

SHARP PHOTO FIELD GUIDE



COLE'S CLASSROOM

SHARP PHOTO FIELD GUIDE

A NOTE FROM COLE

Hi there, and thanks for downloading the Sharp Photo Field Guide!

This PDF is intended to accompany our “Sharp Photo Guidebook.”

Are you frustrated because your images aren’t as sharp as they could be? Then you are in the right place.

This Field Guide is going to give you an opportunity to see visually how to capture sharper images, through a practical lesson that will help you put these concepts into practice.

If you’re ready to see some results right away, then let’s get started.



SHARP PHOTO FIELD GUIDE

1/1000

SPORTS/BIKES

When there is a lot of movement in my scene and I want to freeze that motion, I don't usually let my shutter go any slower than 1/1000th of a second. This works well for things like fast sports or kids riding a bike.



1/500

KIDS RUNNING

A 'safe zone' speed for when kids are moving quickly / running - is 1/500th of a second. Any slower than that and there might be some blur.



1/400

TODDLERS ON THE MOVE

I want my shutter speed to be nice and quick when I'm following a toddler who is fast-moving. 1/400 ensures that I can get sharp images in this case.



1/250

PEOPLE WALKING

In this case, I like to keep my shutter speed at 1/250 -- no slower -- or I'll be worried that the images won't be as sharp as I'd like.



1/160

PEOPLE WHO STAY STILL

The slowest I will go with my shutter is 1/160th of a second when I'm working with people. If it gets slower than that, I'm just too worried about movement and blur. So this works great for people or portraits who aren't doing a lot of moving.



1/125

STILL OBJECTS

When I'm working with something that isn't moving at all, I feel comfortable shooting with a shutter as slow as 1/125. Yes, I CAN go slower if needed - by making sure I remain very still as I shoot. However this is just my 'safe zone' speed.



SHARP PHOTO FIELD GUIDE



YOUR CHALLENGE

Ready to see how your shutter speed affects motion?

1. Set your camera to shutter priority mode. Also make sure your ISO is set to AUTO (to keep things simple, for now). When you shoot in shutter priority mode, it means YOU tell the camera what shutter speed you want, and then the camera chooses/adjusts the other 2 big factors for exposure (ISO & Aperture).

2. Go outside & shoot something that is moving, so that you can practice and SEE for yourself the concept of stopping motion through shutter speed. I recommend shooting something moving quickly... cars on the street, or a fountain of running water, for example. In this challenge, the goal is for you to be able to change your shutter speed and see/observe what happens.

3. As you're shooting your moving object (or person... if you're using a kid riding a bike, for example), I want you to start with a SLOWER shutter speed (maybe 1/30 or so)... and then slowly increase that shutter speed, making it faster & faster, to watch what happens with your subject & motion blur.

**NOTE: If you can't go outside, you CAN shoot something moving indoors (for example, a moving fan like I did in my example on the next page). However - just know that at some point, your shutter will get so fast that you may max out your ISO & your aperture (highest ISO possible, widest aperture possible), and your images may be too dark. That's ok for now -- we aren't trying to get a proper exposure... YET. That step will come next!*

WHAT'S THE POINT?

In this challenge, I ONLY want you to notice how a faster shutter speed starts to 'freeze motion.' We aren't working on correct exposure here. There are a lot more steps to come still, so don't worry! We WILL get to ISO & Aperture... they all relate and interact together, so this is just ONE small step for you. And the point of this challenge is just for you to put into practice this concept of shutter speed.

SHARP PHOTO FIELD GUIDE

Here's my quick example of what happened when I did this assignment myself with a ceiling fan. As you can see, the faster I made my shutter speed, the more the motion stopped! Now I want YOU to go out and try this for yourself. (Reminder - it is easier to accomplish this outside on a bright day, as indoors your images may end up too dark to show the results of the challenge fully. Have fun, and let us know how it goes. We would love to hear how you liked this challenge, and what results you saw from it.




SHARP PHOTO FIELD GUIDE


OTHER STUDENTS' WORK

One of the best parts of teaching photography is seeing - and celebrating - the successes of our students. We just LOVE seeing the results from other photographers as these concepts begin to 'click' for them. Here are just a few examples from photographers who have used the Sharp Photo Field Guide.



 **Jennifer** Being able to see visible results was helpful and having the encouragement to take what I learned and go right then to try it!

 **Gina** Best part is visually seeing it WHILE hearing it. Shutter speed is something I'm aware of, but often forget when in the hurry of trying to capture the moment - still trying to figure out the "exposure triangle" but I know you both will likely cover that 😊

 **Tracy** What an awesome video!!! You broke it down so I could finally understand shutter speeds and why things looked good but never excellent!! Thank you for sharing your knowledge! I can't wait to learn more.

