



Free On-line tutorial #1

Photography: the art of drawing with light

Photography On-line Tutorial #1: Photography - The art of drawing with light!

Welcome! Photography is all about light. Everything we talk about will involve a property of light and how we capture and record it. Sound scary? Well it's not.

Light has many different properties: colour, quality, quantity, direction, reflectance and the list goes on. We cannot take a photograph without light of some form.

The form of light can be either natural or artificial. Sources of natural light include the sun and moon. Artificial includes flash and light bulbs.

Look at a subject, even start around your home, and see how it looks at different times of the day. How does the light fall on it, or through it from different angles and how does the colour of the light change.

Light can be either hard or soft from the source. For instance hard light is the sun on a clear day from straight overhead while soft would be the light coming through the clouds on an overcast day. An overcast day produces a softer light with less harsh shadows and therefore ideal for portraiture (humans and animals), rainforest photography, macro etc. However that overcast day can create a washed out sky in a landscape that is dull and boring and draws the viewers eye out of the frame where a clear blue sky can create drama. Yet with portraits the harsh light from the sun may create harsh shadows in areas such as under the nose and chin and across the neck.

The human eye is naturally attracted to anything bright so be careful how much light area you have around the edge of your image area as it may be distracting to the subject. Rules are always meant to be broken and this can be very effective when using high-key lighting which we'll talk more about in depth later in one of our tutorials.

Within our cameras we have things that control the amount of light that comes in. We call this the exposure triangle. It is made up of:

Aperture: a hole that let's light through and usually found in the lens.

(The word aperture means hole).

Shutter Speed: the time the light is allowed to pass through the aperture (hole).

ISO: how reactive your camera is to light. We use to call this ASA back in the film days. ISO stands for International Standards Organisation and ASA for American Standards Association.

Aperture is expressed as an 'f' number and as well as controlling how much light it also controls our depth of field (DOF) that is how much of our subject, background and foreground in our image is in focus. You'll learn more about apertures and when to use them in further tutorials or many of our workshops.



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Shutter Speed is expressed as an actual speed. Depending on what sort of camera you have, it may go from thousands of a second ($1/8000 = 8000\text{th}$ of a second and very fast) to seconds and longer ($30'' = \text{thirty seconds}$ and very slow). You'll learn more about how to use different shutter speeds to create different effects and when to use them further tutorials or many of our workshops.

ISO: is non mechanical. Think of it as you increase the number the more reactive your camera is to light or the more it sucks light in. A higher number means it's more reactive; that is it reacts to light quicker. ISO 400 is faster and more reactive to light than an ISO of 100.

For every positive there is a negative and while high ISO's can allow us to shoot in low light they also produce noise and we'll be covering this further in our 'Shooting in Low Light' Tutorial.

An overview of Tutorial #1

Photography is all about light. We need light to produce an image.

- Light has different sources: it can be natural or artificial.
- Light has different properties. It can be harsh, soft, different colours, reflective, from a different direction.
- Different light sources have different colours. In the photography world it's known as Kelvin.
- The human eye (our viewer) is attracted to anything light. This rule can be broken with high key lighting.
- Aperture, shutter speed and ISO make up our exposure triangle.
- Aperture: 'f' number. Controls how much light comes through the aperture (hole) and our DOF.
- Shutter speed - the time that light is allowed to enter through the aperture plus it controls if our action is frozen or blurred.
- ISO: how reactive to light our camera is. A higher ISO the more reactive to light, the lower the ISO the less reactive to light it is.

We hope you enjoy and continue to grow in your photography!