



THE CAMERA POCKET GUIDE.

Exposure, camera settings, lenses, composition, and go-to recipes for the shots you'll actually take — explained plainly, so you can stop guessing and start shooting.

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IT · PHOTOGRAPHY · PRODUCTION

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Why I made this

Cameras give everyone trouble sometimes. The menus are deep, the jargon is thick, and most guides either talk down to you or bury you in theory. This one doesn't.

I work across IT, photography, and live production — from the server room to the stage — and the one thing every corner of technology has taught me is that almost anything can be explained simply if you strip it back to what actually matters. That's what this guide is: the settings I check, the rules I lean on, and the recipes I reach for, written down the way I'd explain them to a friend.

I'm no expert — I just know what I know. Everything here is the stuff that survived real shoots: portraits in bad light, stages that won't hold still, landscapes that looked better in person. Use it as a starting point, then break every rule in it on purpose.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Skim chapters 02–04 once so the dials make sense. Fill in the checklist in 01 for **your** camera. Then keep the scenario cards in 07 within reach — that's the part you'll come back to in the field.

// What's inside

01 • Before You Shoot	A pre-flight checklist so the camera is ready before the moment is.
02 • Exposure, Plainly	Aperture, shutter, ISO — the three dials that decide every photo.
03 • Dialing In	Modes, metering, focus, files — the menu settings that matter.
04 • Glass	Focal lengths, lens types, and what they do to your subject.
05 • Level-Up Moves	Auto ISO, back-button focus, bracketing, the histogram.
06 • Make It Look Good	Composition habits that quietly fix most photos.
07 • Scenario Cards	Eight ready-to-shoot recipes for common situations.

Before You Shoot

Every camera walks out the door carrying yesterday's settings — the ISO you cranked at last night's concert will happily ruin today's landscape. Thirty seconds, top to bottom, before you head out. Write your defaults in once and this page becomes **your** reset button.

☐ Shooting mode	_____
☐ Metering mode	_____
☐ Exposure compensation back to 0	_____
☐ ISO setting	_____
☐ Focus mode	_____
☐ Focus area / points	_____
☐ Drive / release mode	_____
☐ White balance	_____
☐ Highlight alert on/off	_____
☐ Noise reduction	_____
☐ File format — RAW / JPEG / both	_____
☐ Picture style / film simulation	_____
☐ Color space	_____
☐ Stabilization on/off	_____
☐ Battery charged, cards formatted — and both in the camera	_____

HARD-EARNED • THAT LAST LINE ISN'T A JOKE — THE BEST CAMERA IN THE WORLD IS A PAPERWEIGHT WITH AN EMPTY CARD SLOT. ASK ME HOW I KNOW.

02

THE THREE DIALS

Exposure, Plainly

Exposure is just the amount of light your sensor collects for one photo. Enough light, the shot looks right. Too much and it's blown out; too little and it's mud.

Three controls decide it — and here's the part that took me embarrassingly long to appreciate: each one also has a **side effect** that changes how the photo *looks*, not just how bright it is. Photography is basically the art of trading those side effects against each other.

DIAL 1

Aperture

How wide the hole in the lens opens. Side effect: how much of the scene is in focus.

DIAL 2

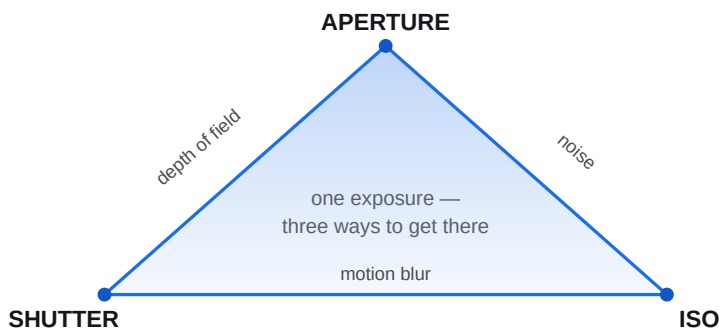
Shutter speed

How long the sensor watches the scene. Side effect: whether motion freezes or blurs.

DIAL 3

ISO

How hard the sensor amplifies what it sees. Side effect: how much noise creeps in.



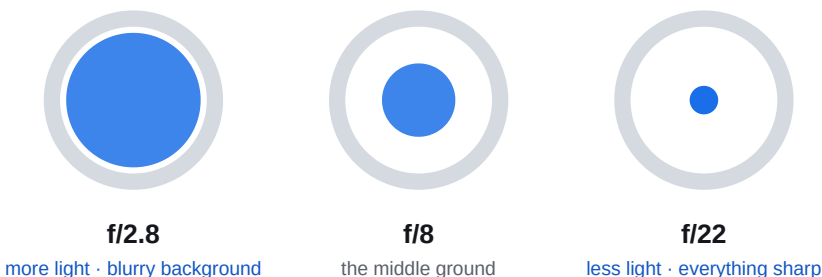
EVERY EXPOSURE IS A TRADE BETWEEN THE THREE CORNERS

Your job on any given shot: get the right total amount of light **and** pick which side effects you want. The rest of this chapter is one dial at a time.

Aperture & depth of field

The aperture is an adjustable opening inside the lens, measured in f-stops: f/2.8, f/4, f/5.6, f/8 and so on. The numbering runs backwards from what you'd expect, and yes, everyone finds that annoying at first:

- Small number = big opening. f/2.8 is a wide-open door — lots of light gets in.
- Big number = small opening. f/22 is a keyhole — barely any light gets in.



SAME LENS, THREE OPENINGS

// The side effect: depth of field

Depth of field is how much of the scene, front to back, is acceptably sharp. Aperture is its volume knob:

- Wide open (f/1.8–f/4):** a thin slice of focus. Your subject is crisp, the background melts away. This is the portrait look.
- Stopped down (f/11–f/22):** deep focus. The wildflowers at your feet and the ridge on the horizon both hold detail. This is the landscape look.

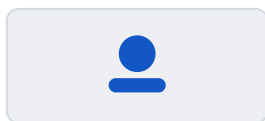
RULE OF THUMB

Deciding what a photo is **about**? Open up and isolate it. Want the viewer to wander the whole frame? Stop down and let everything speak.

Shutter speed & motion

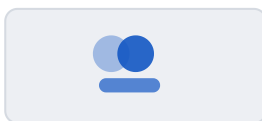
Shutter speed is how long the sensor is exposed to the scene — written as fractions of a second: 1/4000, 1/500, 1/60, 1/8, all the way out to full seconds and beyond.

- Fast (1/500–1/4000):** a tiny sip of light. Whatever was moving gets frozen mid-air.
- Slow (1/15 and longer):** a long drink of light. Anything that moved during the exposure smears into a streak.



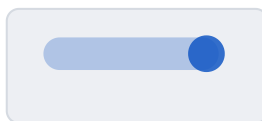
1/1000

frozen solid



1/60

a hint of motion



1/8

motion becomes a streak

SAME SUBJECT, THREE SHUTTER SPEEDS

// The side effect: how motion reads

Neither end is "correct" — they tell different stories. Freeze a wave mid-crash and you get power; let a waterfall run for two seconds and you get silk. A frozen cyclist looks parked; a streaked one looks fast.

The other thing slow shutters capture is **you**. Hands shake. Below roughly 1/60 handheld (sooner on long lenses — see chapter 04), your own wobble blurs the whole frame. That's when you brace, lean on stabilization, or get the tripod out.

RULE OF THUMB

Subject moving? Start at 1/500 and adjust. Subject still but light is low? Slow down until just before *your* shake shows up — then raise ISO instead.

ISO & noise

ISO sets how strongly the camera amplifies the signal coming off the sensor. ISO 100 is quiet and clean. ISO 6400 is the volume cranked — and like any amplifier pushed hard, you start to hear the hiss. In photos, that hiss is **noise**: gritty speckles and off-color dots, worst in the shadows.

- └ **Low ISO (100–400)**: cleanest files. Use it whenever light allows.
- └ **High ISO (1600 and up)**: lets you keep shooting in dim rooms and at night. Modern cameras handle it better than their reputation suggests.

My take: **a noisy photo beats a blurry one, every time**. Noise can be cleaned up in software; a missed moment can't. Raise the ISO without guilt when it buys you the shutter speed you need. (Long exposures can also cook up noise of their own — chapter 03 covers the setting that helps.)

// Stops — the shared currency

All three dials trade in the same unit: the **stop**. One stop = double the light, or half of it. Each step in the ladders below is one stop:

APERTURE

f/2 · f/2.8 · f/4 · f/5.6 · f/8 · f/11 · f/16 · f/22

SHUTTER

1" · 1/2 · 1/4 · 1/8 · 1/15 · 1/30 · 1/60 · 1/125 · 1/250 · 1/500

ISO

100 · 200 · 400 · 800 · 1600 · 3200 · 6400

Because the currency is shared, you can swap side effects without changing brightness. Say a shot is one stop too bright — any one of these fixes it: close the aperture one stop (f/2.8 → f/4), halve the shutter time (1/30 → 1/60), or halve the ISO (800 → 400). Same exposure, three different looks. Most cameras move in third-stop clicks, so three clicks ≈ one stop.

Dialing In the Camera

Camera menus are 90% things you'll set once and forget. This chapter is the other 10% — the settings that actually change your photos.

// Shooting modes: who's driving?

The mode dial decides how the exposure decisions get split between you and the camera. Four modes matter:

P · PROGRAM

Camera drives

It picks both aperture and shutter. Fine for snapshots; you're a passenger.

A / AV · APERTURE PRIORITY

MY DEFAULT

You pick the look

You set the aperture (the depth-of-field look), the camera matches the shutter. Where my dial lives 80% of the time.

S / TV · SHUTTER PRIORITY

You pick the motion

You set the shutter (freeze or blur), the camera matches the aperture. For sports, kids, anything that moves.

M · MANUAL

You drive everything

Both dials are yours. Best in tricky or unchanging light — studio, stage, night — where the meter would guess wrong.

IF YOU ONLY TAKE ONE THING

The extra auto and scene modes are variations of these four. Move the dial to **A** — decide how blurry the background should be, let the camera do the rest.

Metering & the override

// Metering: how the camera reads light

Before every shot, a built-in light meter sizes up the scene and proposes an exposure. You choose how it looks:

Evaluative / Matrix	Weights the whole frame. Right answer for most scenes — leave it here by default.
Spot	Reads one small point and ignores the rest. For a face against a bright window, a performer under a spotlight.
Center-weighted	Favors the middle of the frame, fades toward the edges. A gentler compromise between the two.

// Exposure compensation

In P, A, or S mode the camera decides part of the exposure — and sometimes it decides wrong. Snow comes out gray, a backlit face goes dark. Exposure compensation is your override: the **+/-** control nudges the camera's answer brighter or darker in stop increments, no mode change needed.

WORTH LEARNING EARLY

Shot too dark? Dial **+1** and reshoot. Too bright? **-1**. This one control fixes more bad exposures than anything else on the camera. In Manual mode it doesn't apply — you *are* the compensation; move the dials yourself. And when you're done: **set it back to zero**.

Focus & drive

// Focus: mode + area

Two separate questions. **How** the camera focuses:

Single (AF-S / One-Shot)	Locks focus once when you half-press, then holds. For subjects that stay put. The everyday default.
Continuous (AF-C / Servo)	Keeps refocusing until the instant you fire. For anything in motion.
Manual	You turn the ring. For macro work, video, or when autofocus keeps grabbing the wrong thing.

Where it focuses is the focus area: a single point you place, a zone of grouped points, or full-auto where the camera guesses the subject. The tighter the area, the more say you have. For anything that matters — like the eyes in a portrait — pick a single point and put it there yourself.

// Drive modes: what a press does

Single	One press, one frame. Default.
Continuous / burst	Hold to machine-gun frames. Sports, pets, kids — anything with milliseconds.
Self-timer	2 or 10-second delay. Also great on a tripod for shake-free landscapes when there's no remote handy.
Bulb	Shutter stays open as long as you hold it — that's what B stands for. The door to multi-minute exposures (chapter 07).

Color & warnings

// White balance

Light has a color — candlelight is orange, shade is blue, office fluorescents are their own kind of weird. White balance tells the camera which kind it's looking at so whites come out white. **Auto WB** gets it right most of the time; when you're under mixed or ugly light and skin tones keep drifting, set a custom reading and be done with it. Shoot RAW and the whole decision becomes reversible anyway.

// Highlight alert ("blinkies")

Turn this on. When you review a shot, any area that's pure blown-out white — no detail recorded at all — blinks at you. Sky flashing? The camera is telling you that data is gone forever. Dial exposure compensation down a touch and take it again.

// Noise reduction

Two flavors: **High-ISO NR** smooths the grit from high-ISO shots; **Long-Exposure NR** cleans up hot pixels from multi-second exposures. Both trade a little sharpness — and long-exposure NR doubles your wait after each frame, since the camera shoots a second dark frame to subtract the noise. Fine to leave on until the wait annoys you.

ESCAPE HATCH

Camera acting possessed and you can't find the setting that did it? Menu → reset to factory defaults. No shame in it — it's the camera version of turn-it-off-and-on-again, and I say that professionally.

Files & set-and-forget

// RAW vs JPEG

FORMAT	WHAT YOU GET	SHOOT IT WHEN
RAW 	Every scrap of sensor data. Huge files that need processing — and forgive big mistakes in exposure and WB.	You plan to edit, or the shot matters.
JPEG	The camera cooks it: smaller, shareable immediately, often great-looking. The discarded data is unrecoverable.	Volume shooting, straight-to-share, tight card space.

Can't choose? RAW+JPEG records both. For JPEG, size (S/M/L) and quality (Normal/Fine) settings decide file size — Fine is worth it.

// The set-and-forget three

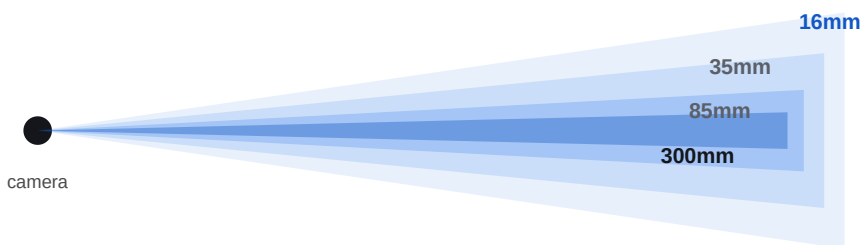
- Picture styles / film simulations** — the camera's built-in looks (vivid, portrait, mono...). They bake into JPEGs; RAW keeps them adjustable later.
- Color space** — sRGB if photos go straight out to screens; AdobeRGB holds more color for heavy editing. RAW lets you re-decide later.
- Stabilization** — ON when handheld; it buys you slower shutters. OFF on a tripod, where a stabilizer hunting for motion that isn't there can actually cause blur.



Glass

Swap the lens and you swap the photo. After exposure, nothing shapes an image more than focal length — how much of the world the lens takes in, and what it does to whatever's in front of it.

Focal length is the millimeter number on the barrel. Small number, wide view; big number, narrow view that reaches far.



SHORTER FOCAL LENGTH = WIDER SLICE OF THE WORLD

RANGE	NAME	LIVES FOR
≤ 24mm	Ultra-wide	Sweeping landscapes, cramped interiors, drama
24–35mm	Wide	Environment + subject together; street, context
35–70mm	Standard	Roughly how your eye sees; everyday everything
70–300mm	Telephoto	Portraits, sports, pulling far things close
300mm +	Super-telephoto	Wildlife, field sports, the moon

Primes are locked to one focal length — they trade convenience for sharpness and wider maximum apertures. **Zooms** cover a range in one barrel. Neither is the "serious" choice; they're different tools.

Reading the lens barrel

// Constant vs variable aperture

Zoom lens names tell you a secret. **"70–200mm f/2.8"** — one f-number — means the lens holds f/2.8 across the whole zoom range. Pro glass, priced like it. **"55–250mm f/4–5.6"** — a range of f-numbers — means the maximum aperture shrinks as you zoom: f/4 wide, only f/5.6 at full reach. Nothing wrong with that, but know that zooming in costs you light and shrinks your depth-of-field options, and your exposure will shift with it.

// What focal length does to a subject

Two lenses can frame a subject identically and still produce completely different photos:

- Wide lenses push things apart.** They exaggerate depth — foregrounds loom, backgrounds recede. Get close to a face with one and the nose grows. Fantastic for landscapes; unkind for portraits.
- Telephoto lenses stack things together.** They compress the scene, pulling the background in tight behind the subject. That compression is a big part of why portraits at 85mm+ look so polished — flattering geometry, and with a wide aperture the background collapses into soft color.

// The handheld shutter rule

Long lenses magnify the scene — and your hand tremor with it. The old rule still earns its keep: **keep your shutter at least 1 over the focal length.**

MINIMUM HANDHELD SHUTTER

50mm → 1/50 · 100mm → 1/100 · 200mm → 1/200 · 400mm → 1/400

Stabilization buys you a couple of stops of grace below that; a tripod suspends the rule entirely. When sharpness keeps missing at the long end, this rule is the first suspect.

Level-Up Moves

Five techniques that separate "I own a camera" from "I run a camera." None of them are hard; they're just not on by default.

// Auto ISO, configured properly

Auto ISO gets a bad reputation from people who never opened its settings. Configured, it's a bodyguard: you give it a ceiling (say, 6400) and a **minimum shutter speed** (say, 1/250), and it quietly floats the ISO so your shutter never drops into blur territory. In aperture priority this means you pick the look, the camera guards the sharpness, and you think about the picture instead of the math.

// Back-button focus

The one setup change I push on everyone — big enough that it gets its own page. Turn over for the full case.

// Putting focus where it belongs

Two clean ways to nail focus on a specific spot with a single point:

- └ **Focus, then recompose.** Center point on the subject, lock (half-press or back button), reframe, fire. Fast and reliable for stationary subjects.
- └ **Move the point.** Compose first, then drive the focus point to the critical spot — a portrait subject's nearest eye. Slower, more precise, safer at very wide apertures where recomposing can shift the thin focus plane.

// Bracketing & HDR

Some scenes hold more contrast than one exposure can carry — a dark room with a bright window. Bracketing fires a small series (typically 3 shots, 1–2 stops apart: dark, middle, bright) so between them, every tone got captured. Blend them in software later — that's HDR — or just keep the frame that nailed it. I bracket every landscape I care about.

Back-button focus

Your shutter button ships with two jobs: half-press to focus, full press to fire — and they collide at exactly the wrong moments. Back-button focus moves focusing to a button under your **thumb** (AF-ON on most bodies); the shutter goes back to doing one thing: taking the picture.



ONE JOB PER FINGER — FOCUS AND FIRE STOP FIGHTING

// Why it's worth the two weird days

- └ **Focus stops resetting itself.** By default every press re-focuses — including the one where the camera decides to grab the fence instead of the face. With BBF, nothing refocuses unless your thumb says so.
- └ **Lock once, shoot all day.** Focus, lift your thumb, recompose, fire ten frames. Nothing drifts.
- └ **One mode does both jobs.** Stay in continuous AF: hold to track a moving subject, tap-and-release to lock like single-shot. Two focus modes, zero menu trips.

// Set it up once

TWO MENU CHANGES · GOOGLE YOUR MODEL + "BBF"

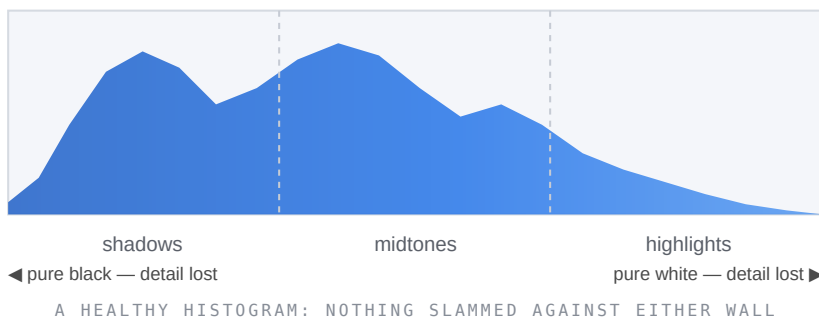
1 · AF-ON → "AF start" 2 · Half-press → metering only

WHY I RECOMMEND IT

I set up cameras the way I run systems at work: one control, one job, predictable every time. This is the single change that made my keeper rate jump — not a lens, a **button assignment**. It feels wrong for two days. Then you're never going back.

Trust the histogram

The LCD lies. Review a shot on a bright trail and it looks dark; in a dim room it looks glorious. The **histogram** doesn't lie — it's a bar chart of every tone in the frame: shadows stacked on the left, highlights on the right.



The read is simple: a pile **climbing the left wall** means crushed black shadows with no detail; a spike **against the right wall** means blown white highlights. Neither can be fixed later — the data was never recorded. Where the hump sits in between is just the mood of the scene; there's no "correct" shape.

One refinement worth knowing: shooting RAW, sensors keep more usable detail in bright tones than dark ones. So exposing a touch bright — pushing the histogram toward (never into) the right wall, then pulling it back in editing — yields cleaner shadows than brightening a dark file. The technique goes by "expose to the right." File it away for when you're comfortable; the blinkies from chapter 03 are the training-wheels version.

HABIT

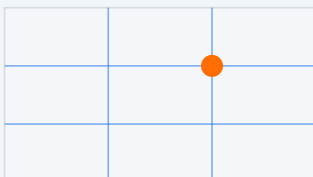
Glance at the histogram after the first shot in any new light. Two seconds. It has saved more of my shoots than any other habit in this book.

Make It Look Good

Exposure decides whether a photo is *usable*. Composition decides whether anyone cares. These aren't laws — they're defaults that work, and knowing them is what earns you the right to break them on purpose.

06 · 1

Rule of thirds



Split the frame in thirds both ways; park the subject on an intersection, horizons on a line — not the middle. Your camera will overlay this grid for you.

06 · 2

Fill the frame

Most photos are taken from too far away. Step in — or zoom in — until the subject is unmistakably the point. If someone has to hunt for what the photo is about, you weren't close enough.

06 • 3

Leave breathing room

The opposite tool: empty space on purpose. A small subject in a wide quiet frame reads as calm, scale, isolation. Leave room on the side the subject moves toward or looks into.

06 • 4

Leading lines

Roads, rails, fences, shadows, a row of streetlights — anything linear steers the viewer's eye. Position yourself so the lines point at your subject, not out of the frame.

06 • 5

Patterns — then break one

Repetition is naturally pleasing: columns, windows, a wall of rental bikes. It gets interesting when something interrupts it — one red door in a gray row. Find the pattern, then find the break.

06 • 6

Frame within a frame

Shoot through a doorway, an arch, branches, a window. The inner frame adds depth and aims the eye. Just keep the framing device itself clean — it's a border, not a competitor.

06 • 7

Change your altitude

Eye level is the view everyone already has. Crouch to a dog's height, shoot straight down at a table, get under a bridge. The photo gets interesting the moment the viewpoint isn't free.

06 • 8

Let color carry it

Sometimes color *is* the subject. Complementary pairs — blue against orange, red against green — have built-in punch. Quick test: would this shot still work in black and white? If not, the color is doing the work. That's allowed.

06 · 9

Or take color away

When the scene is about texture, shape, or hard light — and the colors are just noise — black and white strips it to the bones. Strong graphic scenes often get stronger.

06 · 10

Police the background

The subject gets your attention; the background ruins the shot anyway. The pole growing out of a head, the stranger mid-sneeze, the trash can. Scan the edges before you press — or open the aperture and blur the mess away.

06 · 11

Simplify

When a frame isn't working it's almost never missing something — it has too much. Remove elements: step closer, shift angle, wait for the crowd to pass. A photo is finished when nothing's left to take away.

06 · 12

Chase light, not subjects

Obvious, and still the biggest one: great light makes average subjects glow. The hour after sunrise, the hour before sunset, a window with sheer curtains. An ordinary street in golden light beats a landmark at noon.

THE ONLY REAL RULE

Every one of these is breakable — centered subjects, chopped horizons, chaos instead of simplicity all have their days. The difference between a broken rule and a mistake is that you did it **on purpose**.

Scenario Cards

The chapter you'll actually use. Eight situations, eight starting recipes — dial these in, take a test frame, then adjust from what you see. A recipe isn't a rulebook; it's a head start.

Portrait — one person, flattering

RECIPE 01

MODE	APERTURE	FOCUS	LENS
A / Av	f/2.8–f/4 (widest you have)	Single point · on the nearest eye	50mm or longer

- └ The look you're after is a sharp face against a melted background — that's the wide aperture doing its job.
- └ Sharp eyes forgive everything else; missed eyes ruin everything else.
- └ Face too dark or bright? Exposure compensation, not a new mode.
- └ Motion blur creeping in? Raise the ISO — noise beats blur.
- └ Stay at 50mm+ so facial features keep their real proportions (chapter 04).

HOW TO READ THESE CARDS

The table row is the starting position. The bullets are what to change when reality disagrees — and it will. Test frame, glance at the histogram, adjust, shoot.

Group portrait — everyone sharp

RECIPE 02

MODE	APERTURE	FOCUS	METER
A / Av	f/8–f/16	Single point · middle row	Evaluative

- Groups have depth — front row to back row — so this is the opposite recipe from a solo portrait: stop down.
- Focusing on the middle row lets depth of field cover the rows in front and behind. Soft faces anyway? Smaller aperture.
- Zoom into the review image and actually check the corner faces before anyone scatters.
- Arrange people so every face can see the lens — if they can't see you, you can't see them.
- Small apertures eat light: raise ISO before you let the shutter drag.

Landscape — front-to-back detail

RECIPE 03

MODE	APERTURE	ISO	SUPPORT
A / Av	f/11–f/16	100–200	Tripod · stabilizer OFF

- Deep aperture for deep focus, low ISO for a clean file — the tripod is what makes both affordable at once.
- On the tripod, turn stabilization off (it hunts) and fire with the 2-second timer so your press doesn't shake the frame.
- Single-shot AF, evaluative metering, RAW — skies hold a lot of editing.
- Big sky-to-land contrast? Bracket three frames (chapter 05).
- Horizon on a third, never through the middle (chapter 06).



Freeze action — sports, kids, pets

RECIPE 04

MODE	SHUTTER	FOCUS	ISO
S / Tv	1/500–1/4000	Continuous (AF-C/Servo)	Auto

- Faster subject, faster shutter: 1/500 handles a running kid; a swing mid-arc or a diving keeper wants 1/1000+.
- Continuous focus tracks the subject right up to the frame; add burst drive and pick the peak moment later.
- Dark results mean the shutter is outrunning the light — let Auto ISO climb, or open the aperture.

Panning — sharp subject, streaked world

RECIPE 05

MODE	SHUTTER	FOCUS	TECHNIQUE
S / Tv	1/15–1/60	Continuous	Swing with the subject

- The trick that makes speed *visible*: a deliberately slow shutter while you rotate smoothly with the moving subject. They stay sharp; the background streaks.
- Feet planted, twist from the hips, follow through past the shot like a golf swing.
- Expect a low hit rate at first. That's normal — the keepers are worth the misses.



Low light — gyms, stages, dim rooms

RECIPE 06

MODE	APERTURE	ISO	METER
A / Av	f/2.8–f/4 (wide open)	1600 +	Spot · on the face

- └ This is where I live in event production, so trust me: open the aperture all the way and let the ISO climb. Grain is fine. Blur is fatal.
- └ Spot metering keeps a spotlight performer from becoming a silhouette against a dark stage — meter the face, not the room.
- └ Continuous AF with a single point; low light makes autofocus gullible, so tell it exactly where to look.
- └ Still blurry? The ISO ceiling is the next thing to raise — not your hopes.

Long exposure — silky water, light trails

RECIPE 07

MODE	SHUTTER	ISO	SUPPORT
M + Bulb	1–30s or more	100–400	Tripod · stabilizer OFF · remote

- └ Seconds-long exposures turn moving water to silk and traffic to ribbons of light. The camera cannot move *at all* — tripod, stabilizer off, and fire by remote, app, or self-timer.
- └ Bulb mode holds the shutter open as long as you command it — that's the door past 30 seconds.
- └ Focus once (single AF or manual), then don't touch it. Shoot RAW; long exposures reward editing.
- └ Long-exposure noise reduction helps here — budget for the double exposure time (chapter 03).



Macro / close-up — the small world

RECIPE 08

MODE	APERTURE	FOCUS	SUPPORT
A / Av	f/8–f/16	Manual · zoom to verify	Tripod · stabilizer OFF

- Up close, depth of field shrinks to millimeters — even f/13 is a thin slice. Stop down; you need every bit.
- Autofocus hunts at this range. Focus manually, magnify live view, and confirm the exact detail is tack sharp.
- A dedicated macro lens is the real tool; close-up filters are the budget ticket in.
- Evaluative metering, and a tripod — at these magnifications your heartbeat is camera shake.

Your recipe — the situation you keep shooting

RECIPE 09

MODE	APERTURE	SHUTTER	ISO
*****	*****	*****	*****

Every photographer ends up with one scenario they shoot more than anything else. When you find yours, work out the recipe the hard way — then write it here so you never have to work it out again.





That's the whole guide.

The rest is repetitions. Take the camera out, get it wrong, check the histogram, get it less wrong. If this helped, there's more where it came from — I share what I'm learning in weekly videos and write-ups.

TECHNOLOGY, FROM EVERY ANGLE.

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