

# **JUMP START** *your* **PHOTOGRAPHY** IN 30 MINUTES



*Ray Salisbury*

INTRODUCTION TO DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY

# EVOLUTION OF A PHOTOGRAPHER



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## DEDICATION

**This e-book** is dedicated to my cherished wife Lynette, who keeps the home fires burning while I chase the light. She is the reason I keep coming home from lonely mountain summits; from wild, windswept beaches and from lengthy road-trips with my camera.

I have designed this PDF version of my Kindle eBook in a vertical format, due to the prevalence of people reading on smart phones - which are easier to hold in one's hand in this portrait orientation.

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I offer this free guide in good faith that you will not distribute this to anyone without my express permission. My sincere desire is that you find the information in these pages helpful.

Read on...

*Ray Salisbury*



# INTRODUCTION

Do you want your images to look more professional? Or at least, good enough to post on Facebook, or to illustrate an article? Maybe even win a photo competition? Would you like to impress your friends, or yourself? Feel good about your photography? Record your relationships, or your travels?

If so, you'll need to do something new; something different, to improve your photography and camera craft. Einstein is famous for his definition of insanity: 'doing the same thing, over and over again, and expecting different results.'

Firstly, a definition of photography will help you to see the big picture.

**What is photography?** Essentially, photography is an art form. The Greek words, *photos* and *graphos* literally mean 'to paint with light'. So, if you take photos, then you are a bonafide artiste!

As Pablo Picasso remarked, "all children are artists. The challenge is to keep them artists once they grow up."

It is also worth mentioning that light is the essential element needed to create a photograph. A basic understanding of lighting direction and quality will improve your image making.

This book covers eight different topics, covering both the artistic and the technical aspects of photography. The aim is to inspire and educate you, an amateur photographer looking to improve your work. While not comprehensive, there's enough here to give you a solid introduction, so you have a broader understanding of the topic.

Remember to check out the Appendices at the back, where Hot Pixels Photography has a lot more for you, from free eBooks to video training.

*Let's get started...*

# 1

## THE TECHNICAL SIDE OF PHOTOGRAPHY

### CAMERAS

A wise photographer recently remarked that ‘the best camera is the one that’s with you’.

The camera is merely a tool – the better you understand your camera, the better your photos will be. Plus, there are other aspects of photography you can learn that will improve your craft. You need to understand how to compose a good photo, how light affects your subject, and how to plan for a shoot. Not to mention post-processing your digital negatives on computer software.

Having said that, there are basically five types of camera readily available on today’s market:

#### **1) Phone camera.**

Now universal on every smartphone, the phone camera is making everybody, everywhere a photographer. The lack of functionality and tiny lens are obvious drawbacks, but having a camera on your person 24/7 is a real game-changer.

#### **2) Compact (point-and-shoot) camera.**

This is your standard, run-of-the-mill camera; lighter, cheaper and readily available. The disadvantages are inferior image and build quality, and often the absence of a view-finder. For instance, relying solely on the LCD screen for focussing and framing becomes tricky in strong sunlight.

#### **3) Micro Four Thirds (MFT) camera.**



These are larger and heavier than most compacts, having exchangeable lenses, electronic viewfinders and come with a higher price tag. However, in comparison to DSLRs, the MFTs have inferior image quality, relatively poor ergonomics and are not necessarily more affordable. The 'Four Thirds' refers to both the size of the image and the aspect ratio of the sensor, which is 4:3. An example is the Panasonic Lumix series.

#### **4) Bridge camera.**

These usually look like a consumer DSLR, with full manual controls, but have a fixed superzoom lens, which offers huge magnification. Examples of Bridge cameras include the Canon Powershot and Fujifilm Finepix. Avoid models without a high quality viewfinder or a decent aperture range.

#### **5) DSLR (digital single lens reflex).**

Wikipedia has a great description of the DSLR:

'With the reflex design scheme, light travels through the lens, then to a mirror that alternates to send the image to either the viewfinder or the image sensor. The alternative would be to have a viewfinder with its own lens, hence the term 'single lens' for this design. By using only one lens, the viewfinder presents an image that will not perceptibly differ from what is captured by the camera sensor.'

Basically, this means that what you see, you get (WYSIWYG). DSLRs have a wider aperture control, inter-changeable lenses to give a wider angle of view, and large sensors for optimum quality. While heavier, build quality is more solid and handling is better. The top manufacturers are Canon, Nikon and Sony.

If you're not a professional, and do not need the megapixel count, then carrying a bulky DSLR could prove burdensome. Conversely, compact cameras are cheaper, more portable and sport many useful functions that the pro models don't, (e.g. a built-in flash). Once you've mastered the basics, that's when upgrading to better equipment will make a significant difference.

# LENSES

The old adage 'you get what you pay for' is most certainly true of lens quality. A cheap camera with a fixed lens will not produce pin-sharp images. If you're lucky enough to own a DSLR (or MFT camera), you can mount a range of different lenses onto the camera body. Each lens has a focal length – this is how much you can zoom into – or out of – a scene.

There are two types of lens. You can buy a prime lens, which has a fixed focal length. These have few moving parts, therefore are cheaper and produce sharper image quality. The downside is that you'll need to buy a range of prime lenses.

Alternatively, you can buy a zoom lens, which has a varied focal length, giving you more options in framing your subject matter. DSLR cameras usually come bundled with a kit lens, often an 18-55mm tele-zoom.

These are the most common types of lens variations:

## 1) Wide Angle Lens

For landscape photography, the pros use wide-angle lenses. These range from 10-40mm focal lengths, and are essential for landscapers to capture big panoramas full of foreground detail. They also produce sharper results. An example is Canon's 17-40mm lens. However, their extreme angle of view distorts buildings and people.

## 2) Nifty Fifty / 50mm Prime Lens

With an angle-of-view matching the human eye, these lenses offer little distortion. Being a prime lens, with few moving parts, they are cheaper and produce sharper image quality.

## 3) Telephoto Lens

The other common lens is the ubiquitous tele-zoom, which is what's



bundled with entry-level DSLRs, usually an 18–55mm lens. Many portrait and wedding photographers use a zoom lens with a focal length around 70–200mm. Pro sports and wildlife photographers pay big money for long lenses that zooms in to 400mm ... or beyond.

Telephoto lenses are great for shooting details in the landscape, such as abstracts or wildlife, and are also useful for compressing the perspective of a scene. With wide open apertures such as  $f/2$  or  $f/4$ , a very narrow depth of field can be achieved; perfect for blurring the background of a portrait. A setting of 85mm is considered by many the optimum focal length for compressing facial features in a really flattering way.

## TYPES OF DSLRS

There are two types of DSLR cameras, which affect the focal length of their lenses:

### 1) APS-C

Consumer DSLRs have smaller bodies, and therefore smaller image sensors. Named APS-C, or Crop Sensors, the resulting images are cropped smaller. The outside edges of the photo are cut off, creating an artificial zoom effect. The exact 'crop factor' varies with each model, but it is usually between 1.5X and 1.6X.

But is this crop factor a bad thing? Not necessarily. It depends on what genre of photography you enjoy. If you shoot animals, people, flowers or sports, then it could be a bonus, as you can zoom in closer!

If you are serious about landscapes or shoot indoors, then yes. Your 28mm lens will effectively be 42mm – not wide enough to capture the big picture. You would need to purchase a super-wide-angle lens, (e.g. 10–20mm) for this purpose.

## 2) Full-frame

The second type is the pro-level, full-frame DSLR, where nothing is cropped, because the image sensor is same size as 35mm film. With a 50mm lens, you get a 50mm focal length; there is no crop factor. Simple.

# ACCESSORIES

## 1) Cable Release

This is a short cable that plugs into a DSLR camera, enabling remote control of the shutter. It is designed to prevent camera shake during longer exposures, (e.g. more than a second), where pressing the shutter button could bump the camera. An alternative is the use of the camera's in-built self-timer.

A more expensive and versatile version is an Intervalometer, which the user can program to take photos at set intervals – perfect for time-lapses and shooting star trails at night. These are quite expensive and require batteries.

## 2) Memory Cards

Nowadays, there are essentially three types of Memory Card for digital cameras:

- **SD cards** – (Secure Digital) These are the most common, and are available everywhere. The fancy version, the SDXC (for Xtra Capacity) have a higher storage capacity and faster processing speeds – only important if you're shooting sports or the like.
- **Micro-SD cards** – Originally made for phones and audio equipment, some cameras such as Go-Pros use these. While they only store up to 2 gigabytes of data, the SDHC versions offer up to 32 gigs. Warning: they are tiny, and easy to lose!
- **CF cards** – Compact Flash cards are fast, large and solid, but may be superseded by the prevalence of SD cards.

### 3) Filters

Again, this applies to owners of DSLR cameras. Filters are accessories that can be inserted into the optical path to modify the photo... either a square shape and mounted in a holder, or more commonly, a circular piece of glass, which can be screwed into the front of the camera's lens.

- **Polariser.** This is an expensive piece of glass, but will darken blue skies, saturate colours, as well as reduce glare and nasty reflections in the water. A must-buy for landscapers!
- **Serious landscapers** carry a range of Neutral Density filters which slip into a dedicated filter holder. These are used to tame a bright sky, or to slow down moving water, and especially to get that stock-standard, blurry waterfall shot. Manufacturers include Cokin, Formatt and Lee.
- **Graduated Neutral Density filters** are similar to the NDs, but have a vignette from dark to light. The purpose here is to tame a bright sky, and balance the exposure of a high-contrasting scene, in-camera.

## EXPOSURE

Perhaps the most difficult part of learning photography is understanding how a camera works. Many tutorials can be confusing, as mere words do not adequately illustrate the subject. This form of eBook is not the best way to learn about exposure, so only a basic definition and overview will be given.

**1) Definition** – In photography, an exposure generally refers to a single shot; the time period when the camera's sensor is exposed to light. If there's too much light shining into the camera lens, the scene will be over-exposed. If there's too little light coming into the lens, the scene will be under-exposed.

**2) Exposure Triangle** – The combination of three factors, which make up

a photograph. These are Aperture, Shutter Speed, and ISO rating. They all work together, so when one of these factors is changed, the other two factors will be affected.

**3) Aperture** – The size of the lens opening, measured in f-stops. A wide aperture will allow lots of light into the camera. A narrow aperture will only let a little light into the camera.

If your camera has a Mode Dial, switch to the A or AV symbol. This ‘aperture priority’ mode is great for most genres of photography, particularly landscapes and portraits, and when you wish to control how much of a scene is in focus.

**4) Shutter Speed** – length of time when the camera’s sensor (or film) is exposed to light. The shutter is the mechanism that opens and closes, to allow or prevent light entering the camera.

Shutter speed is measured in seconds – or in fractions of seconds. The bigger the denominator, the faster the speed. For instance, 1/1000th of a second is much faster than 1/10th of a second.

If hand-holding your camera, you will have difficulty avoiding camera shake if the shutter speed is slower than 1/60th of a second. You will need to use a tripod to stabilise the camera, and thus avoid blurry photos.

If your camera has a Mode Dial, switch to the S or TV symbol. This ‘shutter priority’ mode is great for fast-moving subjects, such as sports and action, when you wish to freeze the motion. Alternatively, if you wish to capture a long exposure, switch to Bulb (B) mode. You can keep the shutter open for as long as you hold it down.

**5) ISO Rating** – This is how sensitive the camera’s sensor is to the light, similar to how the human eye works. Many cameras give you the option of changing this setting. It’s best to use a low ISO number, such as 100. A

high ISO setting will allow the image sensor to perform better in low light, but it also will create more stray pixels, called noise.

**6) Metering** – The camera can automatically decide how much light to let in. You can determine how the camera does this, by choosing a metering option.

- **Matrix metering.** Matrix metering is okay for photos that don't have an obvious focal point or subject.
- **Centre-weighted metering.** This assigns the greatest emphasis for determining exposure on the centre of the frame.
- **Spot metering.** Spot metering is useful when your subject is off-centre, or when your subject is back-lit.

## IMAGE QUALITY

### Image Resolution

While technically a megapixel (MP) is equal to 1,048,576 pixels, in reality, camera manufacturers round this number to 1,000,000 when stating how large an image the camera will capture.

All you really need to know is that the higher the megapixel count, the more data the photograph will contain. (e.g. a 21 MP camera can shoot more detail than a 14 MP camera.)

Choose the largest image size available (e.g. 'super fine') to get the maximum number of pixels. The higher the resolution, the better. You can always reduce the image size later, say, if you need to email the picture, or upload it to an on-line album. But you can never increase the image resolution without deterioration in quality.

When it comes to displaying images on a computer screen you need far less pixels than you do for printing. This is because the density of pixels on the

screen is far less than what is required for printing. For example, a typical monitor is 1920 x 1080 pixels in size.

## FILE TYPES

### 1. JPEG (Joint Photographers Expert Group)

When you set your camera to shoot JPEG files, an algorithm determines which information is discarded and which is kept, without changing the way the image looks. This is great for saving space on your memory card, but not so good if you intend to edit in Photoshop.

However, here are the benefits of shooting JPEGs:

- If you do not wish to spend time editing your photos.
- If you want to save space on your memory card, (e.g. when travelling).
- If you want to shoot super-fast in continuous bursts.

### 2. RAW

This is the native, uncompressed digital camera file, offered on higher-end cameras. Admittedly, there are disadvantages of shooting in RAW format. Firstly, your image files will be about five times bigger; secondly, you will need more storage space on a computer; and finally, it may impact your editing workflow, slowing you down.

The overwhelming advantage of shooting in RAW format is that you do not discard any data. You can use this information to create the best possible image. For example, this flexibility means you could recover blown-out highlights or bring back detail in the shadows that would be impossible to do with JPEGs. Think of a RAW file as being akin to a film negative which you can process how you want – in a ‘digital darkroom.’

## FOCUS

With landscape photography, you will usually want everything tack-sharp,



from foreground to background. If your camera has Aperture Priority (A, or AV), use it. Take control of the depth of field (how much of the scene is in focus) by setting the camera to a small aperture between  $f/11$  and  $f/22$ .

Also, deliberately focus about one third of the distance into the scene. This is called the hyper-focal distance, and should ensure all elements in your photograph are sharp.

## 1) Focus Modes

There are four main focus modes, depending on your camera model. They are Continuous, Single, Automatic and Manual. Here is a brief overview of when to use each focus mode.

- **Continuous Focus / AI Servo** – for shooting quick bursts. Mainly used in sports, wildlife and action photography when the subject is moving quickly.
- **Spot Focus** – In this mode, when you depress the shutter button halfway, the camera focuses on the subject just once – there's no continuous adjustment. This mode saves battery power, and is ideal for portraits or static landscapes.
- **Automatic Focus / AF** – Some cameras do it all for you.
- **Manual Focus** – In low-light situations, the camera's auto-focus system will not work. On a DSLR camera, switch the focus button on the lens to manual, and turn the focus ring.

## VIEW FINDERS

A traditional camera has an optical viewfinder which the photographer looks through. Modern digital cameras all sport LCD screens. However, only the more expensive camera models have both. There are pros and cons for both options.

### 1) View-finders

Looking through a viewfinder, the operator can concentrate on taking photos. This is vitally important with portraiture – you want to be communicating with your subject, not ‘chimping,’ that is, looking at the LCD screen too often.

## 2) LCD Screen (Liquid Crystal Display)

The glaring disadvantage of an LCD display is that it’s difficult to see in bright sunshine. Nevertheless, this electronic display is brilliant for reviewing images and enables you to immediately see if your photo is any good. And, if you own a DSLR, use Live View mode so you can predict exactly what the shot will look like before pressing the shutter.

# POST PROCESSING

## 1) Software

This is what often separates amateurish photos from professional-looking images: taking a few minutes in an image editing program, adjusting a few basic things. Tasks such as colour correction, sharpness and adjusting exposure curves are easily done. So is straightening a wonky horizon, or cropping your picture into a more pleasing frame.

While the industry standard for graphic designers is [Adobe Photoshop](#), this is expensive, has a steep learning curve, and is too comprehensive for most users. It has evolved over two decades to be much more than a photo-retouching program. It also caters to web designers, illustrators, movie editors and 3D animators.

[Photoshop Elements](#) or [Lightroom](#) are popular with hobbyists as they are cheaper, stripped-down versions of Adobe’s flagship software. Those on a budget may find [Faststone Image Viewer](#) very useful. It could be viewed as ‘the poor man’s Photoshop’, as it costs nothing, yet it is a powerful piece of image manipulation software. I have produced a classy tutorial on YouTube for you to follow: [Faststone Tutorial: How to fix your photos](#).

## 2) Basic Editing

Your camera cannot always capture exactly what your eyes can see. These are basic ‘fixes’ that you should do on many of your photographs:

- **Cropping** – to eliminate irrelevant objects, or create a more pleasing composition.
- **Straightening** – especially if the horizon is wonky.
- **Exposure Correction** – if an image is too dark or light.
- **Colour Correction** – this is most commonly required if you were shooting inside under Tungsten light bulbs, and the white balance setting in your camera was set incorrectly.
- **Sharpening** – all photos need a touch of sharpening, but don’t over-do this, as it can create artefacts or digital noise, particularly in blue skies.
- **Re-sizing** – important if you wish to prepare an image for emailing, uploading to the Internet, or for a projected presentation (e.g. PowerPoint).

## 3) Sizing for Print

Most cameras generate images at a resolution of 72ppi (pixels per inch). This is okay for most purposes, unless you wish to either print your photo, or use it commercially, (e.g. in a magazine, or advertisement). The photo must then be converted to a high resolution, usually 300dpi (dots per inch). This simple process is quickly done.

## 4) Copyright & Watermarks

If you wish to protect your work, there are a couple of options. Firstly, you can add copyright information to the photo’s meta-data. Newer cameras allow you to record your name into every image you capture. Alternatively, you can manually write in your contact details and copyright info by using [Photoshop](#), Adobe Bridge, or similar software.

Some photographers add a watermark over the photo, although this can be cropped off, and it takes lots of time to add each watermark.

# 2

## THE ARTISTIC SIDE OF PHOTOGRAPHY

### COMPOSITION

*‘Composition is the artistic arrangement of visual elements within the picture frame.’*

A snapshot shows the world what your camera sees, but when you create a composition, you show the world what you see. As Ansel Adams, the grandfather of landscape photography, famously remarked... ‘You don’t take a photograph. You make it.’

Rules are made to be broken, but they’re an important starting point. Remember that the professional landscape photographers abide by these 90% of the time too. Here are some basics:

#### 1) Rule of Thirds

The most common mistake is to place your subject in the centre of the frame ... boring!

Try applying the Rule of Thirds. Divide your camera’s LCD screen into a 3x3 grid, and place key elements of your scene on the intersecting lines. For instance, if the sky is un-interesting, put the horizon one third of the way down the photo, and major on the landscape. Conversely, if you are looking at a stunning cloud-scape, make this fill two thirds of the photograph.

#### 2) Symmetry

The exception to the Rule of Thirds is when shooting a symmetrical scene such as a building, or a mirror lake with reflections. Use symmetry if you want to convey a sense of tranquil calm, or a formal view of something important.

### **3) Lead-in Lines**

These devices include fences, roads, tracks, shorelines or rivers. They can help the viewer's eye to navigate through your composition, then, finally arrive at the focal point.

### **4) Foreground Interest**

Try to include some foreground interest in your photos. This gives the viewer's eye something to lock onto, before exploring the remainder of your picture.

### **5) Background**

Keep the background behind your main subject simple, and uncluttered. This applies mainly to portraits, groups of people, and animals. Avoid having a telephone pole or tree sticking up behind a person's head!

### **6) Angle of View**

So many people take photos from where they happen to be standing, from eye level. Merely moving a few metres away, or lying down on the ground can instantly improve your camera angle. Also, it is especially important when photographing children or wildlife to get down to their level.

### **7) Less is More**

Beginners often try hard to get everything into a single exposure: their friends, plus the pretty view behind the group. Less is more.

Try filling up the frame with your subject. Don't be afraid to crop off the top of a person's head to get an intimate portrait of their facial expression. Ask yourself: 'what are the key elements in this scene that make it work?' Stick to a single subject; eliminate everything else.

# LIGHT

As previously mentioned, the word 'photograph' means to 'draw with light'. A basic understanding of how light affects a scene is fundamental for all aspiring photographers.

Once you have chosen a suitable subject, or scene to photograph, then you must also consider the lighting conditions. If shooting outside, this is related to the position of the sun in the sky.

## 1) Timing

Just like in comedy, timing is everything. Contrary to popular practice, shooting under the midday summer sun is unlikely to produce inspiring results; the overhead sun creates short shadows, which are harsh. Therefore, landscapes lack three-dimensional form and appear flat. People may get unflattering shadows under their facial features. Blue-sky days are great for exploring outside, but make for uninspiring photographs.

For quality light, try shooting in the Golden Hour – that magical time of day before sunset (or after dawn) when the light is softer and diffused, the hills are bathed in a golden glow (and when your companions are most likely heading home for dinner.)

Also try shooting in the Blue Hour, half an hour after sundown, when the colours of the sky can become brilliantly intense. Alternatively, brave the elements and shoot immediately after a storm, waiting for the moment when a shaft of light penetrates the moody sky. Kiwi photographer, Andris Apse, reckons that the mysterious third dimension of photography is mood.

## 2) Colour Temperature

During different times of the day, and in different seasons of the year, the atmospheric conditions will affect the colour of your environment. In the golden hours, the low-angled sunlight will cast a softer, diffused light that is usually warmer. At midday, the overhead sunlight will produce cooler colours.



You can manipulate the colour temperature on some cameras – it's called White Balance, and is measured on a Kelvin Scale.

### **3) Dynamic Range**

This is the contrast between the brightest highlights and the darkest shadows in a scene.

If there's not enough contrast, the scene will appear lacklustre and lifeless. Objects need side-lighting to give them three-dimensional form, or else they will look 2D.

Too much contrast, however, and the dynamic range of a scene cannot be recorded adequately by the camera. A common instance is when shooting a sunset: while the sky might look stunning, other objects are back-lit, looking like nothing more than black silhouettes.

Thankfully, this latter issue can be fixed, with more advanced techniques such as bracketing exposures and HDR (High Dynamic Range) imaging.

### **4) Location**

If shooting on the coast, check out the tide tables beforehand. An outgoing tide will mean any sandy beaches will be washed clean of footprints. Rocks may have a wet sheen, which can reflect the light. And, of course, it is safer to be shooting on the shore when the tide is retreating.

### **5) Planning**

Prior planning is an essential part of serious landscape photography. As Winston Churchill famously said "Failing to plan is planning to fail."

Looking at a map of the area, and checking the weather forecast and tides before leaving home will save you wasted effort and disappointment, improving the chances of success. On the Internet, you can visit [The Photographers Ephemeris](#) (TPE) and find this information.

# 5 HABITS OF HIGHLY EFFECTIVE PHOTOGRAPHERS

### *Effective Photographers...*

**1. Don't expect their camera to do all the work.** This means saying goodbye to 'Auto' and bravely using other modes such as Aperture Priority or Manual.

- Read the camera manual, several times, to get familiar with their gear.
- Gradually work through various functions and features on their camera.
- Take control of their camera, and the lighting conditions they are faced with.

**2. Understand that pressing the shutter is only half of making a good photograph.**

- Modern cameras are no match for the human eye, and still have lots of limitations, especially in low light situations.
- Post-processing has been done since the invention of photography (either in a traditional darkroom or on a computer). This is where you polish your final images, and make adjustments to compensate for the constraints of the camera.
- Select and present only the very best images from a photo shoot.
- Store a back-up copy of their images onto an external hard drive, or somewhere safe.

**3. Publish photographs,** so they aren't destined to die on a dusty hard drive, unseen by the world.

- Share their work to get constructive feedback from peers, (e.g. via on-line galleries such as [500px](#), [Flickr](#), [Google Photos](#), [Instagram](#) or a [Facebook group](#).)

- Present their images as a means of self-expression; their contribution to recording the world, from their point of view, (e.g. framed photos, greeting cards, calendars, art galleries, photo-books, or merely as prints inside a simple photo album).

#### 4. Get inspiration from other photographers they admire.

- Read eBooks, magazines, blog posts, look at [Facebook posts](#), or view YouTube videos. Check out my [YouTube playlist](#) here.
- Visit galleries, take workshops or go on a photography tour to learn from a more experienced shooter.

#### 5. Travel in search of fresh subject matter; this could be interesting locations or photogenic people.

- On a micro level, they use their feet to find fresh angles and perspectives – they ‘work the scene’, and don’t just settle on the first composition they see.
- On a macro level, they visit exotic or remote locations away from home, opening their eyes to new possibilities.
- Avoid shooting clichés, looking for a new ‘take’ on well-photographed subjects.

As inventor Thomas Edison once said...

*“Genius is one per cent inspiration,  
and ninety-nine per cent perspiration.”*

## APPENDIX 2

# 10 COMMANDMENTS FOR LANDSCAPERS

**1 – Use The Photographer’s Ephemeris** to predict sun and moon sets and rises. Use a map to estimate travel times. [thephotographersephemeris.com](http://thephotographersephemeris.com)

**2 – Check thy tide charts.** With coastal scenes, an out-going tide will leave a pristine beach, free of footprints. Rocks will still be wet and hence, reflect the light.

**3 – Check thy gear before leaving home.** Batteries must be charged; memory cards must be empty. The tripod shoe should be on the camera. Lenses and filters must be clean.

**4 – Arrive at thy location one hour early.** If thou art relaxed, thou wilt be in a better frame of mind to produce great images.

**5 – Scout thy location thoroughly,** looking for likely compositions. Pre-focus. Wait for the right light.

**6 – Use a hot shoe spirit level to keep the horizon straight.** (This is very useful for video, or when shooting in the dark.) Alternatively, of course, if you have recent-model DSLR, it may have an in-built level.

**7 – Tell someone exactly where thou art going.**

**8 – Thou shalt look after thyself.** Don’t forget to fuel up. Have snacks, hot drinks, music, warm clothes, first aid and cellphone.

**9 – Know thy gear.** (Thou cannot see thy camera controls in the dark). When the sun is setting, thou wilt only have a short window of opportunity to capture the best light. Now is not the time to be fumbling around trying to read the manual in the impending darkness!

**10 – Thou shalt have fun!** If it doesn't work out, don't fret. Pack up, go home and treat thyself to a hot shower or a decent meal. It is not uncommon for two out of three photo shoots to fail. That is, thou may not have bagged any great photos. But this can be par for the course, as one cannot completely control the vagaries of the weather ... the wind, the tides, the clouds. Indeed, it is precisely this uncertainty which makes Landscape Photography such an exciting pursuit.



## APPENDIX 3

### RESOURCES

#### 1) **FREE VIDEO TRAINING** | 3 Critical Factors to being a good photographer

Visit my Hot Pixels Photography website to access 3 short, high quality training videos. They explore the reasons why your photography might be stuck in a rut, and how you can get re-motivated.

One thing – you'll need to sign up with Hot Pixels. This won't cost you a cent, and you'll get access to eBooks, video training and other cool content to kick-start your photography – you deserve it!

#### **Content Overview:**

- Why most photographers never improve
- The ONE THING which will lift your game
- DSLR camera skills you need to know
- 13 Bad Habits that can ruin your work

**CLICK BELOW** to access your **free VIDEO TRAINING**





**2) Landscape Tips – simple solutions for beginners** – FREE 30-minute video course on the [Udemy.com](https://www.udemy.com) educational platform. Warning: random doses of quirky humour might be hidden here.

***About the video training:***

- Suitable for beginner & intermediate photography enthusiasts
- 6 short, sharp lessons you can put into practice today
- 30 minutes of video + 2 downloadable PDF check-lists + 1 quick quiz
- 2 simple exercises to improve your camera craft

***Content Overview:***

- Over 13 lectures and 35 minutes of content
- Demonstration: How to hold a camera correctly
- Know how to stabilise a camera for sharper shots
- Avoid taking blurry photos
- Use the exposure compensation feature on a camera
- Understand what camera gear you need for Landscape Photography
- Understand how to plan & implement a coastal landscape shoot

**CLICK BELOW** to preview your **FREE** photography basics course





**3) Composition – Improve Your Photography in 5 Hours** – 30-minute video course on the [Udemy.com](https://www.udemy.com) educational platform.

Warning: random doses of quirky humour might be hidden here.

**[CLICK HERE](#)** to preview your **UDEMY COURSE**  
**READER's DISCOUNT: 24% off RRP.**

Are you unhappy with your photos? Do you struggle to understand camera settings, and get confused with all the technical terminology?  
Bypass these issues – *learn the fun stuff first!*

***About the video training:***

- Understand what makes a 'good photo'
- Learn to compose your photos with clear intent, not randomly
- Know how to critique your own work
- Feel good about your photography

Learn the artistic side of photography, and once you've got this mastered, then learn all that left-brained stuff.

[Click HERE](#) to get 24% off the regular Composition Course price

### *Content Overview:*

- Recommended for beginner & intermediate photography enthusiasts
- Suitable for advanced photographers who never studied this topic
- 12 short, sharp video lessons you can put into practice today
- 1 quick quiz - to test your memory recall
- 4 exercises - put these principles into practice
- 4 downloadable PDF exercise sheets
- 21-page, fully illustrated eBook (worth \$15)



#### **4) Join the Hot Pixels Photography community**

Point your mouse to FaceBook and get inspiring tips and more free stuff to take your photography to the next level.

[Click HERE to join our private FaceBook Community](#)



#### **5) Check out the Hot Pixels YouTube channel**

Are you a visual learner? You can learn lots from our free movies here.

[Click HERE to watch free tutorials on our YOUTUBE channel](#)