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The Exposure Triangle

The three elements of the exposure triangle are:

1. **ISO** – this is the measure of a digital camera sensor's sensitivity to light.
2. **Aperture** – the size of the opening in the lens when a picture is taken.
3. **Shutter Speed** – the amount of time that the shutter is open.

It is at the intersection of these three elements that an image's exposure is worked out.

Most importantly – a change in one of the elements will impact the others. This means that you can never really isolate just one of the elements but you always need to have the other elements in the back of your mind.

Mastering the art of exposure is something that takes a lot of practice. In many ways it's a juggling act and even the most experienced photographers experiment and tweak their settings as they go.

Keep in mind that changing each element not only impacts the exposure of the image but each one also has an impact upon other aspects of it (ie changing ISO changes the graininess of a shot, changing aperture changes depth of field and changing shutter speed impacts how motion is captured).

The great thing about digital cameras is that they are the ideal testing bed for learning about exposure. You can take as many shots as you like at no cost and they not only allow you to shoot in Auto mode and Manual mode – but also generally have semi-automatic modes like aperture priority and shutter priority modes which allow you to make decisions about one or two elements of the triangle and let the camera handle the other elements.

