

Lighting for Photography

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Lighting

- Light, along with a camera, film, and a subject, is a basic ingredient for photography.
- No light, no picture.
- But by thinking about light, you make a whole variety of pictures possible!

Front Lighting

- Most pictures use front lighting
- Where the light falls directly onto the subject.
- This kind of light generally provides good, bright, well-exposed pictures.

Side Lighting

- Means that the subject is lighted from the side.
- Generally casts shadows on half of the subject and produces what photographers and artists call modeling
 - the surface of the subject reveals any ripples, bumps, or hollows – any imperfections or textures

Backlighting

- The light is in back of the subject.
- You lose detail in the subject, but backlighting will provide a strong silhouette and sometimes a sort of halo effect.
- Can be very dramatic
 - early morning
 - when the sun is low
 - sun behind subject

Backlighting

- Indoor backlighting would be - silhouettes in front of a window

How Much Light?

- Lux
 - In digital photography, lux is the unit of measurement for light intensity.

One Lux

- One lux is equivalent to the light level of a single candle light. The symbol for Lux is lx .
- The number of the Lux relates to the number of candles necessary for the camera to take a clear picture

Candle Light

- Experimenting with your Lux levels, using candles as your light source can have dramatic effects
 - Turn off flash
 - Use natural reflectors to bounce the light
 - Move the candles around to experiment with shadows
 - Make sure that white balance is not set to auto

Additional Resources

- <http://www.dphotojournal.com/candlelight-photography-tips/>
 - Great article on tips for using candle light

White Balance

- Believe it or not, white can appear very differently depending on the lighting conditions
- Pictures can seem blue or green
- White balance compensates
- Always adjust your white balance

Capturing the Mood

- Taking your light into consideration can seriously change the mood of your pictures
 - Low light and candle light is warmer
 - Less stark

Time of the Year

- This time of the year lends itself to low lighting
- Dramatic effects

Flat Lighting

- When the sky is hazy or thinly overcast so that it appears all white or light gray rather than blue, and shadows are very fuzzy or there are practically no shadows at all – flat light
- Really means shadowless light
- No particular direction to the light; it is coming from all over the sky.

Less Glare

- Perfect time to take close-up pictures of faces.
- Flat light is very flattering. Furthermore, since it is softer than bright sunlight, so you get natural smiles without causing your subjects to squint.
- Flat light gives less glare to objects and images
- Makes for better photographs

Tips for Lighting

- Whenever you want to experiment with some lighting, there are a few things to consider

Tips for Low Light

- Disable your flash
- Use a tripod
 - You will be using a long exposure time, so a tripod will eliminate chances of motion

Long Exposure

- Trick the camera to have a longer exposure time
 - Lights will appear to flow into each other

Exposure = Shutter Speed

Light Painting

- Online Tutorial
- <http://digital-photography-school.com/blog/tips-on-how-to-light-paint-video-tutorial/>
- <http://www.mindbites.com/lesson/539-light-painting-fun-with-photography>

Wide Aperture

- Use a wide aperture setting
 - If you can change it, set it to a wide setting so you allow as much light as possible to come in
 - Widest setting is f2.8

Low ISO

- ISO number dictates its sensitivity to light. A higher ISO (a "fast" ISO) will make your camera more light-sensitive, but will add more grain (or "noise") to your photo.
- If your camera allows you to adjust ISO, set it low (somewhere around 50 or 100) for sharp detail in low-light.

Another Trick

- Try diffusing the light so it is not so direct on the subject
- A trick would be to use white paper in front of your light source to diffuse
- Be cautious of heat
- Wrap foil around cardboard to bounce light off of to soften it

Apply the Concepts

- Now that you have some creative ideas going through your head, put them into action
- Try to incorporate some of the examples into your photography projects
- Always be conscious of your lighting...
 - Is there a better way to light the scene/subject?
 - Experiment with different times of the day