
Tips and Techniques.

Posted by trekker2 - 2007/06/22 17:05

Let's share tips and techniques. How do you go about capturing your best shots?

Don't be afraid to start anew thread on any subject matter related to tips and techniques.

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Subject matter: animals and insects.

Posted by trekker2 - 2007/06/22 17:08

Share your tip on getting great shots of animals and insects.

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Subject matter: landscapes.

Posted by trekker2 - 2007/06/22 17:09

Share your tips on getting great landscape shots.

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Subject matter: sunset and sunrise.

Posted by trekker2 - 2007/06/22 17:10

Share your tips on getting great shots of the sun going up and down.

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Subject matter: people.

Posted by trekker2 - 2007/06/22 17:11

Share your tips on taking great people shots.

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Re:Subject matter: landscapes.

Posted by shutterpro - 2007/06/29 15:31

Great Landscapes need compelling content, a defined focus point and good colors. I look for an interesting sky, rich colors that you get early in the morning or late in the day and then something interesting in the picture.

Here are some tips that might help:

Time of Shoot: Just before Sunrise to maybe an hour after sunrise and an hour before Sunset to just after Sunset. You will often hear this referred to as the Golden Hour or Magic Hour for outdoor photography.

Use a tripod and shutter release. While the lighting is rich and colorful, you will need longer exposures.

Position yourself so the sun is behind and to the left or right of you if possible. This will create contrast and give the image a feeling of depth.

Focusing: All shots need a defined focus point. On shorter shots, pick your most dominant feature to focus on. On longer shots, a technique I use sometimes is to point the camera downward slightly, depress and hold the shutter button (this locks the focus) and then raise the camera until my focus spot is near the bottom of my frame. Then everything should be in focus. More technically, there is something called the hyperfocal distance for each f-stop and focal length (and to some extent the camera). For example, if you have a Canon 30D set at f/8 and a 100mm focal length, then the hyperfocal distance is 216 feet. So if you focus at that point, then everything from roughly 1/2 in front of that to infinity is in focus. Here is a good reference for depth of field calculations. <http://www.dofmaster.com/dofjs.html>

Composition: This is the key. The rule of thirds is a good starting point. The easiest is the horizon. Always position it either a third up from the bottom or a third down from the top, but never in the center of your frame. Another good technique is to have something that walks the eye through the picture, like a stream that starts from the bottom left and vanishes off toward the top right, a fence line or road that diagonals through your frame, etc.

This is important for really nice landscapes, never center the main subject. If you can imagine a small square in the middle of your viewfinder, try placing your main subject at one of the corners of the square. You may be surprised how much it improves the image.

Post edited by: shutterpro, at: 2007/06/29 20:20

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Re:Subject matter: landscapes.

Posted by traveler - 2007/06/29 21:50

Great information shutterpro.

One of the things I find to be a problem more and more lately especially here in the south around Atlanta is the air quality. As the sun rises I it gets almost hazy in the summer.

Do you use any filters or know of anything that might improve my shots, short of cleaning up the atmosphere?

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Re:Subject matter: sunset and sunrise.

Posted by traveler - 2007/06/29 22:57

Shutterpro posted a great piece on another forum link that is very applicable to this topic.

I am adding a link here. Check it out.

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Post edited by: traveler, at: 2007/07/01 15:07

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Re:Subject matter: landscapes.

Posted by shutterpro - 2007/07/02 22:01

The best filter for getting a deep blue sky is a polarizing filter. I use the Hoya Digital polarizing filter and it does a good job. You attach it as the last filter on your lens. As you are focusing, rotate the lens until you see the best color.

You sacrifice about two stops with a polarizing filter, but it is usually worth.

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Re:Subject matter: landscapes.

Posted by traveler - 2007/07/03 01:13

Thanks for the info. I am going to stop by my local Wolf camera and check them out.

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