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3 Easy Tips for How to Avoid Glasses Glare in Photos

If you have ever photographed someone with glasses, you have probably run into the issue of glasses glare. The question of how to avoid glare in glasses is a common one, so today we have some simple and easy to follow tips for you! When we are photographing people with glasses, it can take a little extra attention to capture photographs without a glare from the sun reflecting in their lenses, but it can be done!

Avoiding glasses glare is all about the way your light source is hitting your subject's glasses. Once you understand that, it is simple to find a few ways to reduce or diminish the problematic glare. Here are a few tips:



1. Watch Your Angles

Just as we watch the light when looking for catch lights in your subject's eyes, we must also watch the light closely when photographing people wearing glasses. Just as the eyes will reflect the light source shining on them, the lenses of glasses will do so as well. Unfortunately, the glare that results from this reflection on glasses isn't nearly as appealing as catch lights!

When your subject is looking towards light source (often the sky), it causes glare on their lenses. To avoid this, you can make small adjustments in the angle you are shooting from to eliminate or lessen the distracting glare. Sometimes, shuffling your feet just a little bit to one side or the other will be enough to change the angle and reduce the glare.

You can also have your subject adjust the angle of their head slightly until the glare is gone.

2. Tilt the Glasses

Another way to reduce glare on glasses to physically adjust the position of the glasses themselves. By tilting the back end of the ear piece up just slightly, the plane of the glasses is shifted and can be a great way to keep the light source from reflecting in the lenses. Again, remember that glare in glasses is all about the light. Making minor adjustments, in this case, to the angle of the reflective surface, can really help.

3. Put the Light Behind Them

You can also bypass lens glare from glasses by utilizing backlighting in your photos. By placing the light source behind your subject, you are removing the main source of glare. Il could simply turned my subject around 180 degrees so that the setting sun was behind him.

Lens glare can be a little tricky, and if you aren't careful, you could end up spending a lot of time in Photoshop trying to fix glare on glasses. But you know how to avoid glasses glare in photos with just a little bit of extra attention and time to get it right. By following these 3 easy tips, you can save yourself a lot of time and hassle!

This months cover photo is by,



Shooting with RAW Settings in Photography

Many cameras now offer the option to save captured photos in the RAW file format. RAW capture brings with it an extra processing step. This step requires converting the RAW image data to a format that is more easily edited with programs such as Photoshop and Photoshop Elements. What you need to explore is the impact that shooting RAW has on digital-only camera characteristics. First, look at the RAW format a little more closely.

What exactly is in a RAW file?

It is helpful to think of a RAW file as having three distinct part:

Camera data, usually called the EXIF or metadata, including things such as camera model, shutter speed and aperture details, most of which cannot be changed.

Image data which, though recorded by the camera, can be changed in a RAW editing program such as Adobe Camera RAW (ACR) and the settings chosen here directly affect how the picture is processed.

Changeable options include colour depth, white balance, saturation, distribution of image tones (contrast), noise reduction and application of sharpness.

The image itself. This is the data drawn directly from the sensor in your camera in a non-interpolated form. For most RAW enabled cameras, this data is supplied with 12 or 16 bits per channel colour depth. This provides more colours and tones to play with when editing and enhancing than found in standard 8 bits per channel camera file.

How does this impact on my day-to-day shooting?

Most experienced photographers pride themselves on their ability to control all the functions of their cameras. Often their dexterity extends way beyond the traditional controls such as aperture, shutter speed and focus to 'digital-only' features, such as white balance, contrast, sharpness, noise reduction and saturation. For the best imaging results, they regularly manipulate these features to match the camera settings with the scene's characteristics.

long exposure bridge

For instance, a landscape photographer may add contrast, boost saturation and manually adjust the white balance setting of his or her camera when confronted with a misty valley shot early in the morning. In contrast, an avid travel photographer may choose to reduce contrast and saturation and switch to a daylight white balance setting when photographing the floating markets in Thailand on a bright summer's day. It has long been known that such customization is essential if you want to make the best images possible. However, you must be capturing in a JPEG or TIFF format. As we have already seen, settings such as these, though fixed in capture formats such as TIFF and JPEG, are fully adjustable when shooting RAW.

What does this mean in our day-to-day photography?

All is not lost if after documenting some interiors you accidentally forget to switch the white balance setting from tungsten back to daylight before commencing to photograph outside. The white balance setting used at the time of capture is recorded with the RAW file but is only applied when the picture is processed. This means that when you open the images in a RAW converter, the picture is previewed using the capture setting (tungsten), but you can easily select a different option to process the file. In this example it would mean switching the setting from tungsten back to daylight in the white balance menu of the conversion software. All this happens with no resultant loss in quality. Hooray!

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Water Surface and Waterfall Photography Tips

Waterfalls and streams are popular photography subjects because they can easily be made into a soothing digital desktop wallpaper. A common element in many waterfall pictures is the silky smooth appearance of the water.

water surface photography tips

This is not difficult to capture, with the right tools and techniques.

Tripod

Without a tripod, pictures of silky smooth moving water would not be possible. This is because we typically use shutter speeds of 2 seconds or more, which is not possible to hand-hold without getting camera shake. The general rule of thumb for a steady shot without a tripod is the one-over-focal-length rule. If you are using a 24mm lens, the slowest shutter speed you should use is 1/24. This actually means 1/30 which is an actual shutter speed setting. Similarly if you are using a 200mm lens, you should not use any shutter speed lower than 1/200. Of course, if your lens has VR (vibration reduction) or IS (image stabilizer) you can bend this



rule by a few stops. Or you have hands as steady as a rock.

Polarizing Filter or ND Filter

Circular polarizing filters are designed to reduce reflections and increase saturation. As a side effect, they also cut down about 1.5 stops of light coming through the lens.

ND filters are neutral density filters, available in different strengths. They act like sunglasses for your lens by cutting down the light coming into the lens.

Both these filters enable the shutter speed to drop to the levels that are needed to create the motion blur in the water. The circular polarizing filter has an added benefit in that it minimizes the reflective wet surfaces on the rocks, and prevents hot spots, giving you a clearer shot.

photography tips for waterfalls

"Ferns and Falls" captured by PictureSocial member Mark Broughton

Remote Release

You can use a remote release to trip the shutter, or take advantage of the self timer. Both methods can be used to enable handsfree operation of the camera when the shutter opens. This is crucial for sharp, shake-free shots. If your DSLR has a mirror lock-up function, use it as it adds another layer of stability by locking up the mirror before the shutter opens, further minimizing vibrations.

Timing and Location

Finally it's time to use these tools to get the shot. Shooting a time when the sun is not too strong will give you the best chance of slowing down the shutter speed. This is because even at ISO100 and F22, your shutter speed may not reach the required levels if there is too much light. A shutter speed range of 2 seconds to 5 seconds is your target. Shooting in forest cover will also increase the possibility of lower light levels.

Vary your shutter speeds for different moods. There are many other variables to fine-tune, like composition, color balance and foreground interest. So keep on experimenting to get the perfect waterfall shot.

water motion photography

Smoothing Ripples

You can also apply this technique on other water surfaces, like lakes and dams. Ripples on a lake can be smoothed out by using a long exposure. The result is a mirror-like calmness. Reflections on this surface are sometimes rendered as wavy surreal reflections.



Diagonal Lines in Landscape Photography

Today's landscape photo tip involves diagonal lines. In a landscape photo, portrait photo, still life or any other kind of photo, the first major task of the photographer is to draw the viewer's eye to the most important aspects of the shot and keep it there!



Photo by Jeff Wallace; ISO 160, f/8, 1/60-second exposure.

We want our photo to send some sort of message. If not, we shouldn't be taking the shot. So we want to be certain that our viewer's attention is focused in the right area. By the way, the message we're sending could be as simple as wanting them to see an attractive cloud formation or some pretty colors in a rainbow—whatever.

We're taking the shot because something in that scene attracted us and we want the viewer to see it, too.

This is actually the whole point to the photo composition rules. To make sure the viewer sees what we want them to see in the scene.

First, let's consider how a person looks at a photo. Obviously it's not a hard and fast rule. After all, people are individuals. But eye tracking studies have shown that people tend to start off in the lower left of the frame and let their eye travel up toward the upper right. Add to that the tendency of a viewer's eye to follow natural lines in a photo and you have the genesis of a pretty powerful compositional tool.

In photography, diagonal lines starting at the lower left and traveling toward the upper right are very powerful.



Photo by Giuseppe Milo; ISO 100, f/9, 1/50-second exposure.

Why does the viewer's eye typically go from left to right? For many of us, it's because we're accustomed to reading from left to right. We tend to look at all text and photos in that way.

Keep this in mind... I haven't seen any studies to support this, but I suspect that in countries where people read from right to left, the viewer's eye will travel from right to left. In that case, design your diagonals to lead them into the photo from right to left.

Keep your potential viewers in mind when you're designing your photography composition.

When you're trying to determine where to place your diagonals, try not to start or end right in the corner. Photography diagonal lines that split the composition in half are no more interesting than placing the main subject in the bulls eye position.

Your diagonal lines don't have to be an actual line. It could be a fence drawing a viewer's eye, the horizon (if you're shooting at some funky angle)—anything!

Try this: have diagonal lines coming from both right *and* left and converging at the subect of your photo.

While vertical and horizontal leading lines are nice compositional elements, diagonal lines are more dynamic and will impart more strength and verve to your shot.



Photo by Flickr user Dimit®i; ISO 200, f/5, 1/1600-second exposure. Your assignment for today is to get out there with your camera and find ten different ways to add diagonal lines to your photos. This landscape photo tip—while it seems simple—is one of the big photo composition rules. Master it!

Beginner Tips for Setting up a Photo

Since I like to travel light, I rarely buy souvenirs. The most important things I bring home from a trip are my photos. I love taking and sharing photos, but I'm very much an amateur photographer. I don't know the lingo and I have a DSLR (digital single lens reflex, whatever that means) camera that ups my street cred, but in all honesty, I'm still figuring out what most of the buttons and settings do. It's intimidating to wade through all of the information, equipment, and technology available, but there are a number of things that you can do immediately to ensure that you come home from a trip with a great set of photos that are presentable and fun to look at regardless of the type of camera you own.

These are some of the things that I quickly think through whenever I'm setting up shots:

1. Prioritize your subject

Don't try to highlight everything in one shot. If there is more than one potential subject in the frame, decide what takes precedence and then focus on it.

Do you care more about the person or the landscape? The two should not be competing. If it's the landscape, make sure the person is not obscuring any important elements. Consider shifting them left or right. If it's the person, bring them closer to the camera so that you can really see their face and have the landscape serve as a beautiful backdrop.

Before you click, scan what's inside your frame to make sure you're not cutting off any important elements (the top of a mountain? the top of a person?). Include some space around the subject to create a natural border. When in doubt, include more space than less. It's easier to crop a photo later than to Photoshop an arm back in.

2. Don't shoot into a light source

Unless you know what you're doing, your subject will be back lit and the light will wash out the entire photo. If you really want to take the photo, and the light source isn't too strong, you can try shooting with a flash so that it lights up the subject in front of the light source. Sometimes this works, sometimes it doesn't. It can look kind of artificial.

On the other hand, light hitting a subject at an angle can create some beautiful effects and contrasts.

3. Make sure your subject is actually in focus

Maybe you're looking at the person, but the camera has decided to blur them out and focus on the leaves in the background. Check before you click. Use a tripod or surface to stabilize your camera if necessary.

4. Experiment with different camera angles

While shooting at eye level will give you some concise, straight-forward photos, try occasionally shooting at different angles to add interest. Shoot subjects from above, below, and the side. This will make for more dramatic photos and create size variation and interesting perspectives. In some cases, it will also allow you to capture more details because you're cutting across planes. Plus, kneeling down to take a shot makes you look really cool.

5. Include variations in color, texture, and/or light

If what's in your frame doesn't include contrasts in at least one of these areas, your photo will probably be quite flat and blah to look at.

6. Find frames within the environment

Try to find things that can be used as frames for subjects in your photo. A window or a doorway are more obvious options, but don't limit yourself. Think outside the box. Shooting through a bike wheel or a space between a collection of objects could create an unexpected and interesting shot.



Photo by Giuseppe Milo; ISO 400, f/8.0, 1/350-second exposure.

I personally think the most important part of photography is learning to see things in different ways and being flexible with your vision. After you've become more adept at setting up these basic shots, a lot of "rules" can be disregarded to create more avant-garde photos, but this is a good place to begin to ensure that you take sharp photos that "pop."

What is the Slowest Shutter Speed You Can Use for Handheld Photography?

Once you start taking photos, many things become clear. The first is that light is vital to creating a nice photograph. The second thing is that digital photography has made things much quicker and simpler. Third, we understand that proper camera usage is crucial to getting good quality photographs.



photo by Jamie McCaffrey

As soon as these three things meet, we can start to feel pleased with our images. Once we recognize that various subjects and distinctive scenes need different adjustments, we can then go ahead and take beautiful shots.

Shutter speed and aperture (f-stop) are the two main things we must concern ourselves when aiming for sharp pictures. Shutter speed is responsible for the amount of time that the shutter is open. Aperture is responsible for depth of field and the amount of light coming into the sensor. Once you start exploring this closely you will realize that there's more to the shutter than letting light in.

What causes blurry images?

If you are photographing at night, for instance, and you choose a shutter speed that is too quick, your images will be very underexposed. The shutter simply closes too fast to let any decent amount of light in. Alternatively, if you choose a speed that is too slow, you may run the run the risk of over exposing your scene. At times, when our shutter is too slow we can create blurry motion. Blurring the motion is good for intentional special effects, but it's not good when you want tack sharp pictures.



photo by Keith Williams

Shutter speed is one of the main factors for image clarity. An unintentional blurry photograph is often a result of hand holding the DSLR when the shutter is slow. It is really difficult to take a photo with a slow shutter speed and get absolute sharpness. You can have the best intentions in the world yet still manage to blur the shot just by standing there.

How slow can you go?

So what is the slowest shutter speed you can use when hand-holding the camera? In my professional experience, it lives anywhere between 1/80 and 1/ 50 of a second. I can quite confidently shoot at 1/80 of a second and see no blur. A number of people I know can shoot at 1/50 of a second and see no blur. Your neighbor or friend may be different from you and me. This won't make it correct or wrong. It simply means there is a cutoff point that we can go past.

A useful way to develop the sharpness in your images, without a tripod, is to position your shutter speed at the same number as your focal length. If you are working with a 50mm lens then try not to shoot slower than 1/50 of a second. If you are shooting with a 200mm lens then try not to shoot less than 1/200 of a second. The further away your subject is the longer the focal length you will need. Longer the focal lengths require a faster shutter speed. This is due to the fact that the more you zoom in, the more the image shakes and moves in the frame. You will have to balance this out by choosing a faster shutter speed.

The smallest motion can totally distort your image. This comes about simply from breathing or just standing. If you are shooting with a DSLR, you'll be able to see what focal length you have by looking down the barrel of your lens. Around your lens is a sequence of numbers. If you have a 24 to 105mm

lens, you will see a succession of numbers ranging from 24 right through to 105. As you zoom closer into your scene you will see a little indicator next to the number. For example, if you see this small indicator pointing to the number 85 then you understand that you are working at 85mm. Matching the shutter speed and focal length numeric value is a good way to increase image clarity. However, there is a limit.

You cannot use this rule for very slow shutter speeds unless you use a tripod. For example, if you are photographing a landscape scene at 20mm then I can promise that setting your shutter speed to 1/20 of a second will not advance your clarity. You need to be sensible about how slow you go with your shutter speed before you need the help of your tripod.

Matching your shutter speed to your focal length to attain sharpness may not be observable right away. You will not be able to see a massive change for the better when you take a look at the shot on the LCD on the camera. Only when you get your photo into Photoshop or Lightroom will you observe the difference.

Once you zoom into your photo you will see variation in sharpness. Once you know how to achieve sharpness, you will not need to over sharpen your images in post-production.

How to Avoid Red Eye in Photography

Today's photo tip is about spooky, creepy looking eyes. We all know about the red eye effect ruining our photos, but have you ever seen the green or blue eye effect? This cousin of the red eye effect is often seen in pet portraits. In animals, green and blue eyes are the same thing as red eye in humans. Most of you already know what causes it, but for those who don't, the red eye effect is the result of your flash being too close to the lens. When the light source is close to the lens, like with an on camera flash, when the flash is fired, the light goes from the flash into the pupil of the subject's eye and straight back out into the camera's lens.

photography eye light

Light bounces the same way a billiards ball does. It reflects out at the same angle it went in. If it hits the subject at a steep angle like 45 degrees, it will bounce off at 45 degrees.

In other words, light hitting a model from one side, will exit to the other side. With the on camera flash, the light hits the model with little to no angle at all. So it comes straight back and into the lens. Red eye is caused when the light from the flash goes into the eye and reflects off the back of the eyeball. The red you are seeing is the red of the blood vessels and inside surface of the eye. Green and blue eye is the same thing—only in animals. When you're shooting dogs and cats, you will frequently run into the problem.

How do you fix it?

Change the angle of the light so it doesn't bounce off the back of the eye, straight back into the lens! Move the flash off the camera and away from the lens–tilt the flash so it bounces off the wall or ceiling and onto the subject or get rid of the flash altogether and use another light source.

That's why you frequently see photographers with their flash unit mounted on one of those big stalks off to the side of the camera. They are just eliminating a few problems caused by flash—one of which is red eye.



Book of the Month



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