



Dapto Camera Club Magazine

Viewfinder.

July 2025



MILKY WAY PHOTOGRAPHY CHEAT SHEET



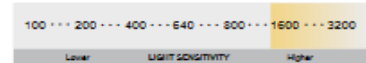
LIGHT STALKING

APERTURE



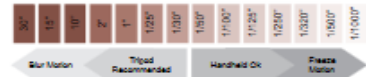
Shoot wide - your aperture will want to be wide. At least f/3.5 and wider in most cases.

ISO



Start at ISO 3200 - most astrophotography is done between ISO 1600 and ISO 6400.

SHUTTER SPEED



Setting the correct shutter speed is one of the toughest things to do in astrophotography, but there's an easy way to figure it out and it's called **The 500 Rule**.

THE 500 RULE

DIVIDE 500 BY THE FOCAL LENGTH OF THE LENS THAT YOU'RE USING.

So, if you have a 24mm lens on a full frame camera, you will set your shutter speed to 20s ($500/24=20.83$).

If you're working with a crop sensor camera be sure to account for the crop factor (typically 1.5 for Nikon and Sony, 1.6 for Canon).

As an example, using the same 24mm lens on a Nikon crop, you'd end up with an effective focal length of 36mm ($24 \times 1.5=36$).

Applying the 500 rule will yield a shutter speed of 13sec. ($500/36=13.89$).

IF THIS DOESN'T WORK, REPLACE 500 WITH 600 IN THE CALCULATION (WHICH IS "THE 600 RULE").

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.

Norm Blake

The complete beginner's guide to drone photography

Never has it been so easy to capture aerial images of some of the world's most stunning (and sometimes hard to reach) places. The drone—a sky-high flying, unmanned camera—is undoubtedly the wildest photography development in recent memory. Almost like a remote-controlled toy for the photo obsessed, drones are as much fun as they are revolutionary.

As the desire for drones has risen, the price has dropped, making it easier than ever to get a camera in the air. But with so many factors to consider—whether you're just planning to get into drone photography or have already gotten one—getting started can be a challenge.

From choosing a set-up to post-processing photos, take these nine tips with you on your journey to drone photography:

01. Choose a drone based on your needs and skills

One search of “drone” in Google will shock you with the mind-boggling number of drones available out there. But what are the things you actually need to consider in getting one for yourself?

The two most common types of drones you can choose from are those with a built-in or on-board camera and those of which you can attach your own. Drones with a built-in camera are often larger, and their cameras might not have a very high resolution—which can compromise the quality of your photos. Smaller drones which allow you to attach your own camera, such as a GoPro, on the other hand, could be easier to manage since you already have the hang of your camera and really only need to learn how to fly.



Photo by David Henrichs

One of the most important things to consider is how well you can fly a drone. For beginning drone photographers, sturdier, lighter, and cheaper drones are available. They aren't as expensive as heavier and more advanced drones either because they have less features. Look for a drone that matches your skill.

You also need to know what your drone can do. For instance, some drones can only be flown indoors. Some drones are also equipped with lighting that can be used for shooting at night. Some fly farther than others. Decide what you want to achieve with your drone, check out the features of the drones you are choosing from, then choose one that best satisfies your needs.

Channels like That Drone Show and Drone Camps RC on YouTube test, review, and compare different drones and accessories. You might consider watching the videos before purchasing your drone.

02. Study the instruction manual carefully

Reading the instruction manual is nowhere near as exciting as soaring your camera over the ocean, but if you want to give yourself the best chance of nailing drone photography, get to studying.



Photo by Curate Labs & Magazine

Your instruction manual holds everything you need to know about your new drone. It will give you the answers to a bunch of questions you might not have even known you had. Knowing what your drone can and cannot do, you'll be spending less time tinkering with it and more time improving your shots.

03. Understand the features of your drone

Drones offer various features that help optimize your flying time. Learning these will ensure you shoot efficiently with your drone.

While they vary for each brand and type of drone, these are the typical features you will encounter:

Smartphone Feed

Photo by Samuel Schwendener

This tool is great for beginners as it allows you to see exactly what your drone is capturing, increasing your chances of a great shot.

Smart Mode

Smart mode essentially translates to “beginner mode.” This innovation is put in place to essentially help newbies get the most out of their shots.

For example, if you're inexperienced and it's a windy day, chances are you won't have the chops to fly your device without it looking like your photos were caught up in an earthquake. Smart mode will have some form of stabilisation feature that will help to counter this.

Tracking

Drones sometimes also have a “follow-me” option. This combines futuristic visual recognition with your smartphone's GPS to help you take the perfect photo.



If you want yourself in the shot, this technology will allow it: put your phone in your pocket, turn on the

“follow-me” option, and the drone will make sure that you’re always in the frame.

Geofence



A geofence will restrict how far and how high your drone flies. Essentially, it locks your drone in an invisible jail, and the minute you try to escape, you’ll run into trouble.

Drone photographers have varying opinions on these features—some find them useful, and others don’t. Find out which features you can use to maximize your drone’s potential.

04. Learn the federal, state, and local drone regulations

Because of how many people have gotten into these little unmanned aircrafts, there’s been a lot of developments into the legality of where, how, and who can pilot one.

For instance, in the USA, UAVs weighing between 0.55 and 55 lbs. require a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) registration. This means that before you take to the sky, you must make your aircraft known—much like registering a car. It’s a simple process: just hand over a small fee and your name, address, and email.

There are also regulations on where you can fly your drone. For example, you (fairly obviously) can’t go flying your drone around another aircraft, so airports are a no-no.

Whilst most laws and regulations are quite obvious and easy to understand, a lot are still quite messy—especially surrounding fines. The laws surrounding registration also vary for every country. The best thing to do is to take the time to check the legality of drones (which you can do online) before you launch your camera.

05. Prepare a pre-flight checklist

Knowing what your drone can do and where you can fly it, you’d think it’s time to finally get it in the air, but before you do that, it’s advisable to first devise a pre-flight checklist. A pre-flight checklist will not only ensure that you have everything you need before you fly but also that everyone around you, including your drone, will be safe.

Before you fly, check these things off the list:

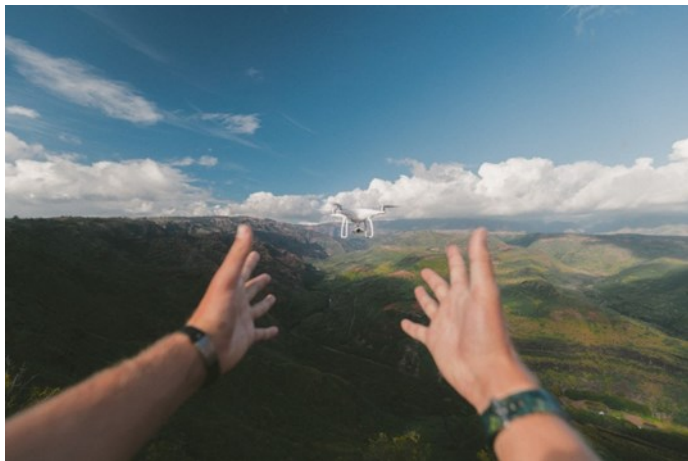
- Fly Zone: Where are you going to fly? Is it private or public domain?
- Weather: Are flying conditions good? Will you need to utilize anti-stabilization because of the wind?
- Surroundings: Will there be people around at this time of day? Will it be safe to fly low/high? Will they mind a drone hovering around them?
- Battery: Have you charged up all your batteries? How long can you stay in the air?
- Settings: What resolution do you need? How bright do you need to set your camera? What frame rate, shutter speed, and ISO are best for what you want to achieve in your photo?
- Propellers: How are your propellers looking? Are they nice and straight, or do they need replacing?
- Motor: is the motor and mounts in tact? Are the motors rotating freely? Is it making any unrecognisable sounds? Are the screws tight?

Controls: If you’re using a smartphone or tablet, is it ready to go for your flight? Are other apps turned off? Is the fully charged? If you’re using a remote control, does it have batteries? Is it responding to your drone?



Photo by Dose Media

With all these in check, now comes the exciting part—flying your drone.



06. Test drive your drone

Can you imagine spending a lot of time and money on a shiny new drone, hooking your expensive camera up to it, and then losing control and watching it plummet to the ground? Don't set yourself up for tragedy—test drive your drone.

Every drone is different; thus, they all fly differently. Taking your new toy out to a big open area, like a field or park (keeping clear of large crowds of people, private buildings, and cars) will allow you to get the hang of the controls all while minimizing the risk of breaking or damaging your drone.

Photo by Jakob Owens

Just like other photography techniques, drone flying is all about practice, practice, practice. Learn how to fly your drone to get the most out of it.

07. Learn drone photography techniques

Now, there's no point travelling to an amazing location and getting your camera in the sky, only to have a weirdly-framed, unclear photo. There's an art to panning across beautiful scenery, which can only be learnt with time and testing.

Here are a few tips to keep in mind:

Don't forget the "rules: "Sometimes it's easy to forget the fundamentals of photography when you're flying, but they all still apply to the world of drones. If you're not familiar with beginner techniques such as the rule of thirds, leading lines, and golden ratio, then get back to basics and study up.

Look for symmetry and patterns: While you're soaring high, keep on the lookout for interesting scenes of colors, shapes, and repetition. They form some of the most iconic aerial photos.

Keep it simple: Just like ground level photography, simple compositions can result in incredible shots that celebrate the subject.

Go slow and stable: Because of how stable some drones are these days, you can still use long-exposure, which can be particularly amazing when capturing swaying trees or the crashing ocean.

Celebrate light: The right light can be a huge advantage for drone photographers—shooting at particular times during the day can create long shadows and striking patterns.

There are so many techniques to discover and conquer. Never stop learning.

08. Post-process your photos

Whether it's color correcting a batch of photos you're unhappy with or editing something out of the shot, what you do after the drone's packed away can be just as important as actually taking the photo. Drone photography almost always relies on post-production to make it shine.

The thing is, editing drone photos takes just as much learning and practicing as capturing them. Even if you're already a gun at post-production editing, editing photographs taken from high above—considering the differences in lighting and angles—is a whole new skill.

Try various software like Photoshop or Lightroom, which have different interfaces and areas of focus, to see which one can best help you achieve the outcome you're going for.

It might be time consuming and, often, tedious, but every good drone photographer is also a great editor.

09. Don't forget the essential add-ons

Just like any other camera, drones also have different add-ons that you can use to improve flying or the quality of your photos.

Batteries

One big, limiting factor to keep in mind - drones don't have the longest battery life. An average drone will fly for about 10 minutes, while high end drones will allow you to fly for around 20-25 minutes. To avoid spending half your time by a power point or having to call it a day without getting the money shot, consid-



er investing in an extra battery (and remembering to charge it). They're not cheap, but as a beginner, can you afford to shoot on such a limited time frame?

Propeller Guards

Crashing a drone or getting it stuck in things, like plants, especially when you're just starting out, is not uncommon. Getting too close to the propellers could also result in a minor injury. Get propeller guards that will help avoid damaging your drone or hurting yourself and others around you.

Photo by Chris Brooks

Extra Propellers

Propellers can also be fragile and are detachable, so they can easily get lost. While you're still learning, buy extras just in case. They don't cost much and will ensure you're always on the go.

Extra SD cards

Don't miss out on the hero shot because your SD card fills up. Drone shots take up a lot of memory space—a 2-minute 4k video takes up around 1GB. No matter how big or small, get extra SD cards, so you never miss a shot.

It's not all boring essentials. Once you've got the responsible stuff, you can accessorize. Whether it's a funky light kit that makes night flying a breeze to camera filters that add an automatic flair to your flight photos, manufacturers are taking advantage of the popularity of drones and churning out loads of amazing accessories.

Here are a couple that I recommend:

Mini drone landing pad

Equal parts cool and functional, having a drone landing pad helps ensure your UAV won't be landing on



something that could potentially damage it.

Never lose your drone in the dark! LED lights mean you'll can always keep track of your drone. Plus, it looks sweet.

Undoubtedly a powerful tool for photography, drones have opened doors to shoot from angles and locations like never before. While they certainly aren't for everyone (with a lot of people sceptical about their inception), they have made a huge impact on photography and aren't looking to faze out anytime soon, so why not hop on the train?

Just remember, mastering drone photography doesn't come to everyone over night. It can get seriously tricky, but with practice, planning, and time, you can take your shots from amateur to amazing.

<https://www.canva.com/learn/the-complete-beginners-guide-to-drone-photography/>

3 Essential Principles of Color Photography

The use of color is about more than creating true to life images. When used carefully, color can make photos more emotional and more compelling.



When working with color photographs, it's easy to simply choose a dominant color or a color cast without thinking too much about why certain colors work and how they affect our perception of an image. However, when manipulated skillfully, color has the ability to transform a dull image into something more dynamic. Color doesn't just set the mood. It creates a visually attractive image or makes certain elements within the image stand out more than others. Instead, when the right shades are chosen, a great color photograph is full of life and emotion. I'll show you three of the things that I consider as I create color images.

Color Psychology

As you're composing a photo, it's important to understand how color psychology works. At the basic level, most colors can be categorized as warm or cool. For the most part, cool colors like blue, green or purple tend to have a relaxing effect while reds, oranges, and yellows are warm and exciting colors.

However, if you dig a little deeper into color psychology, you'll find that each color has its own set of emotions – some colors even cause physiological responses. Red, for instance, signifies danger, confrontation or passion. Viewers often experience a slight increase in heart and breathing rates when viewing the color red. Green, on the other hand, is a calming color. Researchers have noted that green doesn't strain the eyes as much as any other color and it can even help improve a viewer's vision. In lighter shades, green is usually associated with the natural world, but darker shades of green often lend a sense of wealth to an image. As you can see, every color – and all the shades in between – has a unique set of properties. When it comes to color photography, the most effective images are those that use color to evoke particular emotions or responses.

Color Balance

No matter how you utilize colors as you take a photograph, it is always possible to further manipulate the color balance during post-processing. By adjusting the color balance, you can warm up cool photos, cool down warm ones or make warmly balanced photos even warmer. Use color balance in conjunction with color psychology to enhance or modify a photo's mood or emotion.

For instance, an image of a cool green landscape is relaxing and refreshing. By warming the photo's overall tone, you can make it seem more inviting. Wintertime photography – images of snow and ice – tend to look cold based on their subject material alone, but if you adjust the color balance towards the cool end of the spectrum, you can make those cold images seem downright frigid and remote.

Color Intensity

The intensity of your colors (or the saturation) also contributes to the overall effect of your image. Boost a photo's saturation, and depending on the subject material and the colors you've chosen, your photo could be more lively, it may have a richer or bolder look, or it may look almost cartoonish. When you increase saturation, photos generally appear more cheerful, exciting or lavish.

Desaturation has the reverse effect. In many instances, photographers actually tone down the colors to give their images a moody look. Desaturation can also make a photograph seem more old-fashioned or reserved. It is also possible to selectively saturate or desaturate particular colors or certain elements within the image. This is useful if you want to make a dominant color seem less overbearing or if you'd like to bring a particular color to the forefront of viewer's minds. Use selective saturation and desaturation to draw attention where it's needed, to enhance a mood or emotion, or to make an image fit into a particular theme you've developed.

Color manipulation is limited only to your imagination and to the thoughts and feelings that you're trying to convey. Learn everything that you can about the way colors make us think and feel, and then apply that knowledge to your art. By putting color to work in your images, you can create powerful, thought-provoking photographs.

Photograph Trees In Your Own Backyard

By Michelle Ecker



If you're staying home and social distancing because of the pandemic, you might be looking for ways to keep busy and stay creative. Many of our students are reaching out to share ideas and ways to stay inspired during times when it's not as easy to get in the car and drive to interesting locations to practice our photography.

While staying home definitely limits us in the things we might be used to photographing, and although we may need to take a break from those activities and travels for the time being, don't get discouraged. There are still opportunities for you to practice your photo taking skills from the comfort of your own neighborhood.



If you have trees in your backyard, practicing your tree photography is a great way to get some nature and landscape photography practice under your belt while keeping your social distance. If you don't have trees in your backyard, be sure to wear your mask and take CDC Covid19 precautions and go for a little walk around your neighborhood to find some trees you can use as a subject for this exercise.

Getting started, try to pick a tree that looks most compelling to you and one that you'd most like to use as your subject for this activity. Whether it's a large, colorful tree in your front yard lush with pink floral blooms, or a large old oak up your street that you've al-

ways admired. Your first step is to make a decision about what you would like to focus on as the chief subject of your composition.

Get Creative With Your Settings

From there, try starting with an aperture of $f/22$ if you are interested in keeping the entire image in focus - the tree itself, the foreground and the setting behind it. Using $f/22$ as an aperture starting point is a good method to employ if you're looking to keep the entire image equally in focus.

If you are interested in taking a different approach and creating more of a bokeh effect instead of keeping your entire image in perfect focus, try an aperture of $f/8$. By using this setting, you will be able to achieve the aesthetic of gentle, surrounding, out-of focus blur in your image.



Use a Polarizing Filter

If you can only buy one filter for your lens, make it a polarizer.

The recommended type of polarizer is circular because these allow your camera to use TTL (through the lens) metering such as auto exposure.

This filter helps reduce reflections from water as well as metal and glass; it improves the colours of the sky and foliage and will help give your photos the WOW factor. It will do all that while protecting your lens. There's no reason why you can't leave it on for all of your photography.



Reviewing your own photographs

It has been said the most difficult thing for man to do is to judge his or her creative work, objectively. Be honest, can you tell when your work seems to be missing something? More importantly do you know what it is that's missing? You can only improve your photos if you set a high photo standard to compare yourself against.

Intent, skill, and consistency are the same three factors that will determine your own greatness. Study the masters like Ansel Adams, Edward Weston, Imogene Cunningham, and Diana Arbus, and you will see these three factors again and again. But the question remains, how do you get from where you are now to that level?

Have you ever heard the phrase, "being your own worse critic?" By the very nature of the words being used, most people tend to think of that as a negative phrase, when in reality, nothing could be further from the truth. To learn and grow in photography, you have to be strong enough to admit what does and does not work in your photos.

To that end, here is a strength and weakness checklist for you to use when reviewing your own photographs. It's not complicated, just look at your photo and mark whether it is strong or weak. There is no middle gray; your image either succeeds or it does not. Once you know your weaknesses you can work on improving in those areas.



Photo Critique Checklist

1. Intent – Could any viewer look at this photo and KNOW what you had in mind?
2. Emotional Impact – Can this photo be described with words of emotion, like peace, calmness, anger, rage, joy, or sadness? Does your photo make an emotional statement?
3. Center of interest – When composing your images do you successfully direct your viewer's attention to a specific point? Would the viewer know where your center of interest is?
4. Illusion of depth – Have you used framing, balance, contrast, and other art concepts to make your image jump off the page, or does it just sit there?
5. Subject/background contrast – Shooting a portrait of someone with black hair against a black background is not usually a good idea. Does your subject stand out?
6. Personal style – Ansel Adams was known for extreme illusion of depth and all planes in very sharp focus. Jim Zuckerman is known for vibrant colors and simplified subjects within their natural setting. Henri Cartier-Bresson once said, "There is nothing in this world that does not have a decisive moment." How will others describe your unique approach?
7. Selective focus – Do you choose where the viewer will look? If the background is just as sharp as the foreground, things can become very visually confusing.
8. Composition – Do you consistently use the rule of thirds, formal or informal balance, and leading lines? Take control of where the viewer's eyes are most likely to fall in your image.
9. Exposure – Do you always shoot at whatever the camera says, or do you take control of the light? Can you see details in your shadows? Have you ever used a reflector or bounced a flash as opposed to straight on?
10. Story telling – Is there a feeling of movement within your image, or does it just sit there? Does it leave anything to the imagination, or is it just a statement of what is? If your image doesn't tell a story, there is no reason to give it a second glance. Great photos make you want to look again and again.

Use this checklist A) to see where you are at the moment and B) to see where your work is going in the future. Having a photographic standard is like having a road map. It is possible to get from here to there without one . . . but it's a whole lot easier with one. Knowing what areas you need to improve is the first step in becoming a better photographer.

Copied from PictureCorrect.com blog.



Macro Focusing Rail Aluminum Alloy Slider for Digital SLR Close-up Shooting



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