SPYROS HENIADIS

GET OUT THERE AND TAKE SOME DAMN PHOTOS!

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Guide To Avoiding Blurry Photos

CONTENTS

Seven Tips For Avoiding Blurry Photos

1. Use the Reciprocal Rule

The reciprocal rule is an easy way to remember the slowest shutter speed you can use use when hand holding a photo in order to avoid motion blur from camera shake.

To use it:

- **Look at the focal length your lens is currently zoomed to**
- **Set your shutter speed to one over that number**

Some notes on using the Reciprocal Rule:

- You do not need to worry about crop factor
- This is a guideline that you should test with your lenses at various focal lengths *(testing instructions on page 5, testing chart on page 6)*
- Once you get to focal lengths of 50mm or less, you should default to 1/50 for your shutter speed
- The reciprocal rule does not account for image stabilization

2. Use Image Stabilization

Using image stabilization can allow you to shoot at shutter speeds that are slower than one over the focal length of your lens, and still avoid motion blur from camera shake.

Some notes on using Image Stabilization

- Stabilization does not work on moving subjects!
- Turn off Stabilization when using a tripod
- You MUST test the limits of your stabilzation! *(testing instructions on page 7, with testing chart on page 8)*

3. Use a Tripod

As I mentioned in the video this is pretty obvious. With two caveats

- Don't get a cheap tripod. You don't have to spend a ton of money, but get something good and solid (I use these tripod legs and this ball head)
- If you can't use a tripod, consider using a Monopod instead

4. Make Sure You've Got Good Focus

To get the best results when focusing:

- When shooting a still subject, choose a focus point and then using that focus point to focus precisely where you want focus on your subject
- When shooting moving subjects use the continuous/tracking focus modes and focus point areas. (I cover this in depth in this video here.)
- Make sure to test the different combinations of continuous/tracking focus modes and focus point areas to see what gives you the best results with moving subjects

5. Consider Your Depth Of Field

Everybody loves that super shallow depth of field look, but sometimes your depth of field is so shallow it throws parts of the subject out of focus that you want in focus, resulting in unwanted "blur". To get insure shallow depth of field isn't causing unwanted blur:

- Use a Depth of Field Calculator app to determine the depth of field area and see if it is enough to insure all the elements you want in focus will be in focus
- Remember that the depth of field area remains parallel to the camera sensor (this is explained in depth in this video)

6. Make Sure The Shutter Speed Is Fast Enough For Moving Subjects

Different subjects move at different speeds, so you should definitely test this out, but below are some guidelines for shutter speeds to use for moving subjects.*

- **Still Subject**: Use the reciprocal Rule
- **Kids Playing/Kid's Sports:** 1/200 or faster
- **Adult Sports:** 1/500 or faster
- **Wildlife:** 1/1000 or faster

**Be sure to test your shutter speed on any moving subject before shooting for keeps.*

7. Evaluate Your Lens

Sometimes the problem is your lens, and there are two possible problems:

- The camera and lens combo is not focusing accurately (testing instructions on page x)
- The lens itself is not sharp.

If after testing you determine your lens is focusing accurately, and everything else is eliminated as the cause for your photos being blurry, then you may have a bad lens. If that is the case, consider replacing the lens with an entirely different lens, or a different copy of the same lens.

Reciprocal Rule Testing Procedure

Testing chart on page x

1. Choose a focal length (with a zoom lens I recommend testing at least the widest, middle and most telephoto focal lengths of the lens)
2. Set your settings to take a photo with your shutter speed at one over the focal length of the lens
3. Take a photo while hand holding the camera
4. Adjust your settings so that your shutter speed is one stop faster than what you started with
5. Take another photo
6. Adjust your settings so that your shutter speed is one stop faster than the last photo
7. Take another photo
8. After you've taken the photos, download them to your computer and compare them.
9. If the photos are equally sharp, then you are safe using the reciprocal rule for that focal length on that lens and you can note this on the chart
10. If any of the photos are blurry, note the shutter speed at which the photo is sharp on your chart as the safe shutter speed to use at that focal length.

Reciprocal Rule Testing Chart

Lens	Focal Length	Safe Shutter Speed To Use

Stabilization Testing Procedure

(testing chart on page x)

1. Choose a focal length (with a zoom lens I recommend testing at least the widest, middle and most telephoto focal lengths of the lens)
2. Set your settings to take a photo starting with your shutter speed at one over the focal length of the lens
3. Take a photo while hand holding the camera
4. Adjust your settings so that your shutter speed is one stop slower than what you started with
5. Take another photo
6. Repeat steps four and five for up to however many stops of stabilization you're supposed to get with your equipment
7. After you've taken the photos, download them to your computer and see which ones are blurry and which ones are sharp
8. Note the slowest shutter speed that is sharp on the testing chart on page x

Image Stabilization Testing Chart

Lens	Focal Length	Slowest Sharp Shutter Speed

Conclusion

I am excited to help you in your your photography journey, and I am really looking forward to seeing what you can do with your camera, but using your camera for amazing photos is much more than just understanding your Aperture setting, so if you want to truly master your camera and use it to take amazing photos that will match the vision you see in your mind, check out my Guide to Shooting in Manual Mode.

The Guide expands upon what we've covered in this book, and much more, including:

- How cameras work, including more in depth explanations of ISO, Aperture, and Shutter Speed
- Exactly how to change your ISO, Aperture, and Shutter Speed settings
- An in depth look at exactly how changing ISO, Aperture, and Shutter Speed will change your photos
- Exactly how to get Shallow Depth of Field when you want it
- The secret to my I Am Shooting method, which will help you choose the right settings for the photo you want to take every single time
- How to take sharp photos and avoid those crappy blurry photos we never want to take
- and much more...

Go check it out, and then…

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