallel lines never meet or touch but as they disappear an impression is given that they do. This is what fools the eye and brain into believing that there is distance in the image. It is best illustrated when using a wide angle lens. Be sure though to include the focal point which is also known as the vanishing point, which is the point where the lines disappear into nothing.

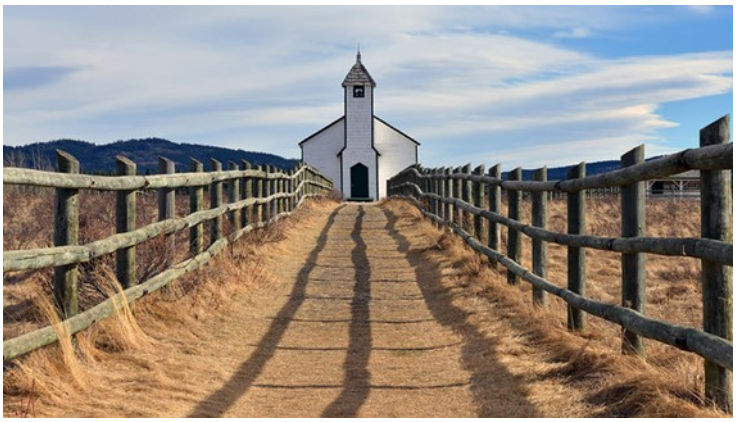


Photo by Gord McKenna; ISO 100, f/16.0, 1/125-second exposure.

3. Diminishing perspective

Diminishing perspective of scale refers to the appearance of size that our eyes see. Take for example a row of telephone poles disappearing into the distance. Our brain tells us that they all should be the same height. But, because they are all gradually getting smaller the brain says they must be getting further apart. If you use this sense of perspective you will find it extremely effective in giving depth to your images. So when you are trying to achieve this, look for fences, trees, telephone poles, and similar repeated objects to include in your photo which will help create the depth.

4. Scale and comparison

When trying to achieve a sense of scale, choose two elements with one having a recognisable height or size, e.g. a person or a vehicle. By placing them next to a large object, such as waterfall or dam wall you get an idea of how large the wall is because you know the size of the recognisable person or object. If you know the height of the person then in relation to them the dam wall must be incredibly large.

5. Stretching Perspective

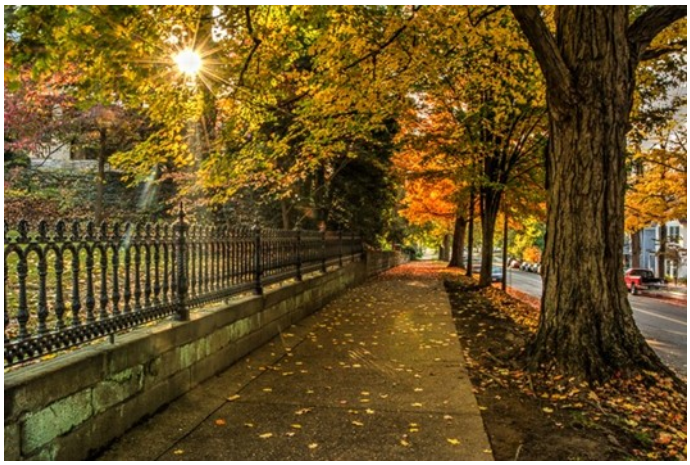
There is another very effective way of showing perspective and this is by using a wide angle lens. The lens by itself stretches the perspective naturally and this is quite dramatically increased by including an object in the foreground. When this object which you know how large it is, is compared to something in the distance such as a building or tree, the sense of scale is increased. It reveals extreme distances and gives the image real depth. This is creates a strong impression of diminishing scale or perspective.

Photos with depth or perspective are far more dynamic and dramatic, revealing that third dimension lacking in most images. If you are able to implement this as you learn digital photography, then you are well on the way to stunning images. Happy shooting!

Understanding Depth of Field for Beginners

By: Bruce Wunderlich

You may have heard the term depth of field (DoF), but if you are new to photography you may not yet be taking advantage of how DoF can enhance your photos. A basic definition of depth of field is: the zone of acceptable sharpness within a photo that will appear in focus. In every picture there is a certain area of your image in front of, and behind the subject that will appear in focus.



This zone will vary from photo to photo. Some images may have very small zones of focus which is called shallow depth of field. Others may have a very large zone of focus which is called deepdepth of field. Three main factors that will affect how you control thedepth of field of your images are: aperture (f-stop), distance from the subject to the camera, and focal length of the lens on your camera. Here are some explanations and answers to other common questions concerningdepth of field.

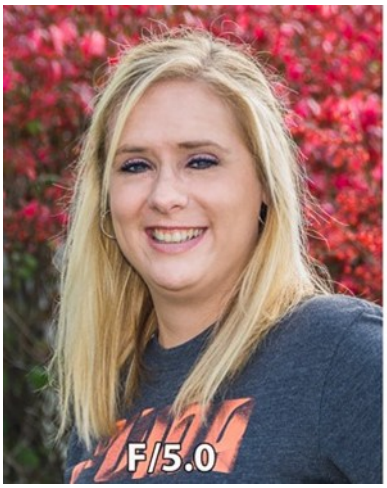
How does aperture control depth of field?

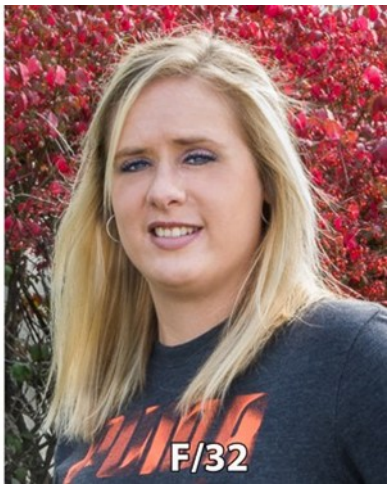
Aperture refers to the access given to light from the lens to the camera sensors. The size of your aperture (the diameter of the hole through which light enters the camera) controls the amount of light entering your lens. Using the aperture (f-stop) of your lens is the simplest way to control your depth of field as you set up your shot.

Large aperture = Small f-number = Shallow (small) depth of field
Small aperture = Larger f-number = Deeper (larger) depth of field

It may be easier to remember this simple concept: The lower your f-number, the smaller your depth of field. Likewise, the higher your f-number, the larger your depth of field. For example, using a setting of f/2.8 will produce a very shallow depth of field while f/11 will produce a deeper DoF.

The image on the left was captured at 250th of a second at f/5.0 which resulted in a very shallow depth of field. Because of this the background is out of focus allowing the subject to stand out. The image on the right was captured at 1/5th of a second at f/32 which created a deep depth of field and a sharper background.





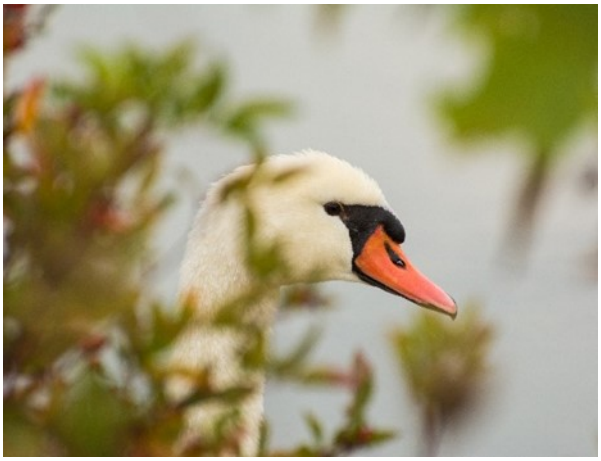
How does distance control depth of field?

The closer your subject is to the camera, the shallower your depth of field becomes. Therefore, moving further away from your subject will deepen your depth of field.

How does the focal length of a lens control depth of field?

Focal Length refers to the capability of a lens to magnify the image of a distant subject. This can get complicated, but the simple answer is that the longer you set your focal length the shallower the depth of field. Example: Your subject is 10 meters (33 feet) away, using a focal length of 50mm at f/4; your depth of field range would be from 7.5 -14.7 meters (24.6-48 feet) for a total DOF of 7.2

meters (23.6 feet). If you zoom into 100mm from the same spot, the depth of field changes to 9.2-10.9m (30.1-35.8′) for a total of 1.7m (5.7′) of depth of field. But if you move to 20m (66′) away from your subject using the 100mm lens, your depth of field is almost the same as it would be at 10 meters using a 50mm lens.



This image of a swan hiding in the tall foliage was captured from about 5m (16′) with a 300mm focal length lens. This combination of focal length and distance created a depth of field of approximately 5cm (2″).

What if I just have a point and shoot camera, or don't know how to change those settings?

Even with a point and shoot camera, there are ways to control your depth of field. In the Scene Modes menu, look for a symbol of a human head, which is the setting for portraits. This will give you a narrow depth of field. In the same menu there is also a mountain symbol, which is a setting for landscapes, which will give you a deeper depth of field.

If you are a beginner with a DSLR there are some simple ways you can control depth of field and still use and automatic shooting mode. By choosing Aperture Priority mode you can set your aperture to get the depth of field that you want, and the camera will automatically set the shutter speed.

Can I set the depth of field exactly for each situation?

Yes, but because changing your aperture affects your shutter speed, the result may not meet the needs of your image. For instance, if you are trying to increase your depth of field by reducing aperture size you will also need to increase (slow down) your shutter speed which could make your image blurry. Understanding how all these settings work together can increase your control over depth of field.

Is depth of field equally distributed in front and back of my focus point?

No, it's usually about one third in front and two thirds behind your focal point, but as your focal length increases it becomes more equal.

How will understanding depth of field improve my images?

Managing depth of field is one of the most important tools at your disposal, because having tack sharp images is one of the most important factors to getting that great shot. Knowing how to make the parts of your image you want sharp and the parts you want to be out of focus, is a great artistic tool to create great images.

Getting the right depth of field for your shot can make all the difference.

When should I use a shallow depth of field?

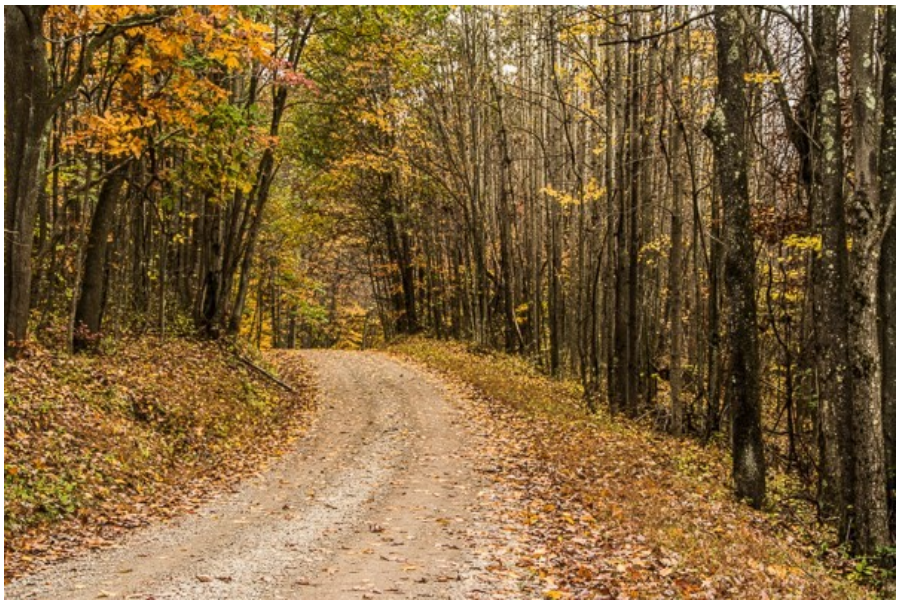
Using a shallow depth of field is a good way to make your subject stand out from its background and is great for portrait photography. Shallow DoF can also be useful in wildlife photography, where you want the subject to stand out from its surroundings. This is also useful because many wildlife photo opportunities are low light situations, and increasing your aperture size will give you more light. Shallow depth of field is also effective for sports photography where many times you

want to separate the athlete from the background to bring attention to them. The result of this should also help give you a fast enough shutter speed to freeze the action.

This image captured at 300mm focal length and f/5.6 produced a very shallow depth of field. Because of this, it is important to set your focal point on the subject's eye. Notice how the bird pops out from the background.

When should I use deeper depth of field?

In landscape photography it is important to get as much of your scene in focus as possible. By using a wide angle lens and a small aperture you will be able maximize your depth of field to get your scene in focus.



This landscape was captured with a 50mm focal length at f/16. The focus point was set at 8 meters, which made everything from 4 meters to infinity in focus.

How can you determine depth of field?

There are several on-line sites that will provide depth of field charts for your camera and lenses. Also, there are a number of apps available for smart phone users that can calculate it for you while you're in the field. Most cameras have a DoF preview button which will give you a preview as you look through the eye piece. (This is probably the easiest and most under-utilized method.) Using this button may cause your image to appear darker as you view it through the eye piece, but not to worry. Your image will be properly exposed as long as you have the correct exposure settings.

Can depth of field be adjusted to get everything in focus?

Yes, using what is called the hyperfocal distance. When you are focused at the hyperfocal distance, your depth of field will extend from half the distance to your focal point to infinity. Use a DOF calculator to find your hyperfocal distance. If you don't have a DoF calculator, a good rule of thumb is to focus a third of the way into the scene. Using an aperture of about f/11 or higher with a wide angle lens will maximize your depth of field.

What about depth of field in macro photography?

Because most macro images are produced in low light and with a longer focal length, the depth of field is often very shallow. Adjust your lens to the smallest aperture that the light will allow. It may also be necessary to increase your ISO to allow you to properly expose the image and to maximize your depth of field. Still, in many macro images your DoF may be very minute. With this very narrow focus it becomes necessary to use a tripod, because even the slightest movement of

the camera will move your macro subject outside your depth of field.

This 120 mm macro even at f/8 still has a very shallow depth of field.

What is bokeh?

Bokeh (boh-ke) comes from the Japanese word meaning blur. This effect is produced by the out-of -focus areas in your image that are beyond the depth of field. Bokeh commonly refers to the pleasing circle shapes caused by the shape of the lens aperture. Usually created when shooting with your aperture wide open, such as f/2.8, bokeh can also be created with smaller apertures if the background is distant enough.
Bokeh in this image was created by the distance of the subject to the background, which fell well beyond the depth of field.

To summarize controlling depth of field:

Increase depth of field

- Narrow your aperture (larger f-number)
- Move farther from the subject

Shorten focal length

Decrease depth of field

- Widen your aperture (smaller f-number)
- Move closer to the subject
- Lengthen your focal length

Take control of your depth of field. Understanding how these adjustments control your it will greatly improve your photography. What questions do you have about depth of field? the camera will move your macro subject outside your depth of field.

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Take control of your depth of field. Understanding how these adjustments control your it will greatly improve your photography. What questions do you have about depth of field?

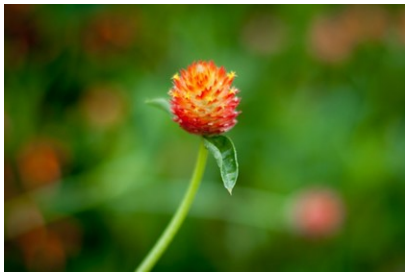
3 Tips for Taking Photos of Flowers

By: Simon Ringsmuth

Flowers are everywhere, and sometimes just the thought of going out to take pictures of their pretty petals can seem downright cliché, because so many people do it. However, one reason flower photography is so popular is because these kinds of pictures can capture incredible beauty, without a great deal of effort. It's fun to go outside and document the incredible array of colors that can be found in flowers, but it's just as common to look at your photos later and discover that they might not be as good as you had hoped.

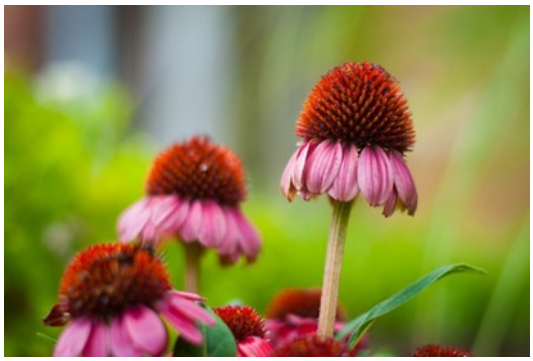
Fortunately there are a few easy steps you can take to not only improve your own flower photography, but help you get out and enjoy the beauty of nature while you're at it.

Everyone has their own unique style when it comes to photography, and taking pictures of flowers is no exception. Some people like flowers in isolation, whereas some like to see a whole field of blossoms in one shot. Some like to use techniques such as over-saturation or selective coloring, while others find these approaches distasteful. Therefore the following tips are not to be considered universal, or the be-all-end-all when it comes to taking pictures of flowers. They are a few lessons I have learned over the years that work for me, and hopefully they will give you something to think about the next time you step out to capture the beauty of nature.



Give your image a clear focal point

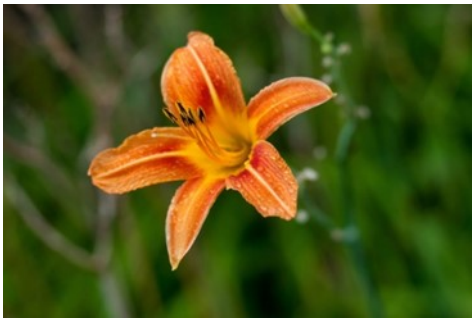
All good photos have a subject, or something on which the viewer's attention is to be fixed. Some pictures can have multiple subjects, but rarely will you find a good image (flower or otherwise) with no subject at all. Where flowers are concerned, you might want to focus on just one flower, or have your viewers see many of them at once, but at the end of the day it should be readily apparent to anyone who sees your photo just what they are supposed to be looking at.



For example, the following image is decent, but as a viewer it's difficult to notice the flower in the center amidst all the other blooms in the background. In essence, there is no one clear focal point even though there is a flower in the center of the frame.

There are several things that can be done to fix the problem, but one of my favorite techniques is to simply use a wider aperture on my lens. I re-shot the same image using a much bigger aperture, which resulted in a shallow depth of field, rendering the flower in focus while the rest of the background shows up as a silky smooth blur. Looking at the second image, there is no doubt at all as to what the subject of the photo is, and what viewers are supposed to focus their attention on.

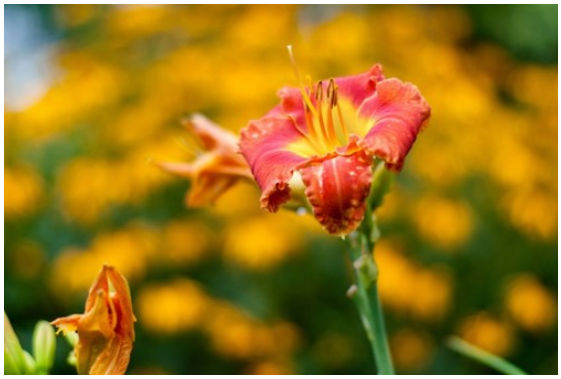
50mm f/1.8, 1/350 second, ISO 100



Another way to make sure your image has a clear focal point is to utilize colors that complement or contrast with one another. The purple flowers in the image below stand out because they contrast quite nicely with the green background, which draws the viewer's attention immediately and creates a nice focal point for the picture as a whole.

You can use multiple techniques to achieve the desired effect, such as the picture below of an orange lily that

stands out clearly from the background thanks to contrasting colors, while also using a wide aperture to make the background appear blurrier. Be careful not to use an aperture that is *too* wide, though: depth of field can be a fickle mistress, and shooting at f/1.8 or f/1.4 might seem like a good idea, until you realize that only half of your flower is in focus and the rest is a fuzzy mess.



This last picture (below) is similar to the one above, but ultimately fails because there is no obvious focal point. Notice how the flower itself almost blends in with the background, and the inclusion of two additional blossoms just behind the red one and in the bottom corner of the frame. These problems cripple the image and keep it firmly in my "Rejected" category in Lightroom, but I'm using it here as an example of what *not* to do.

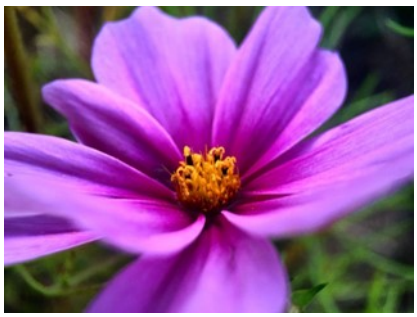
I could have easily fixed this picture by looking at the flower from a different perspective, but alas, I did not and am left with an image that is almost unusable because the subject, what *should* be the focal point, blends in so much with the rest of the image that it's difficult for the viewer to know what to see. Finding a clear focal point for your images might take a bit of practice, but the results will be well worth your efforts.

Find the right camera angle

It's not uncommon to see people taking pictures of flowers with their cameras pointed down from eye level. While doing so may produce decent results from time to time, you will often find that selecting a different angle will yield much more interesting results. The red blossom in the picture below was a few feet off the ground so I did what most people would do: I pointed my camera down and pressed the shutter button. There's a couple of things wrong with this picture, but to me the most critical problem is that it's just not very interesting. Looking at flowers from your normal eye level can sometimes produce pleasing photos, but often you will get better results if you move around a bit, and seek out a more interesting angle.

After taking the initial picture I crouched down and shuffled among the plants for a bit until I found a better perspective from which to shoot the photo.

While not perfect, this is certainly a much better composition than the original shot, and it shows the flower in a whole new light. You can not only see more detail on the petals, but it stands out more from the background, and even utilizes a bit of foreground elements to add depth. The drop of water on the left side which is an afterthought in the original, is now featured quite prominently, and adds a nice accent to the rich red tones of the flower petals. All this was made possible because of a quick and simple change in my perspective. While this doesn't always guarantee better photos it is a fun way to try something new, and even explore a bit more of your surroundings than you otherwise might.



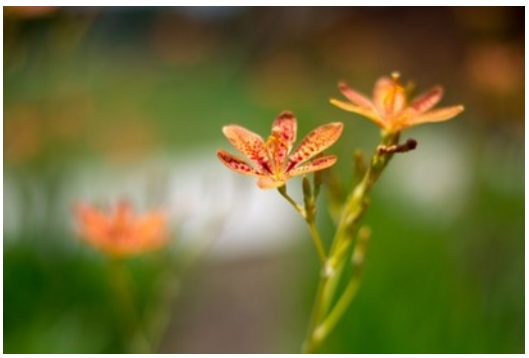
Shooting macro-style pictures is another fun way to get creative with choosing the angles on your shots, provided you are willing to look for some unusual perspectives. My cousin Beth took the following picture of a cosmo flower with nothing more than her iPhone 5s, and a $50 Olloclip lens attachment, that lets her get extraordinarily close-up photos of just about anything. By shooting from a creative perspective instead of straight down, and using complementary colors of yellow and purple, she was able to

take a gorgeous picture that might otherwise have looked quite mundane and ordinary. Her Instagram account is filled with images just like these that she took with her phone, which also illustrates that you don't need to spend a great deal of money to get incredible photos of flowers.

Compose with the whole scene in mind

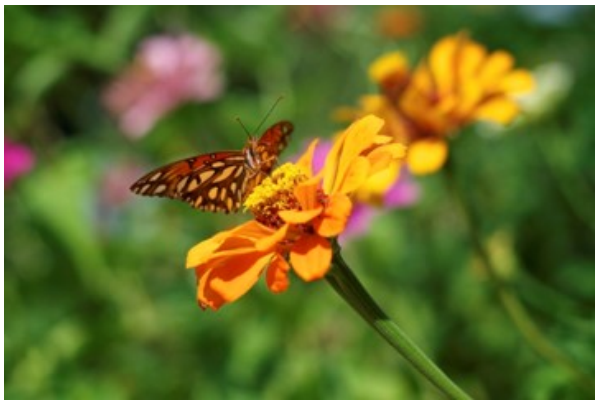
Taking good flower pictures is about more than just a few pretty petals, but everything in front of and behind them as well. Finding creative ways to avoid conflicting colors between your subject and the background or foreground is nice, but you can step things up a notch by actively using these elements to enhance your shots.

For example, I had many options available when I took the following shot of some yellow kosmeyas. I could have just focused on the flower in the foreground, but by taking all the other elements of the scene into account, I was able to create a much richer and more interesting picture. I shot into the early morning sun, before the dew had evaporated, so I could make creative use of backlighting, and was so pleased with the result that a large print of this is now hanging in my living room.

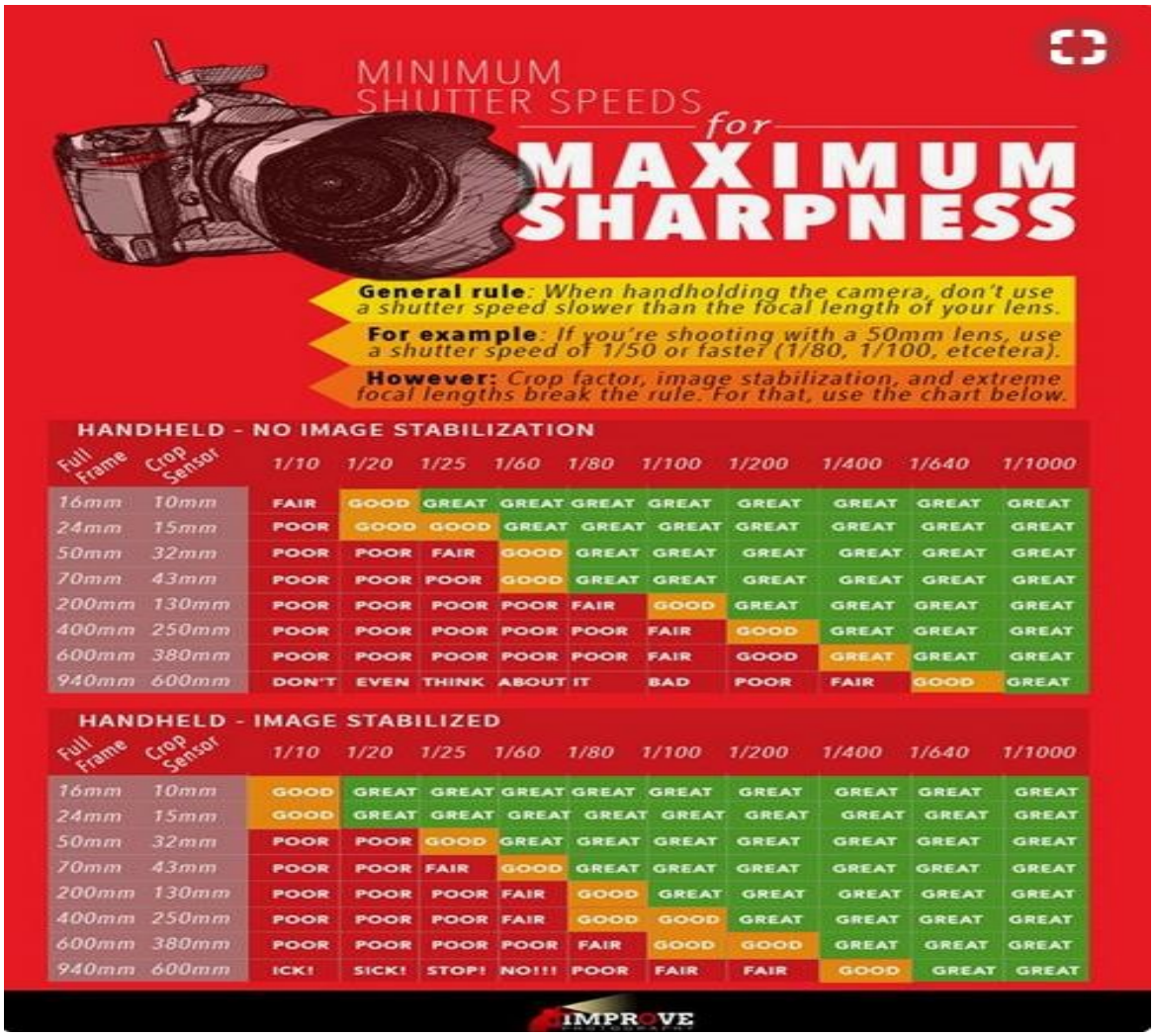


Even the background elements themselves can add interesting colors and patterns that you might not otherwise consider, as long as you pay attention when shooting, and use a careful eye with regard to composition. As I took the photo below, I saw a sidewalk running through the background, so I spent several minutes not just adjusting my camera settings, but also looking at the sidewalk and using that as an intentional compositional element. I like the way it cuts horizontally through the image and serves to accentuate the oranges in the flower at the center.

I want to leave you with one final example when I did not use this technique, and was quite disappointed with the photo that I almost got. Several months ago I spent a while following a butterfly around on a sunny day. When it finally landed on a flower and let me get close enough to take a photo, I eagerly snapped away without taking the rest of the scene into account.



If only I had scooted mere inches to the right I would have isolated the flower and the butterfly against a nice green background, but instead I did not take the whole scene into account, and got an image with no clear focal point and a big splotch of blurry orange right behind my subjects. I could have used the background elements to my advantage, but instead I was careless and overeager. This was actually a good learning experience for me though, as it helped me take much better photos in the time since.



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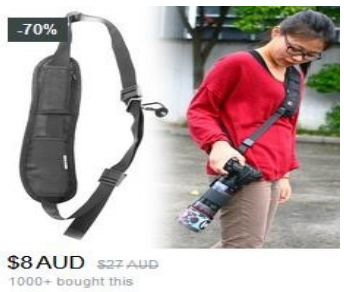

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