Tips to Purposeful Photography:

First: help me understand you and your photography-

- Why do you use this DSLR camera vs a point and shoot?
- What do you like to take photos of?
- How long have you had your camera?
- How long have you been taking photos?
- What functions do you use on your camera when taking photos?
- What do you do with the photos you take?

Getting to know your camera better:

First understand the purpose of Exposure: Basics

Exposure:

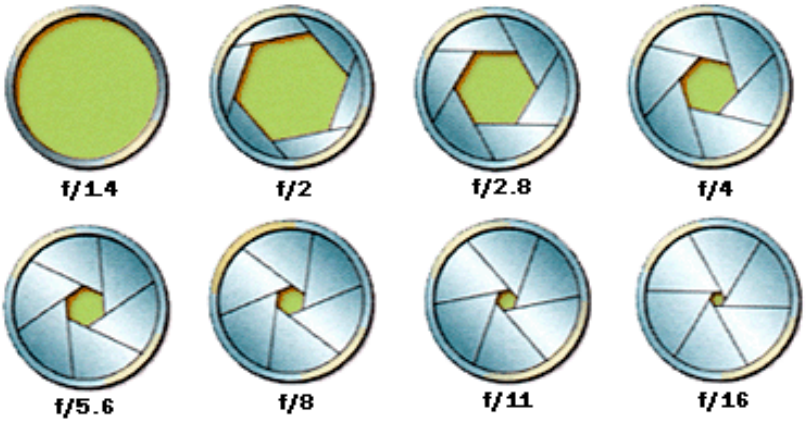
i. What is it?

ii. What is a gray card? What is a gray scale?

iii. Why are they important?

iv. What three things control exposure?

1: Aperture:



Relative Apertures: aperture F-Stop numbers found on your lens, or camera body LCD (depending on which make or model camera you have)

Relative Apertures are as follows:

Lens with Depth of field Preview. F-stops on lens.

So……..

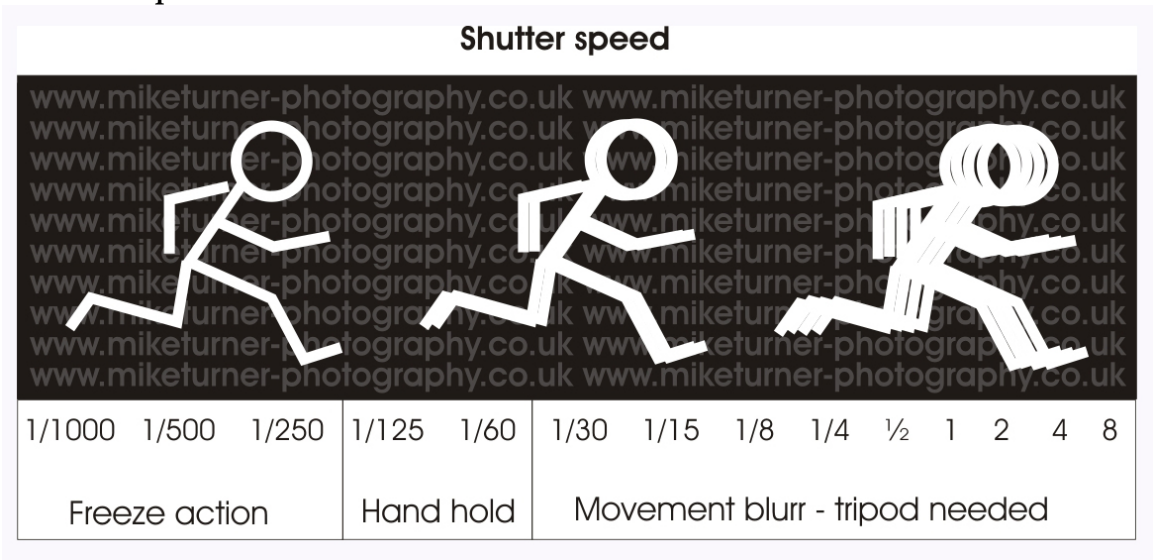
- What is an aperture?
- What does it control?

- Where is it located?

- Why would you change it?

- How do you change it?

2: Shutter Speed

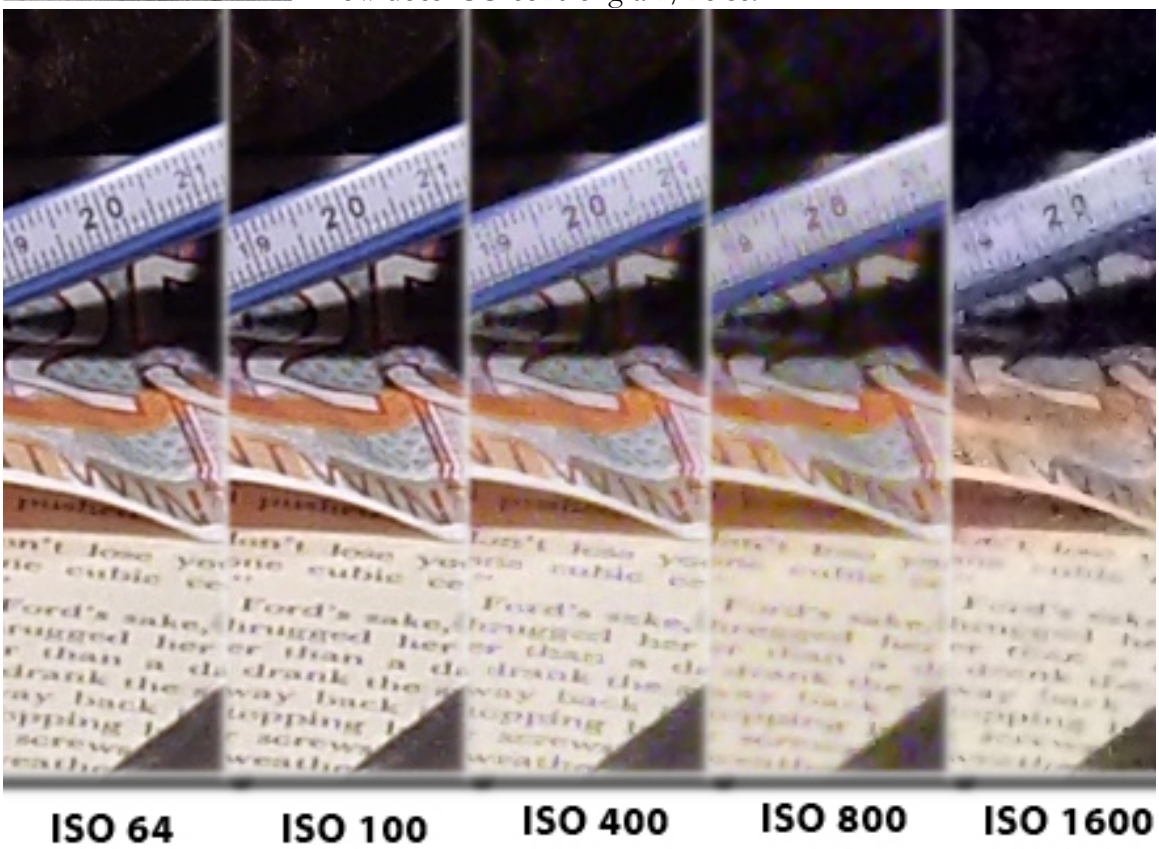


- What is it?
- What does it control?
- Where is it located?
- How do you change it?
- Why would you change it?

3: ISO

- What is it?
- What does it control?

How does ISO control grain/noise?



- How do I change my ISO?
- Where is my ISO located?
- Why would I change my ISO?

why does her camera look better than mine?

Where do I find all this info?

1. Do you recognize any information already presented to you?
2. Where is your F-stop?
3. Where is your shutter speed?
4. Your iso?

What is the rest of this stuff mean?

Next understand the different modes:

i. **Auto modes:** *It's like using a point and shoot camera- only a faster trigger.*
   a. **Green Square or Green Auto**
   b. **P mode**
   c. **Picture modes- what are they now that you understand shutter speed and aperture?**

ii. **Priority modes:** *It's like using Auto but with more control.*
   a. **AV/A mode (canon/Nikon)**
   b. **TV/S mode (canon/Nikon)**

iii. **Manual mode:** *You completely control the light coming into the camera*
   a. **M mode**

So you ask yourself: Auto vs. Manual:

"So, if my camera will take a BASE GRAY image in Auto or priority mode, why do I need to calculate exposure in Manual mode? Why would I ever go off of Auto?"

1. Remember the difference between Auto/P mode and Priority modes. What is the goal in mind?-
    a. exposure/quick pic (use auto)
    b. controlling aperture/dept of field or (use AV/A mode)
    c. controlling shutterspeed/motion (use TV/S mode)
    d. getting a "correctly" exposed image, while controlling the aperture and the shutter speed. *(if this is you- and you're ready to be adventurous, read below)*

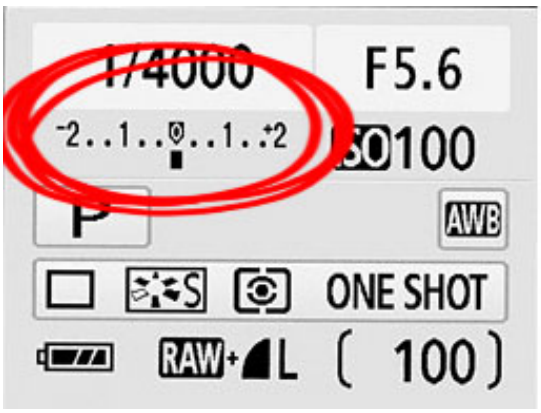
2. Reflective metering (spot) vs. Incident metering (hand held unit)

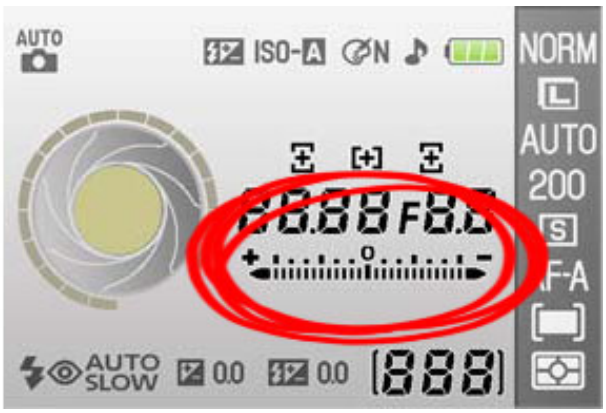
    "In order to accurately record any scene, whether it's a person's face, a piece of jewelry, or a landscape, you have to measure the amount of light that exists in a scene. There are two basic methods for measuring light: You can either take a reflected reading by measuring the light reflecting off of your subject, or you can take an incident reading by measuring the light as it falls on the subject." (sekonic)

    "All light meters, regardless of the type, are designed to measure light in a consistent way. Light meters presume all subjects are of average reflectance, or a neutral gray—often called "middle" gray because it falls in the middle of the zones between pure black and pure white. In the Zone system of exposure, this middle gray is known as Zone V.
    The use of the neutral gray standard allows a reflected light meter to render correct readings for "average" subjects in "average" lighting situations. Light meters, however, can't see subjects and interpret them the way you can—they measure only one thing: the intensity of light. That's fine if you're photographing a medium gray man in a medium gray suit on an average day, but not entirely accurate in other situations." (sekonic)

    "A reflected meter will provide different readings for, say, a white cat and a black cat—but it will provide an exposure that records both as the same middle gray. Similarly, a pristine fresh-fallen snow and a black coal field will be recorded as the same color: medium gray. A reflected meter will also record a red apple and a green apple as the same tone—even though in reality they reflect vastly different amounts of light. You can improve the accuracy of your reflected readings by placing an 18% neutral gray test card in front of the important subject areas, but that's not always practical." (sekonic)

    Make sure that you are using a variable spot metering within your camera so you are getting the most accurate exposure possible in Auto modes!!!





So, why would I use manual exposure? It all seems so complicated.
(because your scene is not always AVERAGE GRAY!)

- What you're pointing your meter at? Is it white? Black? Middle Gray? If it is anything but average, use manual mode!
- I'm in, what do I do now? You need to find something in your scene that is average gray!!! If you can't, pull out your gray card! If you don't have one, then think about what your subject is of, is it white or black? Where on the grayscale would this particular tone fall?
- Look at your light meter. If the zero in the middle of the meter (shown above) is AVERAGE GRAY, then the PLUS (+) side is lighter, or over exposed, and the NEGATIVE (-) side is darker or under exposed.
- If your subject is lighter than gray (and you are filling your frame with that subject), then your blinking indicator below or on your grayscale should blink towards the plus side. If your subject is darker than gray, then your blinking indicator below or on your grayscale should blink towards the minus side.
- If it is not blinking on the correct side then you need to change either your
    - APERTURE
    - SHUTTER SPEED
    - ISO

  To adjust the exposure so that it is properly registering correctly on your light meter.

  REMEMBER the aperture size relative to the f-stop number, the smaller the number the larger the hole, the more light will come in (making the exposure lighter/brighter)

REMEMBER the shutter speed is also relative to how fast the shutter opens and closes, the highter then number, the faster the shutter speed and the less light comes in through the shutter, (making the image darker). If the image is too dark reduce the shutter speed to let in more light and make the image lighter. (this will also create motion in your image if it gets too slow)

The most important thing in metering your image: METER APPROPRIATELY FOR YOUR SUBJECT.

WHITE- PLUS (+)
BLACK- MINUS (-)
GRAY- ZERO- MIDDLE

IF YOU DON'T METER PROPERLY, YOU WILL THROW OFF ALL THE OTHER TONES IN YOUR IMAGE.

The Small Print: what do all those functions mean?

White Balance:

File Type: JPG vs. RAW (and then there's TIFF)

File Size: Small/med/large, actual image count

Card Formatting:

Getting to know YOUR images better:
Concept:

Now that you know how to use your camera, work on the intention of the image.

Ask yourself these questions:

What am I trying to say with my photograph?
Who am I trying to speak to with my photograph?
What is the purpose of taking this photograph?
Where is this photograph going to be used?

Digital vs. Film- quantity or quality? A conversation.

Going from 36 to 360. Good or bad? Are we relying on quantity rather than quality? What does it take to store these images? How many images do we need? How do people see them? How will they see them in 15 or 20 years?

Editing your images- Film vs. Digital- the difference in meaning.

Edit 1: Viewing your images: Contact sheets vs editing programs?
Edit 2: Working on your images: avoid over editing- a good photographer needs to edit their images little if any!

Who do you like? Find inspiration. What do you like about their images?

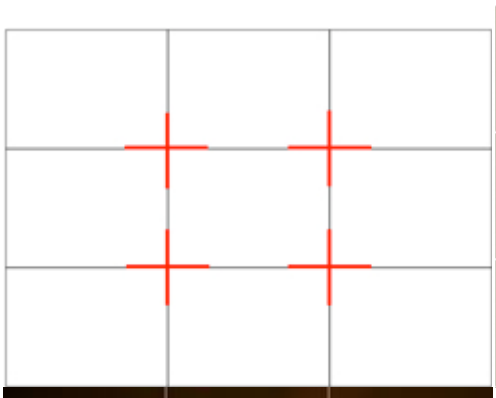
It's important to continuously look at the work of other photographers- books, blogs, websites etc. Find what you like and analyze why you like it. How can you incorporate that into your own work?

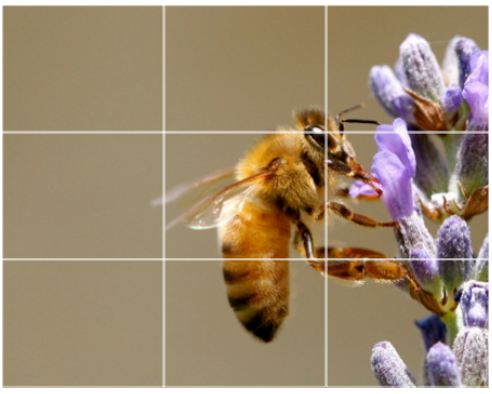
LINE SHAPE TEXTURE

Analyze Formal Composition: Not just for your DSLR- think Instagram

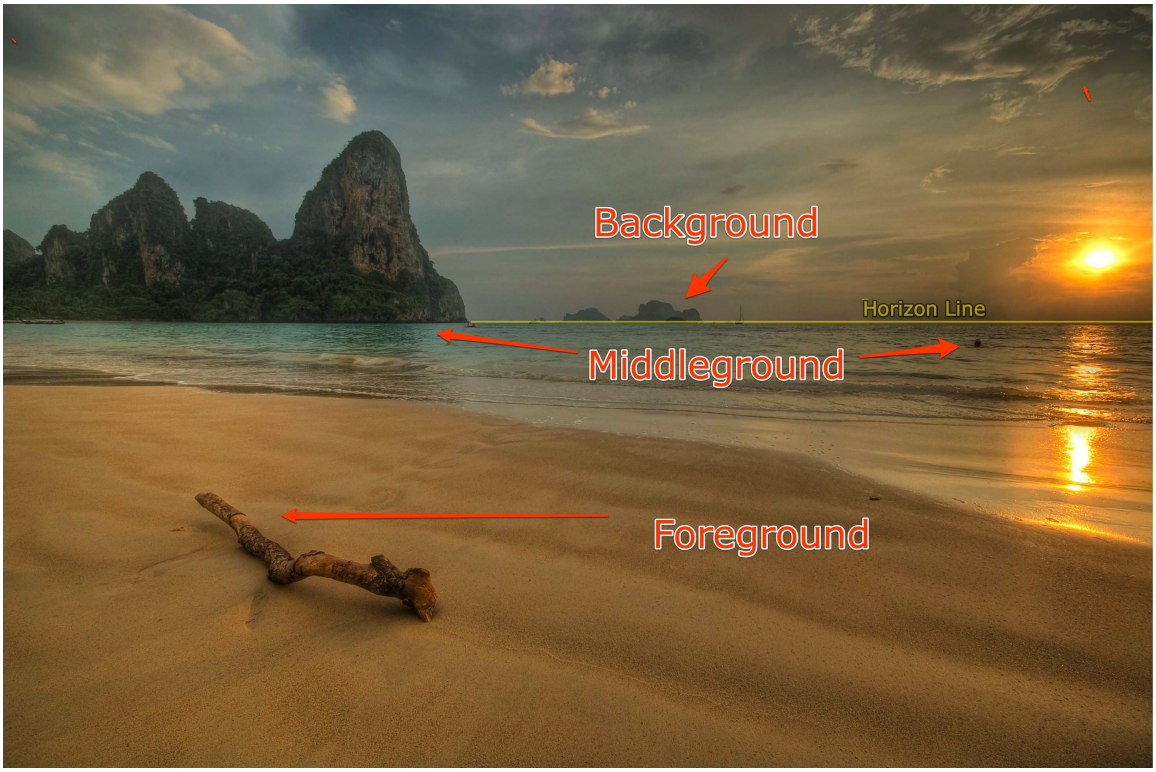
Three BASIC Components of Composition:

- **Subject Placement:**
  ***rule of thirds**





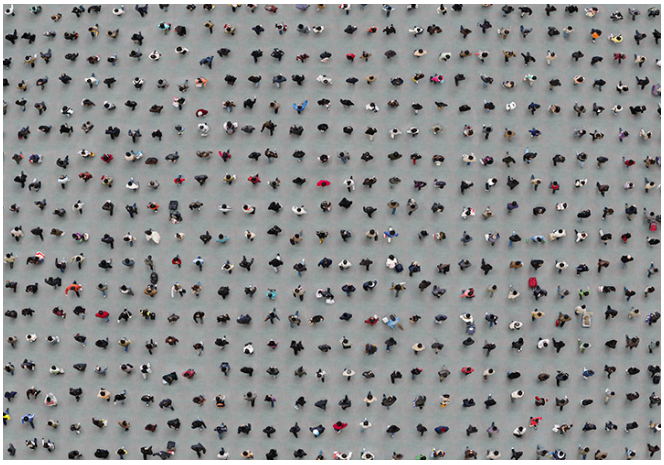
- **Depth:**
  ***Foreground, Midground, Background**



 **foreground/ midground/ background**

 **midground/background (missing foreground)**

- **Perspective: Intrigue your viewer- show them something new!**
  ***Birds Eye View, Mouse Eye View**



(birds eye view)

(mouse eye view)

More food for thought: *Dessert.*

Backing up:

external hard drives:

DSLR to Print aspect ratios: CROPPING!

Mac vs. PC: RUN DISC PERMISSIONS!

Software Programs: photoshop vs. lightroom/aperture/picasa

Additional Equipment: what to invest in first?

- Flashes:
- Lenses:

Final Output: prints, digital, books?