The Official Magazine of
the Dapto Camera Club

Viewfinder.

April 2019

VIEWFINDER INDEX

The Cover Photographer

Norm Blake

Simply Good Pictures 5

Simply Good Pictures 5 makes your photos look more beautiful with just one click!

Fully automatic colour adjustment, including re-distribution of tonal values, white balance, hue adjustment, saturation, contrast optimization and bright/dark correction.

https://engelmann.com/en/optimize-photos-simply-good-pictures/

For a fully free program just join their newsletter and they will send you the password to turn it into fully free software.

This is a good tool to add to your photography toolbox.

How to Avoid Blurry Photos by Choosing the Right Autofocus Mode

By: Lynford Morton

Sometimes the light is perfect, the moment is right, but when you get home you find out that your photo is blurry. Arrgh!

Why are your pictures blurry? One obvious reason might be that your camera isn't focused properly. Today's cameras and autofocus lenses can help you quickly take sharp images in a wide variety of situations, provided you choose the right autofocus mode.

Here are some questions to help you diagnose any situation and choose the correct auto focus setting

Photo by Lynford Morton

Are you using the Auto-area autofocus or Single-point autofocus selection?

Who gets to decide your focus point? That's the question you are deciding with this option. In an Auto-area autofocus, your camera decides what it should use as your focal point. It usually decides based on what looks most prominent in the viewfinder or closest to the camera. This might work when your subject is obvious and there are no potential distractions.

For more control, choose a Single-point autofocus setting. That mode allows you to choose your specific auto focus point (check your camera's manual if you aren't sure how to do this). After all,

Links of Interest:

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ePHOTOzine - http://www.ephotozine.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

only you, not your camera, knows where you want to place your subject.

Is your subject moving?

Most DSLR cameras give you four basic options for autofocus settings: single, continuous, auto or manual. To help you choose the right option, ask yourself, “Is my subject moving?”

No, my subject is not moving

Photo by Lynford Morton

If your subject is not moving, choose “AF-S” for Nikon or “One Shot” for Canon. This mode locks in your focus based on the distance to your subject. As long as your subject stays at that distance, your photo will be in focus. Your subject has to be stationary for this mode to work. In fact, your camera will not take the photo if your subject is moving (or it cannot lock focus).

This mode also allows you to recompose. Let’s say the autofocus point is in the center of the frame, but you want your subject on one side or the other. Keep depressing your shutter button slightly, and focus remains sharp on your subject. Then you can move the camera slightly left or right, recomposing with your subject out of the center of the frame.

Yes, my subject is moving

By Amsterdamized

If your subject is moving, use continuous autofocus (AF-C for Nikon or AI Servo for Canon). In this mode, you place your autofocus point over your subject, and focus continues to adjust while you hold down the shutter button, keeping your subject in focus as it moves.

For example, if someone is riding a bicycle, place the AF point on your subject and slightly depress the shutter. As long as you are pressing the shutter, the autofocus will continually adjust to your subject, keeping them in focus as they move. When you are ready to take the photo, depress the shutter completely, and the camera will focus on your subject for a sharp image.

No, my subject isn’t moving, but it might

A third option merges the functionality of the single autofocus and continuous autofocus. This hybrid mode, (AF-A for Nikon or AI Focus for Canon), starts out as a single auto focus. Your camera won’t focus until you lock in on a stationary subject. Once you have your subject in focus, you can take the photo as you would in a traditional single auto focus mode.

If your subject starts moving, however, the autofocus releases and continues to track your moving subject. It gives you the best of both worlds. One note of caution, I have noticed at times, if you recompose a stationary object quickly in AF-A mode, the camera can be fooled into thinking the subject is moving and release the autofocus.

My autofocus just isn't getting it right

You always have the option of turning off the autofocus function and choosing the Manual setting. If your camera is having trouble detecting your focus point, it might be more efficient to focus the camera yourself.

How about the opposite situation? You turned off your autofocus by accident? Every now and then, when your camera can't seem to focus, and you don't hear the motor searching back and forth, check to see if you selected Manual autofocus by accident. This can happen more frequently than you might think.

Other issues to consider

What if you set up your autofocus properly, and the lens still won't focus? Try these considerations:

- You might be too close. Try backing away. If you are too near the subject, it might prevent the camera from focusing properly.
- Your subject might not have enough contrast. Your image needs to have some contrast for many autofocus systems to work. If you try to photograph a solid sheet of white or any single color, most autofocus systems will struggle. Why? The camera compares adjacent pixels and when one is different, it uses that point to determine its focus. If it can't find any contrast, it can't focus.
- You might have an extremely shallow depth of field. In this case, your autofocus is working, but the depth of field is so shallow, it is hard to tell that your subject is in focus.

You have camera shake. When you depress the shutter, you move the camera. If the shutter speed is too slow, the camera picks up that movement, and it looks like a blurry photo. Make sure your shutter speed is faster than the equivalent of your focal length. For instance, if you are zoomed to 100mm, your shutter speed should be 1/100th of a second or faster to avoid camera shake.

Why is your picture blurry? If the answer is in your autofocus, your fix could be as simple as choosing the right setting.

https://digital-photography-school.com/avoid-blurry-photos-choosing-right-autofocus-mode/?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Jan-1719

The Ultimate List of Free Photography Books

This is a list of over 50 free photography books which are recommended time and time again, and for good reason.

There's no easier way to improve your photography than devouring all the free photography books available on the Internet. Along with watching free YouTube tutorials, you can improve your photography and learn how to run a photography business… all for free.

https://shotkit.com/free-photography-books/

15 Best & Useful Photography Apps for 2019

By Jonathan Sanders

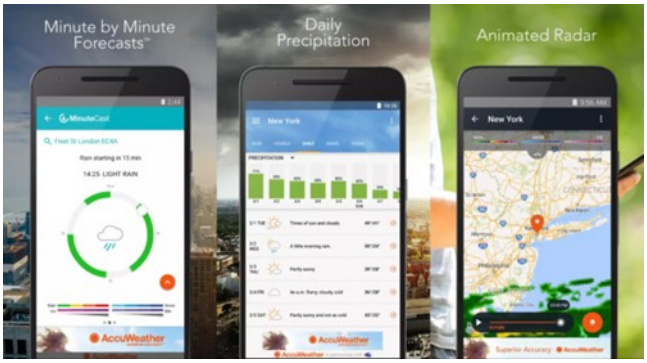
The smartphone today is definitely not just a phone. It has really become a handheld desktop computer with added features. And when it comes to photographers, it's a device that they certainly can't do without. Whether you are an Android user or you have that chick iPhone – the story is same everywhere. No I am not just referring to the smartphone as a device for clicking photos, but utilizing it to achieve a lot more as a photographer.

As a photographer, you can use your phone like your personal photography guide in every segment. There are apps today which would help you from planning a shoot to editing it and sharing across social media platforms.

In this article, we are going to explore just that. We are going to tell you about the must-have apps for photographers.

So what are what the best apps are for photographers in 2019? Let's find out;

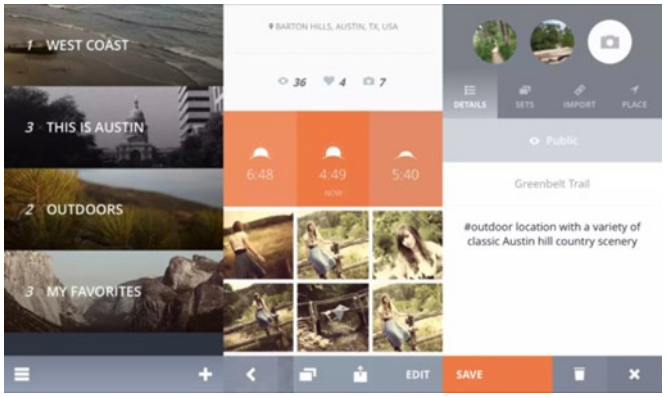
AccuWeather



Another extremely useful weather forecasting app is AccuWeather. It is probably the most popular app in this segment. This app, especially the iOS version, comes with several important features like severe weather warnings.

Both the iOS and an Android version comes with a huge 15-day weather forecast chart which can be a blessing for any outdoor photographer and help them to make and adjust plans well in advance.

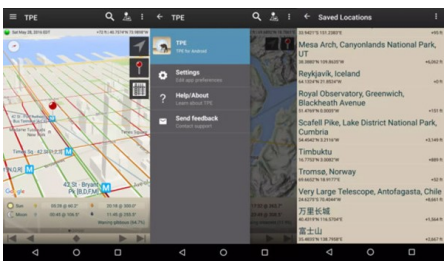
Scene Scout



As I have said earlier, going outdoors is part and parcel of photography and going outdoor means going to a particular location. But how to find the best location for your shoot? How to find locations which haven't been stepped on before? How to find that hidden gem which can wow your audience? That's where these location finding apps come in handy.

Scene Scout is an app that lets you not find a location but store it on your mobile and if needed, share it on social media. Many times it happens, that when finding location, you can't remember a particular place you saw on some website. With Scene Scout you can now store that location for eternity. So you can forget without any worry.

The Photographer's Ephemeris



The Photographer's Ephemeris (TPE) has been, for a long time, a popular photography planning app. The specialty of this app is that you can pick any location on the planet, put a pin on it on an actual map and see how the sun and the moon will move on that location on any given date.

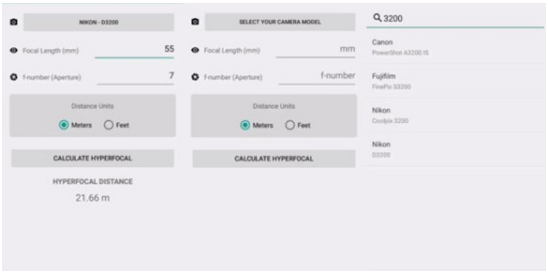
It is especially useful for travel photographers who are out on a long trip and want to maximize their photographic experience in the places they are going.

Pocket Light meter

Light meters used to be an extremely important tool for film photographers, but since the advent of the digital age, its importance has gone down drastically. But it, by no means, is out of fashion. So if you ever feel the need of a light meter then there is no need to go buy one. Just install the Pocket Light Meter app and it does the job exactly like an actual light meter would do.

This app uses your phones camera to judge the lighting condition in your studio and gives you various settings like aperture, ISO and shutter speed.

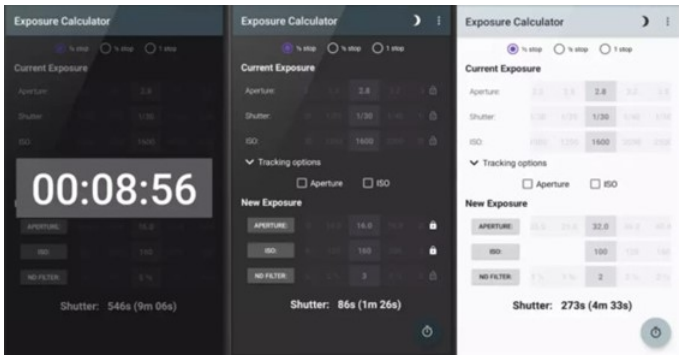
Hyperfocal DOF



Hyperfocal distance is an extremely crucial parameter to keep in mind for landscape photographers. Hyperfocal distance refers to the technique through which you can keep the closest object to the lens in focus while keeping objects till infinity sharp. Hyperfocal distance rule of thumb is that one should focus one-third of their way into the scene, but it doesn't work all the time. Many times it needs a bit of number crunching.

The easiest way of getting around this number crunching is to have an app installed in your mobile and what better app is there than the Hyperfocal DOF. The app supports more than 1800 camera models. All you have to do is tell it your camera model, aperture and focal length and it will give you the hyperfocal distance.

Exposure Calculator and Long Exposure calculator



If you are into taking long exposure shots (where you slow down the shutter speed of the camera and keep the sensor exposed to your object for a longer period) then calculating shutter speed, aperture and ISO can at times becoming hassling.

Worry not. There's an app there for it too. If you are on android use Exposure Calculator and iOS users may go for Long Exposure Calculator

Best 65 free Lightroom presets

From converting to mono in style and boosting saturation to hipsterfying your shots, these Lightroom presets let you do it all for free

https://www.digitalcameraworld.com/features/63-free-lightroom-presets

Shooting Reflections & Using the Multiple Exposure Mode

by Jo Plumridge

Shooting reflections can create stunning results and are a great way to create powerful images that speak to a viewer, or to produce quirky and unusual shots.

In this article, we'll look at how to shoot reflections and how you can replicate reflections using the multiple exposure mode.

How to shoot reflections

The best way to photograph a reflection really depends on what sort of reflection you're trying to capture. The classic reflection shot is of course one into water. For this to work well, you need a fairly still body of water, which is why lakes are so popular.

Even so, you'll want to choose a relatively fast shutter speed to freeze any movement caused by currents or breezes. In combination with this, reflections need a large depth of field, so that the whole shot is in focus and the reflections are clearreflections need a large depth of field, so that the whole shot is in focus and the reflections are clear.

Because this combination means that you won't be getting much light into your camera, you may need to increase your ISO up to allow more light into your exposure. How high you can push your ISO before noise becomes excessive depends on your camera model, although the newer the camera the higher you'll usually be able to go.

If the water has ripples on it, you could try using a long exposure in order to soften them out. This may create a slightly misty ethereal feel to the image, which can be very attractive. In this case, you'll need to use a tripod in order to achieve a sharp photograph. In addition, a graduated neutral density filter will be almost essential here, so that you can keep the sky from over-exposing.

Finally, shooting water reflections is one case where you need to break the traditional landscape rule of thirds, as you'll need your horizon to be in the centre of the frame

in order to capture your reflection perfectly.

Of course, shooting reflections isn't limited to water. Nowadays, there are so many glass buildings, which can offer fantastic reflections. Indeed, any piece of glass, metal or even marble can offer photographic opportunities.

Shooting reflections with multiple exposure mode

Multiple exposure mode simply means that the same frame (photo) is repeatedly exposed to the light.

It can be a tricky procedure to get right and takes a little practice, but can be a great way to '*cheat*' to produce reflections. You'll probably only need to do two exposures – you take the first one normally and then turn the camera upside down to take the second shot and get the reflections!

Using a tripod can be a good way to do this to ensure that you get a level shot each time.

One key thing to remember when shooting multiple exposures, is that you need to underexpose by one f/stop for double exposures (or two stops if you plan to do four exposures). In addition, once you've chosen the ISO you'll use for a single exposure, you'll need to 'up' it one setting (e.g. if you're using ISO 100, up your ISO to 200).

Multiple Exposure Mode on DSLRs

The great thing about DSLRs is that they do all the hard work for you and merge your two exposures together. Not all digital cameras have this capacity at the moment, and those that do may only do multiple exposure in RAW format.

In other cameras, you can shoot a batch of shots and then manually overlay them – still all in-camera. One final tip for all digital cameras is to work in Live View mode, so that you can clearly see the effects of each exposure as you compose.

https://contrastly.com/shooting-reflections-using-the-multiple-exposure-mode/?ck_subscriber_id=368185801

7 Tips For Sharper Photos

"If your photos aren't sharp then the rest doesn't matter." Key to any image is its sharpness, and in order to get those photos pin sharp you need to follow some basic guidelines.

Photo by Mike Monaghan

There's nothing worse than looking at a portrait photo and seeing that the eyes are out of focus with a perfectly sharp nose. The eyes are the windows to the soul and their sharpness is critical to a good image. There are times when we want slightly out of focus images or parts of images out of focus. But, mostly we want crisp and clear images. Here are some steps for sharper images:

1. Pin sharp starts with a tripod

Every professional photographer, and many amateurs, will tell you that a tripod is an essential part of your gear if you want sharp images. Of course it's not always possible to use one, but, when you *can,* use one. It stabilizes your camera and stops camera shake from unsteady hands. A good, sturdy tripod costs money, but it's a basic part of your kit and fundamental to sharp images. Many photographers also opt for small flexible tripods that can be wrapped around objects and work in virtually any situation.

2. Cable Release or Remote

Don't press the shutter; use a cable release. A cable release is a cable that goes to a connection on your camera. By pressing the cable release you don't transfer any movement from your hand to the camera. The same can be done with a wireless remote.

3. Self-Timer

If you have forgotten to bring your cable release or your compact camera doesn't allow its use, use the self-timer. All cameras, including compacts, have this feature. Although you still press the shutter, there is a time delay of 2 to 10 seconds, allowing camera shake to subside before the shutter is activated. Still, you need to press the shutter button gently to limit any transferred shake.

Photo by Michaela Loheit; ISO 100, f/8.0, 1/640-second exposure.

4. Mirror lock-up

This feature is something only for digital SLR camera owners. When the shutter is depressed, a mirror, which is in between your sensor and the viewfinder, pops up to allow light to pass and hit your sensor. This micro movement can affect your final image so what manufactures have added is a mirror lock-up. It locks the mirror in position once you have composed your image. Although you can no longer see the image through the viewfinder it prevents the micro movement from affecting your image. Use it if you are fanatical about sharpness.

5. Use your lens's sharpest aperture

All lenses have a sweet spot. They are sharpest at this aperture–usually two stops below fully open. Unfortunately, this applies only to DSLRs. You should be able to tell by looking at your images and finding which images are usually the sharpest. Check the EXIF data by right clicking on your image on the computer and seeing what aperture it was taken at. Then shoot at this aperture whenever you can.

6. ISO

Avoid increasing your ISO as this causes your image sharpness to degrade. Instead, shoot on a tripod. Shooting on higher ISOs adds noise to the images, which is the reason for images lacking in sharpness.

7. Turn off image stabilization

If you have a lens or camera that has image stabilization or vibration reduction, turn it off. There are tiny motors inside the lens which stabilize the image but also contribute to lack of sharpness through vibration. They are great for low light/handheld situations like weddings, but when you're using a tripod, turn it off.

These are a just a few tips for getting sharper images. No single one will improve your sharpness, but used together they will improve your overall sharpness in an image.

Harvard Has a Free Online 12-Module Digital Photo Course

This free 10-12 Hours online digital photography course will help you get beyond the Automatic Mode of your camera and master the art of taking great photographs. Digital cameras took the world by storm in the mid-1990s. Since then they have become more and more sophisticated, which can also make them more and more difficult to understand. This course will make things simple, and get you taking fantastic photographs in no time at all.

https://alison.com/course/diploma-in-digital-photography

Street Photography Focus Tips

Because you're often working quickly and stealthily, the matter of focusing while doing street photography is important. Here are some tips.

Photo by Heidi; ISO 320, f/5.6, 1/100-second exposure.

Hyperfocal Distance Technique

Hyperfocal distance is a popular technique used mostly with rangefinder cameras. If you are using a Leica or Contax manual focus rangefinder, you'll find the lenses marked and easy to read the hyper focal distance.

Look at the lens and see foot and meter distance measurements for a given F-stop. Since most street photography is done between 7 and 15 feet you can easily set the lens so that everything that falls within this distance will be in focus for a given f-stop. It's not what I'd call exact focus, but it's close enough so that focus will seem fine. After that you can walk around and know that if your subject is within your hyper focal distance you'll be fine. Obviously, you need to be able to judge distances, and it will not be possible if you are shooting "wide open" at say f/1.4. There just isn't enough depth of field (DOF).

Modern SLR lenses don't usually show the hyper focal distance (because they're auto-focus). I like to have the foreground and/or background out-of-focus. In other words, even when I was shooting with a Leica M, I would tend to pre-focus and use a lower f-stop. In fact, I brought neutral density filters with me (since I usually shot a fast film) so that I could shoot at a wider, more-open f-stop if I wanted to.

Pre-Focusing Technique

Pre-focusing, whether with a manual focus camera or an auto focus camera involves anticipation. You have decided what your shot is going to be and find an object that is at an equivalent distance to focus on. With a manual camera, once you've pre-focused the lens, just leave it as is, and point it at your subject and take the shot.

With an auto focus camera, you need to know how to lock focus. On the Canon line of digital cameras (both digital and film) you can move focus lock to a button on the back of the camera and keep your thumb on it to lock focus or even flip off the auto-focus once you know the general area you are aiming for.

You can also just work with the built in focus. I use the center spot only. I don't want the camera to make the decision as to what is going to be in focus. Though the Canons also have an

interesting Depth of Field setting that will attempt to emulate hyper focus, I haven't used that much.

Photo by John Ragai; ISO 200, f/4.0, 1/200-second exposure.

If all of you were interested in shooting was street stuff, then I'd have to give the rangefinder a strong edge. If you're (like me) a generalist, you could have two cameras. One for your scenic work and another for street work. But I have a problem with that; I like to stick to one camera at a time and let it become a part of me. I don't want to have to think about what switch to hit or where such-and-such is buried in the menus. I set the camera up once, and that's usually it.

There are other techniques for street focusing that can be used in combination with these focus techniques. One of these I'd call the street ballet.

The Street Ballet Technique

You're walking down the street and about 20 feet away you see someone approaching that you want to photograph. Just point the camera at a spot on the sidewalk where you're planning to photograph them and lock focus. Then turn around with your back to the subject. If you hold the DSLR in the right position you can see the reflection of your subject approaching. You still have focus lock on. As they are approaching the spot you locked focus on, turn slowly with the camera already to your eye, as if you're just looking through the camera at just about anything. If your timing is good you can take your shot and keep moving so that they're puzzled by what you are doing.

Takes some practice, but works well. It's sort of a street ballet.

Remember, as I've said before, never lower the camera from your eye after taking your shot because this is a dead giveaway.

Yes, it's sneaky, but if you're attempting to photograph people at a close distance without alerting them, this is a useful technique.

Another Caveat

The shot from the hip has been around forever. And there are times and places when you may need to do this. But as a general rule, I'm in favor of looking through the viewfinder. Especially when you're starting out. You should get used to various techniques that allow you to take a quick shot with time to frame.

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