



# PHOTOGRAPHY

TIPS, TRICKS & BEST PRACTICES  
FOR BETTER PHOTOS

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# ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jad is a seasoned Creative Architect, member of Saudi council of Engineers and specializing in fitout works for office buildings and the food & beverage sector, excels in blending functionality with aesthetics to enhance user experience.

Business and brand development enthusiast, seeking growth and supporting businesses in a creative and functional way to step properly into the market.

He's passionate about photography and taking the best possible angles to showcase the beauty in it's unusual state, trying to Capture The Essence Of Structures: Where Photography Meets Architecture In Every Frame.

Graduated Architectural engineering & Built Environment, Founder of Thearchmagazine & SketchupTutorials

Photography is both an art and a science. It allows us to capture moments in time, tell stories, and share our perspectives with others. The advent of digital technology has democratized photography, making it accessible to almost everyone. Whether you're using a high-end DSLR or a smartphone, the principles of good photography remain the same.



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# UNDERSTANDING YOUR CAMERA

Understanding your camera is fundamental to mastering photography. Start by familiarizing yourself with the basic settings: aperture, shutter speed, and ISO, often referred to as the exposure triangle. These elements work together to control the amount of light that reaches your camera's sensor, impacting the final image. Experiment with different modes, such as aperture priority, shutter priority, and manual mode, to see how each setting influences exposure, depth of field, and motion.

Dive into your camera's manual to uncover features like autofocus modes, metering settings, and white balance, which can drastically improve your photos. Practice shooting in various lighting conditions to understand how your camera behaves and responds. Additionally, get comfortable with the camera's physical layout—knowing where each button and dial is located can make shooting more intuitive and efficient. Mastery of your camera's capabilities allows you to focus on creativity rather than technicalities.

As you gain confidence with your camera, take the time to explore advanced features like custom presets, bracketing, and exposure compensation. These tools can help you achieve more consistent and professional results, especially in challenging environments. Regularly reviewing your images and analyzing the metadata can provide valuable insights into how different settings affect your photos. Ultimately, the more you experiment and practice, the more second nature these adjustments will become, allowing you to capture the exact vision you have in mind.





**“Master your camera’s settings; transform technical knowledge into artistic freedom and capture your creative vision.”**

## Practices

To truly understand your camera, start by experimenting with the exposure triangle. Set your camera to manual mode and practice adjusting the aperture to see how it impacts depth of field—use a low f-stop like  $f/2.8$  for a blurry background and a high f-stop like  $f/16$  for sharper details.

Next, adjust the shutter speed to capture motion; use a fast speed (e.g.,  $1/1000$ ) for freezing action, or a slow speed (e.g.,  $1/30$ ) for motion blur.

Try changing the ISO in low light conditions to see how it affects noise levels in your images. Practice switching between autofocus modes—single-point autofocus is great for portraits, while continuous autofocus is ideal for moving subjects.

Finally, experiment with different white balance settings in various lighting conditions to ensure accurate color representation.

Review the results and tweak settings until you feel comfortable with how your camera responds in different scenarios.





# MASTERING EXPOSURE

Mastering exposure is essential for achieving well-balanced photographs that accurately capture the scene as you envision it. Exposure is controlled by three fundamental settings: aperture, shutter speed, and ISO, collectively known as the exposure triangle. Start by understanding each component's role—aperture controls the depth of field, shutter speed dictates motion blur or sharpness, and ISO affects the image's sensitivity to light and its noise level.

Begin by practicing in manual mode, where you can independently adjust these settings. For instance, in bright outdoor conditions, use a smaller aperture (higher f-stop) and faster shutter speed to prevent overexposure. In low light, open up the aperture (lower f-stop) and slow down the shutter speed, while carefully increasing the ISO to avoid excessive noise.

Experiment with exposure compensation to fine-tune the brightness when using semi-automatic modes like aperture or shutter priority. Analyze your histogram to ensure that your image has a good tonal range, avoiding clipping in the highlights and shadows. Consistent practice and reviewing your work will gradually build your confidence, allowing you to achieve perfect exposure under any lighting condition.



“Mastering exposure transforms light into your creative ally, empowering you to capture the perfect moment.”



## ADVISE

To master exposure in photography, practice shooting in manual mode, where you can fully control aperture, shutter speed, and ISO. Experiment in different lighting conditions and use the exposure triangle to balance these settings. Regularly check your histogram to avoid overexposure or underexposure, and use exposure compensation for fine adjustments. Consistent practice, combined with analyzing your images and understanding how each setting affects the final photo, will lead to precise and creative exposure control.



# COMPOSITION TECHNIQUES



## RULE OF THIRD

Divides an image into nine equal segments by two horizontal and two vertical lines. Positioning key elements along these lines or their intersections creates balance and interest. This technique encourages placing the subject off-center, making compositions more dynamic and engaging.



## SYMMETRY & BALANCE

Symmetry creates a sense of harmony by mirroring elements on either side of an image. This technique works well with reflections or architectural shots. Balance, on the other hand, involves distributing visual weight evenly across the frame, ensuring no single part of the image overwhelms the rest.



## LEADING LINES

Guide the viewer's eye through an image, often towards the main subject. These lines can be natural (like rivers or paths) or man-made (like roads or fences). By directing attention, leading lines add depth and perspective, drawing the viewer deeper into the photograph.



## FRAMING

Framing involves using elements within a scene to create a "frame" around the subject. This can be done with natural objects like trees or man-made structures like doorways. Framing adds depth, focuses attention on the subject, and can provide context, enhancing the overall composition of the photograph.



“Photography composition is the silent art of guiding eyes, telling stories without words, in every frame.”

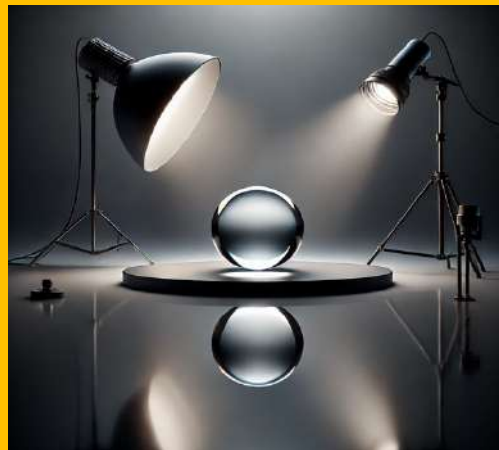


# LIGHTING ESSENTIALS

1

## KEY LIGHT

The primary source of illumination, the key light defines the subject's form and texture. Positioned at an angle to create depth, it determines the overall mood and focus of the shot. Adjusting its intensity and placement can dramatically alter the look, from soft and flattering to harsh and dramatic.



2

## FILL LIGHT

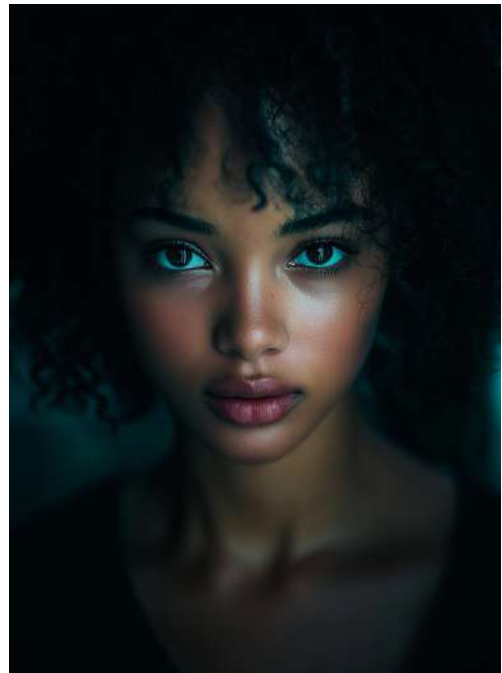
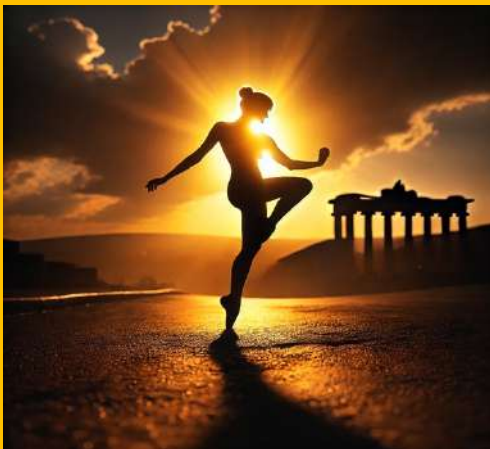
This light softens shadows created by the key light, ensuring details aren't lost in darkness. Typically less intense, it is placed opposite the key light, balancing the lighting setup and adding dimension without overpowering the subject.

“Master the light, and you'll reveal the soul of every photograph you capture”

3

### BACK LIGHT

Positioned behind the subject, the backlight separates the subject from the background, creating a sense of depth. It often produces a subtle glow or halo effect, enhancing the subject's outline and adding a professional, polished look to the photograph.



4

### HAIR LIGHT (RIM LIGHT)

This light is placed above or slightly behind the subject, specifically targeting the hair or edges of the subject. It creates a subtle outline or rim of light that helps to accentuate the subject's contours and adds separation from the background. This technique adds a professional touch by highlighting the subject's shape and texture, often used in portrait photography to add depth and dimension.





# ADVANCED TECHNIQUES

**LONG EXPOSURE** photography is a technique where the camera's shutter is left open for an extended period, capturing motion over time. This results in stunning visual effects, such as silky smooth waterfalls, light trails from moving vehicles, or dramatic, streaked clouds in a night sky. To execute this technique, photographers often use a tripod to keep the camera steady, reducing the risk of blur from unintended movement.

They may also use neutral density (ND) filters to limit the amount of light entering the lens, allowing for longer exposures even in bright conditions. Mastering long exposure photography enables photographers to create surreal, dreamlike images that emphasize motion and time in a way that's impossible to achieve with standard shutter speeds. This technique is popular in landscape, astrophotography, and urban photography, offering endless creative possibilities.





When using focus stacking and long exposure photography, patience and preparation are key. For focus stacking, ensure precise focus adjustments and consistent framing to blend images seamlessly in post-processing. With long exposures, use a sturdy tripod and ND filters to control light and avoid overexposure. Experiment with different exposure times to achieve the desired effect, and always review your results to refine your technique for the best outcomes.

## FOCUS STACKING

Focus stacking is an advanced technique used to achieve maximum sharpness in an image, especially in macro and landscape photography. It involves taking multiple shots of the same scene at different focus distances and then blending them together in post-processing. Each shot focuses on a different part of the subject, from the foreground to the background. When combined, these images create a final photograph with a greater depth of field than any single shot could achieve. This method is particularly useful when photographing subjects with intricate details, like insects or flowers, or when capturing expansive landscapes where both the foreground and background need to be in sharp focus. Focus stacking requires precision in capturing and editing, making it a valuable skill for photographers aiming for high-definition results.





“Advanced photography techniques are the brushstrokes of light and time, transforming moments into masterpieces.”

# POST-PROCESSING TIPS

Photography post-processing is the art of refining and enhancing images after they've been captured, transforming raw shots into polished works of art. This process involves adjusting exposure, color balance, sharpness, and contrast, as well as removing imperfections to bring the photographer's vision to life. Post-processing not only corrects flaws but also allows for creative expression, making it an essential step in crafting compelling and visually stunning photographs.



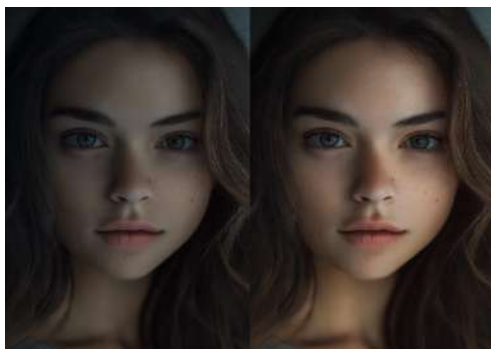
## ADJUST EXPOSURE & CONTRAST

Fine-tune exposure and contrast to ensure your image is neither too dark nor too bright. This helps in bringing out details and adding depth, making your photo more visually engaging and balanced.



## ENHANCE COLORS

Use color correction tools to adjust white balance, saturation, and vibrancy. This ensures accurate color representation and enhances the overall mood and tone of your image.



## SHARPEN & REMOVE NOISE

Apply sharpening to highlight details, but avoid overdoing it to prevent a harsh look. Reduce noise, especially in low-light shots, to maintain image clarity and a professional finish.

# GEAR & ACCESSORIES



Cleaning kits, including air blowers and microfiber cloths, maintain your gear in top condition, ensuring lenses remain free of dust and smudges. Together, these tools empower photographers to push creative boundaries, achieve technical excellence, and adapt to any photographic challenge.

Photography gear and accessories are essential tools that enhance a photographer's ability to capture high-quality images, adapting to various shooting conditions and creative needs. At the core are the camera body and lenses, with different focal lengths and apertures to suit diverse styles, from wide-angle landscapes to detailed macro shots.

Beyond these basics, accessories like tripods and gimbals provide stability, enabling sharp images during long exposures or in low light. Filters, such as polarizers and ND filters, control light and reflections, offering greater control over the final image. External flashes and lighting kits are crucial for managing illumination, particularly in studio or low-light environments.

Memory cards and external storage ensure you have the capacity to shoot in high resolution without running out of space, while protective gear like camera bags and lens covers safeguard your equipment during travel or harsh conditions. Remote shutter releases are invaluable for minimizing camera shake during long exposures or for capturing shots from a distance.





## PHOTOGRAPHY STYLES & GENRES

Photography encompasses a wide range of styles and genres, each with its own unique approach and aesthetic. **Portrait photography** focuses on capturing the essence of individuals, often highlighting emotions, personality, and expressions.

**Landscape photography** emphasizes the beauty of natural or urban environments, showcasing expansive scenes with attention to lighting and composition. **Street photography** captures candid moments in public spaces, often reflecting the spontaneous and dynamic nature of everyday life.

**Macro photography** zooms in on small subjects, revealing intricate details not visible to the naked eye, while **wildlife photography** documents animals in their natural habitats, requiring patience and timing.

**Fashion photography** highlights clothing and accessories, often blending creativity with commercial appeal.

To master photography styles and genres, start by understanding the unique characteristics and techniques each demands. Study the work of experts in your chosen genres, analyzing their composition, lighting, and subject interaction. Practice consistently, experimenting with different angles, settings, and conditions to refine your skills. Embrace feedback and learn from mistakes, allowing each shot to improve your craft. Invest time in post-processing, as it enhances your ability to bring your creative vision to life. Finally, stay curious and adaptable, continuously exploring new styles and pushing creative boundaries.



# BUILDING YOUR PHOTOGRAPHY PORTFOLIO



**ADVISE** Focus on quality over quantity; showcase only your best work that highlights your unique style and technical skill.

This ensures that every image in your portfolio makes a strong impact, leaving a lasting impression on potential clients or employers

Building a strong photography portfolio involves curating your best work to showcase your skills, style, and versatility. Start by selecting a cohesive collection of images that reflect your strengths and the genres you specialize in. Quality over quantity is key; focus on including only your top images that demonstrate technical proficiency and creativity. Organize your portfolio logically, with a clear narrative or theme that guides viewers through your work.

Include a variety of shots to display your versatility—portrait, landscape, macro, or other genres relevant to your expertise. Pay attention to the presentation, ensuring high-resolution images and a clean, professional layout. If possible, create both a digital portfolio and a physical one for different presentation needs.

Accompany each image with a brief description or title to provide context. Keep your portfolio updated regularly, adding new work and removing outdated pieces. Finally, seek feedback from peers and mentors to continually refine and improve your portfolio, ensuring it effectively represents your evolving skills and artistic vision.

# THANK YOU

for taking the time to explore this journey through the world of photography. Your passion and curiosity are what keep this art form alive and thriving. I hope these insights inspire you to capture and create even more beautiful moments.

**Happy shooting!**

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Contact me if you have any question.

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