

# Creative Photography

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## OVERVIEW & PURPOSE

In this class you will learn a handful of skills to take creative photos. These skills will also teach you about your camera's features and how to perform basic photography. Your excitement and curiosity will take you to the next level. Further, I will leave you with a roadmap of features to learn later.

<https://anywhere.ca/beginner/>

## Step 1 – 5 Easy Camera Features You Need To Know

There are 6 features you should learn before you begin learning photography.

1. Factory Reset
2. Format Your Memory Card
3. Turning on Live View
4. Cameras Quick Menu shortcut button
5. Continuous Mode

## Step 2 – ISO (Learn this later, use AUTO for now)

The lower the number, the higher quality the image (less noise). The higher the number, the brighter your image will be. Auto ISO is OK as a beginner, but you will need to know how to change ISO for low light situations.

- 100 or 200 is the best ISO for outside pictures on a sunny and bright day
- 400 ISO for cloudy days, or indoors for window light portraits
- 800 ISO for indoors without a flash
- 1600+ ISO for low light situations – such as an indoor school play

## Step 3 – Focusing (You'll use this feature a lot)

Deciding which part of an image you want sharp and in focus, and which you want out of focus is vital.

1. Your camera has an autofocus system built in. It's important to know this system well.
2. Single Point Focus is something you will use often.

3. Practice focusing with household items first, then with things in motion, like cats/kids, later.
4. Continuous focus is for things that move. It is harder to learn and meant for wildlife, kids etc.

## Step 4 - Consider a Prime Lens

A prime lens has no zoom. That means that a 35mm prime lens, for example, will only shoot at 35mm, whereas a typical kit lens can shoot anywhere from 18-55mm.

A prime lens is faster than a kit lens, and at an aperture of f/1.8 or f/2.8 it can let in 2 - 4 times more light, whereas a kit lens' aperture may only go as open as f/3.5 or f/5.6 when zoomed in.

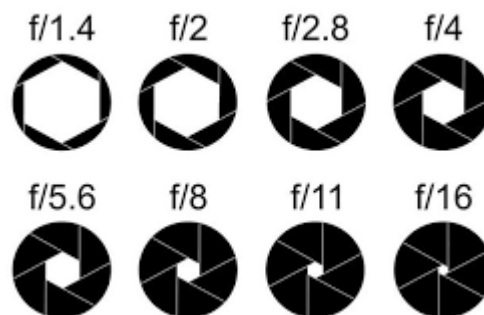
A simple 35mm, 40mm or 50mm prime lens costs roughly \$150 to \$300

Using a prime lens for portraits gives you the ability to shoot in low light without the need to rely on a flash because the aperture of a prime lens is smaller.

A list of popular prime lenses here. <https://anywhere.ca/beginner/>

## Step 5 - Shoot in Aperture Priority Mode

What is Aperture? Basically, it is how big of a hole is in your lens, or how wide it is open. These are measured in f/stops, and they determine how much light comes into your lens.



*The smaller the number, the larger the hole, the greater amount of light that comes in.*

The widest aperture (e.g. f/2.8 or lowest number) is what creates those pretty portraits with blurred backgrounds. This illustrates a shallow depth of field. If you isolate your subject using a shallow depth of field your subject stands out.

On your camera turn the main menu knob to A or AV. From here you can use the dial to switch to f/1.8 (or as low as your lens will allow, which is probably f/5.6 zoomed in on a kit lens).

With A mode, the camera will choose the shutter speed for you. If you are not familiar with ISO, use Auto ISO while learning Aperture mode.

If you want the flat Auto mode look for daytime scenery photos, use f/8.0.

## Step 5 – Exposure Compensation

When shooting in Aperture or Shutter Mode, this allows you to lighten or brighten an image. This is helpful because in Aperture mode you do not get control over shutter speed to affect brightness.

## Step 6 - Shoot in Shutter Mode

This allows you to choose which shutter speed to use. Like with A mode, the other settings will be automatically chosen by the camera.

This is mostly useful if you are indoors and shooting action, like cats or kids playing, and you want to make sure you catch the action without blur. Further, using a slow shutter speed to get some blur can make a big impact on your photo.

Put your camera on S mode using the main menu knob, then use the dial to change to whatever speed you wish to use. Use Auto ISO while learning. Setting an ISO will result in huge changes in image brightness.

Some shutter speeds and examples of activities:

● 1/4000 - A swinging golf club or bat	● 1/250 - Some movement
● 1/2000 - Splashing water	● 1/125 - Good for most people photos (Default Shutter Speed)
● 1/1000 - Sports, moving cars	● 1/50 - Slowest handheld speed for most people.
● 1/500 - Kids, cats, running	

## Step 7 - Lighting

*Origin of the word photography – “drawing with light”*

We are blessed with amazing natural lighting. The hours before sunset and after sunrise are very popular times to photograph (aka Golden Hour). Further, with the right lens you can shoot up to 45 minutes after the sun has set.

Avoid direct sunlight if you can. If you’re shooting people, place them in the shade if possible.

## Step 8 - Composition Rules

*‘Show me something I haven’t seen before’*

Once you’ve got the hang of those basic technical skills, go to places like Pinterest and search for 'photography composition rules'. Here are some of the rules:

- Rule of Thirds
- Centered Composition & Off Center
- Foreground Interest and Depth
- Frame Within the Frame
- Leading Lines
- Rule of Odds
- Leave Negative Space
- Minimalism
- Fill the Frame
- Lens **compression** - The phenomenon of background elements appearing larger than they actually are.

## Step 9 - Post Processing Images

Even basic post processing does amazing things to your photos. You do not need to learn complex programs like Photoshop. I highly recommend Adobe Lightroom (\$249) & Adobe Photoshop Elements (\$100). You can take online tutorials and learn the basics of these programs in around 3-12 hours, and your images will be amazing.

Popular Tools: Brightness/Exposure, Contrast, Highlights, Shadows, Clarity, Saturation, Vibrancy, Straighten, Crop, Sharpen, Lights, Darks, Spot Removal, Noise Reduction.

## Things to Learn Later

Eventually you'll want to learn to shoot in full M (Manual) mode, where you choose the aperture and shutter speed, as well as the ISO.

**Metering** - Takes about 20 minutes to learn.

**White Balance** - This can take about an hour to learn and you should experiment with this in a badly lit room.

## Online

The images used in this class, the equipment and software discussed in this class, the Facebook photo posting group & more can be found on my class board here:

Website: <https://anywhere.ca/beginner/>

<https://www.youtube.com/chrisattrell> - Lots more tutorials