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Digital Photographer

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Issue 185

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LANDSCAPES
IN TOUGH
CONDITIONS**

Use the weather to your advantage



**CANON
EOS M5**

10 **ESSENTIAL
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“Discover the skills you need to produce portraits that have a professional look, even in limited space”



A warm welcome to the latest issue of **Digital Photographer**. We've got a truly diverse range of topics, techniques and features for you to get your teeth into this issue. From shooting portraits with just one light to capturing stunning landscapes in tough conditions, there's something

for every photographer in these pages.

Starting on p28, our guide to incredible portraits using just one light will help you discover the skills you need to produce portraits that have a professional look, even in limited space.

On p38 of the magazine, our landscape photography feature takes an in-depth look at working successfully

in tough conditions, including rain and mist. If you're interested in wildlife photography, meanwhile, turn to p48 for our feature exploring ten essential pro skills. If you're keen to get creative, our shooting tutorial this issue looks at using a Lensbaby to capture an artistic portrait, while the creative project explores light painting.

Elsewhere, we've got expert reviews of the latest cameras, lenses and accessories to help you with your next purchases, including a group test of backpacks for photographers. I really hope that you find the inspiration you're looking for in this issue, and we'd love to see your own work on dphotographer.co.uk. We'll see you next issue!

Matt Bennett, Deputy Editor

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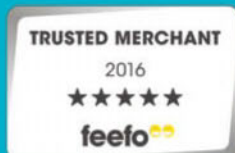
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REBECCA GREIG

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This issue, our Reviews Editor Rebecca offers an in-depth exploration of shooting portraits with just a single studio light. Discover her tips and tricks in our feature on p28. Rebecca's also lent her technical expertise on high-speed photographic capture (p106) and portable solid-state drives (p108).



ANGELA NICHOLSON

Website:
angelanicholson.com

Freelance journalist and photographer Angela has years of experience in testing cameras, from medium-format to compacts. This issue she road-tests Canon's new mirrorless model the EOS M5 (see p96), and tries out the Mark V edition of Sony's enduring RX100 premium compact – turn to p100.



KILIAN SCHÖNBERGER

Website:
kilianschoenberger.de

Photographer and geographer Kilian Schönberger specialises in bringing out the harsh beauty of remote landscapes, especially those at high altitude. On p38 this issue, he explains how you can make the most of challenging weather conditions to capture moody and dramatic scenes.



DAVID GILLIVER

Website:
davidgilliver.com

David creates playful fine-art images, with a particular emphasis on integrating art into the landscape. He brings his knowledge to bear in his creative project on p58, as he shows how to paint with light. Discover the shooting techniques and camera settings you need to bring light art into your own work.



APRIL MILANI

Website:
milani.photography

April Milani shoots conceptual images and evocative portraits. Specialist lenses are among the gear she uses to achieve her distinctive look; on p64, she demonstrates how to use a Lensbaby Composer and its custom optics, like the Sweet 35, to create an artistic, painterly effect in your own photographs.



RICHARD PETERS

Website:
richardpeters.co.uk

Richard aims to capture unusual and unexpected views of wildlife in his photos, giving you a different perspective on familiar animals. In his feature on p48, Richard suggests ten ways to deliver real impact in your own wildlife shots, from understanding the light conditions to including the habitat.



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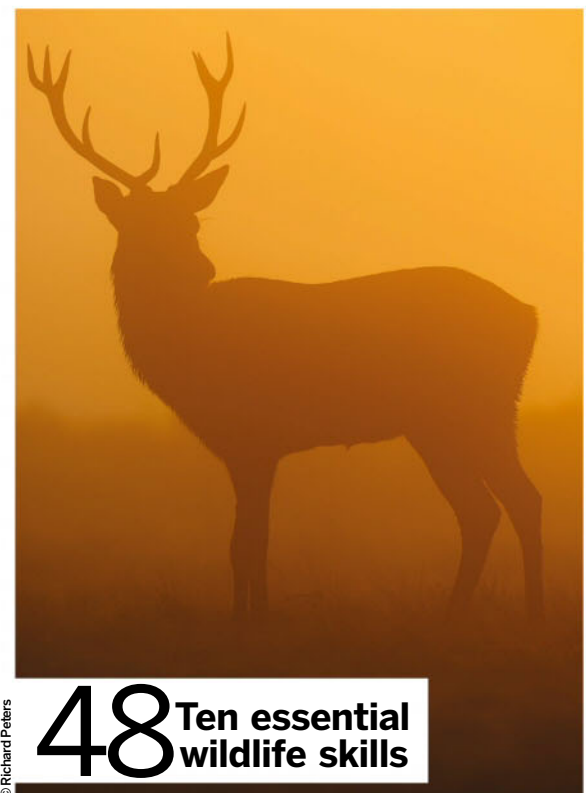


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38 Landscapes in tough conditions



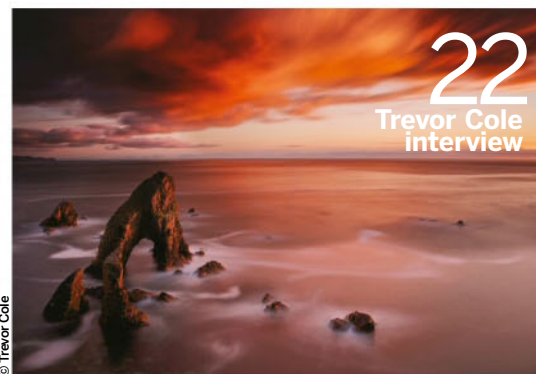
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© Richard Peters



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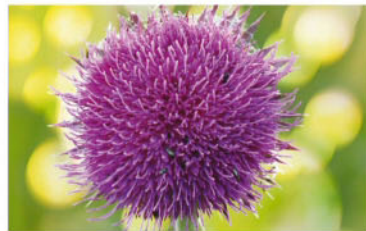
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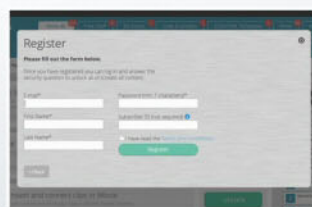


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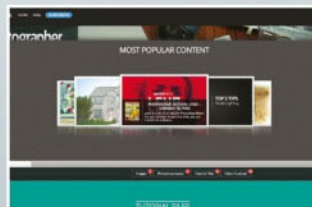
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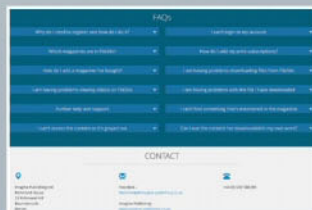
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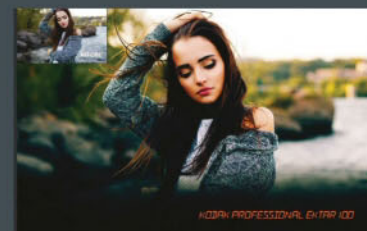
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The Gallery

Some of the best images from our website

2x © Ivan Farca

Ivan Farca



DP Gallery address:

ifarca

Image title:

Surfer

What camera, lens and settings did you use to capture this stunning shot?

My latest camera equipment is the Canon EOS 5DS with the 16-35mm f2.8 II on a Q55 Manfrotto carbon fibre tripod.

This was the first run on the 16-35mm and I have to say that I loved it. The settings on this shot had to be very fast because a long exposure would blur out the surfer and it was getting dark, so I went with 1/6sec f2.8 ISO 200 at 16mm.

How did you decide on the composition?

I knew that the tide would be low this day and reflection would be very clear on the Crystal Pier. I wanted the sunset right behind the pier and the camera at a low angle to capture as much of the reflections as I could – from nowhere this surfer came out of the ocean and, being in Southern California, I needed this sunset with a surfer.

I asked the guy if he could pose for me and he gladly did. I snapped four shots and that was it, after that I chatted with the surfer a bit and the sunset was gone.

Can you explain a bit more about the techniques you used to capture it?

First off I had my tripod open a bit more than usual to get the camera lower. I positioned myself on the water to get those reflections that I wanted to capture and when the surfer came into the frame, I quickly had to change the settings to make a faster shutter speed because I was doing some 30-second exposures.

My focus point was on the surfer and since I had to take the shot at f2.8, I needed the surfer to be in focus.

What do you like most about the image?

In December and January we get what we call the king tides, where the water retreats and rises more than usual. I'm always looking for nice reflections but this one took them all, with the surfer in a clear reflection and an amazing sunset.

Did you do much post-processing?

My post-process workflow is very simple and natural looking. I first start out with highlights, shadows, white and blacks and adjust contrast. I add a bit of vibrance and straighten the horizon, and that is it. I tend to keep my images as I saw it and get it in a single exposure.



2x © Chris Evans

Chris Evans



DP Gallery

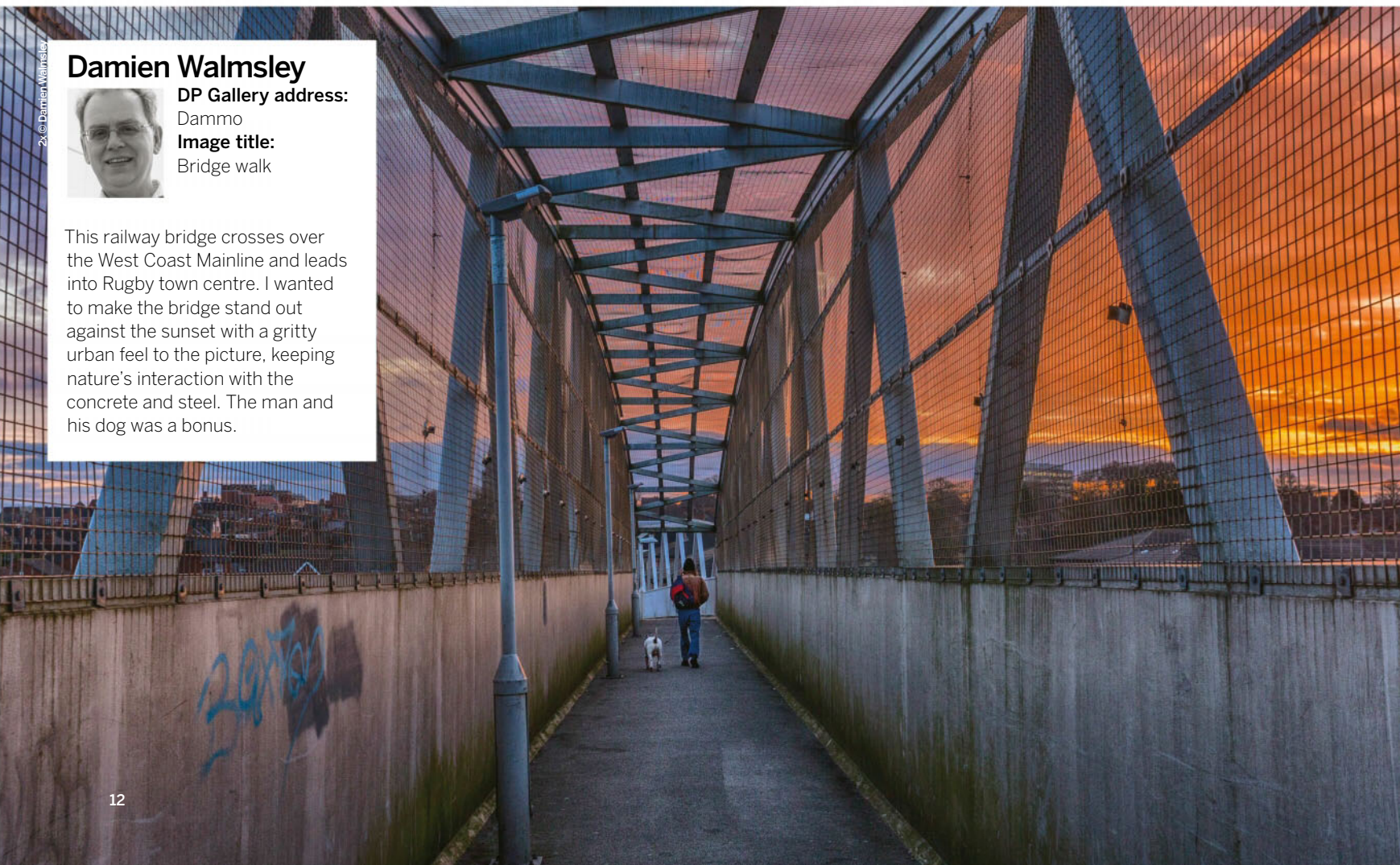
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Chris_V_Evans

Image title:

Vladimir Pinta

A chance shot taken while dining al fresco when on holiday in Prague during August 2016. This is the enigmatic Vladimir Pinta, a busker; at over 70 years old he is a well-known character on the streets of Prague. He even has his own unofficial Facebook page! I converted to black and white as I feel it gives the image the timeless quality I was after.



2x © Damien Walmsley

Damien Walmsley



DP Gallery address:

Dammo

Image title:

Bridge walk

This railway bridge crosses over the West Coast Mainline and leads into Rugby town centre. I wanted to make the bridge stand out against the sunset with a gritty urban feel to the picture, keeping nature's interaction with the concrete and steel. The man and his dog was a bonus.



Basia Pawlik



DP Gallery address:

basiapawlik

Image title:

Joanna

I shot this along with the series The last day of Summer at the end of August, on the last warm, but windy day last year. We've found a perfectly lit location in the centre of Birmingham, and I really liked how the light got reflected from the buildings around. In this shot I've used one of my favourite lenses: 85mm f1.2 by Canon, set to f1.2 and ISO 200. The colours are natural, thanks to the fantastic fence covered in green. Joanna, the model, is my muse; she always guarantees the best result and inspires me.

2x © Basia Pawlik

Eithne Ni Anluain



DP Gallery
address:
nianluain
Image title:
Beo with Elle Beth

A very quick and impromptu shoot at my house in this orange-flowered bush. It was a funny experience as I was holding my camera and throwing petals in the air as we were smothered by an orange smoke pellet!



Richard Dawson



DP Gallery
address:
Richard_uk
Image title:
In The Air

I photograph a lot of equine, whether action or private commissions. This photo was taken at a point-to-point race. The horses have to go along a hill to get to the start, so I positioned myself so that I could get a shot with the horse against the sky. The horse was nicely relaxed and I managed to get the shot I was after, all four feet off the ground.





Magdalena Szurek



DP Gallery address:

valori

Image title:

Selfie

This photograph is my auto-portrait. Walking on the frozen lake where the snow had dissolved I had no photographic inspiration until I saw the reflection at my feet. The scratches and splinters of ice water from the snow had created a real picture, with me in the lead role, that I could hardly resist capturing.

Technology is such that high-end equipment is not always necessary. This particular time it was enough to use my mobile camera with its manual settings and speed. The camera hanging heavily on my shoulder was not needed on this occasion.

THE BEST OF BLACK AND WHITE STREET PHOTOGRAPHY

The winners of our latest contest with Photocrowd and Think Tank Photo have been revealed

In our most recent contest in association with Photocrowd we challenged you to submit your best black and white street photography, and after sifting through over 2,300 impressive images – a Photocrowd record – the winners have been selected. Our expert selection of first place and the crowd voted image will both receive a Think Tank Photo Retrospective 30 Leather bag worth £230.

1ST PLACE WINNER

The middle men

Photographer: Peter Murrell

Our comments: The composition of this stunning black and white shot is the reason that we have chosen it to be the winner. The viewer is drawn into the image, straight to the main subject on the opposite platform.

The station sign has been skilfully centred in the shot and the image is very high contrast and low key, which is ideal for monochrome photography – our eyes were drawn straight to the highlights in the middle. We feel it has truly captured a candid and very real moment.



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We want to see your best abstract architectural shots, whether they are black and white high-contrast images or bright colourful captures. Enter now at www.photocrowd.com/contests/1009-abstract-architecture. The contest closes on 3 April 2017.





2ND PLACE Street performer

Photographer: Robert Wood

Our comments: After sifting through over 2,000 images this image really stuck in our minds. The photographer has very skilfully timed the shot in order to capture the bubble as it moves through the air, which flows stunningly through

the centre of the image in an almost ghost-like way. The dark trees add texture and they contrast beautifully against the light-coloured clouds in the sky. We also really love how part of the bubble perfectly frames the street performer's face, and his expression is great too.



3RD PLACE The mask man

Photographer: Diogo Barroso

Our comments: We really love this shot because it made us look twice. At first we thought all three figures were mannequins, but on closer inspection we saw that the central figure was in fact a real person. Although his eyes

are somewhat shadowed we can see that he is making eye contact with the camera, which helps to pull the viewer in. There is a high contrast between the blacks and whites in this shot too, which makes it very striking indeed.

1ST PLACE CROWD VOTED Around Yangon by train

Photographer: Marco Tagliarino



STORY BEHIND THE STILL



Photographer: Lee Acaster

Website: www.leeacaster.com

Location: Cym Bychan, Snowdonia

Type of commission: Personal work

Shot details: Sony a7R, Sony FE 70-200mm f4 G OSS
ISO 100, 0.6sec at f11

About the shot: This beautiful shot was taken by photographer Lee Acaster and has been named as the overall winner of the International Garden Photographer of the Year 10.

"I was just exploring the location and my attention was caught by the character and form of the tree," explains Acaster. "I wanted to make sure I only had the dark water behind it to avoid distractions, so had to climb to an elevated viewpoint to get the composition I wanted."

"It was my first time visiting the location, so had no idea what to expect. I knew there was a lake surrounded by mountains... so I arrived for sunrise hoping for some nice light to shoot more traditional landscape images. It turned out to be a grey and drizzly day, but I never really let weather conditions put me off... I just looked around for interesting details in the landscape which might reflect the mood of the day."

"Although it was early autumn, the exposed trees around the lake had lost most of their leaves. I really liked the way the few remaining leaves contrasted with the inky dark water behind. The damp conditions also meant that the wonderfully twisted wet branches were reflecting the light along their edges, so I thought this would work really well to create an almost painterly, abstract image."



"It was a wonderful surprise to find out my image had been awarded the overall prize. The standard of entries and previous winners is incredible... This made it doubly pleasing really, as it really sums up the kind of image I like to take and view, and it's incredibly humbling to think that it must have held a similar appeal to the judges."

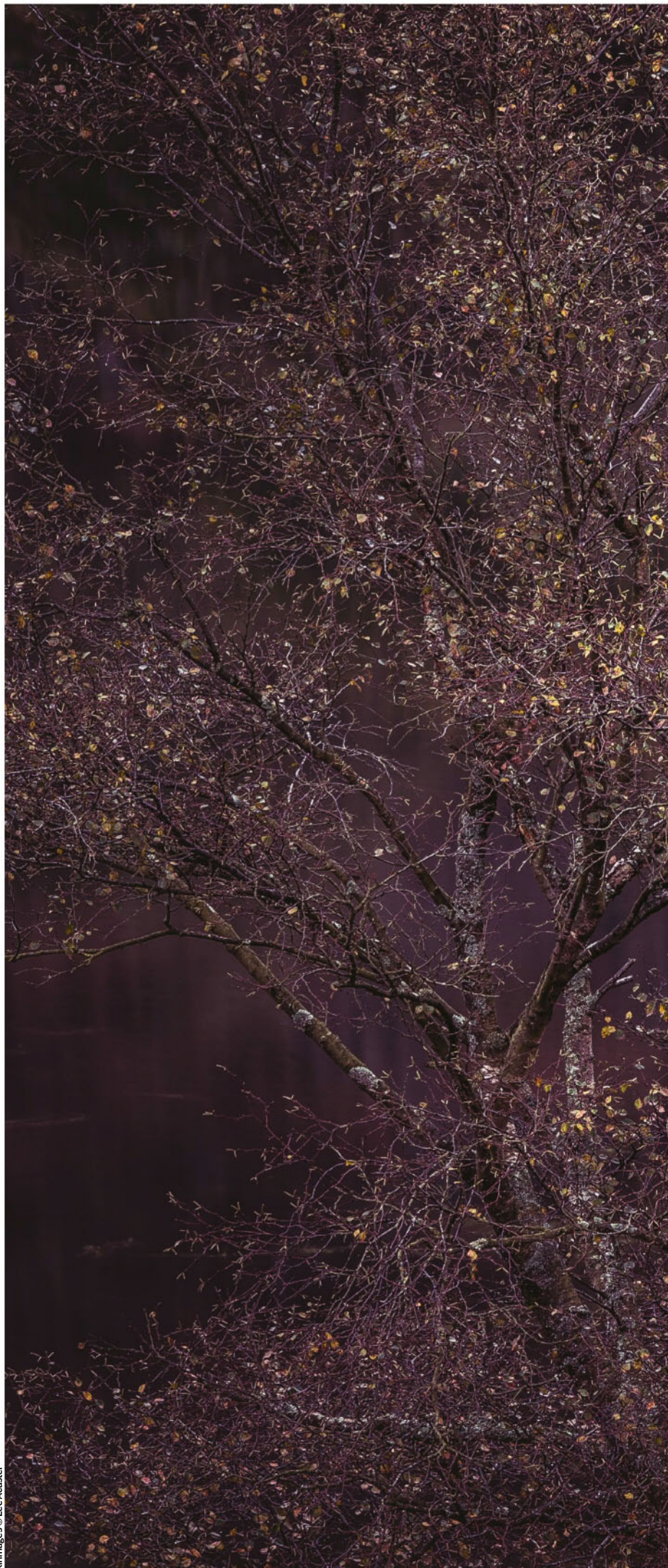
www.igpoty.com

Right

Snowdonia National Park, Wales, UK

"A straightforward shot to capture, it just became a case of getting a composition I was happy with."

All images © Lee Acaster







Canon introduces the EOS M6

A new mirrorless camera promises DSLR quality

The EOS M6 mirrorless camera is intended to pack high-end Canon features into a compact body. The camera houses a 24.2-megapixel APS-C size sensor, Dual Pixel CMOS AF and the Digic 7 processor.

Canon says it will offer speeds and quality typically associated with DSLRs, to suit photographers looking to shoot action scenes and other brief moments. It can shoot continuously at 7 frames per second or as quick as 9fps when shooting with fixed AF. The camera also has five-axis video stabilisation to enable smooth video operation.

The EOS M6 features a large tilting touchscreen, as well as integrated Wi-Fi and NFC for easy sharing.

Canon has also announced the launch of the Electronic Viewfinder EVF-DC2, a compact and lightweight external electronic viewfinder for compatible EOS M cameras – including the EOS M6 – as well as a range of PowerShot models. The 0.39-type viewfinder includes a 2.36-million-dot display with 100% coverage. It will show movement in real time with a refresh rate of up to 120 fps. It's easy to swap between screen and viewfinder while shooting, simply by raising the camera to your face.

The EOS M6 will be available from April with an RRP of £729.99 (body only). The EVF-DC2 will be available from April with an RRP of £219.99.

Hands-on first look: Canon EOS 800D and EOS 77D

Canon has added two new DSLRs to its line-up – we took a closer look at both at the launch event

Canon's new models both feature a 24.2-megapixel APS-C CMOS sensor (the same as the popular 80D) paired with the Digic 7 processor. We found the image quality produced by the EOS 80D to be impressive, so it will be interesting to see how these models perform.

The EOS 77D and 800D are a little smaller than the EOS 80D, despite sharing the same sensor and autofocus technology. They are comfortable to hold with a good grip, although some parts of the body feel a little plasticky.

The cameras will allow you to shoot at up to ISO 25600 (extendable to 51200), which should enable successful low-light shooting. The EOS 77D and the EOS 800D also both have 45 cross-type AF points for quick focusing and tracking objects accurately. The 77D has an AF-On button on the rear – a feature popular with action photographers. The EOS 77D features built-in image stabilisation and a Dual Pixel CMOS AF system for fast video focussing. It has dual control wheels that allow you to adjust settings like aperture and shutter speed, and also sports a top-panel LCD that will enable you to see your settings with ease.

Right

For beginners

The EOS 800D is positioned as an entry-level model in the Canon DSLR range

The simpler control layout of the EOS 800D is fine for beginners, but could prove frustrating for more experienced users. The 800D's guided interface will take you through how its settings work as you shoot, which should help you develop. Although Canon's new guided interface isn't enabled by default on the EOS 77D, it is available as an option.


The compact EF-S 18-55mm f4-5.6 IS STM lens has also been announced, as well as the Remote Controller BR-E1, which will allow remote capture with no line of sight from up to five metres away. All four products will be available from April. The EOS 77D will have an RRP of £829.99 and the EOS 800D will be priced at £779.99. The EF-S 18-55mm f/4-5.6 IS STM lens be available for £219.99 and the Remote Controller BR-E1 will cost £39.99.





Elinchrom releases portable light

Flash technology continues to evolve with the launch of the ELB 1200

 Elinchrom has revealed the ELB 1200, a portable and robust battery pack that has been designed for even the most extreme photographic adventures.

The manufacturer has designed the new product to offer more flexibility for action and location photographers. It weighs just 4.3kg, which will enable you to carry smaller, more powerful battery packs to wherever your adventure takes you.

Elinchrom has completely redesigned its three flash heads especially for the ELB 1200:

each now has rugged aluminium housing and a tilting head as well as a 7-8 mm umbrella tube. When you use the corresponding flash head, the hi-sync option will enable you to freeze motion up to 1/8,000 second.

The battery pack itself has been rethought to suit even the most demanding photographers – it's light, compact and will be able to withstand harsh weather and heavy shocks.


The game-changing ELB 1200 will be available from mid-2017, with pricing yet to be confirmed.

Above Great outdoors

The new ELB 1200 from Elinchrom will enable you to shoot with flash wherever you are

New Nissin Air10s

A flash transmitter that provides wireless control with a range of cameras

 The flash specialist Nissin has announced a new flash transmitter. The Air10s is an advanced Nissin Air System (NAS) 2.4GHz wireless TTL commander for use with Fujifilm, Sony, Micro Four Thirds, Canon and Nikon cameras.

The Air10s is an advanced strobe commander that's been designed to enable you to control a large group of strobes in a range of situations, from a dark studio to a bright outdoor location.

The wireless TTL commanders have a Micro SD slot that will enable users to update the device and its range has been expanded to a maximum distance of 100 meters.

The new commander has a TTL memory function, which memorises the exposure during a TTL Mode shoot and allows for a one-touch switch to Manual mode. You can save time during setup, as the device takes the TTL exposure data, calculates the individual output

internally and transforms the exposure data into Manual mode.

The Nissin Air10s strobe commander system will be available from April 2017. Visit www.kenro.co.uk for more information.



Above Flash command

Nissin's cross-platform flash transmitter will enable you to control a large group of strobes with ease

In other news...

More snippets of photo news from around the world



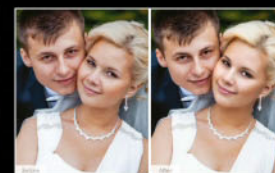
NIKON CANCELS DL COMPACT RANGE

The long-awaited release of the Nikon DL range of premium compact cameras has been cancelled. The series of cameras had been due for release in June 2016 – but after the identification of issues with the integrated circuit for image processing, the release was delayed. Now Nikon has cancelled the DL series due to the increase in development cost.



MANFROTTO PRESENTS XUME ADAPTERS

The new Xume adapters promise to take the hassle out of changing filters, which should ensure that no photographic moment is lost. The magnetic solution locks filters onto lenses with speed and precision. For more information, head to manfrotto.co.uk.



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Landscape variety

Professional photographer Trevor Cole discusses his passion for stunning scenes and why no two are the same

Left
**The Breeches,
Crohy Head**

A golden long exposure taken in
County Donegal, Ireland

All images © Trevor Cole

INTERVIEW



Irish-born professional photographer Trevor Cole (www.coleimages.com) frequently travels the world in search of stunning landscapes to capture. Cole's

beautiful images have been published in magazines, on cards and calendars, and used in the tourism industry for online travel articles. His images are even used for educational purposes for the International Baccalaureate.

Have you always been interested in photography?

When I first travelled as a teenager I wanted to capture those inimitable moments and vistas. So yes, the seeds were sown a long time ago!

How did you get started?

My parents bought me a Rolleiflex SLR and from that moment I never looked back.

What got you interested in landscape photography?

I am a geography graduate and taught geography in international schools for 24 years. I have always had an interest in people and landscapes and the interactions that exist between them. Landscapes shape the way in which humans utilise them and people in turn shape landscapes to bring economic gain.

What is your favourite thing about shooting landscapes?

No two landscapes are ever the same and you can shoot the same landscape over and over,

but it continually changes in response to season, diurnal change and light.

What's in your kit bag?

A Nikon D810 and D750, AF-S Nikkor 70-200mm f2.8, AF-S Nikkor 24-70mm f2.8, AF-S Nikkor 50mm f1.4, AF-S Nikkor 14-24mm f2.8, AF-S Nikkor 85mm f1.4, Gitzo Tripod Ocean series GT2542LOS Carbon 6X and a diverse range of NISI and Lee filters!

Do you have a go-to lens? What is it?

I would have to say that if I am shooting landscapes then I use the 14-24mm f2.8 predominantly, but if I am shooting portraits then the 70-200mm f2.8. I change my lens frequently in response to the prevalent conditions.



Below
Moraine Lake and forest

The vivid blue water in this image makes a big impact



Top portfolio picks

Cole discusses a few of his favourite images



THE VESTRAHORN, ICELAND

The light balances the black, frozen dunes with yellow grass and the backdrop of the Vestrahorn mountain ridges. This typifies what I love about landscapes – a war of attrition at the boundary between the marine and the terrestrial, creating a raw interface untouched by human hands.



MORAINE LAKE IN MONOCHROME, CANADA

I love monochrome and this image encapsulates a calm winter scene reflected perfectly in the lake. The clouds create mood and the scree slopes covered in a light coating of snow exacerbate some of nature's symmetry. The range of tones appeal to my eye.



BEACHED, BROKEN AND BOTTOMED OUT – THE WRECK OF 'CARA NA MARA'

A long exposure of an old iconic wreck on the west coast of Donegal, Ireland on an overcast day. I love the mood and presence created by this old wreck. It sits, slowly decaying in the face of storms, but always presents the photographer with a different vista.

INTERVIEW

Do you have a favourite country/place to photograph in? Why?

This is a challenging question! I have travelled to many countries, but I continually return to Ethiopia. It has unique landscapes in the form of the Bale and Simien mountains and then has the hottest place on Earth in the Danakil desert. The Great East African Rift Valley in Ethiopia has salt deserts, active volcanoes with lava lakes and hydrothermal activity, unlike anywhere else on Earth. It also has the cultural richness of 86 different ethnic groups.

I also love to photograph, of course, in my home country of Ireland – the softness of the Irish light, the indented coastlines with bays and beaches, ancient ruins, lakes and mountains.

For you, what makes a good landscape?

Light, morphology and a balance between foreground interest and the 'bigger picture'. Leading lines, detail and depth.

Have you had a career highlight? What was it and why?

Again a difficult question. I seek to use my images to create a more sustainable world and enlighten people about major environmental and humanitarian issues facing the Earth. I have had a few images published by National Geographic online and in particular some which reflected the beauty of my home county, Donegal. It is a 'hidden' county and arguably the most beautiful in Ireland. A little more exposure always helps! I have also taken pride in being People/Cultural Photographer of the Year in 2015 and Natural Landscapes Photographer of the Year in 2016 for Africa Geographic. In February 2017 I won the *Wanderlust Magazine* photographer of the Year (portfolio category).

Do you have any projects coming up?

I have just come back from leading a photo tour in Southern Ethiopia with a very reputable photo tour operator based in the US. I am going on tour to Iceland in February and Chile later in the year.

Top **Uluwatu**

The colours are stunning in this calming shot taken in Bali

Middle **Mount Agung**

A beautifully framed shot of Mount Agung in Bali, Indonesia

Bottom **The Dark Hedges, Armoy**

Compressed perspective makes the most of the trees





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ONE LIGHT PORTRAITS

Learn how to master a simple setup and shoot professional portraits with minimal kit and space

Perfecting a professional studio lighting setup can be a little daunting, so learning how to master a simple single light setup is invaluable. A wide range of professional looks and effects can be created, and there's not always a disadvantage in using fewer individual lights. Extra lights can sometimes complicate things needlessly.

When only using one light, you'll have less to think about and control compared

to if you were using multiple lights. You'll be able to spend more time interacting with your model and perfecting posing instead of spending time fiddling with multiple studio lights. Not only that, but it will make you more mobile for on-location shooting and help you truly understand how light can affect and manipulate a subject's face.

Over the next few pages, you'll discover a number of different one light techniques, including understanding hard and soft light,

Rembrandt lighting, split lighting, as well as low-key, high-key and a traditional beauty style of lighting. You'll learn how easy it is to create professional-looking images with just one light and also cover adding in a few different modifiers to enhance and manipulate the light further.

Above

Plenty of potential

There are a whole host of professional effects that can be created with just one studio light

Model: Delina Cleo/Source Models

CLOSE TO MODEL

When using a softbox to diffuse the light, the light will become even softer the closer you position it to the model



FURTHER FROM MODEL

The further away the softbox is to your subject the harder the light becomes, because the light source becomes smaller in relation to the model



POSITION A SINGLE LIGHT

Perfect the placement of your flash for the best results

Learning how the positioning of your light will affect the final look of your portrait is extremely important. As mentioned previously, the distance between where the light is placed in relation to the subject will affect the quality of light as well as the size of the light source, but the height and angle will also determine how the shadows fall and shape the model's face. It is important that you pose your model to match your chosen lighting setup, then move the light around instead of getting the model to move.

Having the light positioned directly in front of the model can sometimes make your shot a little flat, as it will fill in all of the shadows – and the shadows are needed to add depth and interest to the image. Simply moving the light around to the side can help you create a far more dramatic image. Ask your model to stand still in just one position and move your light around them so that you can see how its position will affect the shadows on their face.

The Rembrandt style of lighting is a good example of the interplay between shadow and light, and is characterised by a distinctive upside-down triangle of light on the shadow side of the subject's face. The light is positioned at around 45 degrees to the model. Rembrandt lighting creates a low-key, high-contrast and atmospheric look. The strong use of shadows has a very flattering, slimming effect on the subject's face – because the shadows are so aggressive it doesn't always suit female models, however, we found that because our model had very defined cheekbones it actually worked well in our case. For an even more dramatic look, move the light further around to 90 degrees for a split-lighting effect where one side of the subject's face will fall entirely in shadow.

Loop lighting is one of the most popular styles as it flatters most subjects. It is created by positioning the light just above eye level around 30 degrees from the camera and is characterised by a small shadow of the subject's nose on their face. If light is positioned too high though you'll lose the catchlight in the subject's eyes, which can be unattractive. A light positioned too high or even too low will also create rather unflattering shadows, so it is important to always pay attention to where they fall.

1. IN FRONT

The light has been positioned in front of the model and has illuminated and lifted a lot of the shadows on her face



3. SPLIT

This is an even more dramatic look where the light has been placed at 90 degrees to the subject and only illuminates one side of the face

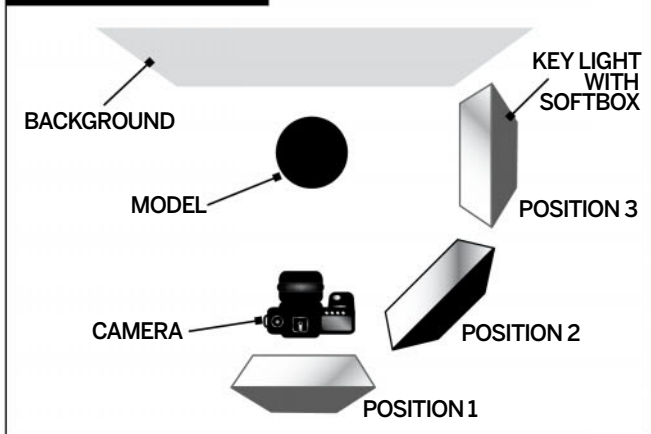


2. REMBRANDT

The light has been moved around by 45 degrees to create a dramatic Rembrandt lighting effect. This angle helps to accentuate the model's cheekbones and has a slimming effect on the face, and creates the Rembrandt-style triangle on the shadow side of the face



THE STUDIO SETUP



Right Softbox
Position the key light just above the head height



Right
Soft light
A popular technique employed by many portrait photographers – the shadows are far softer than those captured with a hard light

WORK WITH SOFT AND HARD LIGHT

Embrace the simplicity of using one light and learn to make use of its qualities

Because it is a relatively simple setup, it is particularly important that you perfect your exposure and consider the power and quality of the light you are using, as well as learning how to control it for creating different effects.

The power and quality of your light will have a huge impact on the portraits you produce. It can be defined by two broad categories: hard light and soft light. The quality of light depends a large extent on the size of the light source in relation to the subject. If a large light source is close to the subject it will produce a softer light than if it is pulled away. A good example to help you understand this concept is the Sun – it is extremely large, but because it is so far away it is seen as being a small light source in relation to the subjects on Earth, and thus creates a hard light.

Many portrait photographers favour a softer light, as it is typically seen as being more flattering for your model and more forgiving in terms of how it's positioned and exposed. Soft light is created by large light sources, such as studio lights used with a softbox. Images that have been shot with a soft light will have more delicate shadows and are generally lower in contrast. Sometimes in softer light you may not even be able to identify where the shadows fall and soft light is often used to reduce, disguise and hide hard facial lines and wrinkles. Light created by adding a softbox to your studio light will create an image with a gradual transition between the highlights and shadows.

Despite all of this, when working with just one light, a hard light can be used to create a far more dramatic look. Hard light portraits are characterised by crisp, well-defined shadows with a high level of contrast between the highlights and the shadows. Sometimes, the highlights and whites are purposely slightly overexposed to create a very high-contrast look. Although hard light can present challenges in terms of perfecting the angle and position of the flash and refining the model's pose, it is absolutely perfect for creating dramatic portraits. When working with only one flash a hard lighting approach can appear much more purposeful and serve as a better use of the resources that are available to you. Just remember to check your images using your camera's LCD review screen, to ensure the shadows are not too harsh or misplaced.



**CONVERT
TO MONO**

Portraits taken with a hard light are perfect for black and white conversion because of the high-contrast effect that it will create. The well-defined shadows, lines and textures will look great in black and white.

Inset

Hard light

The shadows in this shot are far darker and there is a more dramatic transition between the shadows and highlights



CREATE HIGH-KEY AND LOW-KEY LIGHTING

Get more from a single flash with these simple tricks for high-contrast effects

The way you use a single studio light can completely change the mood and overall feel of your portrait, and mastering both high-key and low-key effects can really help your work have a very professional, high-end feel. Creating a high-key or low-key portrait is a good way of ensuring that the focus is on the subject.

A high-key image is generally dominated by highlights and sometimes errs on the side of overexposure, whereas a low-key image mainly consists of shadows and lowlights. Low-key images are usually more dramatic and can be used to create a more mysterious or sensual image, whereas high-key shots are vibrant and engaging.

The challenge with creating a high-key portrait with one light is that this style typically demands that there is lots of light. Two lights

are normally needed just to ensure a brightly lit background, but the image below was created by positioning a large softbox behind the model to take the place of the background, with the light reflected back onto the model's face with a reflector creating a luminous glow around her.

If you're shooting portraits at home, a low-key style doesn't necessarily require a dark background. Instead, use the inverse square law to produce a dark backdrop in-camera. You must position your light far away from the background and angle it down towards your model to ensure the least amount of light will reach the background – the goal is for the light to 'fall off' sufficiently so that it does not light the wall behind the subject at all. Best of all, these effects are fairly easy to replicate.



Above
Create a silhouette

Without a reflector, you can create a completely different, high-contrast effect that happens to work very well in black and white

High-key with one light

Use a softbox to backlight the model and a reflector to light her face for a simple solution



1 Modify your reflector Cut a hole the size of your camera's lens out of the middle of an old, large reflector. Then attach it to a stand at the height you would like to shoot through.



2 Position the softbox Position a large softbox behind your model. This will create a very dramatic backlight that can be reflected back onto their face.



3 Choose your settings High-key lighting usually requires some experimentation in order to get the exposure right. You can also adjust the distance between the model and light.



4 Shoot then edit Remember that you will be able to enhance the results in Lightroom or Photoshop, so keep this in mind as you shoot and review the shots on the LCD screen.



Create a dark background

Use the inverse square law to shoot a low-key portrait



1 Move the light Position your studio light with softbox as far away from the background or wall as possible, as this will mean that the flash will 'fall off' before it reaches the wall. Angle it downwards towards the model.



2 Pose the model You want to illuminate the model, so it's important that you encourage them to pose for the light. Try a few poses, including having the model look into the light, or ask her to angle her body towards the light while looking back towards the camera.



3 Set up the camera Once you have your lighting and model in position it is time to shoot the image. Here, the camera was in Manual and set to f13 in order to limit the amount of light getting in. A shutter speed of 1/200sec was used.



REFINE WITH A REFLECTOR

Discover how accessories and editing software can assist a single light setup

Adding a reflector into your one light setup will act like a fill light and will help you to lift areas of your model's face that are in shadow. Once you understand the extent to which you can manipulate the light you can add in more reflectors, and you'll quickly discover that you can create more complex looks by bouncing the light at different angles. Experiment with where you position your reflector – having it positioned centrally above or below your model, or at 45 degrees to the left or right, will have completely different effects.

For a high-end fashion look, the classic butterfly lighting effect is ideal. It involves positioning a large light source directly in front and above the model with a reflector – or a trireflector, if you have one – positioned beneath them so that their eyes are not too dark. This is great for female subjects, as it creates soft, delicate shadows and, as with Rembrandt lighting, it will help to enhance the model's cheekbones, but in a far more subtle way. You can use a studio light with a softbox for this effect, or for an even more luminous glow use a beauty dish.

Flags can be used to both reflect and block the spill of light. A white flag can be used to bounce the key light back into the shadow side of the subject's face to act as a fill light, or you can use a black flag to block some of the light and create a shadow.

DP

Create butterfly light

A simple but elegant effect



1 Position the light and reflector Place your studio light with softbox directly in front of the model and angle it downwards. Place a reflector underneath facing up towards them.

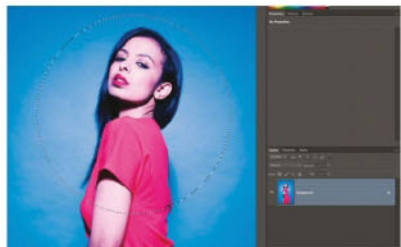


2 Pose and shoot Decide how you would like to pose your model and experiment with asking them to lean into the camera. The camera here was set to around f7 at 1/200sec.



Imply another light

Edit your file in Photoshop to create the illusion of a second flash



1 Create a mask

Start by using the Elliptical Marquee Tool to select the area where you want the impression of light to fall. This selection will then need to be feathered for a subtle transition.



2 Add a vignette

Create a Curves adjustment layer and pull the diagonal line upwards to brighten this area. Use a soft Brush (B) set to black to carefully dial back the subject's face, hair and clothes.



Top 5 tips for using one light

• **Underexpose your shots** It is a good idea to underexpose your shots by around one or two stops, then fix it in post. A slightly underexposed shot can take on a dramatic feel straightaway, so try this before using a reflector or a brighter exposure.

• **Keep an eye on shadows** Make sure you are always aware of where the shadows fall on your model's face. A light positioned too high or too low will create very unflattering shadows around the eyes, mouth and nose.

• **Add life with catchlights** All successful and engaging portraits will feature catchlights in the subject's eyes. A catchlight is basically a reflection of the light source used that you can see in the subject's eyes. If the light is positioned too high or too low, then you will lose the catchlight. Without a catchlight the subject's eyes will look dull and lifeless.

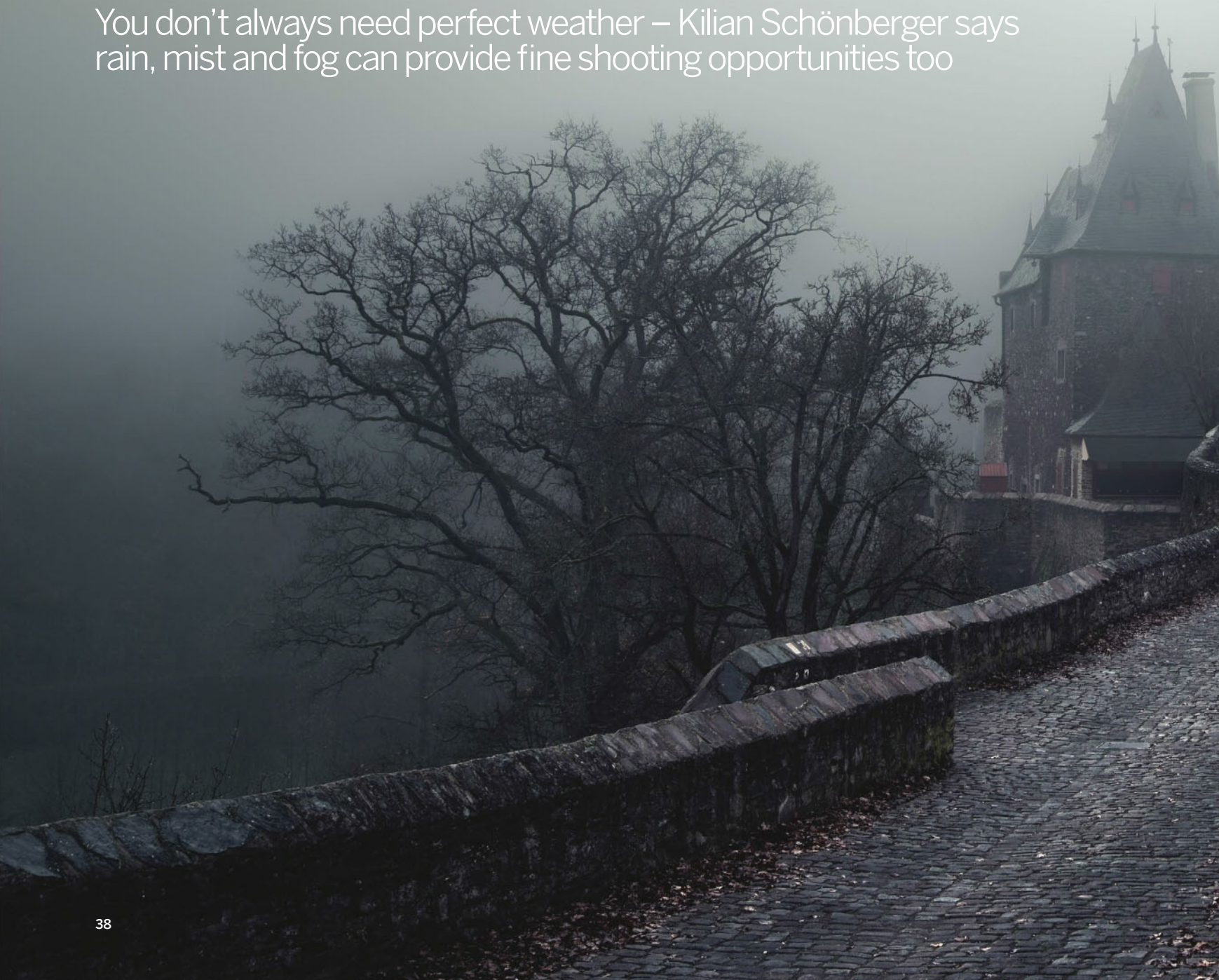
• **Pose the model for the light** Get into the habit of encouraging your model to pose for the lighting setup and always

have the position of the light in mind if you change the model's pose, making sure to move the light as necessary.

• **Experiment with the white balance** You can alter the colour temperature of some studio lights in order to create warmer and cooler images, but you can also alter the white balance in-camera. If aiming for a high-key portrait you might want a cooler white balance, but other setups might look better with something a little warmer.

STUNNING LANDSCAPES IN TOUGH CONDITIONS

You don't always need perfect weather – Kilian Schönberger says rain, mist and fog can provide fine shooting opportunities too





The rain is pouring against the windows... the world is bathed in grey and it's drab. The weather forecast doesn't seem too promising either. Some kind of frustration is slowly growing, especially if an expensive photo trip has fallen through because of this kind of bad weather.

Many photographers think in this way. But here you will learn how to handle such 'bad' conditions – perhaps even learn to love them.

In my opinion there is only one kind of bad weather for landscape photography: an all-blue sky with harsh sunlight at lunchtime. Luckily, lunch is around the corner then.

But back to stormy and misty weather – your new favourite weather conditions

for atmospheric pictures. To master truly dramatic landscapes, you have to understand that the weather is an important part of visual storytelling. When you have to handle 'bad' conditions on location, it makes no sense to complain and to wait for the next sunset with dancing colours. Instead, get yourself in touch with the secret beauty of dull, grey days.

Above

Time travel

Situated in a small side valley of river Moselle, Castle Eltz is one of Germany's most picturesque medieval fortresses... it looks like [it's] from a different time. Fog emphasises the timeless mood.

© Kilian Schönberger

WAIT FOR THE RIGHT LIGHT

Cloudy skies can yield dramatic shots – but to be in the right spot at the right time means going out when it's still raining

Many of us know this situation: you're driving down the highway during late afternoon, and it's pouring down. Suddenly the rain stops and everything is bathed in golden light. But since it's not a good idea to stop on the highway and most of the time there are no promising locations nearby, you just think what you could have done with the same conditions at your favourite location.

Is there a way to plan for such conditions? Yes, if only to a certain extent. To be ready to capture these shots, you have to know from which direction the storm or rain is coming in, and how long it will last. The best way for this is to check a high-definition weather radar readout with a mobile app. There you can see how the rain and the clouds are moving and if there is any chance for some golden strip-light at the end of the day.

This kind of light is more common at the end of the day because wet air masses are often moving in from the west then, so you get this kind of light during sunset. In spring, with its localised showers of rain, the chance to capture this phenomenon is especially high since there are many gaps between the clouds. It's more likely you'll witness the golden light after rain shortly before sunset, because when the Sun is already near the horizon, the light can shine through between the remains of the cloud cover and the surface of the earth.

The best plan is to have several easy reachable locations nearby to react

spontaneously to the weather. The transition from the muted colours during rain to the golden light is intense. Since everything is wet, the light mirrors itself in every surface – especially in forest environments, as the drops on the leaves become a thousandfold light reflexes. Use a polariser to intensify the colours and contrasts.

It's important to provide some protection for your equipment – and yourself. I've always got a simple plastic bag in my backpack and an umbrella in the back of my car.

Opposite-bottom-left

Trees in mist

This image by Dorset-based landscape photographer Mark Bauer demonstrates how mist illuminated by warm light can look hugely atmospheric and evocative

Opposite-bottom-right

Chase the rainbow

When a rain shower has passed and sunlight bursts through the clouds it's always worth keeping an eye out for the possibility of a rainbow, which can be particularly striking above the right landscape

Below

Misty Orchard

At the end of a hot summer day a local storm disappeared as fast as it appeared. Just some fog in the valleys bears witness to the conditions. The focus is on the apple trees in the foreground, with fog shrouded spruces and the Bavarian Alps as backdrop

How to capture the spectacular

Understanding the weather is key to getting great shots

TIME IT RIGHT

Wait around until the light has faded, so that you can capture moments like this, where the golden hue of the lowering sun is reflecting off every cloud

© Kilian Schönberger

Find the best conditions

How to predict when a glowing strip will appear on the horizon

It's important to spot the signs that there could be golden light after rain. A good omen is always when there is a flat bright strip or gap between the clouds and the ground. Watch this gap closely; is the light intensity or colour changing? Which direction are the clouds moving? To check if the Sun could shine below the clouds, you can use satellite images from websites and apps.



STUNNING LANDSCAPES IN TOUGH CONDITIONS

STORMY WEATHER

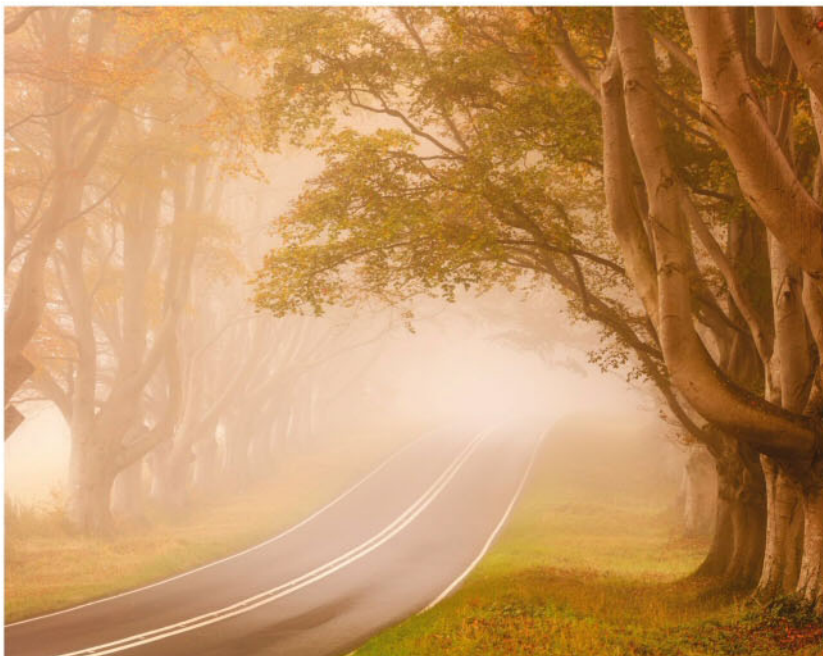
Get to know weather patterns in your area so that you can predict the times when storm clouds are most likely to build, and from which direction

BURNING FOG

The right conditions outweigh a so-so location – like this post-thunderstorm mood with glowing fog, taken shortly before sunset in rural Bavaria

FIX THE UMBRELLA

An umbrella is handy when it's raining – but it's hard to work when you need one hand to hold the umbrella. Look for clamps for the tripod, but be aware that under windy conditions, an umbrella on your tripod could lead to the whole installation tumbling over.





All images © Kilian Schönberger

WORK IN THE FOG

Create an ethereal mood

Fog and mist can be key elements in visual storytelling. Painters have a canvas; landscape photographers have fog. It's our white space where we can arrange the picture elements. But this also means it's important to find convincing compositions and know how to give a photo structure.

Try to find the best angle of view to give every element enough space for taking effect. Work with intersections and staggered arrangements. Leading lines, structures and patterns are more important than colours – but during autumn, you can use autumnal leaves to catch the eye, though.

It's also important to look for the right subjects for fog photography. Since the background is often non-existent – just a grey or white surface – look for motifs that suit your current conditions. Shooting a big mountain on a foggy day might be impossible, so look for the little brothers of mountains: rocks. They just look wonderful and mysterious when it's foggy outside, especially if you can find any with strange or unusual shapes. Your other

Use a telephoto lens for distant abstraction

Fog and mist lead to interesting layers in the landscape – but try using a telephoto lens to make the most of this

Many people think of wide-angle lenses when it comes to landscape photography. But using telephoto lenses extends your photographic options during misty days. I normally use a 70-200mm for this, but even longer lenses are suitable.

Try to find interesting lines and shapes in the landscape. Be aware that even the newest camera sensors don't have the same contrast range as the human eye, so emphasise edges in post-production, but still try to keep a natural look without haloes or too much contrast.

Top-right

Compressed Trees

A rather unusual approach is the use of a telephoto lens for forest photography. But especially during foggy and misty conditions this is a fine opportunity to play with the fading brightness and contrast of the distant trees



Bottom-right

Misty Hills

Early morning over a low mountain range in South Germany captured with a telephoto lens. Mist and fog lead to an otherworldly appearance of the scenery



best friends for fog photography are trees and forests, castles, old houses, lonely lanes, rivers, creeks, gorges, waterfalls and ruins.

But where does fog appear? That's a difficult question. There are many different sorts of fog, and most of the time it's hard to forecast where it will emerge. Most know the typical November mood, with fog everywhere. Since this fog is very dense, hardly any oriented light reaches the ground. Sometimes during bad weather periods, the top regions of mountains are covered in clouds and allow fog photography up there. During high pressure phases in autumn, you can find high-inversion fog, where the peaks of higher mountains stick out and allow perfect shots of islands in a sea of fog. This kind of fog is more common in continental Europe.

My personal favourite is low fog on the meadows during spring, when the Sun sends some light through the fog early in the morning – especially when there was rain the day before and it's cleared up during the night.

For misty shots, where the white and light grey areas dominate the scene, it's recommended to slightly overexpose. It's the best way to transfer the real mood to the final photo and to get some details in the darker areas, too. Shooting in your camera's RAW format is recommended for more control during post-processing.



Above

Rain Forest

Even a commercial forest can look like out of a fairytale with the right conditions. The puddle in the foreground mirrors the mist shrouded spruces and opens a window into another world

Opposite

Woodland in fog

A wood can be a visually confusing environment, but when fog descends it obscures some of the details and helps to create a scene that's simpler but also more atmospheric

LEARN FROM THE OLD MASTERS

Photographers often use chest waders in rivers or creeks. But they are also recommended for wet meadows with high grass or tree thickets during rainy days. Waders don't offer good air and moisture exchange, so they are not a good solution for longer hikes.

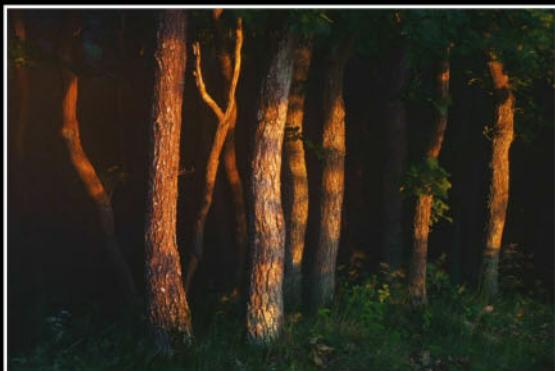
Capture rays of light

Fog and mist can look very different, depending on the angle the light is coming from



☛ **Into the light**

Backlit mist is the key for getting those magic rays and beams everyone is looking for. Usually it's best to search for them near the forest edge, where the light hits the forest at full intensity



☛ **With the Sun behind**

Photographing during misty conditions is less spectacular than against the light, but sometimes it's a conscious decision to capture more subtle scenes. There would have been nice rays behind the trees in this situation



☛ **Above fog and light**

A good opportunity to combine light and fog in one photo is to look for viewpoints above the surrounding foggy landscape. When the Sun hits forests and other parts of the landscape, you may get beautiful distant rays. The Sun has to be in front of your camera for those shots, too.

USE THE WEATHER TO YOUR ADVANTAGE

Tough conditions create opportunities for experimental photography – discover how to use long exposures for dramatic effect

There is hardly anything as beautiful as fog floating in and rolling over the hills. For this kind of photography you need floating fog (normally high-inversion fog), a viewpoint that sticks out of the fog, and some knowledge of which direction the wind pushes the fog and the height it's flowing at. It's also good to know which elements of the surrounding landscape may affect the flow. Also the light is important: 'blue hour' shots are recommended, since the highlights of direct sunlight on the fog surface are often too bright for good results.

If the fog is moving fast due to wind, a sturdy tripod is needed. The best opportunity to plan such shots is when the wind pushes

low stratus clouds or fog against a mountain ridge and the white stuff is flowing through a hollow between the areas (a kind of föhn wind effect). Be aware that with sunset the height of the fog surface will often change. So it's always a good idea to stay until the blue hour ends: there may be totally different conditions within 30 minutes.

Use a ND filter for longer exposure times. The exact time depends on the speed and the surface structure of the fog. When it's slow, you'll need exposures of up to several minutes. On a stormy day, wind is your best friend for this kind of photography.

You could use an ND filter for longer exposure times at other times of day too, but since branches and leaves are moving quite fast during a storm, the exposure time is normally shorter than for floating fog shots.

Normally these kind of shots are done with some grass in the foreground, and trees and further landscape elements in the background. A higher viewpoint is recommended, though – for example, an observation tower or a steep rock wall. Be aware that this can be dangerous at the edges during stormy weather – for your equipment and for yourself.

Look for some treetops dancing in the wind. Autumn, with the colours of the canopy changing from day to day, is the best season. Take several shots from different angles and compositions to get a feeling how the trees are moving in the wind. Then you can find a convincing point of view and wait until the movement of the trees is perfect. When the sunlight finds a way through the clouds, you'll get some extra structure in the canopy.

Below

Dancing in the wind

Wind can be used to create a creative, abstract image of trees, particularly when combined with a longer exposure

LEARN FROM THE OLD MASTERS

If you're searching for inspiration, look at the work of Romantic landscape painters like William Turner and Caspar David Friedrich. They used clouds and fog to emphasise the dramatic intent of their paintings. Look too at their colours and compositions.

© Kilian Schönberger



Five top tips

Mark Bauer offers his shooting secrets for rain, mist and fog

☛ Shoot in woodland

Overcast or drizzly days are perfect for shooting in woods or forests. Not only will you be under cover and able to stay dry, but the soft, diffused light is very flattering for woodland locations. By contrast, on bright, sunny days, although dappled light can look very pleasing to the eye, the tonal range is often too great for the camera to capture, resulting in blocked-up shadows and burnt-out highlights.

☛ Head for the coast

Coastal scenes can actually look better in bad weather than in good weather. Stormy seas crashing over rocks or sea walls always look dramatic. Try using an extreme neutral-density filter, such as Lee's ten-stop Big Stopper. The resulting long exposures render white water as an ethereal mist and can turn the surface of the sea into a glassy surface. Any moving clouds will be recorded as dramatic, dark streaks across the sky.

☛ Get ready for rainbows

When the Sun breaks through as a shower passes, or even while it's still raining, there is always the chance of a rainbow. They can be fleeting, so you need to set up while it is still raining, and point your camera away from the Sun, ready for a rainbow to appear. Electronics and water don't mix well, so you'll need to protect your camera from the rain. There are many commercially available rain guards, or improvise your own.

☛ Pack a chamois leather

It's important to protect your kit from the elements. It can be bad news if rain gets into the electronics. Sea water is even worse – and always a possibility if you're shooting on the coast in bad weather. A chamois leather is a really useful accessory. They're brilliant for wiping down kit which has had a soaking and can also be draped over your kit to protect it from moisture.

☛ Dealing with wind

Windy conditions are perhaps the most difficult to deal with – strong wind can cause camera shake, even when you use a sturdy tripod. To reduce this risk, spread the tripod legs wide, set it up low to the ground and don't raise the centre column. To add weight and stability, hang your camera bag from your tripod. Don't attach it directly, though: use a bungee cord so the bag rests on the ground and doesn't bump into the legs.



Top **Stark trees**

Tough weather conditions are ideal for capturing images that have a bold, graphic feel

Above **Hidden Sanctuary**

A remote place in the middle of the forest; the visit during a rainy day paid off because the mist intensifies the scene

Left **Moody seas**

Mark Bauer captured this long exposure image at the coast while the conditions were less than clement

CAPTURE MISTY MONO MINIMALISM

Learn to create strong black and white scenes with the help of mist and fog in the landscape

Bad weather means muted conditions, muted light and muted colours. Therefore a main option is to focus on structures and patterns. Especially with some contrast enhancement, some foggy and misty photos are predestined for minimalist black and white photography.

When the conditions are mostly the same for several hours a day, you can try to work conceptually and in a series. With frequently represented and characteristic elements of a certain landscape, this can be an interesting approach. Think of the various monochrome

series you've seen of gnarly trees, hay barns and so on.

Another option is to keep the same frame all the time – or just with a little variation – and to wait for changes in the structure of the clouds or fog. Perhaps it's not the usual kind of landscape photo you're looking for, because those shots are not as appealing as a great sunrise, but they offer the opportunity to focus on the image motif. Watch out too for the uncommon appearance of everyday surroundings during bad weather.

Opposite-top

Convert to black and white

When you convert your images to mono, it helps to further simplify the composition, continuing the work the mist has begun

Opposite-bottom

Trees die standing

Great areas of mountain spruce forest in Bavarian Forest National Park were killed by bark beetles. [This is] a very good subject for bad weather photography, since fog and mist underline the morbid mood

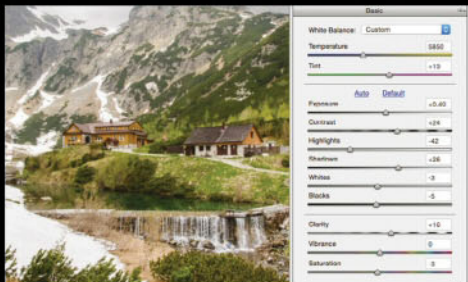
DP

Edit the weather

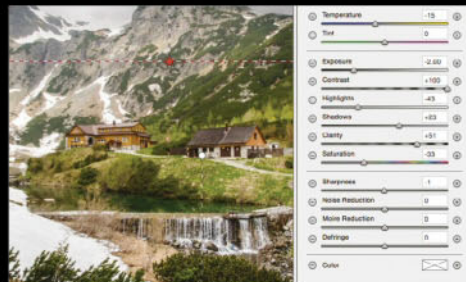
Images taken in difficult conditions can benefit from some simple RAW adjustments

When it comes to overcast conditions, you may find you have an advantage when it comes to editing. As a result of the duller light, the dynamic range is frequently reduced, which means you don't have to worry about

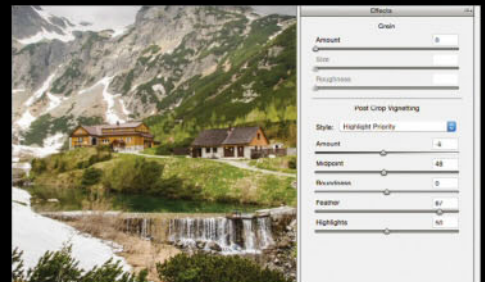
lifting deep, dark shadows or dialling back excessively bright highlights. How you choose to edit your work is entirely dependent on the situation, but these three RAW processes are worth considering...



1 Basic adjustments Increase the Contrast and Clarity, and adjust the Highlights, Shadows and Exposure sliders. To correct White Balance, choose the Auto setting then adjust the Temperature slider.



2 Apply a gradient A washed-out, pale cloudy sky will not have much impact, so consider using a Gradient to darken it down. A separate Gradient has been applied for the foreground too, to draw the eye in.



3 Add a vignette This is an optional step. If there is not much actual shadow within the scene itself, adding a vignette could look heavy-handed. Slightly darken the edges by taking the Amount slider down a little.



BEFORE



AFTER

CHASING WATERFALLS

Bad weather is good for photos of waterfalls and creeks. You don't have problems with excessive contrast due to direct sunlight; the structures of rocks emerge better; and the greens look more saturated. For best results, use a polariser to minimise reflections.

Left

Boost the drama

A few quick tweaks in your RAW processing application can make a big difference to how your final image looks.



2x © Kilian Schönberger



TECHNIQUES

10 ESSENTIAL WILDLIFE TECHNIQUES

Expert photographer Richard Peters reveals how to make the most of your wildlife images with these essential tips



Getting your subject within range of the camera is only half the battle. Once you have, then what? A viewfinder-filling subject seen through a telephoto lens isn't a guarantee to success; it doesn't matter how exotic the subject is or if you've travelled for 20 minutes or 20 hours to see it, because there are a multitude of factors to consider before you take any photos. What are the lighting conditions like? How does the background look? What is the subject doing? Once you've figured these out and you're

about to take the shot, the lighting suddenly changes and the subject starts to move. How quickly can you react to adjust your exposure or framing to suit the new and unexpected conditions, and should you now switch lenses to consider the scenery change as the subject moves through the landscape? Of course it isn't always going to be quite as dramatic as that but when you're out with the camera, these factors should be running through your head as second nature. Being able to read the scene before you, and plan how to photograph

it before even taking the camera out of the bag, is one of the biggest advantages you can have as a photographer, and being able to react quickly will be sure to improve your portfolio significantly.

Below

Pelican line-up

With the right approach and technique, even the dulllest of days can be used to create images with mood, drama and atmosphere

All images © Richard Peters



1 UNDERSTAND THE LIGHT

Knowing how to read the conditions is critical

A beautiful subject bathed in warm light might be appealing on the face of it, but it won't get the creative juices flowing. By looking for ways in which you can potentially use any light, understanding the different ways that variation will impact the image and, more importantly, the way in which the sensor will expose for it, you will be able to quickly determine how best to use aperture, ISO and shutter speed for more creative control. Shooting at sunrise and sunset will often pay dividends, but make sure you pay close attention to how the light falls on the subject and act fast. At sunrise for example, it won't take too long for the Sun to rise high enough that a subject's deep-set eyes will become shaded. And with that thought, keep in mind that shade is as important as light, and the way they complement each other as they both emphasise contours, textures and shape. Once you've got a picture or two in the bag, try moving around – the direction of light relative to the subject will also provide very different effects.



Left
Intrigued little owl

Here the evening Sun has created warm light that highlights the owl's profile, separating it from the background and adding shape and depth to the bird

3 TAKE ATMOSPHERIC MONOCHROMATIC PHOTOS

For stylistic merit and high impact, aim for images with a single colour or muted shades

Below
Red deer silhouette

By placing the subject between the Sun and the camera and exposing for the rim-lit fur, a dramatic single-toned portrait is captured



This style can produce very memorable images and works well with strong, bold outlines and silhouettes. Generally you will need a dark-coloured background along with a strong back or side light, or to be shooting towards the light at sunrise or sunset to produce warm pastel shades. The best effects tend to be when the difference in dynamic range between the light and shade is large; exposing for the very brightest highlights as they fall on the subject renders the shade completely black, allowing for the subtle light to really pop. Because ambient light can change quickly, it's a good idea to practise being able to quickly dial in underexposure to override the metering system, which will want to produce a balanced and even exposure. If the camera were to expose the scene evenly, the ISO would be raised to allow the shaded areas to retain detail, while blowing all the highlights.

2 SEE THE BIGGER PICTURE

It's not all about frame fillers – including habitats can be as important as the subject

Tight crops with clean backgrounds are always appealing but thinking wider is a very good way to add more depth to your photos. While a habitat shot can be quite easy to achieve with a telephoto by going for the small-in-the-

frame look and compressing the surroundings, switching to a wide-angle lens offers a unique and unrivalled perspective. Plus, this technique doesn't rely on fast, prime wide angles, as you'll often need to stop down to create more

depth of field. Most variable aperture lenses sharpen up considerably around f8 and having a wide-angle zoom can allow more flexibility in camera placement, as you may find the need to trigger the camera remotely.

Right The Wick

The temptation is to capture a tight crop with the puffins, but shooting wide allowed this pair to be immersed within the beautiful sunset above them

Remove colour altogether

Allow beautiful tones to come into their own by shooting for a full mono conversion

Some images lend themselves to black and white conversion, often producing a far more powerful image than their colour counterparts. The key to successful mono images lies within scenes that have lots of contrast that can be emphasised more when converted to black and white during the edit.

Right Wise old man

Animals with contrasting colours and strong facial detail especially suit black and white, providing particularly engaging portraits

UNDERSTAND YOUR KIT

It's crucial to understand how your camera equipment works so that, in the heat of the moment when you only have a second or two to react, you are able to quickly change any necessary settings.

4 CLEAN UP YOUR BACKGROUNDS

Look beyond the subject and consider what's behind the main point of focus

Anything that unwittingly draws attention away from the subject is a compromise to your photo. Even with a wide-open, shallow aperture these distractions usually come in the form of hard, man-made lines or stray background elements. These can include areas of contrasting colour that break up uniformity, don't complement the colour of the subject or objects that are too close and therefore not in focus enough for attention-grabbing detail to be recognised. If the distraction is moving, such as another animal, wait until it has moved from view before releasing the shutter. Even moving the camera several centimetres can be enough to remove background elements from the composition, either pushing them out of frame or behind the subject itself.

DRESS APPROPRIATELY

Don't forget to put some thought into the clothing you wear when photographing wildlife. Nothing will break your concentration faster than being too cold, wet, hot or generally uncomfortable.



Left

Red deer distraction

Beautiful light and subjects can be easily ruined with conflicting background elements such as man-made objects

Above

Red deer dawn

With a clean background free of distractions, the viewer can fully appreciate the clean lines and beautiful colours of the image

5 CONSIDER PERSPECTIVE

Change your position and get down low for a compelling view

One of the best ways to obtain a clean and aesthetically pleasing image is to get eye level with the subject, especially with animals that are low to the ground. If you can get your camera roughly head height to the subject, the background will be further away than if you were looking down from up high. This gives a cleaner look, allows the subject to really pop from the frame and the low-level perspective offers a much more interesting view by providing a glimpse at the animal's perspective on the world.

Top
Water level pelican

Laying the camera just millimetres from the water's surface, the lake's background is diffused and the viewer's focus is drawn straight to the dalmatian pelican

Right
Morani

One of the most regal lions in the Maasai Mara is Morani, but to capture that feeling of grace, eye contact was essential



Make eye contact

An important element for the ultimate viewer engagement

Ensuring eye contact with the subject of your photo does something crucial: it draws the viewer in by commanding attention, making it one of the most powerful tools in gaining a connection with the subject. Often it is the final ingredient needed to make a good image a great one.



6 CAPTURE CHARACTER

A static subject can be visually boring, even in good light, so look for behaviour to add more impact

While extremely captivating behaviour such as a fighting or hunting can really elevate your image, don't forget to think about the smaller, less-pronounced behaviour, as it can often still have a big impact. Even a photo of something as grand as a lion can be dull if it's just sitting around sleeping, but waiting for it to wake up and yawn can transform the image. The same principle applies to even the smallest of species, such as birds – capturing one singing with its beak open results in a far more appealing image than a straightforward bird on a stick.

Left
Waking lioness

After watching this lioness sleep for almost an hour, the wait was rewarded with a brief yawn before it walked away

7 CAPTURE MOTION AND MOVEMENT

Be it fast and vigorous or slow and steady, use shutter speed to emphasise animal activity

There are three key ways to give a feeling of movement. A slow shutter speed combined with panning creates blur and momentum, but although it is the most effective way to emphasise motion, it's also important to think about framing and subject posture by allowing room to move into or across the frame. Also

consider the slower the shutter speed the longer the blackout time in the viewfinder, which makes the subject harder to track. Smooth panning is the key to success with this technique, so ensure you use a tripod and gimbal when working with longer focal lengths and slow shutter speeds.



Left

Use a tripod

For optimum results panning with a telephoto lens and slow shutter speed, use a tripod and gimbal for smooth motion

Above

Wings of gold

By combining backlight and a 1/60sec shutter speed at 400mm, the rapid motion of this puffin coming into land was captured in a unique manner



8 USE SPECIALIST ACCESSORIES

Getting the shot can sometimes require equipment above and beyond a simple DSLR and lens combination

From right-angle viewfinders that make shooting at ground level more comfortable to shutter-release cables and full-blown camera trap setups, there are a multitude of accessories available to aid in capturing that tricky image. Wired shutter-release cables with extension leads allow you to have some

distance between yourself and the subject, enabling you to quickly fire your camera at the right moment without being too close. A PIR motion sensor, that triggers the camera when movement is detected, enables you to hide the camera away and return to it later to see if the animal has come by.

Below

Perched little owl

By using a motion sensor, the camera was left in an old farm house for several weeks to capture this little owl in position

Inset

Use a radio release

These can be very small and discrete, making them easy to carry while allowing you to fire a camera from distances of up to 100m. Perfect for tricky subjects



9 PERFECT YOUR FOCUS

Learning which focus modes to use and when can be the difference between successfully capturing the shot and not

Use back-button focus to disengage the autofocus from the shutter release in order to have more control over how and when focusing is engaged. Always select the active AF point closest to the eyes for your desired composition, rather than using the centre point and recomposing. Recomposing after focus acquisition shifts the focus plane away from the intended area. For fast-moving subjects, use smaller groups of AF points to help keep the focusing locked on when you have trouble tracking the target through the viewfinder. If you find the focus often snaps to a distraction other than the intended target, switch on AF tracking delay, if your DSLR has it. This will delay how quickly the camera tries to lock on to competing elements within the frame.

Above Red kite flight

With a similar coloured background, setting focus delay and nine group points kept the focus system locked and accurate

Inset Set your autofocus

Knowing when to adjust your Autofocus reaction time to changes in contrast can be vital in helping the system stay locked onto subject with competition backgrounds

LONG LENS TECHNIQUE

When shooting with a long lens, always support it with a tripod to avoid camera shake. If handheld shooting, keep your elbows tucked in, use your left hand to support the lens and press the camera up against your face.





USE AUTO ISO

By using Auto ISO in conjunction with manual aperture and shutter speed, the exposure will be balanced by adjusting the ISO. This ensures you always get the lowest ISO value possible for your chosen settings.

10 WORK CREATIVELY WITH SPEEDLIGHTS

Don't just stick to conventional methods for capturing great images – add interest with artificial light

A flexible way to inject creativity into your images is to introduce artificial light. Doing so should always be approached with care however. For example, control your DSLR's sensor sensitivity to light with aperture and ISO, rather than setting the speedlight's power too high, and be sure to place diffused artificial lights on the periphery rather than at eye level. By having full control of the main light source, it's possible to take photos that would be otherwise impossible with natural light. One way to utilise flash is to underexpose on an overcast day while using it to fill in the shadows and illuminate just the subject. Or, you can combine it with long exposures of up to 30 seconds at night to freeze the motion of the animal, using the natural, low ambient light to show a star-covered sky. Using speedlights to create lighting that can't be found naturally is one of the best ways to allow creative freedom.



Above Shafts of light

By incorporating off-camera flash and a garden bench, creative lighting was utilised to emulate the dark and light markings on the badger's fur

Below & inset Use a camera trap

This was photographed by attaching two flashguns up off the ground and using a PIR sensor. Using multiple wired flashes is very easy with a hub, which allows quick connection and control of three flashguns at a time

Create and capture ribbons of light

Master this unique method of image making and learn how to create a dazzling, ethereal light painting



In this tutorial, you will learn the techniques needed in order to create 'ribbons of light' by way of light painting. As this will involve a pretty long exposure time, captured under the cover of darkness, you first need to think about what equipment you will need before you head off to your location. First up, you are going to need a sturdy tripod, a DSLR camera (preferably with Bulb mode), a wide-angle lens, a shutter remote, a decent torch and a device to create your 'ribbons' (a tool called an LED Lenser V24,

which is a bit like a 'lightsaber', was used here). You will also need to have a good think about what technical considerations you will need to make. Night photography is very different to more conventional methods of photography, and as such you will need to know how to set up your camera for this kind of shoot. You will then discover how to edit your work in Lightroom after the shoot. Light painting truly is a magical process, and one that is actually very simple once you understand the basic requirements.

Ribbon dance

This photograph was created using a 2.5 minute-long exposure during which time the 'lightsaber' was used to create the patterns



What you'll need

- DSLR camera (with Bulb mode) and a fully charged camera battery
- Wide-angle lens (a lens that lends itself well to landscape photography – a 24mm prime lens was used here)
- Tripod and tripod head
- Shutter remote to start and stop the long exposure
- A reasonably powerful torch (an LED Lenser torch called the X7R was used here)
- A toy lightsaber that changes colour
- Adobe Photoshop Lightroom for any post-editing work that is required

Shooting steps

1 Use a tripod A tripod is going to be essential on this shoot. You are going to conduct your light painting during a pretty long exposure, so having the camera remain completely motionless throughout the exposure is going to be vital to create a sharp final image.

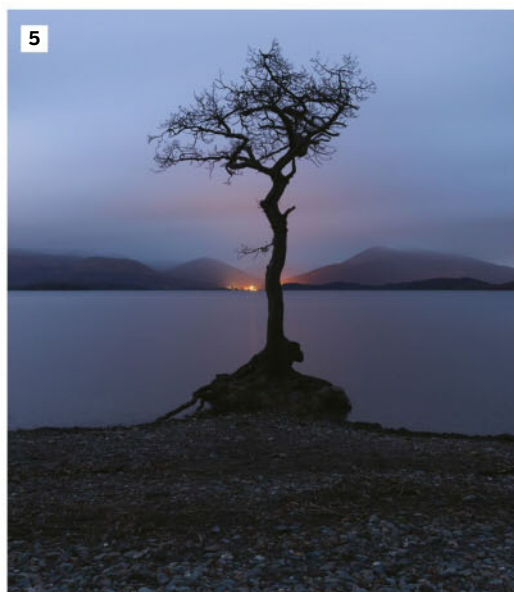
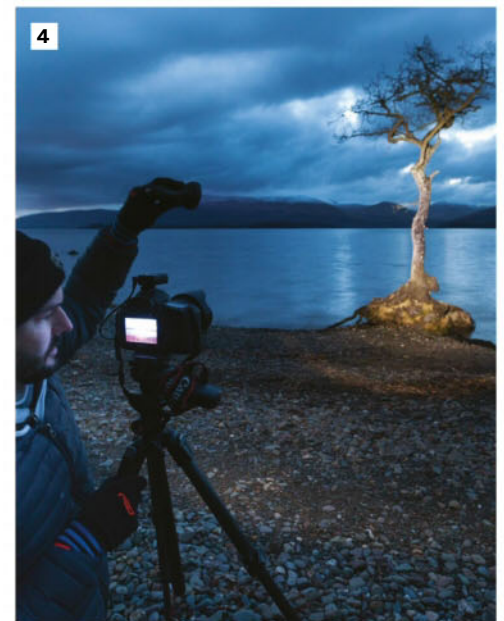
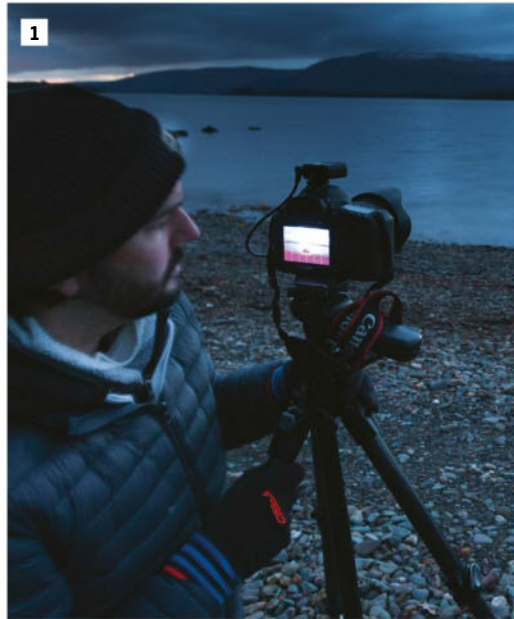
2 Switch camera to Bulb mode This mode is something that nearly all modern-day DSLR cameras have. On our camera it is marked by the letter B on the main camera settings dial. Bulb mode will allow you to take exposures that are much longer than if you use Manual mode for example.

3 Test your cable release This is something that you can do before you leave your home, but it's also a good idea to test your cable release at the start of the shoot. If it starts playing up you are not going to be able to take exposures longer than 30 seconds, so give it a quick test early on to avoid potential issues.

4 Compose your shot Switch on the Live View function so that you can view your image composition on the back of the camera. Use this in tandem with a torch to illuminate the area you are photographing, so that you can see the composition and also set the focus point in your shot.

5 Take a test shot Take a few test shots before you are ready to create the light painting. This will allow you to get your camera settings right, and also work out the correct exposure time so that your surrounding landscape is exposed well. You can also work out where best to add the ribbons of light.

6 The final shot Now start the exposure, walk into the shot and begin moving the 'lightsaber'. You can add as many ribbons as you like but just remember, however you move your lightsaber the light will 'freeze' into the final shot, so try to move gracefully in order to create smooth, elegant-looking ribbons of light.



The setup

FIND A SUITABLE LOCATION

As interesting as light paintings look on their own, it's always a good idea to have a think about shooting at a location that possesses a feature (or features) that will really add to the impact of your overall shot. You'll also be setting the focus point on the main feature of the composition (in this case, the tree)

USE A TRIPOD

Keeping the camera totally stable throughout the duration of the long exposure is critical

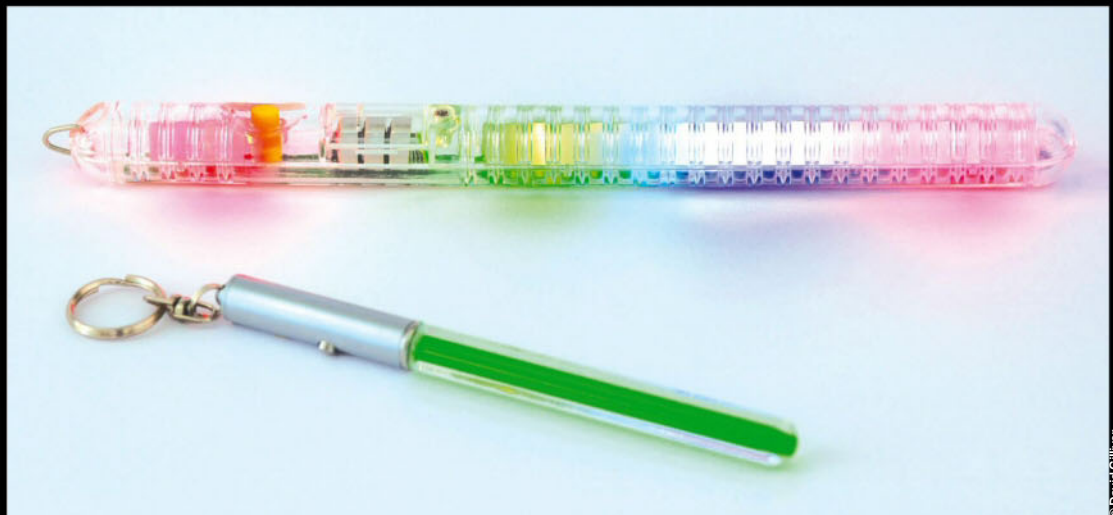
LIGHTSABER / CLOTHING

You will need to find a portable colour-changing 'lightsaber' to create your ribbons (there are plenty on the market ranging from very cheap to quite expensive). Wear dark clothing to minimise the chances of being made visible during the exposure

The right light

Obtain a toy 'lightsaber' that cycles through a range of colours

If this is not bright enough or doesn't produce a nice range of colours, this could have a negative impact on the final result. There are plenty of toy 'lightsabers' on the market, so choose one that produces a range of colours and is nice and bright when switched on. For more information, visit davidgilliver.com, where you can find his e-book guide.



© David Gilliver

Editing steps

1 Crop your image if necessary

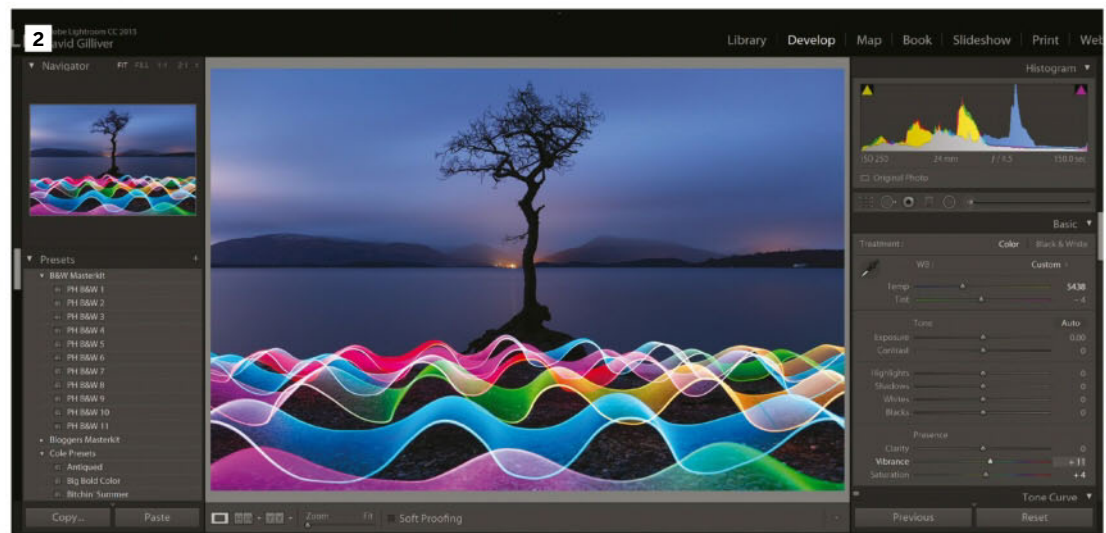
Once you have uploaded your RAW files into Lightroom, start off by performing any necessary cropping that you feel improves the photograph(s).

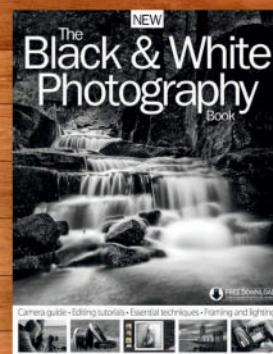
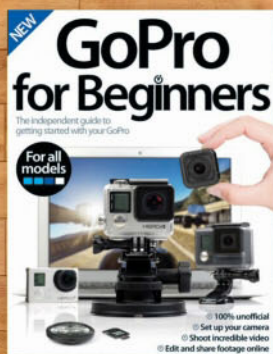
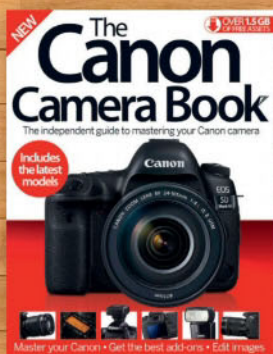
2 Colour saturation and WB

Take a look at rectifying the white balance if necessary, and also up the saturation levels a little to give the ribbons a little extra punch.

3 Contrast levels Now tweak the contrast levels of the shot to your liking. This can really help the final shot, particularly because it is quite common to lose a lot of detail in the 'black' levels when it comes to night photography.

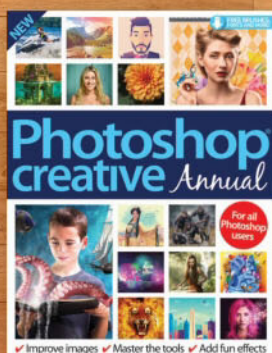
4 Noise reduction Shooting at night will always mean that you experience slightly higher levels of noise in your shots than normal. Lightroom is a great editing suite for reducing noise levels, which can really improve the quality of your final shot.





Discover another of our great bookazines

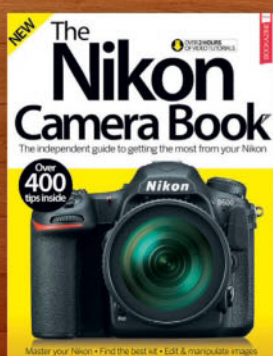
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Work with a Lensbaby

Conceptual photographer April Milani reveals the magic that custom lenses can create



Like most good things in life, the beautiful and unique can easily be misunderstood. People give the same reasons for feeling intimidated when they dive into the creative world that Lensbaby's distinctive optics provide.

Ironically, the fears that keep people from adding a completely one-of-a-kind tool to their toolbox are the same ones that prevent them from advancing their skills using other lenses. Virtually anyone with the ambition

to create picturesque and exceptional art can use the Lensbaby Composer and its accompanying optics to produce visually stunning pictures with ease.

Here you will discover how to create a painterly effect for an artistic portrait image using the Sweet 35 optic. Just as an artist will hold a brush to blend paint, tilting your Composer will stretch your pixels to give the impression that your image is emerging from a painting.



1 Calibrate your diopter The diopter's adjustment knob enables it to work as a lens switching from near to far, but it will not focus properly unless you first adjust it for the correct focal point.



2 Choose your location Place your subject and match the light to set the mood of your photo. Putting a good distance between your subject and the background will create depth to help your subject pop off the page.

FINAL IMAGE

Painting with light

The combination of the Lensbaby Composer and the Sweet 35 optic enabled April Milani to capture this painterly portrait



3 Choose your lens To create this photo, the Sweet 35 was used for its surround blur with a razor-sharp sweet spot. This optic is housed in your Composer; Lensbaby has many other optics, each with its own unique bokeh.



4 Before you shoot Do a light check. Keep in mind that when the Composer is tilted, the camera's light meter will be slightly off. Use the histogram to verify all exposure settings (ISO, shutter speed and aperture).



5 Aperture To achieve the greatest amount of blur for that painted look, the lens was set to an aperture of f2.5 (wide-open), providing a narrow area of sharp focus – your sweet spot.



6 The Composer Tilting the Composer moves the pixels by stretching them in your picture, yielding many different looks with the same lens. Here, the Composer was centred, then tilted up slightly.

**NIKON D810**

David Yarrow reveals that he considers this to be an ideal camera body for shooting fine art wildlife images such as this.

Nikon on location

David Yarrow discusses how he captures his astonishing wildlife images with the help of Nikon kit



I guess I have built my career around wide-angle lenses and Nikon makes some outstanding ones. I never travel without

my 20mm, 24mm and 35mm primes – the best that Nikon does.

In preparing for Japan in the winter, I knew what I was going to photograph – swans and red-crested cranes. Swans are not scared of humans and in the Japanese winter, I really needed a sense of place. My instincts were to use a 24mm or indeed even the 20mm – it was time to get cold, wet and creative. This rules out anything above my 35mm.

Red-crested cranes however are less tolerant of humans; I also wanted to create negative

space, which is harder with a wide angle when so much context comes into play. This was a time where distance compression could work.

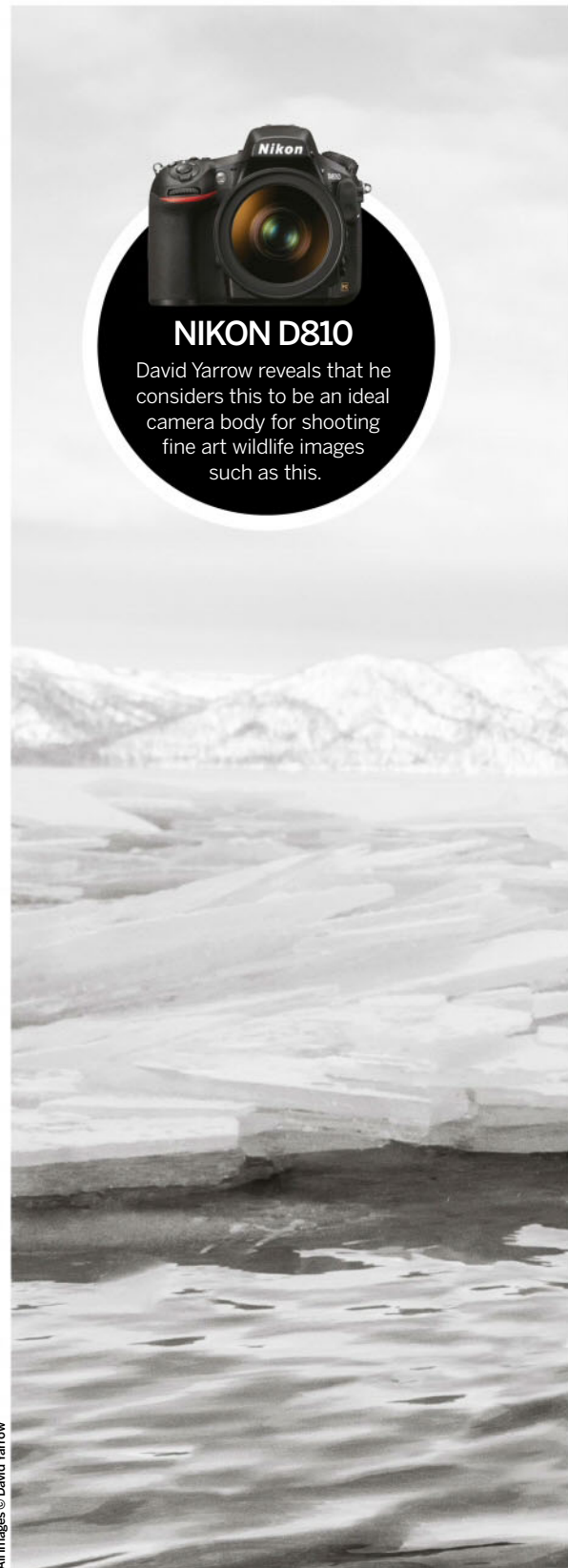
So I left for Japan without my 58mm, my 85mm and my 105mm. They are all brilliant and crisp lenses but I needed clarity and they were not right for either job. I think some people take too much equipment on an assignment. The best chefs keep it simple.

My camera body in Japan was always going to be the D810. It is almost a medium-format camera, just tougher. I take three D810s simply because I don't like changing lenses in the field. It is a time to focus on what you can see, not on your oversized camera bag.

**LAKE KUSSHARO, JAPAN**

Found in Hokkaido's Akan National Park, this is the largest of three caldera lakes, formed 100,000 years ago as a result of volcanic activity.

All images © David Yarrow



Six top tips for fine art wildlife

1 Use a 300mm

I knew that I needed a telephoto to compress distance and be a reductive tool... the 300mm 2.8 is a less expensive [lens option] and far less logistically challenging than the 400mm f2.8. At 1/800 sec, there is no need for a tripod unless you are heavy handed.

2 Work with less kit

The less equipment the better. Be light and please no tripods – be spontaneous and react to what you find. This Swan Lake image is a gem and has almost sold out. I had one camera and one lens when I arrived at the lake. This makes you work better.

3 Work with wide angles

Looking at the metadata, there was a load of light coming into the lens. This allowed me to close down to f10 and this helps with this degree of proximity. With wide-angle primes, if there is light, prioritise aperture – I want as much sharp focus as possible.

4 Bring hand warmers

I hate using gloves, so keep warm with hand warmers before you shoot and then remove your gloves when it comes to the key time. Far better to bring hand warmers than a lens that your research tells you that you will never need.



5 Check weather every hour

Try not to shoot in sunlight. Build your day around the weather, not around your own needs. Get Wi-Fi and use it. The weather is everything. Sleep on a floor if you have to, if the weather at 6.45 am is what you want. After all, you may have come 8,000 miles.

6 Never sacrifice resolution

I was there to photograph two majestic breeds – the red-crested crane and the swan. I did bring a D5, which is incomparable for in-flight work, but I wanted to give a sense of place and was happy to sacrifice frames per second for a 'knock 'em dead' image.

Improve your skills

Discover the pro secrets you need to capture images like this

The Nikon School offers a wide range of courses to help you get the very best from your camera, unlocking the settings and controls that will enable you to achieve incredible images. On 4 August

2017, the Nikon School will be leading a safari workshop at the Chobe River in Northern Botswana. For more information and to book, please visit their website over at nikon.co.uk/training.

Apply filters as Smart Objects

Improve your photos non-destructively in Photoshop with the help of this trick



A Smart Object is a Photoshop term that describes a method of non-destructive editing with layers, or, more accurately, within one layer. A Smart Object is adaptable and extremely versatile; whether you're applying adjustments or filters, text layers or masks, Smart Objects should never be overlooked when it comes to the editing process.

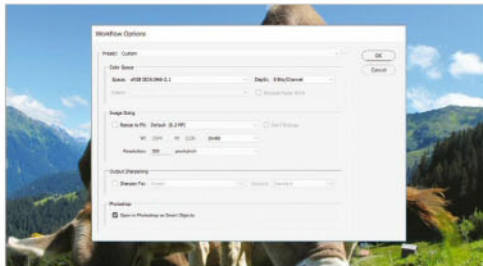
So how do you apply Smart Objects, and how can they benefit a photographer's workflow? The next few pages will take you through the process of converting RAW and JPEG images to Smart Objects, and then applying adjustments and filters to create depth of field. If you don't have Photoshop CC, or the Field Blur filter, then try out the

Gaussian Blur filter as an alternative method – just make sure that you're always working with Smart Object layers.

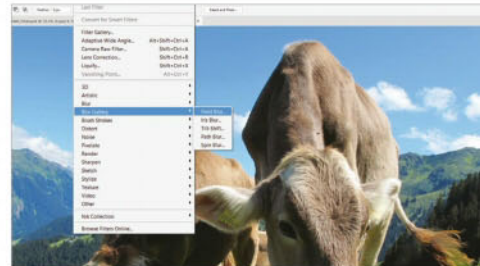


© Pixabay.com (203460)

Above
Captivating nature
Photographing animals in their natural environment can provide some interesting angles



1 Use Camera Raw If working with a RAW image, open in Camera Raw and activate Smart Objects by clicking the line of text just under the image. Inside the dialog box, tick the option Open in Photoshop as Smart Objects.



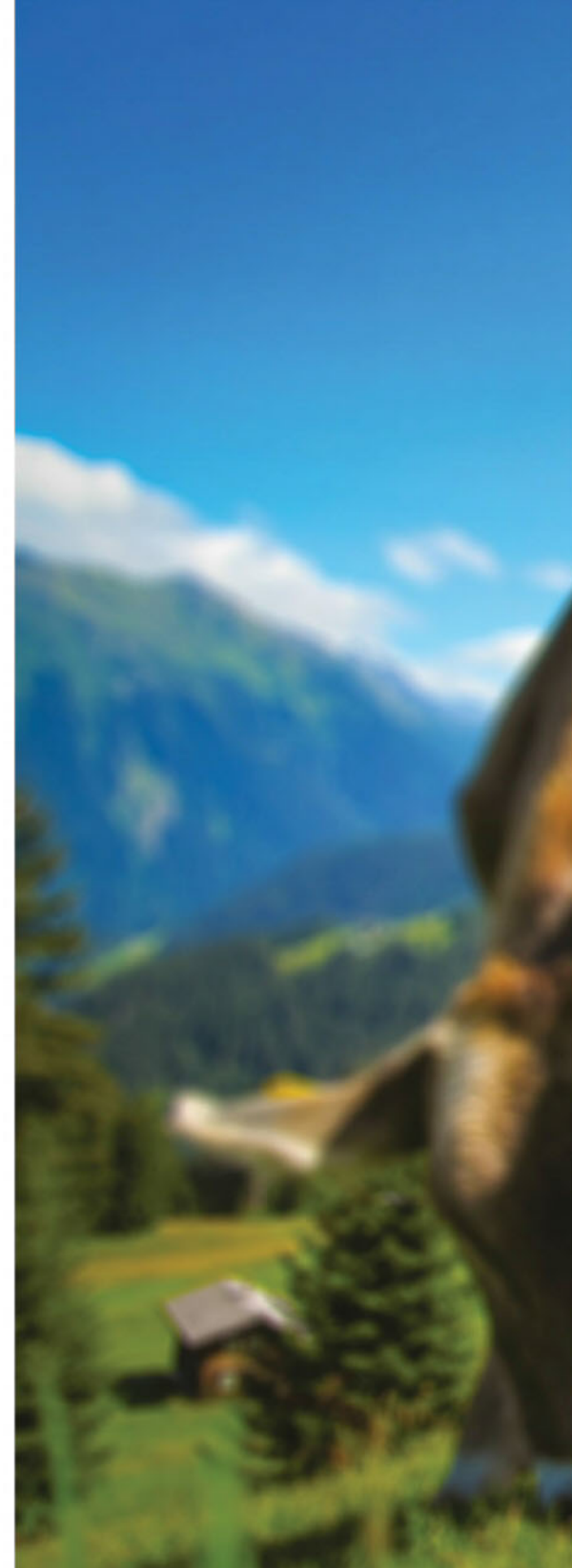
2 Load Field Blur If it's a JPEG you're working on, head to Layer>Smart Object>Convert to Smart Object in Photoshop. To start creating depth of field, head to the Field Blur option under Filter>Blur Gallery.



3 Background blur Add three points into the background of your image and set Blur to 50 or higher for each. Place these around the main subject. The whole image will appear blurry at this stage.



4 Subject in focus To retrieve focus back on the main subject, place a Field Blur point over it and reduce Blur to 0. You may need to add multiple points set to 0, depending on the size of your object.



5 Improve lighting When satisfied, hit OK. The Field Blur will be applied as a Smart Filter onto the Smart Object. In Filter>Camera Raw, reduce Highlights and increase Shadows to improve the dynamic range of your image.

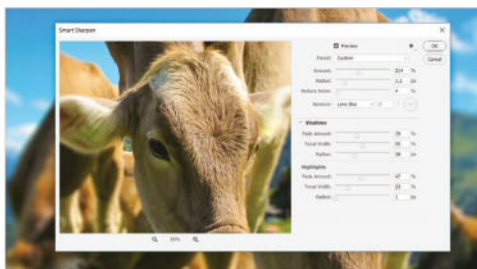
AFTER

Smart Object editing

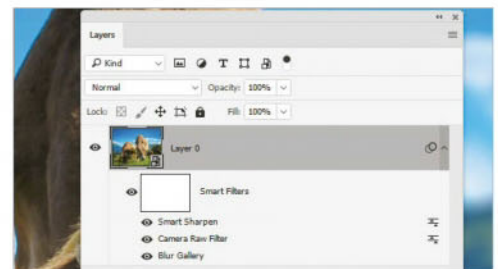
We've utilised Smart Object layers and Blur filters to recreate depth of field and enhance sharpness and tone



6 Add effects Inside the Effects section in ACR, we can apply a vignette and dehaze. This will help improve clarity and tone. There is also an option to add grain. Hit OK to apply Camera Raw settings onto your Smart Object.



7 Apply sharpening Now head to Filter>Sharpen>Smart Sharpen and set Amount to 200% and Radius to 1.2px or higher, depending on the image's resolution. This should enhance any finer details in your image.



8 Edit Layers Because all of our edits have been applied as Smart Objects, we can head back into their settings by double-clicking on their names in the Layers palette, or hide them by clicking the eye symbols.

Work with metadata in Lightroom

Speed up your workflow with these simple tricks for tagging and copyrighting your photos



Metadata is not something we think about on a regular basis, but it's always there behind the scenes. This refers to the hidden information that gets 'tagged' onto our images, and it can contain a variety of data. From location data captured by a camera's GPS to exposure settings and even details about copyright, metadata plays an important part in telling us more about images and where they came from.

In Lightroom, you have the chance to create your own metadata presets, which can be set up to tell Lightroom how to tag your images. The software will apply metadata presets to newly imported files, saving you time going back through and tagging each image separately. Follow these steps to find out how

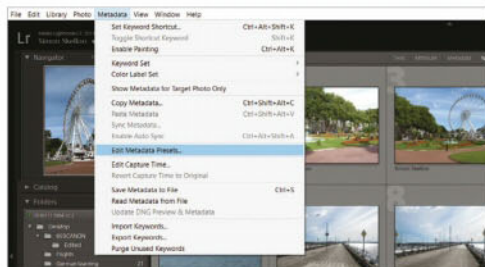
to make a new metadata preset containing copyright information, to help others who come across your work get in touch.



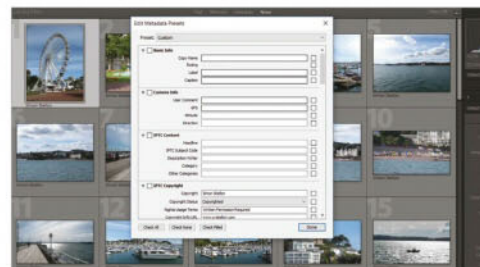
© Pixabay.com (1636868)

Above Metadata preset

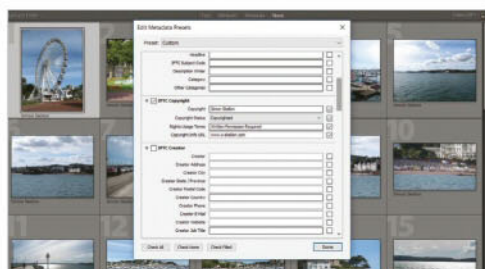
Cameras will add metadata to images when they're taken, in the form of exposure settings and file info



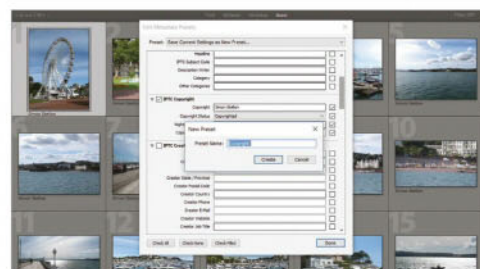
1 Load Metadata menu To use metadata presets, we have to first create them. Head to the Metadata menu at the top of Lightroom in the Library module and then go to Edit Metadata Presets.



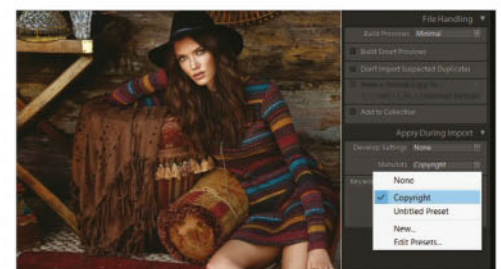
2 Check None This is where we can tag additional information onto an image during the import stage. Inside the dialog box, click Check None to clear the board, then select IPTC Copyright.



3 Enter info and copyright Input your copyright information into the fields, such as 'Written Permission Required' into Rights Usage Terms. Location data and captions can be added under Basic and Camera Info fields.



4 Save your preset Save the metadata preset by going to Save Current Settings as New Preset and give the new preset a name, for example 'Copyright'. Hit Done to store the preset for future use.

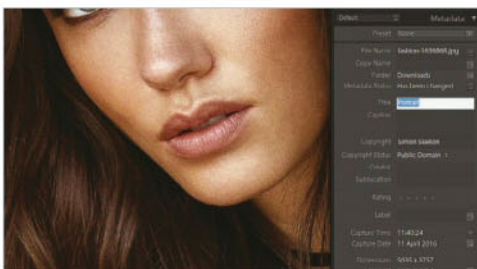


5 Import and apply Head to File>Import Photos and Video. Locate the folder or photo to import from the Source panel. Down the right-hand side, locate Metadata under Apply During Import and select your preset.

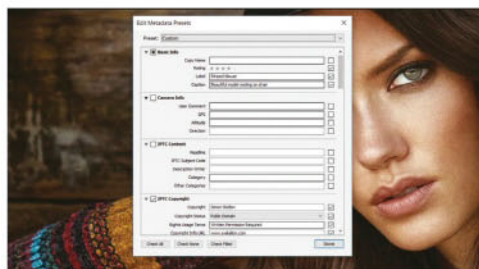
AFTER

Custom metadata

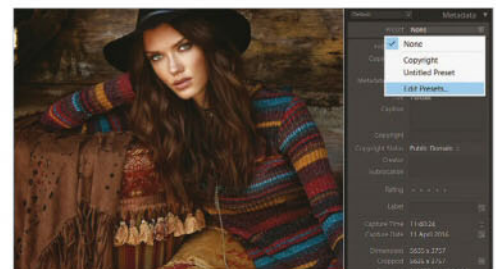
Making your own metadata presets is easy to do, and will provide additional information about one or more of your images



6 View metadata Press Import to load your images into Lightroom's Catalog and view the metadata from the right-hand panel. Copyright info can be adjusted and Title and Descriptions added to individual images.



7 Adjust preset To edit an existing preset, go back into the Edit Metadata Presets menu and add other details such as Rating and Label. Then under the Preset drop-down menu, select Update Preset 'Copyright'.



8 Access from Library You can edit metadata presets within the Import section by going to Edit Presets from the Metadata drop-down list. You can create multiple presets for different images using this menu.

Control shadows and highlights

Retrieve dynamic detail in your images with Photoshop



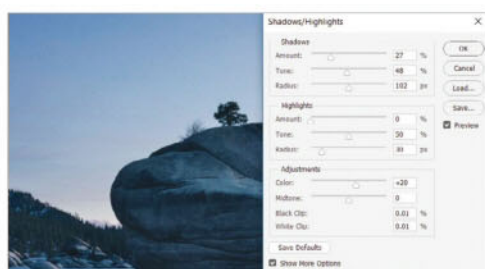
Capturing the same dynamic range we see with our eyes through a lens is not always easy, and often impossible.

Take, for example, a sunset with heavy shadows next to a bright, glowing sky. The pressure this puts on a lens is often too much for it to handle. Using Photoshop, we can call upon a powerful adjustment to bring back detail in shadows and control our highlights, as well as tweaking the midtones and overall tonal variations. Using a number of Tone and Radius sliders, we'll demonstrate how to transform the dynamic range in minutes in post-production software.

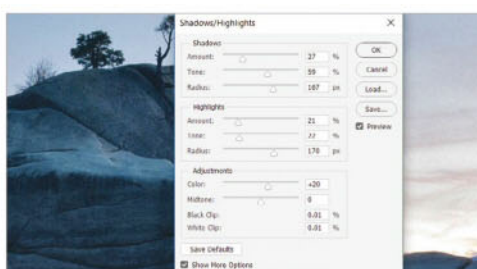


Left Difficult lighting

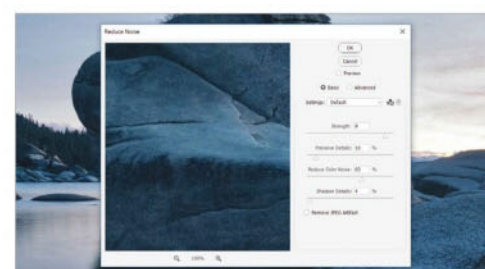
Dusk and dawn pose significant exposure challenges in terms of the dynamic range that these conditions typically present



1 Work with shadows Convert to a Smart Object, then head to Shadows/Highlights in Image>Adjustments. Boost Shadow's Amount to reveal detail, then Tone and Radius to lighten.



2 Tackle highlights Increase the Highlights' Amount slider to reduce overexposure. Increase the Tone and Radius sliders to improve the blend between shadows and highlights.



3 Noise reduction If noise has become a problem, go to Filter>Noise>Reduce Noise and increase Strength. Keep the Preserve Detail and Sharpen Detail sliders to a minimum.

AFTER

A balanced exposure

Detail has been restored to the rocks and balanced along with the sky, which has revealed natural tones that existed at the time of the shoot



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- Jay P. Morgan
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KEY PAPER TYPES

If you are new to printing, the names given to the various surfaces available can be confusing at first

01 Gloss (high-contrast)

Gloss papers offer high micro-contrast in images, allowing them to render excellent detail. The high-shine finish is perfectly suited to fashion, portrait and punchy images to add to their impact. The gloss covering makes them sometimes harder to view in some lighting conditions, though.

02 Fine-art matt

Matt papers are the fine-art paper of choice for many photographers. Offering high ink loads, they reproduce highly saturated images very well, providing excellent contrast without the glare that is associated with gloss prints. With a natural and subtle look to them, they're perfect for wildlife or landscape prints.

03 Textured

Textured papers offer an additional way to bring mood to your prints. The feel of the paper and small indentations

or 'roughness' can make images seem more subtle and art-like in their reproduction. These papers are fantastic for subtle landscape prints, fine-art images and shots with pastel colours.

04 Pearl or Semi-gloss

These papers offer many of the benefits of gloss, such as contrast and detail rendition, while minimising the glare for a more natural and softer-looking print. These types of paper are suited to a broad variety of subjects, and are often a standard photo paper for professionals.

05 Platinum

Platinum papers often offer high D-Max values for deep blacks, and wide colour gamuts for a wide range of applications. Due to their excellent ability to show smooth gradations between highlights and shadows, they are often highly regarded for black-and-white printing, offering stunning final results.



LOOK BEFORE YOU LEAP

Think about buying a test pack to get a feel for a range of paper types, before you make a bigger investment. Fotospeed, for example, offers a range of packs that showcase some of its best signature fine-art papers, allowing you to try multiple types on your images. Its Signature Test Pack, for example, includes three sheets each of Smooth Cotton 300, Natural Bright White 315, Platinum Baryta 300 and Platinum Etching 285.

Go to a show

As with all things in photography, it's often best to try before you buy. Head along to a printing open day or visit the various photo paper manufacturers at events such as the Photography Show to get a few of your own images printed on various paper types.

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Become a picture editor

If you love working with images, this might well be the career for you

Working with images doesn't necessarily mean you have to be the one taking the pictures. In fact, the moment of capture is only a very small percentage of a photo's life when you look at the wider world of photography. Being a picture editor is a completely different take on working with images and many might not consider or possibly know about the role that a picture editor plays within the industry. As a picture editor you will find yourself looking at photography from the other side of the coin, so to speak.

Being in and around photography as an amateur or even a professional could put you at an advantage in becoming a picture editor. College and university qualifications are beneficial and are usually a requirement for most employers. There is no course in particular, but one that is related to imagery, publishing or journalism is a good start. However, working in a relevant field can be just as good. Having industry knowledge prior to working as a picture editor will undoubtedly stand you in good stead and could even help you get your foot in the door.

Nothing quite shows skill, ability and most importantly understanding of photography better than a portfolio. By curating a solid collection of images that cover a range of skills and techniques, this shows that you are capable of editing images. Ensure the portfolio layout is cohesive; creating a good portfolio is a skill in itself.

There are an overwhelming amount of magazines and books available, so it's worth taking some time to go through a variety of genres and observe how the images relate to the text. It's interesting to look at the image credits to see where the content has derived from. Books will have an image contributor section at the back, and from this you can gain a good idea of where particular content comes from. From here you can look up the source on the internet, which will help broaden your knowledge about the various image providers and photographers that are

supplying the content. One of the challenges of being a picture editor is knowing where to go to source particular content. If you have a good knowledge of this, then you are already ahead of the game.

The role of a picture editor is fairly varied, from sourcing unique content for publications to setting up publishing agreements with stock libraries, photographers and illustrators. You may end up working across a broad range of subject matter so it helps to have a general interest in most subjects.

To an outsider, finding images could seem like an easy task, but more often than not, there are simply very few images available through particular image libraries. The process becomes more investigative and usually results in trying to trace the whereabouts of potential content.

Often the perfect image can be found on blogs or personal pages where the image has been used to assist a feature. It's common to find that the images are uncredited, causing the trail to go cold. However, the world of Google is a wonderful thing. If you drag an image into the Google images search bar, you can perform a reverse image search. Basically, every image has a footprint when used on the internet. This search will reveal everywhere the images have been used. Not only does it show the location of each image, but it also reveals the size. From here you can hopefully find a site that has credited the image in order to trace its original source.

Picture editors can spend countless hours browsing through thousands of images looking for ones that leap out, whether it be from specialist nature, travel, history or generic stock image libraries, not to mention portfolio hosting sites such as Flickr, 500px and personal websites. Although having all

Right **Kiteboarder, Florida**

While driving along a coastal road in Florida, this kite boarder was spotted. An image like this could be of great use to a picture editor looking to illustrate a book or magazine.



All images © Tim Hunt Photography

BECOME A PICTURE EDITOR



GO PRO

the images you can shake a stick at is great, it is becoming ever-more time consuming to search through.

Alamy, a widely used image library containing in excess of 94 million images, is just one of the countless image libraries that's growing at an incredible rate. While having a lot of choice is great, it is important for a picture editor to find the best content available and with this many images it takes time to source the right image. You will have to get used to scrolling and scanning at speed in order to cover the endless pages of content. A broad understanding of content type is valuable as it means that you can search more efficiently with the use of essential key words. Specialist image libraries have dedicated teams, keywording every image before uploading, whereas for other libraries it's up to the contributor to keyword their images – meaning that you have to be prepared to think outside the box in order to find the right intended image.

The process of image searching starts off with a designer compiling a list of images they require in order to assist a particular feature. As budget is king, sourcing the cheapest options is the first port of call, which usually begins with looking within public domain. With many historic image searches Wikipedia holds many usable images where the copyright has expired many years before. With other searches, such as wildlife, it usually requires specialist image libraries. Depending on the type of content required it always helps to collect as many images as possible in order to support the designer. These are then presented in a lightbox-style format to make it easier for them to pick out images of interest. Usually the most relevant images are selected and then a second, more refined search is performed to find better images again.

Cover images for magazines can be particularly challenging to find, as they need to have the right amount of negative space in order to accommodate cover lines. They also need to be the highest quality possible in order to catch the viewer's attention when on sale. These images usually require a more refined search and often results in turning to a photographer's website and online portfolio.

Before a publisher can use paid-for content, a publishing agreement needs to be in place. This outlines the terms of use, which covers print run, duration and territory. The terms can vary with every publisher, which affects the price per image. Negotiation is a skill that comes with experience, but it helps if you are a confident speaker. Staying within budget is key and essentially drives when an image can be used or not. So, a major part of being a picture editor is getting these agreements in place – and sometimes in a very short timeframe. Not only is a picture editor hired to find content, but also to save money where possible.



Pursue a career in images

Simple tips and tricks to help you on your way

- ✿ Take the time to perfect your photographic practice and be critical of your own work. This will help develop a keen eye for attention to detail.
- ✿ Take an interest in copyright law and research some previous cases online. It will help you understand the do's and don't's that are common in the world of publishing.
- ✿ Work on putting together a quality portfolio of carefully selected images and make sure that it shows a range of skills and subjects.
- ✿ If you don't already, try submitting your own images to image libraries to learn the process. You never know, you might end up selling something along the way.
- ✿ Look at as many publications you can get your hands on and observe where they are sourcing their content from.
- ✿ Get work experience. This is a great way of meeting people in the industry and will broaden your knowledge of what is expected.

With literally ten of thousands of images being uploaded every week it's easy to assume that every subject has been covered countless times, but you can still be amazed to find that there are relatively few images that cover what you are actually looking for.

You often have to track down images that may not be available through stock sites, which is why it's important to have a good knowledge of professional photographers in the industry who could provide the ideal image.

Copyright law is a challenging but interesting subject. Often there is no black and white answer as every case is different. The more you know about it the better, so it pays to take some time to familiarise yourself with it. The rule of thumb is that you never use an image without prior consent from the owner. As a picture editor, you often source images that are in the public domain and free to use. Despite Wikipedia being a great resource for

'free' images, you always have to be certain that what you see is true. Often images are stated to be in the public domain, but have been sourced from an image library. Needless to say, they are definitely not in the public domain.

Sometimes, when images are of a certain age, the copyright has expired and they are now within the public domain. Despite this, image libraries still continue to sell the images, so you have to be vigilant in making sure that you only pay when you need to. Staying within budget is paramount, so image use needs to be monitored in order to be working efficiently within an assigned budget. As a picture editor you will be expected to look out for this and advise other members of the team as you go.

The beauty of any role that involves images is that it's driven by passion. If you love looking at photography and believe you have a keen eye for detail, it's a worthwhile career opportunity for you.

DP

From selling images to buying images

A completely new perspective on the supply and demand of photographic images

Pursuing an image-related career is the perfect way to enjoy photography without the pressure of surviving as a photographer in what is already a saturated market. You can go from selling the odd image here and there to suddenly buying hundreds of images every month for a whole host of publications. By becoming a picture editor it allows you to transfer over all the skills learnt from being a photographer and still remain working with images. It requires a keen eye for detail and a passion for finding the right image for the job.

The picture editor's role can vary on a daily basis. This can greatly help to expand your knowledge and broaden your skill set, allowing you to become a valuable asset within any organisation.

Opposite Spoonbill

Just after sunrise on a misty morning, the soft light allowed the capture of the subtle pinks of this roseate spoonbill

Below-left Iguana, Florida

Fort Zachary Taylor in Key West, Florida is home to a large collection of Iguanas, who enjoy basking on the warm bricks

Below-right The Shard

This was taken while standing at the Thames water level. The bank of clouds helped emphasise the buildings below

Bottom-left Sea spurge

At only four inches high this sea spurge resembles a desert, as the Sun's low angle casts long shadows from its stems

Bottom-right Reddish egret

A reddish egret comes into land in a shallow pool. Taken just after sunrise on Merritt Island, Florida



Career advice

Working with other photographers can be a much more resourceful path to take than going it alone, as James Abbott explains

The reality of work experience

I'm often contacted by photography students who would like to do work experience with me. I'd love to help them – but I don't think there's much they can learn from me, because my work is studio-based. I'm really busy, and I don't think I'd have enough time to explain everything. Am I being fair?
Marie Anthony

Taking on individuals for work experience can be daunting: there is always an assumption that it's going to cost you a lot of time and effort, for little or no return. The reality is that it doesn't have to be like that at all.

Learning can take place just by being there and seeing how things are done. You certainly don't have to stop and explain everything as you go along when it comes to setting up and shooting. Being a professional photographer is much more than just taking photos: in many ways it's more about running a business. And this is the side of the subject you can't learn at university.

Remember when you were starting out, and how difficult it was to get your first break? Just giving a student the opportunity to see how a professional works can be more help to them than you could ever imagine – not to mention that you'll have an extra pair of hands to help, and you could make a good new friend and industry contact.



2x © Pixels

Above
Taking on work experience assistants doesn't have to be as much of a chore as you think...

Referring other photographers

I'm a wedding photographer, and it's quite common for me to have to turn couples down because I'm fully booked up to a year in advance. I don't like having to say no, but I simply can't be in two places at once. I'd like to be able to refer people to another photographer, but it feels risky to recommend a competitor. Could doing this be detrimental to my business?

John Kitchen

The thing about competitors is that they're not the enemy. They're simply professionals who are similar to you and could quite easily

be friends if you don't know them already. Referring customers to another photographer when you're too busy is excellent customer service – something that I'm sure you pride yourself on working in the wedding industry.

Referring an alternative photographer when you're busy is good because you're helping a couple, but it certainly shouldn't be a shot in the dark. It's best to personally know the person you're referring. Only refer people you respect as photographers – your reputation is still at stake. Get a reciprocal arrangement with another photographer or two and it could get you more work than it takes away.



Start your own collective

I'm a professional photographer, and find that work can be quite a solitary experience. Is there a camera club or something similar where working professionals can share knowledge and experience with one another? My peers are all competitors, so is it safe from a business point of view to work together in this kind of way?

Robert Brown

You're absolutely right: being a professional photographer can be lonely, and over time this can have a negative impact on you, both professionally and personally. The easiest way of alleviating this is to have more contact with other professional photographers. That's right:

you need to get out there and network with the competition. Creating a group that meets up once a week or even once a month is the perfect way to connect with people who can identify with you and your business.

Creating a collective is a great social exercise that can also boost your business. By getting together with similar professionals, you can share tips and experiences, have a laugh, and make solid contacts who you can help and vice versa. You can refer one another when someone needs a specific type of photography you don't shoot; and if you do shoot the same subjects, such as weddings, you could even work as second photographers for one another when needed.

The big question

Eric Renno has built a great community around sharing image-editing techniques



© Eric Renno

TipSquirrel (tipsquirrel.com) is a fantastic blog that's based entirely around sharing image-editing tutorials. It began almost accidentally when Eric Renno was ill and housebound: to pass the time, he and his neighbour began sharing Photoshop tutorials they'd found online. Eric kept forgetting the URLs, so he decided to create a WordPress website where he could collate the techniques he liked. The name TipSquirrel came from the fact that Eric was squirrelling tips away for later.

At first TipSquirrel was a hub for Eric's found tutorials, but it wasn't long before he and several contributors (known as Photoshop Nuts) began making their own tutorials. The 'Nuts' have changed over the years, and have included some big names in Photoshop training.

Eric says he enjoys sharing techniques: "The advantage of sharing is that you build a community, and you're able to broaden your own skills. If I see a tip I like on TipSquirrel, I can adapt it to my needs before sharing this. Someone else may then develop it further – it's all about growth and expanding knowledge.

"TipSquirrel.com has opened a lot of doors for many of the Nuts – myself included. The saying that 'the whole is greater than the sum of its parts' is very true here, I think."



Above Share editing skills

Photographers are particularly interested in new pro editing tricks

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Don't be afraid to refer a client to another photographer if it suits their style better

Right
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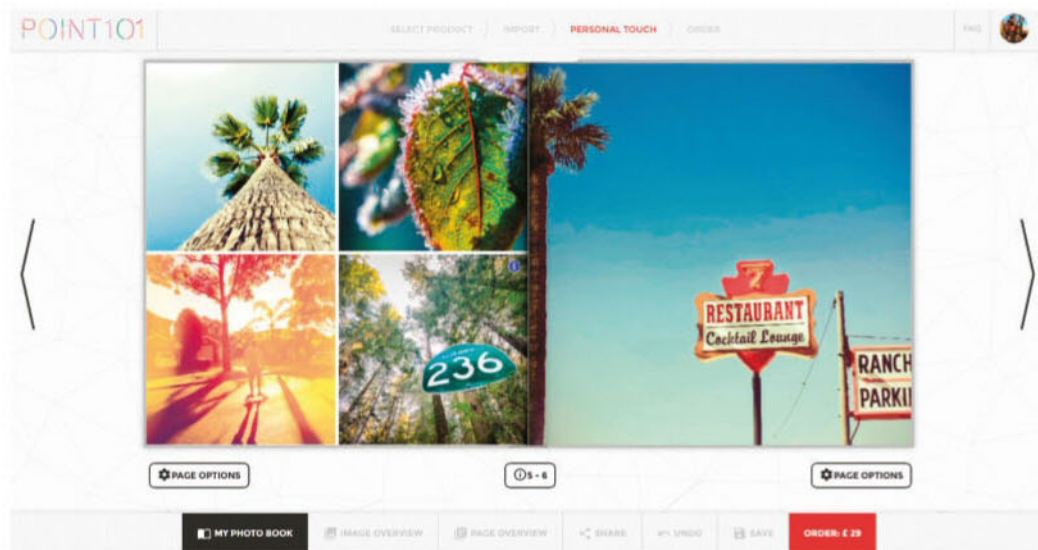
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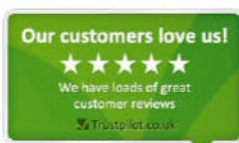
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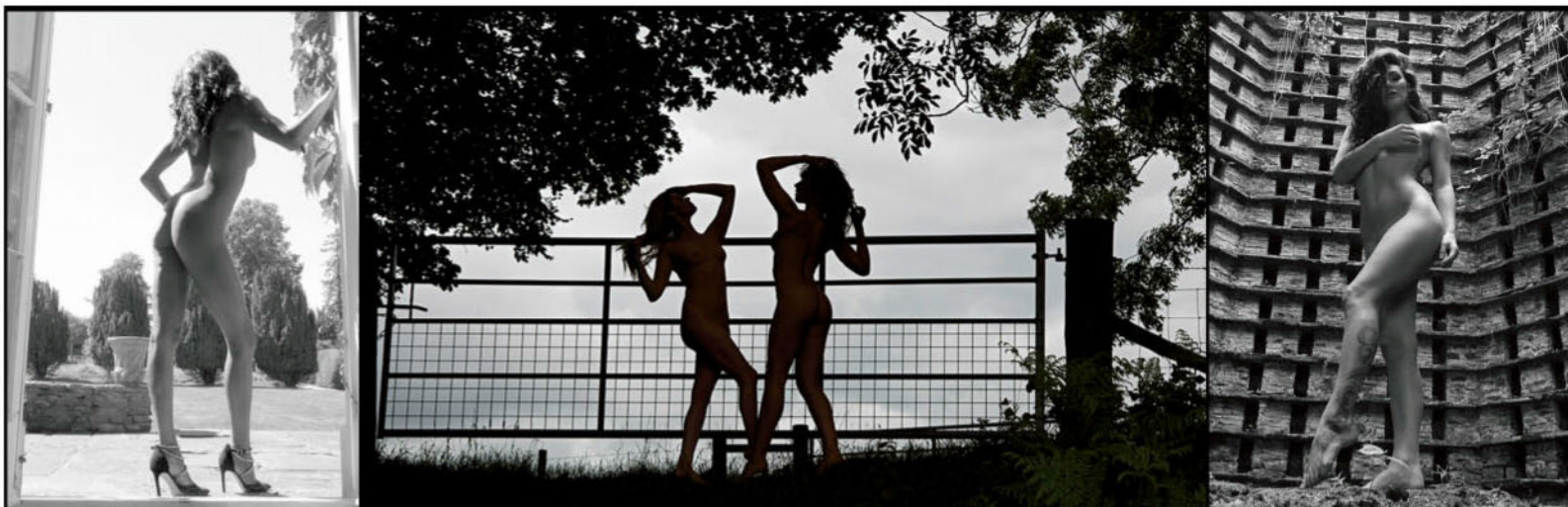
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BACKPACKS FOR



PHOTOGRAPHERS



Carry all the gear you need for your next shoot in comfort and security with one of these backpacks, especially designed for photographers



There are lots of photography bag options to suit different needs, but a backpack is a very popular choice. If you have a lot of heavy kit, a backpack will generally be more comfortable – and better for your back – than using a shoulder bag. Of course, it's not as easy to grab your camera for a quick shot, but that will matter less depending on the subjects you shoot.

For example, street photographers and those who like to capture shots off the cuff

will probably find that a backpack doesn't suit them. On the other hand, wildlife, landscape and perhaps even portrait photographers – where you're travelling to a specific location and stopping – may find them to be a more useful solution.

Backpacks designed for photographers tend to have padded compartments that keep your camera, lenses and other accessories secure and protected while on the move. When looking for the best backpack for you, consider how

many lenses you generally like to carry around with you, and how large they are. Some people also like to carry a laptop or tablet with them, in which case a bag with a dedicated computer compartment is essential.

For landscape photographers going on a long hike to get to the best location, consider a backpack with chest or waist straps for best balance and comfort, and also think about bags which enable you to attach a tripod or monopod to the outside of the bag.



Left

Padded interior

The camera compartment is completely customisable to suit however many cameras and lenses you need to take with you, keeping them snug and secure

SRP: £140 / \$190

Manfrotto Pro Light RedBee-210

A security-conscious bag constructed for all your landscape photography needs

This Manfrotto backpack is exactly what you need if you plan to head to a location with a full range of lenses. The dividers on the inside of the bag are interchangeable, but come ready to accept one camera with a long lens attached, and up to five surrounding it. You can alter the pockets to fit your exact needs, or you could fit a second camera at the expense of additional lenses.

The camera and lens holder is protected by a mesh covering, while it is accessed at the rear of the bag meaning you place the external part on the floor. You can also access this compartment from the side via two pockets for quickly grabbing what you need – particularly handy if you want to change lenses without having to take off the bag entirely. These pockets are protected by a buckle to make it harder to open secretly by thieves. A laptop can be slotted into the second section of the bag, while there's also small pockets for accessories and extra space for your personal items.

Lots of handles around the exterior of the bag mean you can pick it up from almost any position, or use a second handle for extra leverage if the bag is heavy. The padding on the back and on the straps make it comfortable to wear, while there is a chest strap and a waist strap to keep it secure while on a long hike. Tripods can be attached using the external connections too.





Left

Small and compact

If you've got a CSC, or just want to carry one camera and lens, the small camera compartment of this bag won't bother you

SRP: £99 / \$100

MindShift SidePath

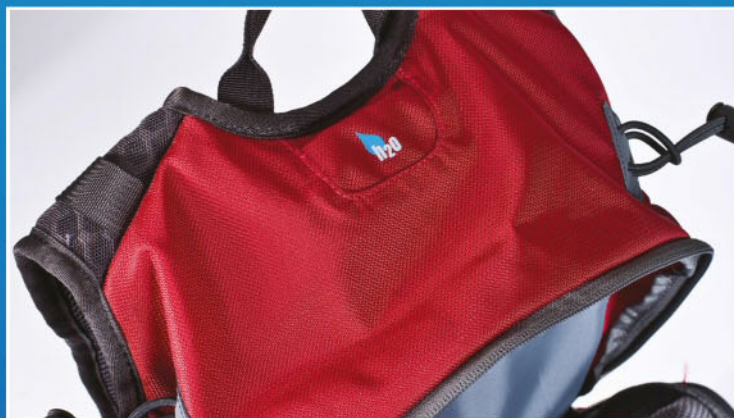
Including day trips and weekends away, the SidePath is a bag designed for multiple uses

The MindShift is ideally suited for those looking for an affordable bag for the odd day trip, especially those who don't need or want to carry around a lot of equipment with them. Alternatively, those with smaller CSCs might find this the most appealing.

Designed not to look like a camera bag, the small and unassuming SidePath could easily be mistaken for an ordinary bag. Indeed, the camera section is removable so you could use it as everyday bag when you don't need your camera.

The camera section is small, but it can be divided into a few padded sections as necessary. It's likely you'd only fit one large DSLR and standard lens, but smaller CSCs and accessories should fit nicely. Accessing this section via the rear of the bag also means you'll keep yourself clean and dry as it won't be touching the floor at any point. There is a chest strap to help keep the bag secure, which is especially useful when on a long hike, while the main straps are adjustable to fit your body shape.

You can fit a tablet in the second compartment, and there's also a decent amount of room for your personal items. A rain cover is included for extra peace of mind too. There's not a huge amount of pockets for accessories, but there's a couple of pouches on the exterior of the bag, which you could potentially use for a small tripod or monopod.





Left
Serious storage

The largest and most capacious of any of the bags here, the compartments on the interior of this bag give you room for many different camera combinations

SRP: £180 / \$263

Tamrac Anvil 23

A bag that's ready for when you need all your accessories with you on your next shoot

The largest bag in the group, the Tamrac is another great choice if you have a lot of lenses to carry with you. The main compartment comes with space for a DSLR and up to eight lenses, depending on size. You can customise how the spaces are divided depending on what you have or what you need to take with you for a particular shoot – and you could easily fit two cameras in the bag if you were willing to sacrifice lens space.

Unfortunately, the compartment opens from the front of the backpack, so you will need to lay the part that touches you on the floor – not ideal for very muddy or wet situations. There's also no side access to any pockets to allow for quick changes, so this bag is perhaps best for photographers who are likely to be in one location for a given length of time, but need a lot of equipment.

A number of smaller pockets can be found on the back of the bag, including one which fits a laptop or a tablet very comfortably, while other pockets can be used for accessories or small items.

This is probably the most comfortable bag of all those on test thanks to thick padded chest and waist straps that help the bag to sit firmly, making it great for landscape photographers – attaching a tripod is also easy thanks to the exterior buckles. A rain cover is included inside the bag to give extra protection.





Left

Handy openings

A good mid-sized and mid-priced bag for carrying just enough gear for your day or weekend shot – as long as you don't need your laptop

SRP: £136 / \$160

Think Tank Trifecta 10 DSLR backpack

An understated design with quick access to your camera for when grabbing a quick shot

The Think Tank Trifecta has a slim, simple and understated design. The inside can be customised using however many dividers or shapes you need, but it's ideally suited to a DSLR camera body and three different lenses – you might be able to squeeze in a small fourth prime lens.

You have three entry points to grab your gear. You can open the bag from its back – the part that rests against your back. Having the opening here means that you lay the part of the bag that doesn't touch you on the floor, removing the risk of getting dirt on your clothes.

There are also two openings on the side of the bag; this means you don't have to put the bag down – just remove one of the straps from your shoulder and you can quickly get what you need. You may want to invest in a small padlock to keep your camera safe if you are likely to be travelling through a densely populated area.

A small pocket for a tablet is included, but it won't fit a large laptop – so it's best for day trips and so on where you won't need a computer. There's plenty of small pockets, which are very useful for memory cards, batteries and small accessories, while a compartment at the top of the bag can be used for personal items.

Landscape photographers will appreciate the waist strap, which keeps the bag secure, while there's also a rain cover included inside to add extra protection during downpours.





Manfrotto Pro Light RedBee-210

Weight	1,600g
External dimensions	510 x 340 x 250mm
Internal dimensions	440 x 280 x 160mm
Materials	Nylon
Laptop compartment	420 x 280 x 25mm
Features	A good number of pockets, customisation and security – a great choice if carrying a lot ★★★★★
Build quality	High-quality material, while the padding and adjustable straps make it comfortable to wear ★★★★★
Handling	Nicely designed with the option to quickly grab a lens without removing the bag ★★★★★
Value for money	It's not the cheapest bag in the test, but for your money you get a lot of great features ★★★★★

Overall

With the ability to quickly grab your stuff, as well as security options and soft padding, this bag from Manfrotto is a great all-rounder.



MindShift SidePath

Weight	700g
External dimensions	260 x 470 x 150mm
Internal dimensions	240 x 150 x 140mm
Materials	DWR (durable water-repellant) coating, polyurethane, YKK® RC-zippers, nylon, ultra-stretch mesh, high-density nylux
Laptop compartment	10-inch tablet compartment
Features	A simple backpack for when you just need a few things – but it can't carry all your gear ★★★★★
Build quality	Feels well made, but looks cheaper than the others – so looks less like a valuable camera bag ★★★★★
Handling	It would be better if you could access your camera without having to take the bag off ★★★★★
Value for money	The cheapest bag of the test, this is ideal for those who want a simple bag for small cameras ★★★★★

Overall

This bag is well priced, but the actual camera compartment is very small – more ideal for those who mainly want a general bag.



Tamrac Anvil 23

Weight	2,100g
External dimensions	310 x 470 x 250mm
Internal dimensions	280 x 440 x 160mm
Materials	500D CORDURA nylon fabric with 2 x PU coating, 840D polyester dobby fabric with 2x PU coating, 210D Oxford nylon lining
Laptop compartment	Tablets/laptops up to 15 inches
Features	Lots of pockets make it a great choice for lots of kit – but quick and clean access is limited ★★★★★
Build quality	A sturdy, comfortable bag to wear – perfect for landscape photographers ★★★★★
Handling	Your gear is well protected, but getting at it when speed is of the essence isn't possible ★★★★★
Value for money	The most expensive bag here, but still good value for money for transporting a lot of gear ★★★★★

Overall

While this bag is the best in terms of sheer space available, it's a shame the opening is on the front, rather than the back.



Think Tank Trifecta 10 DSLR backpack

Weight	1,200g
External dimensions	320 x 490 x 175mm
Internal dimensions	280 x 310 x 135mm
Materials	DWR (durable water-repellant) coating, polyurethane, nylon, ultra-stretch mesh
Laptop compartment	10-inch tablet compartment
Features	Space for a selection of lenses, but no laptop compartment makes it more of a day trip bag ★★★★★
Build quality	It feels well put together, and it sits comfortably on your back thanks to padded material ★★★★★
Handling	You can quickly grab your kit without putting the bag down – useful for off-the-cuff shots ★★★★★
Value for money	A mid-range price, it's a good choice if you don't have huge amounts of kit ★★★★★

Overall

If you're looking for a simple and stylish bag and have a decent amount of kit – but not too much – this is a great choice.



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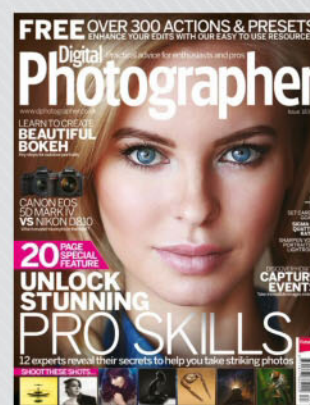


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Above
PowerShot inspired
The M5's control layout is similar to that of PowerShot cameras like the G5 X

Opposite
Good grip
Though it's small, there's a decent grip on the M5, making it comfortable to use



SRP: £1,000 / \$980

Canon EOS M5

Canon finally seems to be taking compact system cameras seriously, but is the new EOS M5 enough for experienced photographers?



Although they are capable of delivering high-quality images, to date Canon's EOS M series of compact system or mirrorless system cameras haven't raised much interest among experienced photographers. On the basis of its specification, however, the EOS M5 could change that.

Let's start with the basics. Inside the EOS M5 is the same APS-C format 24.2 million-pixel sensor as is in the Canon EOS 80D, but rather than the DIGIC 6 engine Canon has coupled it with the newer DIGIC 7 processor. This proves a capable combination as the EOS M5 is able to capture a high level of detail, and noise is controlled well through most of the sensitivity range (ISO 100-25600).

The feature that has probably most attracted the attention of experienced photographers, however, is the viewfinder. This is an electronic OLED device and it's the first time that Canon has fitted an EVF in an interchangeable lens camera. It's a little on the small side compared with the units in the likes of the Fuji X-T2, but with 2,360,000 dots it's capable of revealing plenty of detail. However, in very low light it's prone to flickering, which may put off Canon DSLR devotees. It also makes the scene look much warmer and more saturated than both reality and the rear screen. The rear screen generally gives a more faithful representation of the images as they are captured.

Canon has given the EOS M5 a tilting screen, which can be angled up for low-level shooting and down for above-head shots. If you want to take a selfie, the screen can be flipped down through 180 degrees.

The screen is also touch-sensitive and Canon has implemented touch control well, allowing it to be used for menu navigation and setting selection as well as image browsing and autofocus point selection (the latter is even possible while looking in the viewfinder). This touch control doesn't come at the expense of direct controls as, in addition to a control dial around the navigation pad (with shortcuts to key features) on the back of the camera, there are also four high-quality knurled metal dials on the top plate. To the left is the mode dial with all the enthusiast's favourite exposure modes represented (PASM) plus two Custom settings along with automatic and scene modes to keep less experienced photographers happy. At the centre of the dial is a release button that must be pressed before the dial can be turned. It's a bit fiddly in cold weather, but not a major drama.

The remaining three dials are on the right of the top plate, with the front one surrounding the shutter release and adjusting exposure. The dial nearest the thumb rest is dedicated to adjusting exposure compensation in 1/3EV steps across the range +/-3EV. The final

"This is the first time that Canon has fitted an EVF in an interchangeable lens camera"

FEATURES

POP-UP FLASH

In addition to the hot shoe for mounting an external flashgun, there's a small flash built-in with a GN of 5m at ISO 100, useful for providing a fill-in light.

EVF

A control under the viewfinder housing enables the diopter to be adjusted. It's a little awkward to reach while looking through the viewfinder.

DUAL PIXEL AF

There are phase detection focus points built into the sensor to speed up autofocusing, covering 80 per cent of the vertical and horizontal area of the sensor.

WIRELESS CONNECTION

Bluetooth, Wi-Fi and NFC connectivity gives plenty of scope for connecting to a smart device for image transfer and remote control using Canon's free app.

PICTURE STYLES

The M5 has Canon's recent Fine Detail picture style, useful when shooting JPEGs with lots of little details, but bespoke processing of RAW files is still best.

SET THE AF POINT

It's possible to specify the area of the touchscreen that's active while looking in the viewfinder to limit the chance of setting the AF point with your nose.





ISO RESULTS

Noise is controlled up to around ISO 6400, but the results become a bit painterly with detail being lost above that value. Consequently ISO 12800 and 25600 should be reserved for emergency situations rather than used routinely.



ISO 500



ISO 25600

dial has a button at its centre to enable the purpose of the dial to be set, and each press advances through the options. By default, sensitivity and white balance are assigned to this button in shooting mode. You simply press it to access the feature you want then turn the dial to set the value. If you wish, it can also be set to access autofocus, drive and metering mode. It's a really quick and convenient way of changing settings and can be used with the camera held to your eye.

While the EOS M5 has the best AF system in a Canon EOS M camera to date, it's not quite as fast or as sensitive as the systems in cameras such as the Olympus OM-D E-M10 Mark II or Panasonic G80. It is possible to focus on and follow moving subjects, but it's a little unreliable.

With the Canon EF-M 18-150mm f3.5-6.3 IS STM, the EOS M5 is reasonably quick to focus in good light, but light levels don't have to drop much for it to slow. In the evening you'll find you have to hunt out high-contrast areas and focus on lamps. It's a little better with a brighter lens such as the Canon EF 50mm f1.8 STM mounted via the EF-EOS M Mount Adapter.

Image quality from the EOS M5 is generally good, but we recommend sticking to ISO 6400 or lower whenever possible. The settings above this are within the native range, but details can become rather painterly. At the other end of the scale, however, detail levels are high and on a par with what we'd expect from a Canon camera with a 24MP APS-C format sensor.

On the whole the Evaluative metering system can be relied upon to give good exposures. The exposure compensation facility may occasionally be required, but not in any unexpected situations.

TALKING POINT...

EF-M mount

Like Canon's other EOS M cameras, the M5 has the Canon EF-M mount. As the M5 has no mirror and has a smaller flange depth than Canon DSLRs, this is different from the EF mount used on Canon's full-frame DSLRs and the EF-S mount on APS-C format DSLRs.

Canon currently only has seven EF-M lenses, with focal lengths ranging from 11mm to 150mm, which in full-frame terms is equivalent to 17.6mm and 240mm respectively. However, there's a Canon EF-EOS Mount Adapter (£105/\$200), which enables EF and EF-S lenses to be used on EOS M cameras. In the UK this adapter is currently supplied free with the camera as a launch offer. While the adapter makes it possible to mount a huge range of lenses on the M5, its small size makes prime lenses and shorter zooms a more comfortable fit than long telephoto optics.



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Colours are also typically Canon, by which we mean pleasantly saturated and generally slightly warm.

Surprisingly, given the price and era of the camera, Canon has opted to give the EOS M5 Full HD (1920 x 1080) video capability, but not 4K recording. There's a mic port and in-camera control over audio, but no headphone jack. Nevertheless, video quality is very good.

Above-inset

No surprises

The Evaluative metering system doesn't present any unpleasant surprises and responds predictably to subject brightness

Right

Needs light

The AF system can generally be relied upon to get stationary subjects sharp, but it becomes slow as light levels drop



100%



1 EYE SENSOR

A sensor turns off the main screen and activates the EVF when you look through the viewfinder

2 RECORD BUTTON

Take care with this button, as it's easy to press it accidentally and start video recording

3 QUICK MENU

Pressing this button activates the touch-sensitive Quick Menu for making speedy setting adjustments

4 EXPOSURE COMPENSATION

The exposure compensation dial is within easy reach of your right thumb for fast adjustments

Canon EOS M5

Megapixels

24.2

Max resolution

6000 x 4000

Sensor information

APS-C (22.3 x

14.9mm) CMOS

Shutter speed

30-1/4,000sec

ISO sensitivity

100-25600

Exposure modes

P, A, S, M, Custom,

Movie, Scene

Intelligent Auto, Hybrid

Auto, Creative Assist,

SCN, Creative Filters

Metering options

E, P, CW, S

Connectivity

Micro USB, Wi-Fi, NFC,

Bluetooth, Micro HDMI

Weight

427g (including battery

and card)

Dimensions

115.6 x 89.2 x 60.6mm

Batteries

Li-ion

Storage

SD, SDHC, SDXC

LCD

Tilting 3.2-inch

1,620,000-dot

Viewfinder

0.39-type 2,360,000

dots OLED EVF

Features

The M5 has a decent feature set with 4K video capability being noticeable by its absence

★★★★★

Build quality

Metal controls and solid build give a good-quality feel, but there's no weather-sealing

★★★★★

Handling

Touch control is implemented very well and most of the controls are carefully considered

★★★★★

Quality of results

Once focus is achieved, the M5's results are very good at all but the highest ISO settings

★★★★★

Value for money

The M5's price is out of step with competing mirrorless cameras that have better AF systems

★★★★★

Overall

While the M5 has good handling and is capable of producing very good-quality images, it lacks some video features we might expect from a high-end CSC and is expensive.

★★★★★



HIGH FRAME RATE MODE

HFR (High Frame Rate) mode, selected via the mode dial, allows you to shoot Full HD video at one of three frame rates (250, 500 or 1,000fps) for slow-motion playback. While it produces some excellent results, the interface is rather confusing for first-time users.



Above Aperture
The lens ring's purpose can be customised, but it's ideal for adjusting aperture

Left Viewfinder
A small switch releases the viewfinder ready for extension and use

Sony Cyber-shot DSC-RX100 V

Megapixels
20.1MP

Max resolution
5,472 x 3,648

Sensor information
13.2mm x 8.9mm
Exmor RS CMOS

Lens data
f1.8 - f2.8, 24-70mm
equivalent

Shutter speed
30-1/32,000sec

ISO sensitivity
A, 125 - 12800

Exposure modes
Auto, P, A, S, M, SCN,
Panorama, HFR,
Movie

Metering options
MP, CW, S

Flash modes
A, Fon, Foff, SS, RS

Connectivity
Multi/Micro USB,
Micro HDMI

Weight
272g (body only)

Dimensions
101.6 x 58.1 x 41mm

Batteries
Li-ion NP-BX1

Storage
SD, MS variants

LCD
3-in, 1,228,800 dots

Viewfinder
EVF, 2,359,296 dots

Features

A fast lens, 24fps shooting, 315 phase-detection AF points and wide-ranging video features

★★★★★

Build quality

Though it feels well made, the front is too smooth to give a secure hold, making an extra grip necessary

★★★★☆

Handling

Controls are sensibly arranged and there's a good degree of customisation available

★★★★☆

Quality of results

Noise is controlled well and there's a high level of detail (especially in RAW files) for a camera of this size

★★★★★

Value for money

Squeezing so much tech into a small body brings a high price. More affordable alternatives exist

★★★★☆

Overall

If you can accept the high price, the RX100 V gives you lots of control, a snappy AF system, 24fps shooting capability, some fun video options and high-quality results.

★★★★★

SRP: £1,000 / \$1,000

Sony Cyber-shot DSC-RX100 V

Sony has shoe-horned some impressive technology into the body of this high-quality compact camera



Externally the Sony RX100 V is an unassuming compact camera, but pick it up and its solid metal-bodied build becomes apparent. Its price tag hints that it's a bit more than the average pocket-sized camera.

Inside the Mark V is a one-inch type Exmor RS CMOS sensor with 20.1 million pixels. The sensor's stacked construction means the signal from the photosites (aka pixels) has less distance to travel, enabling a faster read-out speed. A DRAM chip and newly developed front-end LSI that supports the BIONZ X processing engine also enables 4K video, and a phenomenal maximum stills shooting speed of 24fps at full resolution with continuous autofocus and metering for up to 150 shots.

This impressive shooting rate is backed up by a top shutter speed of 1/32,000sec using the electronic shutter (the mechanical shutter maxes out at 1/2,000sec), a hybrid autofocus system with 315 phase-detection points and a claimed response time of 0.05sec. While we can't verify that time, the RX100 V certainly gets subjects sharp quickly and does a great job of tracking moving targets in reasonable light. It's more hesitant in low light, but it's still very good for a compact camera.

In addition to the high-quality, three-inch 1,228,800-dot tilting LCD screen on the back of the camera, there's a built-in 0.39-inch OLED electronic viewfinder with 2,359,296 dots. This pops-up smartly with the flick of a switch but its rear element needs to be pulled out manually to give a focused view. That last stage seems a little unsophisticated, but the

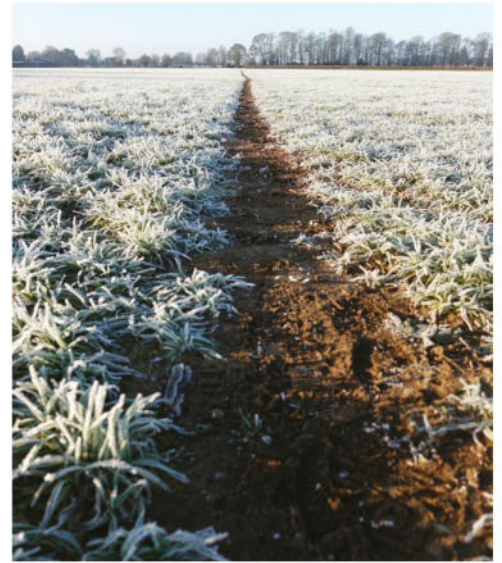
viewfinder works well, giving a nice, clear view that's especially useful in very bright light or when panning with a moving subject.

Like its doppelgänger the RX100 IV, the RX100 V is delightfully compact with understated charm, but its front is smooth and slippery making it a nervous hold and a wrist strap or similar is recommended. Thankfully, Sony offers an optional rubber grip (AG-R2 for £14/\$15) that can be stuck on.

One disappointment with the RX100 V is that Sony continues to shun a touchscreen. This would make some setting selections (including AF point) a little easier and more intuitive. By default the AF point is set by pressing the button at the navigation pad and then using navigation controls. If you want to use the navigation buttons to reach their other designated functions, you need to press the centre button to deactivate AF point selection.

As the RX100 V has the same pixel count as its predecessor, its images aren't a revelation in terms of detail resolution, but it's still impressive for this type of camera. Noise is also controlled well to around ISO 3200. Above this value RAW files show their benefit by producing slightly more natural-looking images and giving control over noise visibility. As a guide, try to stick to ISO 6400 or lower.

In the default settings the RX100 V produces pleasant colours and it generally handles exposure well, while dynamic range is good. Occasionally you may need to use the exposure compensation control to protect highlights, but that's to be expected.



Top Versatility

The lens' focal length range of 24-70mm (equivalent) and fast aperture are a great choice for general photography

Above AF points

The AF system usually has a point just where you need it and is fast and effective in decent light

FEATURES

ELECTRONIC VIEWFINDER

A bonus in a camera this small. Because it's electronic, you see images as they will be captured.

TILTING SCREEN

The screen can be tilted to give a clearer view at high or low angles, and flips right up for selfie shots.

AF OPTIONS

There's a collection of Focus Area options, but Flexible Spot, Lock on AF and Wide are the most useful.

WI-FI AND NFC

Wi-Fi connectivity lets you share images quickly and if you have an NFC-enabled phone it's very easy.

BATTERY

With a disappointing battery life of just 220 images, a spare battery is advisable for heavy users.

FUNCTION MENU

A quick route to your favourite features, this menu shows up to 12 features for adjustment.

ELECTRONIC VIEWFINDER



DOWNLOAD THE TEST SHOTS
www.filesilo.co.uk/digitalphotographer



SRP: £850 / \$1,000

Olympus M.ZUIKO DIGITAL ED 12-40mm 1:2.8 PRO

A top-quality camera needs a top-quality zoom; how does the Olympus perform?



This offering from Olympus is arguably one of the most glamorous lenses in the company's line-up and it's the lens you'll get if you opt for either the older E-M1 Mark I or the latest E-M1 Mark II cameras. As a micro four thirds lens, equivalent to 24-80mm, it's quite a lot smaller than anything you'd get for APS-C let alone full-frame. It's not a lot larger than an APS-C crop camera's budget kit lens, and it handles well on the original E-M1 model we had for testing. Although the extending barrel is plastic, it's also rather well made with metal zoom and focus collars, and one of the best-fitting hoods in the business. Those metal zoom and focus collars are silky-smooth and nicely weighted, and autofocus is very fast and near silent. All what you'd expect from a maker as fine as Olympus. There's no faulting the optical quality either. Few zooms can match the quality of fixed focal-length models, as there are just too many compromises to be made. But this is one of those occasions where a zoom comes pretty close, if it's to come close at all.

It's extremely sharp throughout the zoom range, especially at the shorter focal lengths, and has class-leading flare resistance. It also has very low levels of fringing. Like a lot of wide zooms though, it has quite noticeable barrel distortion that is removed on the fly in the viewfinder, in out-of-camera JPEGs and tagged in RAW files. Still, few zooms excite more than this one.



Left

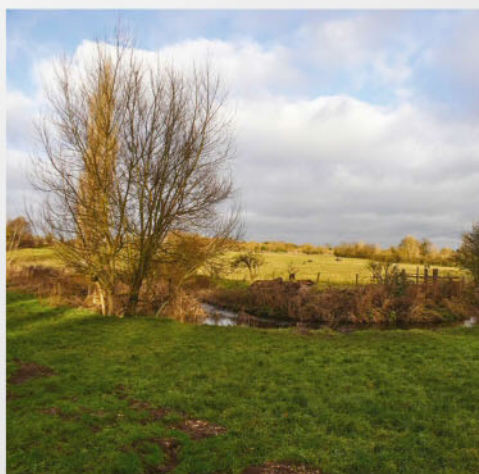
Barrel distortion

The barrel distortion in this landscape isn't obvious. However, it's something you'll rarely have to fix, as it's typically applied automatically in software

Bottom-left

Chromatic aberration

Barrel distortion isn't the only aberration that's removed in JPEGs – so too is fringing on the more recent Olympus cameras



Technical specs

Manufacturer	Olympus
Model	M.ZUIKO DIGITAL ED 12-40mm 1:2.8 PRO
Web	www.olympus.co.uk
Elements/construction	14 / 9
Angle of view	73.7 - 25.4 degrees (horizontal)
Max aperture	f2.8
Min aperture	f22
Min focus distance	0.2m
Mount	Micro Four Thirds
Filter size	62mm
Length	84mm
Diameter	69.9mm
Weight	382g

Summary



The 12-40mm f2.8 might not be quite as versatile as the new 12-100mm f4 Pro model announced by Olympus, but it is more affordable and performance is still first-class



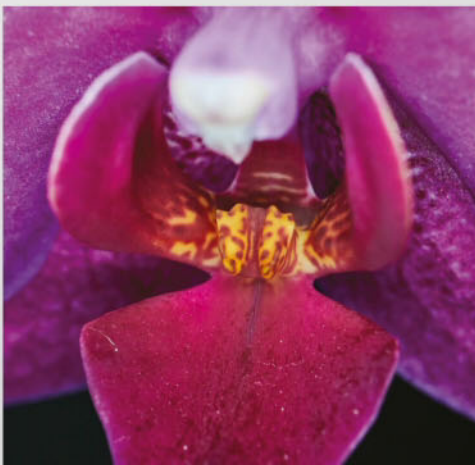
SRP: £300 / \$300

Canon EF-M 28mm f3.5 Macro IS STM

Canon expands the scope of its mirrorless system with a macro offering

Canon's M-series cameras are very good, especially the later models such as the M3, but the bodies are only a part of the equation. Arguably more important is a range of good-quality lenses in popular focal lengths. Initially, the 28mm focal length seems an odd choice for a macro. But on the APS-C M-bodies what you're getting is the equivalent of a 45mm, so it will double as a standard or normal lens, and that makes a lot more sense.

Externally, the design looks like the others in the line-up, but Canon has adopted a retractable design, much like the type you see on a kit zoom. That's a surprise. When not in use it makes it a little more compact, but when extended it only adds around 15mm to the overall length, so it's not saving much. When used hand-held the catch for the extending barrel falls naturally to hand, as does the button for the macro light. On a tripod it's a different matter; it all gets rather awkward. Still, autofocus is smooth and quiet, and it's also relatively brisk with contrasty lighting. Even manual focus is not bad, though the lack of markings means it's sometimes hard to know which way to turn the collar. As for the optical quality, it's surprisingly good. There's barely any fringing and sharpness is high, even when used wide open. The only real downside is, as a macro, the short focal length doesn't provide much of a natural perspective.



Left

Macro and Super Macro modes

Although this lens features a built-in macro light and hybrid IS, depth of field is likely to be more problematic than camera shake

Bottom-left

Short focal length

The trouble with adopting a short focal length on a cropped camera like this is that close-up images tend to look distorted

Technical specs

Manufacturer	Canon
Model	EF-M 28mm f3.5 Macro IS STM
Web	www.canon.co.uk
Elements/construction	11 / 10
Angle of view	43.8 degrees (horizontal)
Max aperture	f3.5
Min aperture	f22
Min focus distance	0.093m (Super Macro mode)
Mount	EF-M
Filter size	43mm
Length	60.9mm (retracted)
Diameter	45.5mm
Weight	130g

Summary



Despite the intriguing spec, this macro lens feels a bit gimmicky, but there's no denying the results. In the right hands, it's a perfectly capable lens that doesn't cost the earth



SRP: £420 / \$500

Nikon KeyMission 360

Go exploring with the most durable 360 action camera on the market

The Nikon KeyMission 360 boasts 4K ultra-high-definition images and video recording in a waterproof, shock-resistant and dustproof housing. The target audience for this camera would be a lover of the great outdoors or an adventure sports enthusiast who wants to record their journeys and experiences from every angle.

Compared with other 360-degree cameras on the market, the KeyMission is a lot heavier and considerably bulkier, so you might assume you're getting more camera for your money. The KeyMission doesn't come cheap at a little over £400: it's slightly more expensive than competing cameras.

The camera does not offer a display of any sort: instead, Nikon offers a free app that links the camera directly to your mobile device. The app enables you to access a Live View display, store and view images, and make changes to the settings. If you're in range of your mobile device, the KeyMission will auto-transfer content, saving time downloading later.

The camera's cube-like shape requires that it's placed or mounted on a bracket of sorts, one of which is included in the box. Unless you already own a selfie stick, you will immediately find it awkward to hand-hold, and this leaves it vulnerable to being dropped.

There are two On buttons: one immediately activates video recording, while the other

instantly takes stills. This is a bonus when you want to capture something at a moment's notice – but a simple On button still would not go amiss.

Despite the camera looking and feeling solid, the results it produces are disappointing. Often it looks like the camera has struggled to stitch the images together to create a seamless 360-degree panorama. Results from other makes of 360-degree camera, such as the Ricoh Theta SC, instantly have that wow factor, but the KeyMission 360 does not offer that straight out of the box.



Below Shooting in good light

The KeyMission 360 performs best in good light. When faced with contrasting light, the camera struggles to stitch the images seamlessly.

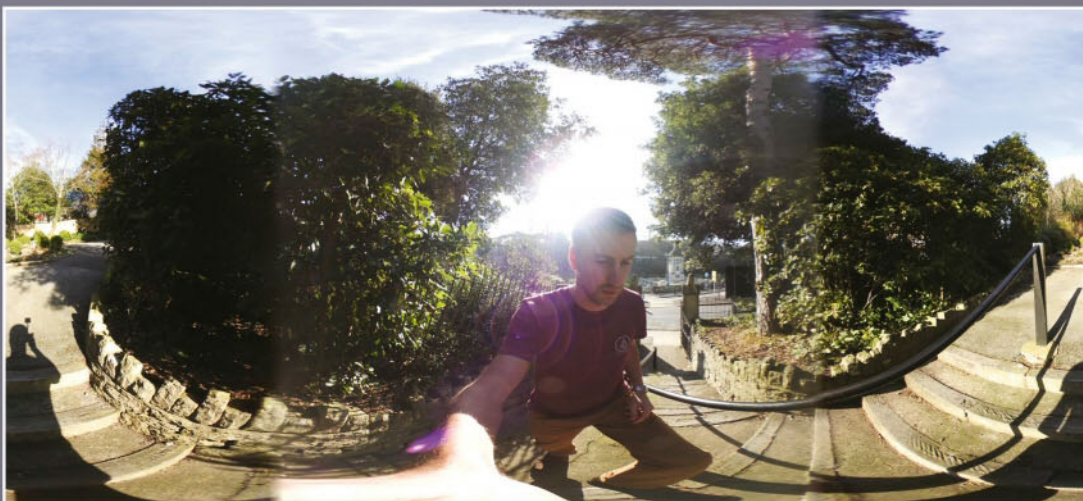
Summary

Ease of use	★★★★★
Value for money	★★★☆☆
Features	★★★★★
Quality of results	★★★★★

Overall



The KeyMission is a camera that often struggles to do what it was designed for. It's a lot more expensive than other 360-degree cameras – and sadly does not do the job as well.



WIN KIT FROM MANFROTTO

Be in with the chance of winning a carbon fibre tripod and geared three-way pan/tilt tripod head

This issue we're giving you the chance to win Manfrotto kit worth over £500! The set includes a 055 carbon fibre three-section photo tripod (£394.95) and an XPRO geared three-way pan/tilt tripod head (£169.95).

The three-section carbon fibre tripod is incredibly lightweight and features a 90-degree column that can be extended vertically or horizontally so that you can shoot with greater versatility. The tripod absorbs vibrations and is also much lighter to carry around than the aluminium version, making it perfect for travel photographers.

The geared three-way pan/tilt head has the lightest and most precise body in the Manfrotto range. You'll be able to frame images with precision thanks to the geared movement, which will enable you to compose your images one micro-step at a time on all three axes.

Head to manfrotto.co.uk for further product information and take a look at the details directly below for your chance to make these accessories a part of your kitbag.

How to enter

Please email your best photo, your name and contact details to rebecca.greig@futurenet.com with the subject line 'Issue 185 Manfrotto competition' by 06/04/17.

Terms and conditions

This competition is open to residents of the United Kingdom and Ireland. Future Plc has the right to substitute the prize for a similar item of equal or higher value. Employees of Future Plc (including freelancers), Manfrotto, their relatives or any agents are not eligible to enter. The editor's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. Prizes cannot be exchanged for cash. Full terms and conditions are available on request. From time to time, Future Plc or its agents may send you related material or special offers. If you do not wish to receive this, please state clearly on your entry.

**£500
of kit to
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Manfrotto
Imagine More

Master high-speed photography

Find out more about the devices you need to capture split-second moments



High-speed photography can be very tricky, but with automated camera triggering tools from the likes of TriggerSmart, it becomes far easier. Some devices work with your smartphone and camera to help you trigger the camera in a whole host of creative ways, including sound, motion, vibration and facial detection. TriggerSmart, for example, is an advanced device that can be used to trigger a camera through sensors using sound, light or the interruption of an infrared beam. It has been designed for to be used by both professional and amateur photographers.

To shoot these stunning paint explosion images, photographer Phil Durkin (www.phildurkin.co.uk) used a similar device to capture a balloon popping, with the capture triggered by the sound. This sort of photography can be great fun to explore, as it enables you to capture rather incredible images with relatively inexpensive kit.

"I wanted to capture something a bit different with my camera, including using my Speedlights," explains Durkin. "And I wanted

a challenge that I could do indoors so the weather and light would not be a problem."

The really great thing about this sort of image is that each successful capture will always be different from the last – nothing is precisely repeatable from one shot to the next.

The initial setup of high-speed shots like this can be challenging. Durkin says that one of the difficulties of this setup is knowing what power to set the Speedlights at, as well as the camera settings and exposure. He recommends that you experiment without the paint on the balloon first so that you can adjust your camera. "Other factors that affect the outcome are the amount of delay from the bang produced by the popping balloon to the flash triggering," he explains. "Too early and the paint won't have moved enough, but too late and it's all but gone!"

On this type of image, post-processing is a must. Durkin says that you will have to clone out the coat hanger and possibly the balloon if it is visible in the image plus clean up any paint spots in the background that distract from the finished picture.

Capture a paint explosion

Phil Durkin shares his tips for shooting a paint explosion

⚙️ **Be patient** It usually takes a handful of attempts, so have patience!

⚙️ **Add water** Consider watering the paint down: if it's too thick, it may not move fast enough.

⚙️ **Attach a pin** When you pop the balloon, try taping a sewing pin to the end – you don't want the balloon moving too much, as you have focused for the centre of it.

⚙️ **Get protected** Put polythene sheeting over your lens and cut a hole for the lens to poke through. Use a UV filter, which can be removed and rinsed afterwards.

⚙️ **Use manual focus** Make sure you set the camera to manual. If you leave it on autofocus, it will try and refocus before releasing the shutter, so will fire too late.

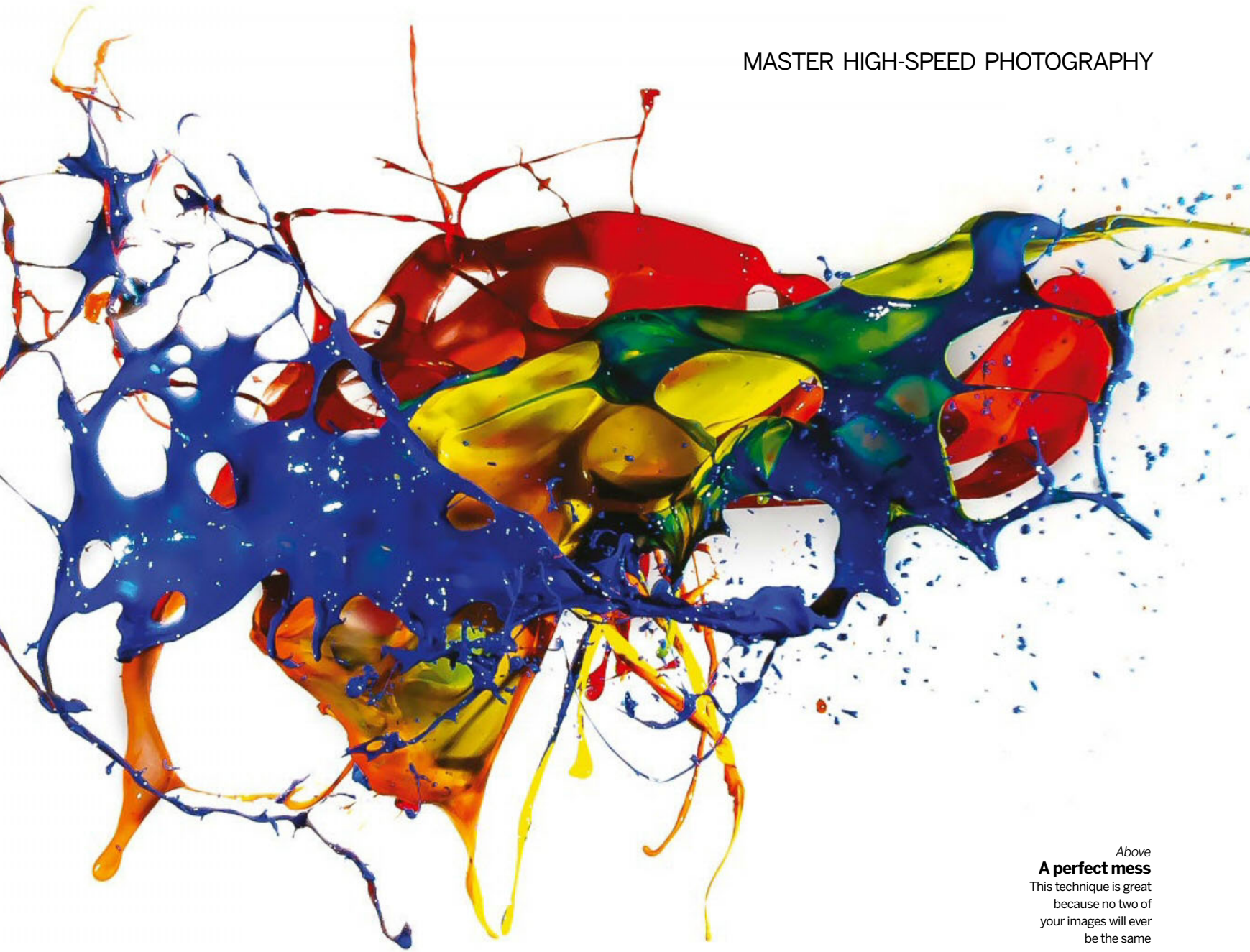
TriggerSmart MCT-1



SENSORS
The kit includes two multi-mode sensor modules with mini-tripods. The sensors can detect sound and light intensity, which can be used to trigger the camera

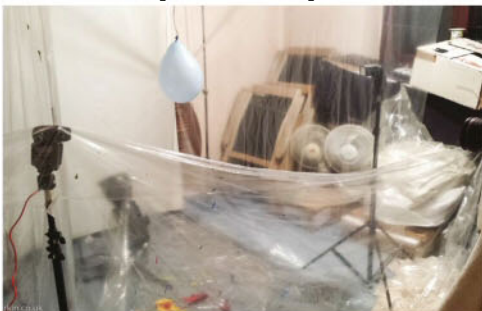
CONTROL UNIT

The TriggerSmart MCT-1 controller is the heart of the system that allows you to have complete control over the sensitivity of the sensors. The control unit has an output that is connected to the camera trigger and focus. It also has a second output channel to control multiple pieces of equipment such as additional cameras and Speedlights



Above
A perfect mess
This technique is great because no two of your images will ever be the same

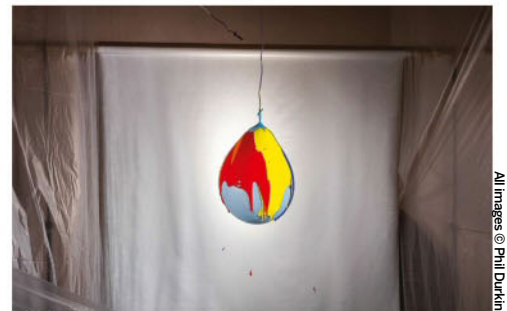
Shoot a paint explosion Follow Phil Durkin's step-by-step for shooting at high speed



1 Set the scene Make an enclosure with polythene sheets from the ceiling to the floor, in an area around 2.5 square metres. Hang the white background on the back wall, and protect the floor well. Suspend a long piece of string attached to the ceiling in the centre of the work area. Place two Speedlights on stands on the outside of each polythene wall, around 1.5 metres high and 0.3 metres forward of the string. Point them to the string so they are angled slightly, and cut a hole in the plastic sheet so the head pokes through.



2 Set up the kit Set the kit up with a flash adapter so that the adapter is connected to one of the Speedlights. Make sure the other Speedlights are set up to trigger, either by RC or optical slave. In the app, select Sound Sensor, adjust the delay time to around 0.02 seconds, and adjust the sensitivity to about halfway. Suspend an inflated balloon on the string hanging from the ceiling. Focus the camera on the balloon, then switch to manual focus. Set the camera to Manual mode at f13, ISO 100 and a four-second exposure.



3 Add the paint Pour the paint over the balloon. If you're doing more than one, try to keep the paint separate so that they don't mix too much. The paint will be dripping off the balloon at this stage. What you need to do within the four seconds of the shutter releasing is to switch all the lights off, then get an assistant to pop the balloon. The sound of the popping balloon will trigger the flash. As the balloon deflates rapidly the paint partially contracts with the balloon, but the release of air pressure also sends it outwards everywhere.

All images © Phil Durkin

Portable SSDs

Having a compact and reliable solution for storing and backing up your images is essential

Transcend ESD400K USB 3.0 Portable SSD 512GB SRP: £222 / \$242

At more than half the size of the SanDisk this SSD is certainly portable and won't add much weight to your kitbag. It is made from plastic, so doesn't feel quite as tough and slick as the other two on test, and does seem to scratch and mark easily. Transfer speeds were impressively fast, but not quite as efficient as the SanDisk SSD. It comes equipped with a one-touch backup button that allows for instant data backup, which we found to be really convenient. Although it is as impressively fast as the T3, the build quality lets it down slightly.

Overall



SanDisk Extreme 900 Portable SSD 480GB SRP: £233 / \$330

This offering from SanDisk is the most bulky SSD on test, however the device is durable and the rubber around the edges helps to prevent any hard knocks. It is shock resistant and includes simple-to-use encryption software to keep your files private. It claims to be nine times faster than the speed of an external hard drive, which is more than twice as fast as the T3, and we were certainly impressed with the speed. It may be the most bulky and lowest capacity of those on test, but if it's sheer speed you are after, this is the ideal choice.

Overall



Samsung Portable SSD T3 500GB SRP: £190 / \$198

The T3 is super lightweight at only 51g and is even smaller than the Transcend SSD at 74mm x 58mm x 10.5mm, which means it is the smallest and most portable on test. The build quality feels a lot more slick and robust than the Transcend and it's shock resistant up to 1,500G. We found all three SSDs to be closely matched in regards to speed, however, the T3's read/write speeds of up to 450MB/s are outperformed by the SanDisk SSD. Not only is it the smallest SSD on test, it is also the cheapest, making it our top choice for value.

Overall



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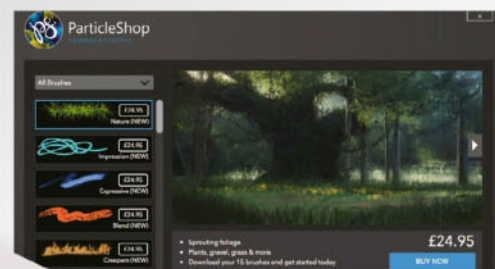
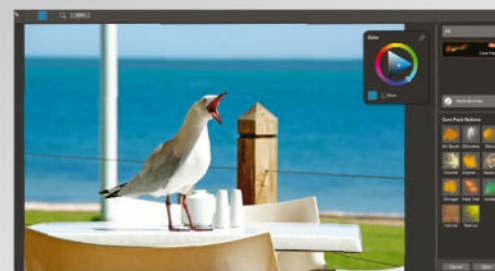
Digital
Photographer

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Top Colour Picker

Choose specific hues using the Colour Picker, and check the Glow option to brighten up the shade when you apply the brushes

Above Extra brush packs

On startup, ParticleShop will show you more brush packs you can buy for the software

Corel ParticleShop

Apply brush effects with a difference using this expansive plug-in from Corel

SRP: £40 / \$50 (approx) **OS:** Windows 7 or later, OS X 10.9 or later, Adobe CS5 +

Brushes are thought to be a weapon primarily of digital artists. They're employed for creating painted effects, flourishes and embellishments rather than injecting reality into your work, and it's rarely considered that they may actually be useful tools for photographers as well as painters.

Corel ParticleShop promises though to be more versatile than your average painting program. Including a core pack of brushes, it's available as a plug-in for Photoshop and Lightroom, as well as Corel programs PaintShop Pro and AfterShot Pro, but delivers photorealistic brushes rather than your average paint splatter effects. Additional brush packs can be purchased too; though ParticleShop only revolves around one specific nuance of image-editing, it's so in-depth that there's plenty to explore.

ParticleShop is really easy to use for the most part too. The brush previews are clear enough for you to actually see the effect that you would be applying to your photo, and

the brushes are really high quality, as well as producing unique strokes and having a Glow option, which also looks great. ParticleShop allows you to get so much more detailed than just varying whether you have a softer or harder edge to your brush, as you can choose blendy, billowing or even grungy effects for your strokes.

Each of the brushes too has good pressure sensitivity and can be rotated. While just about any photographer looking to add quirky or realistic effects to their photos can use ParticleShop, it really thrives when you can apply the strokes via a graphics tablet. You can really get the best out of the brushes when they're applied with subtlety; ParticleShop might only seem like a few added brush packs for you to use in Photoshop, but the plug-in itself is smoother and easier to use in places than Photoshop's own Brush tool. There's no lag or latency at all with the brushes, and they produce perfectly clean strokes, no matter which one you're using.

ParticleShop is a plug-in that you can explore for hours, trying all the brushes and downloading new ones. It has almost limitless possibilities for your pictures.

www.corel.com/en

Top-left Responsive action

ParticleShop's brushes are unique in the way that they spread; no two strokes are the same, making for a novel and exciting digital art experience

Summary

Ease of use	★★★★★
Value for money	★★★★★
Features	★★★★★
Quality of results	★★★★★

Overall



A must-have for any Photoshop brush enthusiast, ParticleShop is a natural progression for the tool, great for improving your images with subtle effects

AfterShot Pro 3

Develop, organise and tweak your photos with Corel's inexpensive software

SRP: £70 / \$87 (approx) **OS:** Windows 7 or later, OS X 10.9 or later

AfterShot Pro 3 is a program aimed at photographers of all skill sets; it's a package for organising, tweaking and sharing your photos. Although it perhaps isn't as advanced as more expensive programs on the market, it positions itself as compact and capable at the basics, making it easy to process photos while offering the ability to watermark shots and fantastic layering options.

The first thing that really grabs you about AfterShot 3 is not just how clean the layout of the program is but how responsive and quick it is too. AfterShot feels really easy to use but boasts new correction tools to help fix chromatic aberration and lens distortion, and the presets included in the program are useful for making simpler edits to your pictures.

The layers panel is what really makes AfterShot feel so user-friendly though; while the editing tools themselves vary in terms of how sophisticated they are, the layers panel breaks them down into far more manageable editing steps. The sliders within the program, that can help control everything from basic

adjustments to advanced exposure options, are also easy to use and of fantastic quality.

AfterShot is considerably cheaper than a lot of RAW processing programs on the market, and in all honesty, it does feel so. But while it does take a more simplistic approach than some of its rivals, it's not without its marquee features that set it apart from others. It's still quick and powerful and offers a lot to hobbyist photographers as well as professionals.

www.corel.com/en

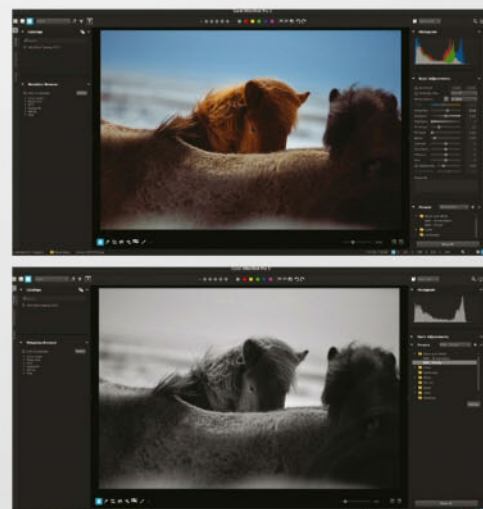
Summary

Ease of use	★★★★★
Value for money	★★★★★
Features	★★★★★
Quality of results	★★★★★

Overall



Fantastic value for money with simplified features that you won't get in more advanced programs, AfterShot is useful for any level of photographer



Top

Simple adjustments

Whether you're looking to alter the warmth of your photo or work on the exposure, AfterShot offers basic adjustments to fix your work in minutes

Above

Presets

If you would rather tweak your photos in just one click, AfterShot has folders full of presets for quick editing



App Focus



Dark Sky Finder

Price: £2.99 / \$2.99

OS: iOS 5.1.1 or later

Night is a hard enough time to shoot as it is, but with the Dark Sky Finder app, you can at least find a clear sky and check light pollution maps from all over the world before you venture out. The sky charts are easy to understand, the app is very user-friendly, and it's a great companion for anyone who wants to take good photos at night. The Dark Sites section is particularly cool, and worth checking out if you're looking for a good spot to shoot in.



Accessories

A collection of the best fun-yet-functional products out there for photographers

1



2





1 IGPTY Ten Year Anniversary book

Website: www.igpoty.com

Price: £25 / \$31 (approx)

The tenth anniversary edition of the International Garden Photographer of the Year book is strikingly beautiful. The design of the cover is simple, yet looks and feels incredibly luxurious – the copper writing is a particularly nice touch. Lee Acaster's stunning winning image makes for a great opening to the book and the foreword from Beth Chatto OBE adds to the sense of occasion. The paper feels very high quality and the colours and detail in the imagery look great in print. For just £25 it's well worth a look.

★★★★★

2 Manfrotto BeFree Color

Website: www.manfrotto.co.uk

Price: £175 / \$180

This is the ideal purchase for any photographer looking to shoot out of the studio on location. At 1,400g it is lightweight while still feeling extremely sturdy, and it even comes with a rather attractive carry case that the tripod will fit snugly into, which makes transportation practically effortless. The mechanism for locking the legs at different widths is really helpful and simple to use, and the legs are split into four sections, which means the shooting height is extremely flexible to suit almost any subject.

★★★★★

3 Picture Keeper Connect 16GB

Website: www.picturekeeper.com

Price: £96 (approx) / \$120

This is a really worthwhile purchase for anyone wanting to make a quick and painless backup of their pictures. The Picture Keeper Connect is a little memory stick with a USB connection at one end and a lightning connection at the other, and there is also a micro USB adaptor in the box. The memory stick can be used to easily back up pictures from your phone – all you need to do is download a very easy-to-use app or back up images from your computer. The whole process is extremely simple and surprisingly speedy.

★★★★★

4 LumiQuest SoftBox Ltp with UltraStrap

Website: www.snapperstuff.com

Price: £49 / \$49

This LumiQuest softbox can be fitted onto most speedlights thanks to the secure Velcro UltraStrap. It won't take up much room in your kit bag either, as it has been designed to be slim and fit comfortably into most laptop pockets. It is for off-camera flash only and is approximately 40 times bigger than a standard flash head. As a result of its large surface, shadows were pleasantly soft and the light was attractively diffused. The material feels durable, so you won't have to worry about it getting damaged on location.

★★★★★

5 Lastolite by Manfrotto Strobe Gobo

Website: www.manfrotto.co.uk

Price: £77 / \$92

A great addition to any kitbag for getting creative with your off-camera flash. The Strobe Gobo easily fits onto the Strobe Bracket that you can purchase separately and comes with two Gobo masks – an arched window and a dappled foliage effect. The lighting and background effects that you can create with the Strobe Gobo are really impressive. For close to £80 though we would have liked a few more masks included in the initial set, as it can become quite expensive if you include the bracket and any extra masks.

★★★★★



THE BEAUTIFUL BLUE HOUR

Professional photographer Deborah Sandidge discusses the magic of shooting at twilight

All images © Deborah Sandidge

Photographing during the blue hour can transform an ordinary subject into something beautiful and magical!

During this time the sky takes on a rich colour, but only for minutes. The sky will soon fade to black, so you'll need to work quickly.

You can use various tools to paint the scene – if you need to extend exposure during twilight, use a polariser or solid neutral-density filter. A longer exposure will help create a mirror-like sheen to water, or capture streaks of light from passing cars. The light is well balanced for the short amount of time that twilight lasts. Most often the light will be just perfect to create dramatic imagery.

Twilight is often called the blue hour because the sky becomes an incredible, vivid colour. To accentuate the colour, try changing your white balance to between 4000K and 5000K. Experiment with different white balance settings to suit your image. Use Live View to see the effect that white balance has on

your composition. Reality isn't as critical as how the colour affects the mood, and depth of feeling in an image. Be creative.

You can also photograph the blue hour at dawn, though most often I tend to photograph at sunset, the edge of night and beyond. It really depends on your location and personal preference. In your travels you may find that early morning works best for certain locations, while after sunset works better for others.

When photographing cityscapes, use a narrow aperture to create wonderful little starbursts that sparkle from various points of light. Stopping down (narrowing the aperture) and using your lowest ISO creates longer exposures compared to using a wide aperture, therefore



PRO BIO

Deborah Sandidge is a professional photographer specialising in world travel and artistic imagery. As an author and instructor, she shares her perspective and inspirational ideas through workshops and seminars, encouraging others to connect with the people and places that surround us.

debsandidge.com

extending your shutter speed for creative effects.

You can photograph twilight with almost any lens. Try a wide-angle lens to capture the drama of a cityscape or landscape. Zoom lenses work when you need to bring the subject in close. Fisheye lenses can be a lot of fun, and create an ultra-wide view of your composition. If you want to get really wild and crazy, try a circular fisheye! A circular fisheye on a full-frame camera produces a perfect circle image. Try pointing this lens toward the sky for a creative composition of converging lines.

Your photograph is your unique story, a visual narrative of what you experience and your interpretation of the scene. So, be creative, have fun and be passionate: it will show in your photos!

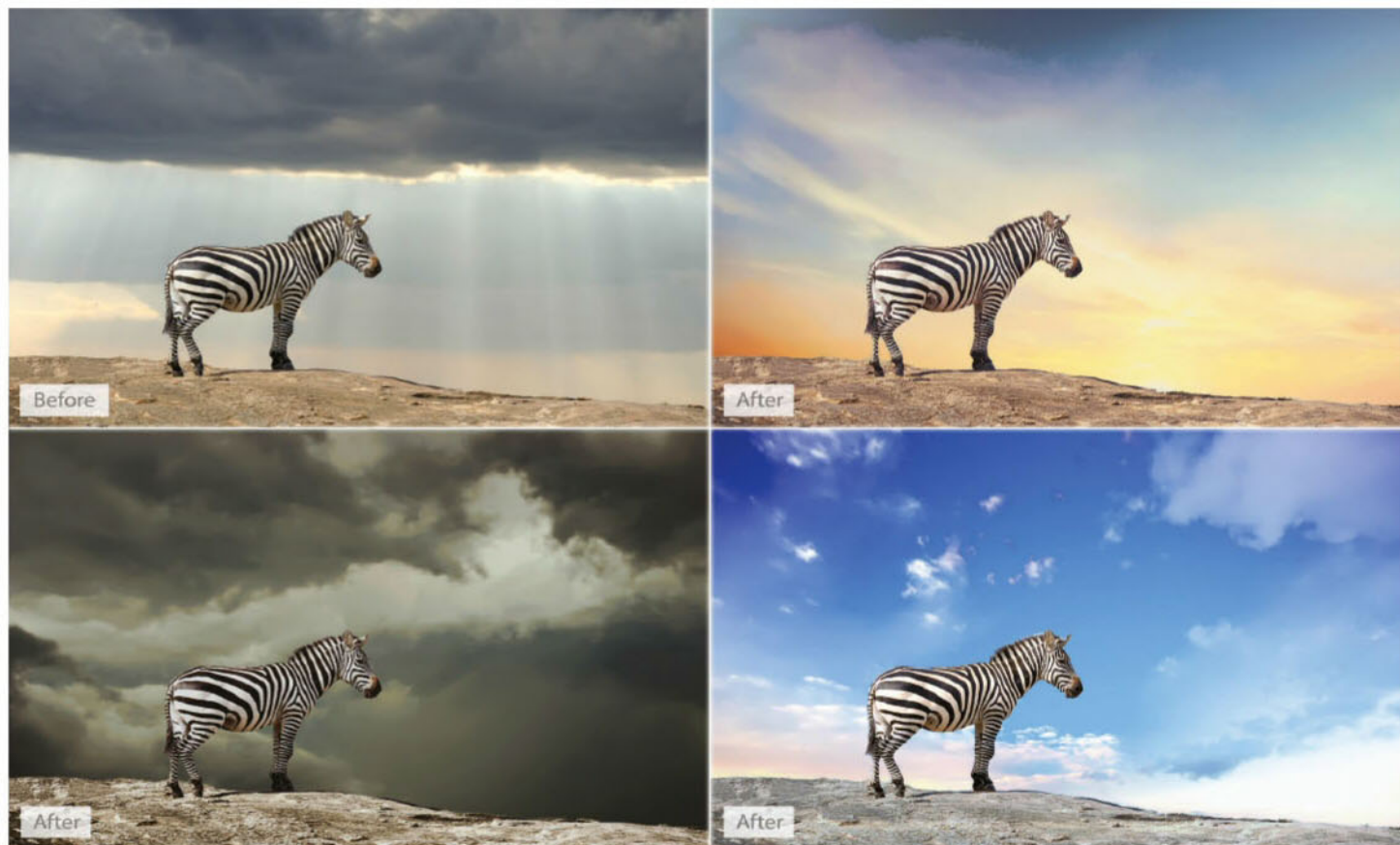


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