

**Dapto Camera Club Magazine.**

# **Viewfinder.**

**March 2021**



## Photoshop Elements Tips

- As you make changes to images you can step backwards through the alterations that you've made by repeatedly pressing the **[Ctrl] + [Z]** key combination and forward again by pressing **[Ctrl] + [Y]**.
- Lassoing and defining sections of an image can be a long-winded process. The Quick Selection tool in the main tool palette is a super-speedy alternative and it works a treat.
- Use the Unsharp Mask tool to sharpen a complete image, or be selective by pre -defining the area to be sharpened first (such as the eyes in a portrait), using the Quick Selection tool.
- Photoshop files can end up being enormous if you use a lot of layers. To save disk space, use the Flatten Image option to shrink finished images down to a single layer.

- Which one should we use -- the *Spot Healing Brush* or the *Healing Brush*? Does it matter?

**Answer:**

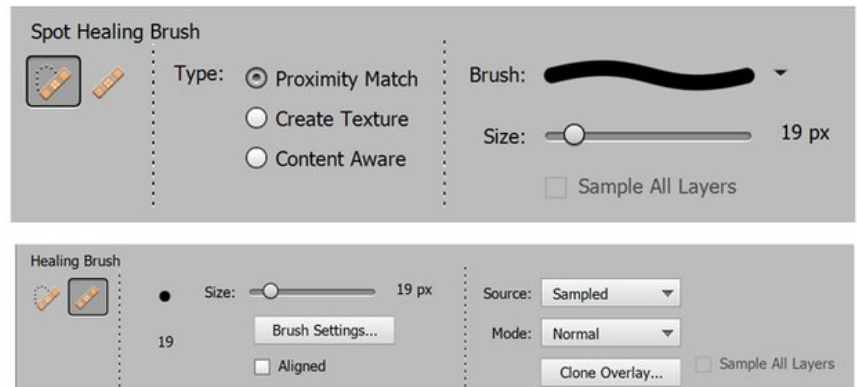
You may want to use the *Spot Healing Brush* to fix small areas and save the *Healing Brush* for larger areas.

**Rationale:**

The use of these two tools requires Elements to search the surrounding areas and, then, blend them into the area you are trying to fix. This is a drawback for the *Spot Healing Brush*. The larger the area you drag this brush over, the larger the area

Elements has to search for blending material. Sometimes this can lead to contrasting material close to the area being repaired to be picked up by Elements and mixed with the repair. On the other hand, when you use the *Healing Brush*, you are the one selecting (sampling) the area which will get blended into the repair. This gives you more control over the process.

You can give Elements some help when using the *Spot Healing Brush* by choosing a brush size that barely covers the spot being repaired. You can also make a selection of the offending spot before using this tool; this will limit the area Elements will search for material to use in the repair.



### Links of Interest:

Viewbug - <http://www.viewbug.com/>

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>

Viewfinder cover photo taken by.

**KEITH SMITH**



# Monochrome Photography vs. Black and White

By Peter Dam | Photography-Raw

You may think the terms ‘monochrome’ and ‘black and white’ are synonymous. After all, it’s quite common for people to use these terms interchangeably.

They’re not exactly the same, though. There is a distinction which can be helpful to know.

In this article, you will learn the difference between monochrome vs. black and white photography.

## What is Monochrome Photography?

Monochrome photos contain variations of only one color and nothing else. This could be different shades of blue, green, or grey, for example.

If you wanted a green monochrome photo using only your camera, you would seek out a scene where the only colors in the frame are variants of green.

You can also decide to post-process a photo as monochrome. This involves taking an image and limiting it to a single color range. These days this is most commonly done using Lightroom or Photoshop, although it is not a new practice.

You may have seen vintage sepia or cyanotype photographs. These are the most common examples of monochrome photography. In such photos, the warm and cool tones were the results of specific toning chemicals used in the developing process.



*Vintage sepia photograph of newsboys, c. 1909*



*Vintage cyanotype photograph of schoolgirls doing calisthenics, c. 1899*

## Capturing a Slice of the Colour Wheel

Take a look at the color wheel below. You can see that each color is divided into smaller pieces. These show you a rough illustration of variants within a single color.

Let’s take the example of green and variants of green. On the outside ring, you have the pure color (sometimes referred to as the ‘hue’), labelled with its name.

Going towards the middle of the color wheel, we next have the ‘tint’, which refers to the green highlights.

Next up you will find the neutral green variants, which is the same as green mid-tones.

Closest to the centre of the color wheel, you will find the 'shades' or shadow tones of green.

### In-Camera Monochrome Photography

To capture a natural monochrome image in-camera, get the brightest and the darkest variants of the color into the frame.

This will create more contrast in the photo.

A close-up photo of leaves would be a good example of a natural green monochromatic picture.

Another example is the photo of the underside of a mushroom below. This only contains variants of yellow-brown colors.



*This close-up photo a group of mushrooms shot from below only contains variants of yellow-brown colors. It's a natural monochrome image.*

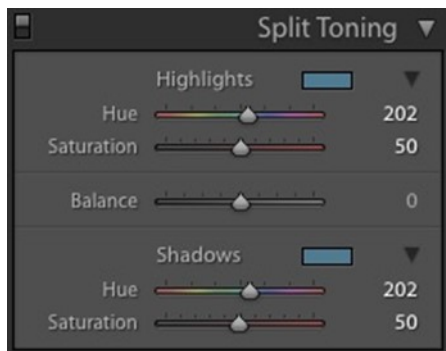
The photo below is not perfect monochrome photography, but it's close. It was captured in-camera with a long shutter speed. Because of the time of day, the colors in the water and the sky matched quite well with the bathhouse.

This photo appeared on the Google Nik Collections website with the following comment:

'This image caught our eye with its cool blue hues and simple composure. This type of colorful image is a great twist on a monochromatic image.'

### Using Lightroom to Post-Process a Photo as Monochrome

As mentioned above, you can also post-process a photo to be monochromatic.



To do this in Lightroom, go to the Develop module (press D). Locate the Split Tone panel on the right-hand side of the screen.

In the Split Tone panel, you can set different tones for the highlights and the shadows.

To create a monotone photo, you can set both the shadow tone and the highlight tone to the same color value setting.

You can use this technique for creative purposes. I have rarely found a photo that benefits from being made monochromatic in post-processing. You'll get the best photos and results by looking for naturally mono-

chromatic scenes.

### What is Black and White Photography?

Black and white photography contains variants of the color grey ranging from absolute black to absolute white.

This means that all black and white photos are monochrome photos, but *not* the other way around.

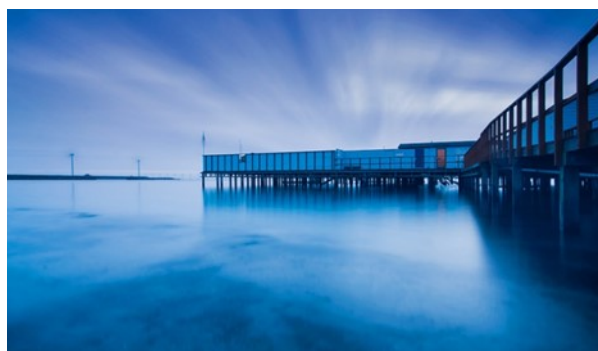
A more accurate (but decidedly less popular) term for this type of image is 'grayscale'. This is because the image typically comprises grey tones, not just the color black and the color white.

Black and white images as you probably know them are images like the one immediately below. In these images, no color information has been captured or it has been removed. Note the wide variety of grey tones.

While it's uncommon, you can also find scenes that only contain strong black and white colors.

*An example of a high-contrast black and white photo containing only tonal values in the dark shadows and the bright highlights.*

This photo is a high-contrast black and white photo lacking mid-tones. Grey is barely present, if at all. While the tonal profile of each of these photos differ, both count as black and white photography.



of





## Should You Capture Black and White Images in Camera, or Convert Them in Post?

If you want to set your camera to capture in black and white, be aware that both Canon and Nikon call this Monochrome. Confusing, right?



I suggest that you always shoot your images in color and then convert them to black and white in post-processing. If you force your camera to capture black and white, it will often do so in JPEG format. This doesn't contain the same amount of data.

If you capture in RAW format, you will capture a color photo and get more image data. This is useful for post-processing.

If you still want to capture your images in black and white you can set this on a Nikon DSLR by using the menu: Shooting Menu > Set Picture Control > Monochrome. However, it is better to learn how to identify what makes a good black and white image but still capture it in color,

to be converted later.

## What Does Grayscale Mean?

Often you'll hear the term 'grayscale' instead of calling a photo black and white. As mentioned above, these two terms are one and the same thing. However, 'grayscale' can also have another meaning.

To a photo editing software, grayscale is also a way of storing information about how a photo is presented, just like RGB or CMYK.

In Photoshop, these methods of storing the information are 'color modes'. RGB and CMYK are color modes which store color information and display it in a certain way. Grayscale, however, does not store color information at all.

If you want to discard color information in Photoshop, you can opt to convert it to grayscale mode. Be aware that this is a destructive way of converting a photo to black and white. This means that once you convert it, you lose the color information in the image forever.

We often use grayscale conversion when we want to print our B&W images without any unwanted color deformation.

Converting photos from color to black and white in Photoshop is a whole topic in itself.



**NOTE.** Depending on the software program you are using for Post Processing/editing your photo you may find that the Mono photo that you took in camera will show as a colour photo. To fix this use the program you have to save the photo as a mono and all will be well.

# Bird Photography Basics for Beginners



In my last article, I provided a few tips for beginning wildlife photographers. In this one, I'm going to discuss a sub-genre of wildlife photography that presents enough challenges to be considered separately: photographing birds. Capturing great images of birds, especially in the wild, comes with all the difficulties of wildlife photography in general, along with some specifically related to winged wildlife. Let's look at some of those challenges and how to overcome them.

## **It's not ALL about the gear.**

Let's get this one out of the way right now. One of the most popular excuses for taking less-than-perfect bird photographs is not having the right photo equipment. There's **some** truth to this, since a \$10,000.00+, 600mm lens and a full-frame camera are very likely to give you an advantage.

On the other hand, there are plenty of serious amateurs and professionals taking and selling great bird photos with less expensive cameras and lenses. They're accomplishing it with *skill, knowledge, preparation and determination*. With that combination and the best gear you can afford, you can, too.

So, does that mean that just any camera and lens combination will get the job done? Not really, but there are too many possible combinations to cover them all here. Generally speaking, a lens with a focal length of at least 300mm and camera capable of shutter speeds of 1/2000 second and/or faster will save you some frustration. A good autofocus system will help, too, especially if it has a tracking mode.

## **The early (or late) bird gets the shot.**

Time of day can be used to your advantage in avian photography. Nocturnal birds can often be captured while returning to their nests early in the morning, while others are going out for their morning meal. Late afternoon and evening can provide great opportunities as well. These times of day also provide some of the most dramatic and complimentary lighting.

## **Study your subjects' habits.**

Do some research. The feeding, mating and nesting habits of most birds are readily available from many online sources and can also be found at your local library. Find out what birds are common to the area you plan to be shooting in and take some notes about when and where to expect them. If you're out to capture specific birds, read up on them. Understanding your "prey" will increase your odds of getting close to it.

## **Let your subjects come to you.**

Many novice birders expend far too much energy on trying to get close to their subjects. It's often much more effective to simply make yourself comfortable and wait patiently for the birds to come to their natural habitat. Have some fun with bird calls. Learn to be still and move slowly. If you do startle your subject away and it doesn't move far, give it a little time and it may return, especially if you're close to its nest or feeding ground.

## **Learn the art of concealment.**

Not everyone has the opportunity to shoot from a blind, but that doesn't mean you can't avoid standing out against your surroundings. Wear earth-toned colors if you don't have camouflage clothing. Shiny objects like jewelry, eyeglasses and even your camera gear can reflect flashes of sunlight that can spook entire flocks of birds, so eliminate what you can and find ways to cover the rest. **Be a ninja.**

## **Keep the ISO setting high.**

Birds move quickly. If you understand how to use the Exposure Triangle, you'll know that this means you'll want to use higher ISO settings for bird photography than, say, the average landscape. In turn, this means the possibility of more noise in your shots, but needing to remove a little bit of noise is better than a blurred photo.

This is one genre where many photographers count on the auto-ISO feature of their DSLRs.

Many modern cameras will allow you to set a minimum shutter speed and allow the camera to adjust the ISO setting to the minimum that will allow that speed.

## **The eyes have it.**

Like a good portrait, bird photos will come to life and connect to viewers through the eyes. Always try to focus on the eyes of your subject. If possible, try also to capture that little spot of light in the eyes known as a catch light. This is normally the result of frontal lighting on your subject, so having the sun more at your back will usually help.

## **Pay attention to what's in the frame.**

It's easy to become so focused on your the birds you're shooting that you ignore the other things in your viewfinder. Always be aware of the background and other elements in your compositions. Keep elements that complement the subject and eliminate those that don't. One particular problem in birding shots is small branches in the foreground that go unnoticed when taking the photos.

## **Learn how and when to use exposure compensation.**

One of the most common mistakes I see in bird photos from beginners is a badly underexposed subject. This is often the result of shooting a bird against the sky, in flight or at rest. Unless your lens will let you fill the frame with the bird, the sky will probably dominate the frame and in the most common metering modes, that's what your camera's exposure system is going to adjust for.

Grab your manual and learn how to use your camera's exposure compensation. This is usually the fastest way to compensate for all that extra light you'll let in when you point your lens at the sky. I'm assuming here that you're going to let the camera handle the exposure settings. If you're confident in your ability to manually - and quickly - adjust your exposure, you won't need this advice.

## **Work on your panning technique.**

Obviously, photographing a bird in flight may mean panning to follow it. You may also need to pan to keep up with birds on the ground. Shore birds like sandpipers move much faster when feeding than you might expect. Herons, cranes and other long-legged birds will cover a lot of ground per stride. It's important to be able to follow moving birds smoothly and learn to "follow through" as you press the shutter release if you want sharp shots.

## **Practice on the locals.**

There are probably plenty of birds in your own neighbourhood that can give you some valuable practice. If you have a park with a duck pond close by, it can be a great place to learn some of the habits of waterfowl. If you have a local zoo with an aviary, spend a few hours inside with your camera. If you have bird feeders, try setting up to capture the birds as they come and go, without getting the feeder in the shots.

Taking advantage of these above subjects will help you learn to anticipate action and practice the techniques you'll need out in the wild.

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# **Garden photography tips**

By **Claire Takacs.**

I see gardens as works of art and believe in their ever-increasing importance in our daily lives. I love to capture the beauty and essence of gardens and landscapes around the world, particularly while working with light.





Credit: Claire Takacs

## 1. Lead the eye in

Framing your image so that a pathway in a garden leads and invites the viewer's eye into the image can be really powerful. It can help viewers imagine themselves being there more clearly and lead them through the garden scene.

## 2. Shoot into the light

This is my top tip! It really creates the most exciting light and, often, images. I prefer avoiding complete flare though, as most of the time it can distort colours. Instead, position yourself and frame the image so that something blocks the direct sunlight from hitting the lens, such as a tree or house.

## 3. Use a ladder

Take your own ladder with you or ask the garden owners if you can borrow theirs. I've found this very useful recently, especially with gardens later in the season with tall perennial plantings. In the bottom right image, I wouldn't have been able to show both the garden and house without getting that extra height from



standing on a ladder.

## 4. Shoot at sunrise and sunset

It's helpful to have at least two attempts at photographing a garden – sunset and sunrise – so you can get to know it more intimately. Shooting at these times of the day will let you capture both directions of light. Some gardens or parts of, will be best shot with evening light, while others benefit from morning light.

Credit: Claire Takacs

## 5. Create layered images

Shoot as though you are photographing a landscape. Have foreground, mid-ground and background interest and edit/crop your images tightly, so that everything has a purpose and feels balanced. Try to create images that keep your eye within the frame by directing viewers to where you want them to look.

## 6. Spend time with owners/designers

It's very important to get a good feel for a garden. Find out what special plants will be flowering at the time of your shoot. Ask the owner/designer what they are trying to achieve, the viewpoints/angles they love or any of their favourite or special design features. It will really add to your photography if you do this, and make the whole experience more enjoyable and richer than purely just taking pictures.



## 7. Remove distracting elements

Avoid capturing distracting elements while shooting preferably or crop later when editing as a last resort. These could be garden hoses, distracting leaves, power lines, and so on. Work on your images and take another look at them in a few days – this way anything distracting should jump out at you. You want the viewer to look at the whole image and not that one distracting element.



Credit: Claire Takacs

## 8. Timing is everything

If possible, do an initial visit to the garden and talk to the owners/designers about peak moments in the garden; then plan your shoot around this. For example, being present for the flowering of these 20,000 blue irises at Bryans Ground was great. It's then just a matter of waiting for the best weather conditions.

## 9. Link garden to the distant landscape

Give the garden a sense of place by showing its context in the wider landscape. It's valuable to see how a



garden is placed and connects to its surroundings. Try to do this when the light is at its best, that is, close to sunrise and sunset. This is when you can take those wider landscape shots, because the light is still soft and there isn't too much contrast.

Credit: Claire Takacs

## 10. Use a reflector

When shooting into direct sunlight and you are unable to block harsh rays from hitting the camera, depending on the angle, use the black cover of a reflector to prevent the flare from hitting the lens.



<https://www.amateurphotographer.co.uk/technique/garden-photography-tips-117627>

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## What Is ISO?

Learn ins and outs of ISO with these tips!

### What does ISO on a camera stand for?

ISO stands for the International Organization for Standardization—an organization that sets international standards for all different kinds of measurements. But, when in reference to your camera, the ISO is your camera's sensitivity to light. ISO is displayed in a number like this: 100, 200, or 400. Essentially, when you adjust your ISO, you're changing your camera's sensitivity to light (i.e., you brighten or darken your image).

### What does ISO do?

The ISO is how you can adjust the exposure on your camera. It's one of the three main pillars of exposure—along with shutter speed and aperture. Changing the ISO will brighten or darken your image. When it comes to measuring the ISO, the lower the ISO, the darker your image will be; the higher the ISO, the brighter your image will be.





## How does ISO affect photos?

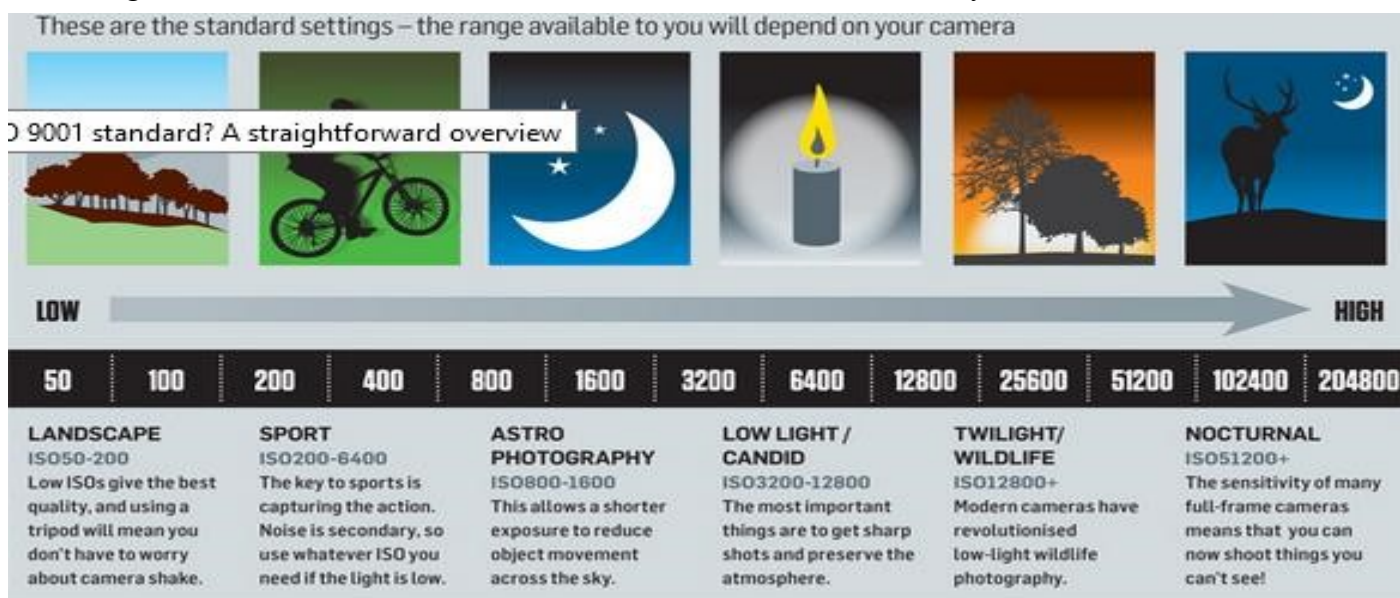
Changing your ISO for photography will make your image brighter or make your image darker. Typically, the lower the ISO, the better. That's because the lower the ISO, the less noise and grain you'll have in your shots.

## How does ISO affect videos?

ISO for video is basically the same as it is for photos. When you adjust the ISO for your videos, they'll be brighter or darker. And just like with photos, the lower the ISO, the better, because your image quality will be crisp and clear. Higher ISOs tend to look noisy or grainy.

## Is higher or lower ISO better?

A low ISO is technically going to give you the best image quality possible. If you use an ISO of 100, and your image is properly exposed, this is the best scenario to be in. This means, you'll be getting pretty much the best quality out of your camera. Now, when it comes to higher ISOs, of even 3200 or higher on some cameras, you'll start to experience noise and grain. The higher the ISO, the more grain and noise you introduce to your image. That in mind, try to keep your ISO low if possible, and only raise it when you need to! One thing to note when it comes to ISO is that all of this is also relative to your camera. Some cameras are



great in high ISOs while others have very noticeable grain. It's best to test with your own camera to see its capabilities.

## What is the best ISO setting for video?

Typically the best ISO setting for video is a low ISO. An ISO between 100–200 is going to give you the best result. You'll also want to consider your camera's native ISOs. What are native ISOs? Well, they're the ISOs your camera performs best at. For example, when it comes to Canon cameras, the native ISOs are 160, 320, 640, 1250, 3200, etc. It's usually structured the same way for other cameras, too. You'll often see that native ISOs are doubled as they increase. If you stick to native ISOs while brightening or darkening your image, you'll notice less grain, and get—overall—a better quality image.

So, if you're opening up your camera to shoot a video, choose a low ISO like 160 if you're on a Canon. And then brighten up your image if you need to with shutter speed and aperture. For setting exposure, you should follow this order: ISO, then aperture, and finally shutter speed to get the best results.

## What is the best ISO setting for low light?

If you're shooting in low light, a high ISO is best (e.g., 3200, 6400, or anything higher). A higher setting will help you achieve a well-balanced shot in low light. If you can, you should still try and stick to native ISOs. And even if you get a little bit of noise and grain, you can still push your camera if you need; it's all about getting the shot. So, if that means you have to boost your ISO to get a proper exposure, do it!

## Why does higher ISO increase noise?

High ISOs typically have a lot of noise and grain associated with them because it makes the camera sensor absorb light faster. That means, the higher the ISO, the harder the image sensor is working to produce a good image, which sometimes produces more digital noise or grain.

## What's the difference between ISO and Shutter Speed?

ISO and shutter speed are both products of image exposure or brightness. I like to think of ISO as an exposure slider; its main purpose is to brighten or darken your image. Shutter speed is more related to motion blur in video and capturing fast-moving objects in photography.

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## Water Droplet Photography Tips

by Brooks Carver from *antiquecuckooclocks*.

Do you love taking pictures? If so, this is a new and exciting way to take awesome photos that will have your friends and family talking! The best part is that you can do this at any time of year or time of day, and you don't have to leave your home to do it. I will show you how to photograph water droplets for some downright amazing images!



Photo captured by PictureSocial member Jeff Carson

Start by mounting your camera on a **tripod** in front of your setup.

Using your viewfinder, make sure you **background** color is reflecting strongly off the water. Try using a piece of magazine as a target to get your camera ready for focus. I stick with using an aperture of f/4 to f/4.5 to make sure the depth of field is still keeping the drop sharp while blurring the background.

Make sure your setup is **well-lit** with flash units, then dim the room lights.

Set a **fast shutter speed**.

I have found that an **eye dropper** works best for making a drip. Squeeze out a drop, and start by manually flashing. Then continue till you achieve your desired result! Your hardest task is going to be timing!

Your best method is going to be **trial and error**. It does take some practice. After about a dozen shots, you will start getting in sync with your camera and your amazing pics will be proof!

Another method is to use a **sound-activated or motion-detecting device** that will automatically make your flash units trigger.





“Droplet” captured by PictureSocial member vjekoslav antic

### **Creating your Shape**

1. Crown shapes. You need to fill the receptacle with liquid to about 1 centimeter or less.

Column shape. You are going to need to add a tad more liquid. Plain water works best, so no need to waste your time trying anything else. It's cost effective and reflective!

### **Backgrounds**

Have fun with this. There are several different ways you could go:

1. Go all black with a beautiful wine glass as your receptacle.
2. Use bright, fun colors underneath your container; it creates a fun, upbeat effect!
3. Try placing some colorful stones in the bottom of the dish.

Wrapping paper works great. Make sure your receptacle is a contrasting color to really make it pop out at you.

At about 120 degrees, water drops will reflect a given area. Your background doesn't have to be huge since it is only going to be sitting about 3 inches behind the receptacle.



Photo captured by PictureSocial member Jeff Carson

I hope you now have learned how to photograph water droplets and are well on your way to making stunning photos to show to your family and friends!



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## How to Photograph Lightning

by [Loaded Landscapes](#)



Image: MattysFlicks / CC BY 2.0

Lightning is one of the most challenging, yet rewarding types of photography. Lightning storms can be amazing to watch. Their beauty, power, and unpredictability are features that ap-



peal to photographers the world over.

But while lightning storms can make striking photographs –they can also be difficult to capture. After all, working in (often) low light conditions, and attempting to capture a fleeting moment of electricity is no small feat. Still, taking the time to master lightning photography is more than worth it. Capturing some of these powerful and spectacular bolts can produce some truly amazing images.

If you're ready to head out and capture some spectacular lightning photos, here are some things to keep in mind.

→ **Related reading:** [Tips for Photographing Storms](#)



Image: Carl Milner / CC BY 2.0

## Safety First

Don't forget that lightning photography –is extreme photography. Lightning is one of the most dangerous types of weather, and when you hit the road with your very own lightning rod (aka tripod!), keep in mind that things can quickly become disastrous.

Before you head out it is important to keep safety in mind. Never head out into a storm without a safety plan. This should include a plan for photographing the lightning, without getting too close to it. If you're shooting the lightning from a distance of about five miles or less, it's a good idea to do this from inside the house, or car. And avoid standing too close to any tall trees or metal poles. Remember –no picture is worth risking your life over!

## WEBSITE of the MONTH



Neewer DSLR Battery Bag/Holder/Case for Battery of Nikon D800, Canon 5DMKIII

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