

Digital Point and Shoot Photography

Important trip take 2 cameras and practice with a new camera before traveling

Camera in a bag—keep the lens covered—store camera without batteries—clean lens with lipstick brush or soft, clean cloth (from a plastic bag) after breathing on the lens or air without solvents. Do not use eyeglass cleaner! If the camera gets wet remove the batteries and card and leave it open to dry out.

Always have extra batteries in a plastic bag. NiMH or nickel metal hydride batteries are best. Lithium is good, but have memory. Alkaline should be designed for cameras or they cannot take the high discharge rate. Use batteries of the same age and brand. Recharging less than 12 hours. Keep at room temperature.

Use the viewfinder instead of LCD to save the batteries, except when doing close ups. Using the lines in the viewfinder to prevent cut off heads or if close use the LCD can solve **parallax** problems.

WYSIWYG or What You See Is What You Get--**not so**

Screen will probably show battery level and need for a flash.

I for information or **DISP** for display—hit several times—monitor brightness

Shooting—Keep elbows in or stabilize against a solid object. Shutter release ½ way down to lock focus. Use a monopod or tripod when shooting at speeds below lens length. Horizon should be level. Breathing—self-timer—change ISO.

1. Look around the scene for trash, poles, etc. Find the **best angle and height**.
2. Leave a little extra space around subject when shooting--one step back.
3. Weather, time of day and angle of the light. Sunset look forward and back.
4. Angle of the light. People--portrait style, reflectors. Watch background.
5. People in shadow. Fill flash or handkerchief over flash.
6. Sun on the lens -- block with hand or hat.
7. Close up and distortion.
8. Highlights and shadows. Might have to combine 2 pictures.
9. Panorama
10. Panning -- High speed and/or blur. Angle. 1/60 sec. Swing using hips not arms.
11. Rule of Thirds, Diagonal Rule, Golden mean, S shape, spiral. Avoiding mergers.

Cold to warm temperature may cause fogging so bag the camera.

Picture Taking Modes –Symbols – <http://www.inspiredart.biz/Digital%20Symbols.htm> for extra information and just <http://www.inspiredart.biz> for more about cameras.

1. **Auto**. Start with this setting. **Red** means exposure beyond the camera's ability
2. Portrait (**head and shoulders**) - makes a fuzzy background. Use a slight telephoto. Vertical. 12'

3. Sports or Action (**runner**) continuous auto focus
4. Landscape (**mountains**) everything is in focus
5. Sunset (**half circle with dashes above**) warming effect. Read camera manual about having the sun in the picture.
6. Night (**star**) use a tripod or picture will be blurry since the shutter stays open for a few seconds after a flash is used to capture the foreground. Self timer.
7. **AV** for aperture value – high number for everything in focus (landscape); low value creates blur around the sharp object (portrait)
8. **TV** (time value) or **S** for Shutter priority or Speed—waterfalls
9. Movie Mode (**movie camera**) lets your record MPEG's good enough for email
10. Close up or Macro mode (**tulip**) – for close focus
11. **M** for Manual—you set the speed, aperture, ISO... using the buttons in the circle. **P** or program camera sets the speed and aperture which you can modify.
12. **Trash can**-to delete photos
13. Lock (**key**) so photos cannot be deleted
14. Information (**I**) – histogram, speed, aperture
15. Exposure compensation (**+/-**) for high contrast scenes
16. (**triangle pointing right in a rectangle**) switches from recording to playback

Exposure Compensation in Program, Aperture, and S modes. It is used to lighten (+) or darken (-) the image. This may become the default. Used for very bright or dark situations.

Shutter release—go half way down for focus lock and then move the camera.

Stabilization – turn off when panning and use TV (S) shutter priority.

You go from wide angle (**w**) to telephoto (**t**)—optical and then digital zoom. Instead of digital zoom use a computer after the picture is taken.

Focus—diopter adjustment if you wear glasses

1. AF or auto focus so the shutter release pushed half way is not needed. Center weighted. AF uses infrared light or sound and may delay the shot.
2. ESP or Multi-segment; Matrix
3. Spot—small area to calculate exposure that is not influenced by a bright object or dark area nearby.
4. Special situations—animals behind bars, subject near a bright object—2+ shots to be combined later. Subject blends into dark background or night, sunset halos.

Close up (Macro) **tulip** and Super Macro with fixed focus

1. Use camera back for viewing.
2. Tripod with anti-shake off. Use the self timer.
3. Small aperture for depth of field or switch to telephoto

Flash (**lightning arrow**)

1. Automatic—for low light and backlit conditions
2. Red Eye (**eyeball**)—preburst
3. Fill (**lightning arrow**) for daylight shadows and pictures of people in direct sunlight reduce harsh shadows. Groom in front. Use a handkerchief.
4. Slow Sync (**lightning arrow and SLOW**) for dark locations to get detail—use a tripod and people don't move
5. **ask before using a flash** in museums.

6. Accessory flash may cut off Red Eye function since the angle prevents red eye.
Image Size and Image Quality or Compression— Enlarge function. Fine, standard, economy. Saving as TIFF (biggest), JPEG (2 – 50% reduction)

Drive Modes

1. Single frame advance
2. Self-timer (**circle with clock hand inside**)—excellent to reduce camera shake for still life, landscapes and close up pictures. Also lets you get in the picture.
3. Continuous advance (**3 empty rectangles**) as long as the button is held down. Number of images is based on camera writing speed and file size. Starts with the shutter being pressed. Rate may be 2 fps.
4. Bracketing (**3 rectangles empty and shaded**) —usually 3 different exposures—shooting a streambed. 1 EV or exposure value gives twice the amount of light than the calculated value.
5. Panorama—links pictures together with camera software. Overlap pictures 1/3.

Delete images

1. Individual--trashcan
2. all—via menu
3. or use the computer

Save images to computer by

1. camera program software
2. www.picasa.com software
3. My Computer—copy and paste where you want it

Histogram shows the luminance distribution from black to white.

www.shortcourses.com -- To buy or learn about how to use a digital camera

www.gccameraclub.com/references.html for more about camera use.

http://photoinf.com/General/KODAK/guidelines_for_better_photographic_composition.html

http://photoinf.com/Golden_Mean/Petteri_Sulonen/Space_Figure_Ground.htm

Good discussion of composition.

www.picasa.com to organize your photos on your hard drive

www.photosig.com for photo critiques; some good, some not. Photo hosting and Scrapbooks – set up a separate email address

1. www.imageshack.us
2. www.kodakgallery.com
3. www.snapfish.com
4. www.imagestation.com
5. www.shutterfly.com
6. www.webshots.com
7. www.fotolog.net
8. www.picasaweb.google.com

Back up images and keep them off site in case of fire or a computer virus.

Printing—kiosk, drug store, camera store, your computer (paper) + ink with a drying time of 24 hours. Photoshop Elements (<\$100); Corel Paint Shop Pro X

Care of prints

White balance – use auto unless there is more than one type of light. Hold white paper next to subject and use custom white balance.

Anti-shake – turn it off if you use a tripod

Camera sensitivity or ISO – lower is better (less noise), but for greater flash distance or rapid movement then higher is better.

Critique

Focus

Exposure

Lighting

Distance

Compositon

Appeal or "Wow" factor

Care of prints

Things to do:

1. Make a greeting card
2. Shoot a series of pictures of moving objects at different speeds
3. Create a photo essay of your neighborhood or town
4. Do a close up of insects, flowers, mechanical parts
5. Make a collage or montage
6. Design a slide show
7. Email photos to family and friends.
8. Brochure or newsletter
9. Family tree of photos
10. Make nature trail ID cards to help people identify flora and fauna
11. Blur a photo with speed or screen or plastic wrap. Blur just part of the photo using depth of field
12. Night photo, Silhouette
13. Beach / snow scene (+1) or performance in a dark space with illuminated person (-1). Use (+2 or -2) for high contrast. Exposure compensation. Fireworks at night 1/30 second.
14. Sea smoke or fog
15. Candid and set photos. Camera at person's chest height.

http://photoinf.com/Image_Balance/Larry_Seiler/Composition_-_Understanding_it_-_Using_it.htm
http://photoinf.com/General/Johannes_Vloothuis/landscape_composition_rules.html