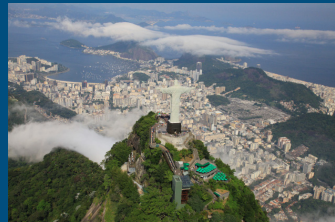


Luke Ballard
LUKEBALLARD.COM



Photographing Places, Landscapes and Your Travels



Luke Ballard
LUKEBALLARD.COM

Email: luke@lukeballard.com
Web: www.lukeballard.com

© Copyright 2009-2018 - Luke Ballard
Copyright applies to all information and images
All rights reserved.

1. Manual Settings for your Camera

As advanced as your camera is, it lacks the intuition to interpret the landscape as you see it – or as you imagine it. Automatic settings on your camera mean that your camera is driving the car and you are just along for the ride.

Three settings we learn about and adjust are shutter speed, aperture and ISO. These are known as the exposure triangle of photography.



Where is the M?

Let's start off by locating the M setting on your camera. All D-SLRs and many Point and Click or Compact cameras will have access to the M setting. If you cannot locate the M, your workshop instructor will be able to show you where it is.

ISO

Changing the ISO is a very simple task - however can be different camera to camera. Your camera may have an ISO button on the top or back display of your camera. It might be accessed through your camera's menu system. If you need help locating your ISO button, please ask your workshop instructor.

When you have located the ISO button we can then change the ISO for your camera.

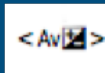
As a rule with landscape photography we want to set our ISO to 100 which will give us the best quality image available. Some camera models do not have a possible ISO of 100 - so please set it to 200 if that is your lowest setting.

SHUTTER SPEED AND APERTURE

Both of these settings are often controlled by a single dial on your camera. The dial may be at the front of your camera or at the back. On some cameras there is a separate dial for each of the settings.

On cameras where they are controlled by the same dial you will also have a button with a little + and -.

Your button may look like this.



For 95% of Remember Forever's landscape photography we use an aperture of F8. This is a medium aperture that will give us a nice range of focus and depth throughout our photograph.

2. Setting Your Aperture

The aperture is the opening and closing of your lens. The smaller your aperture number - or F-stop - the larger the opening of your lens. Conversely, the larger the number the smaller the opening.



From left to right we have a large aperture (F2), a midrange aperture (F8) and a small aperture (F16). Different apertures will have different effects.

3. Shutter Speed

If you have your ISO set at 100 for the highest quality and your aperture set at F8 for the best depth of field, that leaves only one main setting that you need to worry about when taking a landscape photograph.

Your Settings!

ISO = 100
Aperture = F8
Light Meter = 0 (centre)

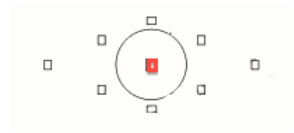


On your camera - both on the LCD screen and also through your viewfinder, you will see a light meter. The goal is to change our shutter speed to centre the little marker on 0 in the light meter for a correctly exposed photograph.

4. Focal Points - Where are you aiming?

Your focal point is the most important thing in the photograph. Most cameras default to multiple focal points - or the camera deciding what is important. Now your instructor will show you how to set a single focal point - so we can tell the camera what is important!

By selecting the centre focal point as our single point of focus on our camera, you will always know where to aim the camera at when starting your photograph. You can then reframe your photo at will!

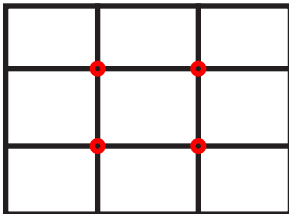


RULE OF THIRDS

The basic principle behind the rule of thirds is to imagine breaking an image down into thirds (both horizontally and vertically) so that you have 9 parts.

As you're taking an image you would have done this in your mind through your viewfinder or in the LCD display that you use to frame your shot.

With this grid in mind the 'rule of thirds' now identifies four important parts of the image that you should consider placing points of interest in as you frame your image. Not only this – but it also gives you four 'lines' that are also useful positions for elements in your photo.



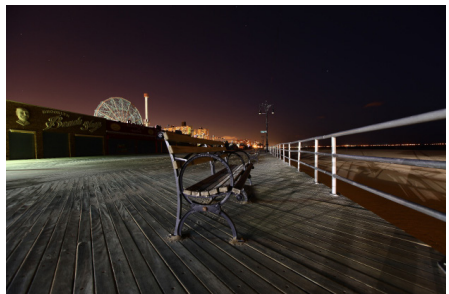
TRY AND HAVE EVERY ELEMENT OF YOUR PHOTOGRAPH ALONG ONE OF THE LINES (OR THIRDS).

FRAME YOUR IMAGE SO THAT YOUR FOCAL POINT - THE MOST IMPORTANT ELEMENT/S OF YOUR PHOTOGRAPH ARE PLACED ON ONE OF THE INTERSECTING POINTS

REMEMBER THE RULE OF THIRDS IS **NOT** A SUICIDE PACT

5. Getting the most from your Foreground

One element that can set apart your landscape shots is to think carefully about the foreground of your shots and by placing points of interest in them. When you do this you give those viewing the shot a way into the image as well as creating a sense of depth in your shot. Ensure a great foreground by crouching/climbing to the level of your focal point and also raising your horizon to run along the top third.



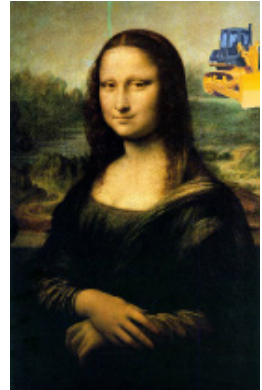
6. Remove the distractions from your Photograph

When you take a photograph you are trying to capture an amazing story - a masterpiece of your own. A lot of things can get in the way of your masterpiece - people, garbage bins, litter, other photographers - the list goes on.

At last count there were 1,046,247 possible distractions that could appear in your photograph.

As a photographer we want to spend as much time evaluating our landscape and planning our photograph as we do actually taking the photograph - if not more time.

By changing our angle slightly, by moving a few feet in a different direction - we can begin dictating more and more how the end result would look.



If Da Vinci painted the distractions

7. Lines and Perspective



One of the questions to ask yourself as you take Landscape shots is 'how am I leading the eye of those viewing this shot'? There are a number of ways of doing this (foregrounds is one) but one of the best ways into a shot is to provide viewers with lines that lead them into an image.

Lines give an image depth, scale and can be a point of interest in and of themselves by creating patterns in your shot.

8. Everything interesting happens after 1 second

After one second moving people will disappear from your photograph, fast moving water will become like fairy floss, slow moving or still water will become reflective glass.

If you can slow your shutter speed to slower than a second - amazing things can happen in your landscape.

You can also use an ND filter (and sometimes a CPL filter) to assist you in getting the shot!



Brisbane Rvr + CPL + 10" at F8 ISO 100



Waterfall + ND Filter + 3" at F8, ISO 100

9. Don't be afraid of inclement weather

A scene can change dramatically depending upon the weather at any given moment. As a result, choosing the right time to shoot is of real importance.

Many beginner photographers see a sunny day and think that it's the best time to go out with their camera – however an overcast day that is threatening to rain might present you with a much better opportunity to create an image with real mood and ominous overtones. Look for storms, wind, mist, dramatic clouds, sun shining through dark skies, rainbows, sunsets and sunrises etc and work with these variations in the weather rather than just waiting for the next sunny blue sky day.



10. The Golden Hours

These 'golden' hours are great for landscapes for a number of reasons – none the least of which is the 'golden' light that it often presents us with. Also, less light from the sun means you can have more fun with your aperture and depth of field, more control over your shutter speed without filters and combined with beautiful colours give you better photos. Sunrise is better than sunset.

11. Straight Horizon

1. Is it straight? – while you can always straighten images later in post production it's easier if you get it right in camera.

2. Where is it compositionally? - a compositionally "perfect" spot for a horizon is on one of the thirds lines in an image (either the top third or the bottom one) rather than completely in the middle - unless it's a very striking photograph.

12. Be Different - Take photos no-one else is taking

Take a little more time with your shots – particularly in finding a more interesting point of view to shoot from. This might start with finding a different spot to shoot from than the scenic look out (wander down paths, look for new angles etc), could mean getting down onto the ground to shoot from down low or finding a higher up vantage point to shoot from. Explore the environment and experiment with different view points and you could find something truly unique.



Machu Picchu - like every one takes



Our award winning shot of Machu Picchu



Email: luke@lukeballard.com
Web: www.lukeballard.com

© Copyright 2009-2018 Luke Ballard
Copyright applies to all information and images
All rights reserved.