

Exposure Part 2 by Ian Homewood & Julie Pigula FRPS FDPS

So Ian has introduced you to lots of new information and photography jargon and explained all about Apertures, Shutter speed, Depth of Field, ISO and F stops.

Its is now time to start taking control of your camera move away from auto and start to use the program modes. Learning what all those dials and letters do on your camera.

It's also about deciding how you want the picture to look and to get more creative about your photography. In Aperture priority you are in control of the aperture whilst the camera selects a shutter speed that will result in proper exposure based on the lighting conditions. When I started, everything had to be in focus and sharp. I took most pictures at f16 or f22 but I soon realised you don't always need to get everything in focus.



These rowing boats on Derwent Water where taken using a 17-40mm lens. Whilst f11 isn't that small an aperture it was enough to capture most of the scene in focus.

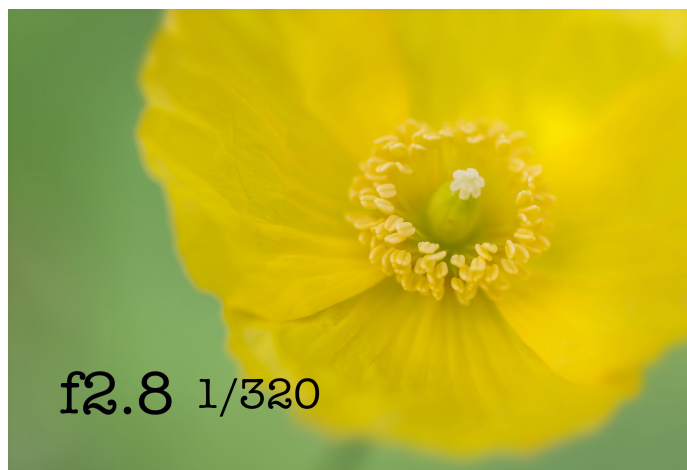
Today I like to take images with the lens wide open, this means using the maximum aperture of whatever lens I am using at the time to get a shallow depth of field with just part of the image in focus. This Willow Warbler was taken with a 400mm at f5.6 because that was the maximum aperture for that lens.



A small aperture, such as f/22, should make all of the images look sharp. This rose was shot at f18 because I wanted it to be sharp all the way through. A Rose has a relatively large depth of field as does a daffodil for example. A pansy is a flat flower you could use a larger aperture to get it sharp since it has one plane of focus.



From one extreme to another, this welsh poppy was shot at f2.8 with the lens wide open. I focussed on the stamens because I like my flowers to have a soft feeling with only one element sharp. the thing to remember is that the smaller the aperture the slower the shutter speed. If you compare the shutter speed of the rose image shot at f18 the shutter speed is only whilst with the poppy was shot at f2.8 the shutter speed is much higher.



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With these images of this hellebore flower I have tried to illustrate how the background becomes more noticeable by changing the aperture. f2.8 the background is totally blurred, f5.6 and it's still blurry at f8 the background is coming into focus and at f13 it is quite noticeable to the point I think it starts to distract you away from the flower. Also make a note of how the shutter speed decreases as the aperture number increases.



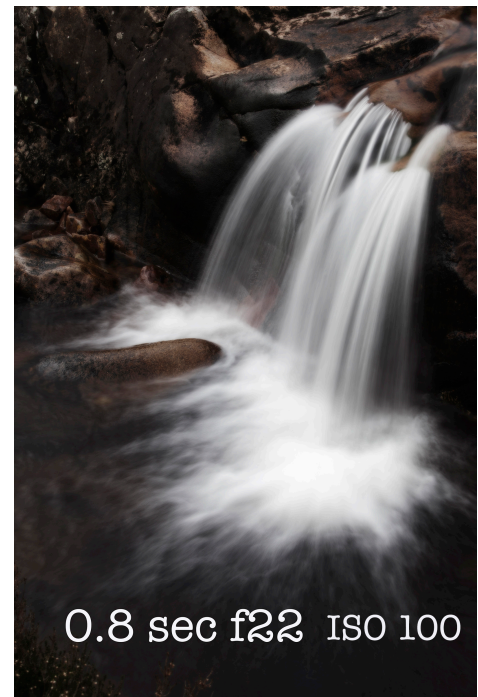
Next Shutter Priority and Bailey (yes, he had to be in this talk somewhere), Shutter Priority allows you to control the shutter speed whilst the camera selects an aperture to match it that will result in proper exposure based on the lighting conditions and ISO speed.

You use fast shutter speeds to capture any action shots wether it be Bailey in action, birds in flight or any sporting event. This was taken one afternoon when Bailey met an Italian greyhound on the beach. Any guesses who was the winner ? - whilst the greyhound was faster in a straight line, Bailey caught up on the corners plus he had more stamina too. Taken at 1/4000 at the 200mm end of my 70-200mm zoom lens.



Slow shutter speeds can be used creatively. The most common use is for freezing the flow of water. This shot of a waterfall in Glen Etive was shot with a shutter speed of just 0.8 of a second which renders the fast-moving water in a soft blur. I did use a tripod for this shot. Taken again at the 200mm end of my 70-200 lens.

But take note of the aperture this time. Bailey was taken with an aperture of f4.0 whilst the waterfall was taken at f22. Obviously, when you are shooting slow shutter speeds you really need to be thinking of using a tripod unless you have very very steady hands.



Slow shutter speeds can also introduce an element of creativity to your images. Panning is a technique where moving objects are taken using a slow shutter speed. The basic idea behind panning as a technique is that you move your camera following the moving subject and end up getting a relatively sharp subject but a blurred background. This gives the shot a feeling of movement and speed.

Finally, I just want to touch a little on Depth of field. Depth of field refers to the range of distance that appears acceptably sharp. It varies depending on camera type, aperture, focal length of lens and distance away from subject. Understanding what DOF is, and knowing what factors affect it, are things that are important concepts to grasp. We could also talk about hyperlocal distance but I think we should leave that for another day.



This picture breaks the classic rules of composition by placing the Rose flowers on the far right of the frame. But the composition also has pin mill and the Rose garden still in the frame. By selecting an aperture of f4 the roses are sharp but you can still see the garden in the background. Taken with a 24-70mm zoom lens.



The Duke of Portland boathouse on Ulswater on a cold winter's morning with ice on the water and a beautiful mute swan appeared just to add that little extra to the image. A landscape shot so I wanted to get everything in focus so I needed to use a relatively small aperture. Taken with a 17-40mm zoom lens.



Let me introduce Becks a female Blackbird with a taste for mealworms (live ones I hasten to add and only as a treat so she was not dependent on them as a source of food) During the summer months when she had young she appeared as soon as I went into the garden. In order to photograph her, I placed a small container of mealworm on the lawn from which she gathered several up then always walked across the lawn before flying off then returning a few minutes later for more. I wanted a low viewpoint so I lay flat on the ground and used a fast shutter speed to capture her walking across the lawn. I also only wanted a shallow DOF for this image to just get the blackbird sharp. Taken with a 400mm lens at f5.6



Finally Bailey in full flight on Ainsdale beach, I wanted to get a picture of him in action on the beach. I, therefore used a high shutter speed and a relatively large aperture to catch him in full flight. The added element to the shot are the ears flying, a sparkle in his eyes and he has a big grin on his face too. Taken at the 300mm end of a 70-300mm zoom lens.

So lots to think about and get the brain cells going.

Experiment taking pictures using different apertures and shutter speeds.

Get more familiar with the dials on your camera.

Look at your LCD screen and see what information there is.

The internet has so much information nowadays, remember google and YouTube are your friends.

Most importantly of all have fun.