

The Whole Picture

Jewelry Photography Training

with Matthew Perosi

revision 2.1 4/1/2019

Basic Photography Pointers For Shooting Jewelry

LIGHTING:

The lighting is the most important aspect of jewelry photography. Your computer cannot correct a photo taken in the wrong lighting.

All studio lighting tries to replicate the pure white light of the sun. The best we can do is have a light bulb rated as “Daylight.”

The color of a light bulb and a camera flash is measured on the Kelvin temperature scale shown to the right.

Camera flashes are around 5500K while the steady daylight temperature is about 5000K.

Your jewelry must be evenly lit from all directions with the same color light.

Using anything less than 5000K lighting will always be more difficult and more time consuming.

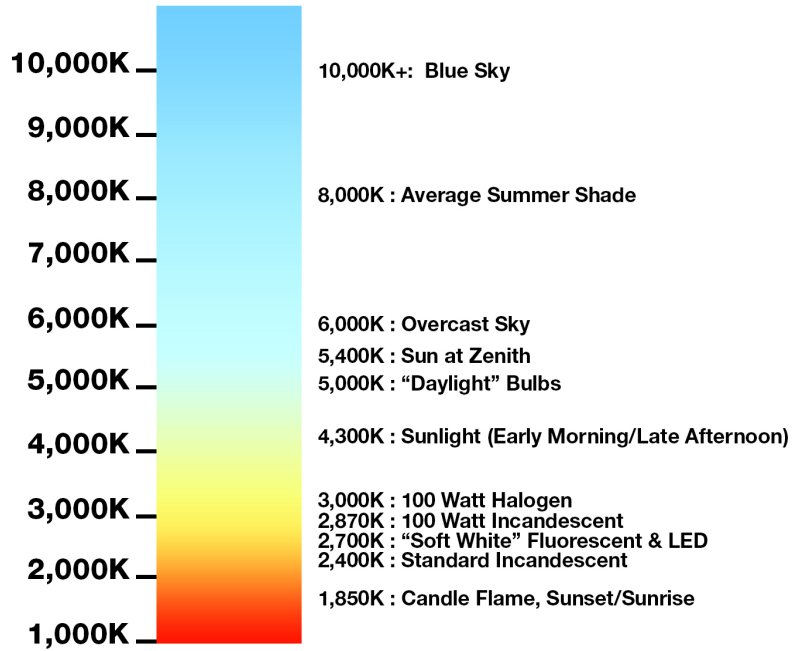
LENS QUICK TIPS:

- Don't shoot with anything larger than a 55mm lens.
- Don't use a long lens. It's more difficult to manage the needed lighting settings with them. Longer lenses also force you to stand several feet away from the jewelry just to get it in focus.

ISO QUICK TIPS:

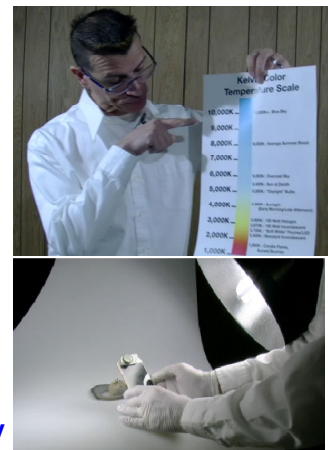
- Always try to shoot your jewelry with a 100 or 200 ISO. Your final photo will always be it's sharpest.
- The AUTO ISO setting on your camera will always tell you to use an ISO of 400 or more. An ISO of 400 or more will never capture the beauty and fine detail of your jewelry. Avoid those settings at all costs.

Kelvin Color Temperature Scale



Jewelry Photography Training Videos for only \$250

- Full explanation of all topics shown on this page
- Demonstration of using 5 different types of lighting enclosures
- Printable notes
- Photography theory
- DSLR & Smartphone training
- 15 Chapters, 50+ Training Segments and 7+ hours of training



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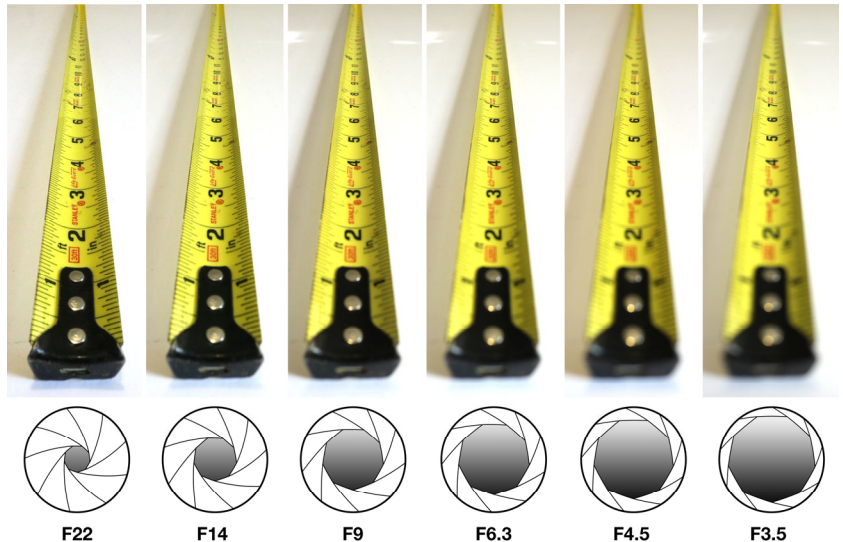
DEPTH OF FIELD:

Your lens can only focus on one point at a time. However, things that are closer or more distant than the focal point can still look sharp. This zone of sharpness is called the depth of field, and it's really important for jewelry photography.

There's a lot of poorly photographed jewelry where only a few gemstones or prongs are in focus while the rest of the item is blurry. This type of photo might be artistic and nice to look at, but it won't sell your jewelry.

Want your jewelry to sell? Then the entire item needs to be in focus.

When shooting with a 55mm lens you will need to use an aperture setting of F16 or higher.



Notice the ruler is completely in focus on the left with the F16 setting, yet the ruler on the far right only has one point in focus with an F1.4 setting.

IMAGE QUALITY TIPS:

- You should always shoot in RAW mode on your Canon or Nikon camera. This allows for the best, and easiest editing.
- Don't shoot in JPEG mode unless you need quick photos to upload online. It's more difficult to edit a JPEG photo if ever you need to.
- You could set your camera to take a RAW and a JPEG photo at the same time, but that requires more space on your memory chip.
- You can always convert a RAW photo into a JPG.
- Need to send a photo to a publication? Save your RAW image as a TIFF, then send the TIFF to the publication. TIFF images are high resolution and better when converting to print media.

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TYPICAL CAMERA SETTINGS:

Infinity Table:

M 1/13 F22 ISO200
AWB RAW ONESHOT [•]
You'll need to use a tabletop tripod or a floor tripod and there will be a lot of color reflection.

Lighting Tent

M 1/13 F16 ISO200
(1/10 & F22)
AWB RAW ONESHOT [•]
(1/13 & F18)

There's no contrast in the photo. Finished surfaces are drowned out with light. You need to use a lot of scoop lights with a tent, or work outside at high noon. You'll need to use a floor tripod

Gem eBox

M 1/10 F20 ISO800
*WB RAW ONESHOT [•]
You must change the white balance for either florescent or tungsten light, depending which light you are using.
Difficult to get setting on camera correct, and you'll need to take a lot of shots.

Flash Setup

M 1/160 F22 ISO100
AWB RAW ONESHOT [•]
No tripod needed.

Easy to add contrast.
Background whites out most of the time without the need for infinity curve.

Shibusa Studio & LED Enclosures

M 1/6 F20 ISO200
AWB RAW ONESHOT [•]
You'll need to use a tabletop tripod or a floor tripod and there will be a lot of color reflection.

CHOOSING A CAMERA:

You should have a Canon or Nikon DSLR camera. A DSLR camera is a larger camera with interchangeable lenses.

Don't try to use a compact or point-and-shoot camera, even if it has a good zoom. These cameras simply don't have the ability to process light, and color correctly, and have a difficult time focusing on jewelry.

Everyone wants to shoot their products with their smartphone. You can take a relatively good model shot with a smartphone, and they are also good at taking photos of larger products and sunsets. However, the smartphones simply do not have the correct lens capacity to take an in-focus photo of jewelry.

UNDERSTANDING THE APERTURE:

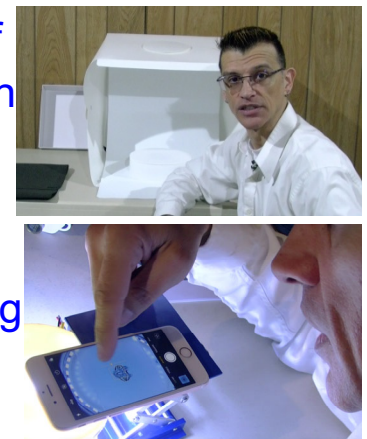
The aperture setting is also known as an f-stop. This setting is the main factor in dictating how much of your jewelry will be in focus. The camera will show settings like F4, F5.6, F13, F22, and even higher in some cases.

Higher f-stops will produce jewelry photos that are fully in focus, while a lower f-stop will have such a small area in focus that you might only see one diamond clearly.

You should always strive for an F16 or greater setting, but you'll need a lot of light to make it work.

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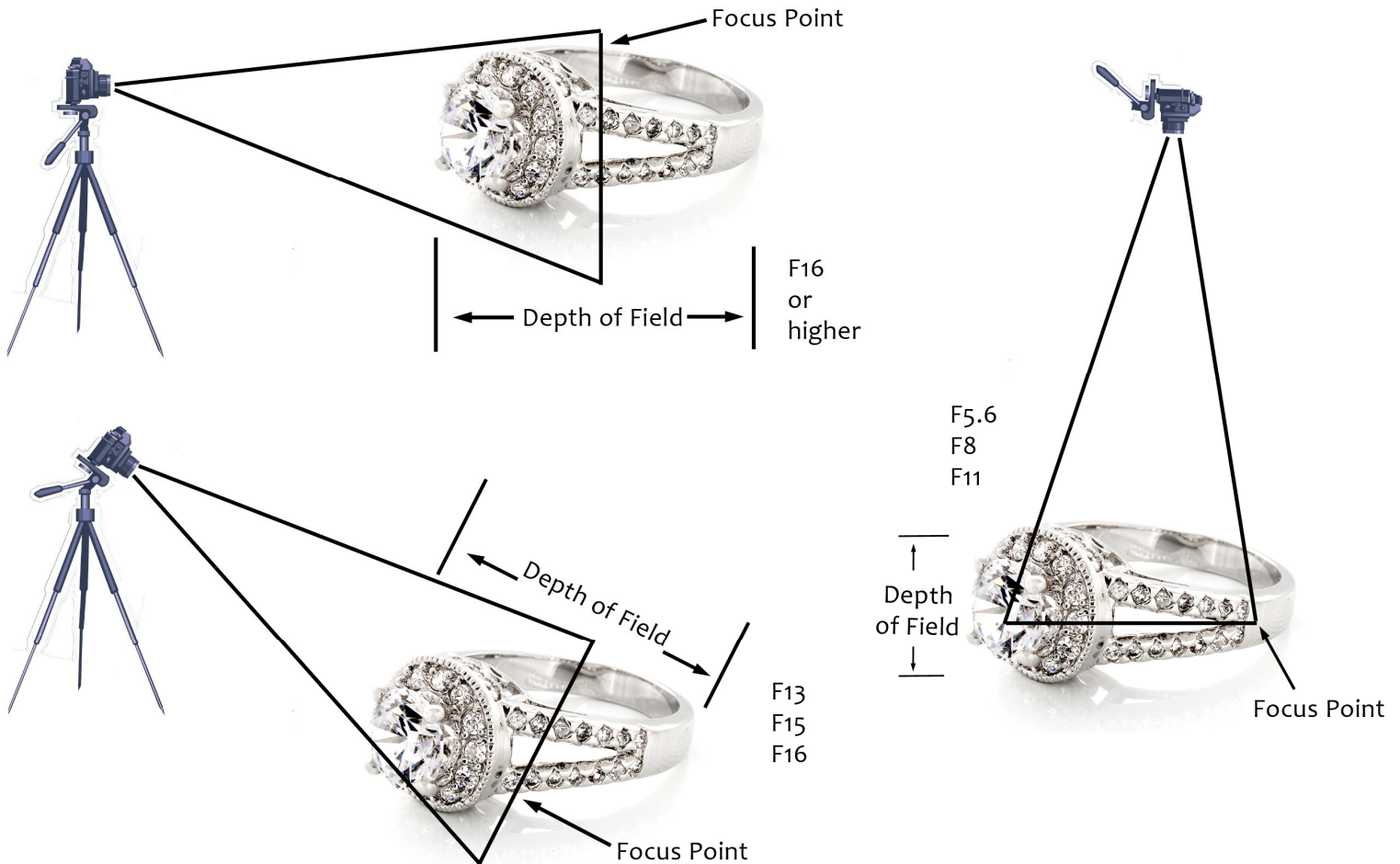
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Camera Position vs. Depth of Field



 Jewelers Get Online with
SapphireCOLLABORATIVE

*Good photos won't be good enough,
you'll also need a good website.*

- Websites
- Online Marketing
- Social Media Management
- E-Commerce
- Marketing Analysis
- Search Engine Optimization

Our industry is changing. Are you coming along?