

How To Change Your ISO, Aperture and Shutter Speed When Shooting in Manual Mode



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Putting Your Camera in Manual Mode

Before you can change any of your ISO setting, you've got to make sure your camera is in Manual mode. So, if you haven't already, change your mode dial on your camera so that the "M" (for Manual) is your selected mode.



Changing The ISO

Most cameras have a dedicated button for changing the ISO, and it's typically labeled "ISO". On some cameras, the button allows you to access two functions, so it might be labeled with more than one option.



Typically the button is either on the top right side of the camera near the shutter button. If it isn't there, then it's likely on the back side, often on one of the directional pad buttons.



However, if you have a Nikon D7000 series camera, it's on the back of the camera on the left side. If you have a Nikon D3000 or D5000 series camera, there is a function button on the left front side of the camera that accesses the ISO setting.



Once you've found your button, changing the ISO is going to work in one of two ways.

The first way it might work is that you press the button and the ISO option becomes active.

Then, depending on your camera, you either change the ISO using the directional buttons on the back of your camera or you spin a control dial to change it. (On many cameras, you can use both.)



If you have a camera with one control dial like the Canon Rebel series and the Nikon D3000 and D5000 series, that control dial will change the ISO.

If your camera has two control dials like the 60D, Nikon D7000 series, or any Pentax DSLR, one of the two control dials will change the ISO for you. You may have to try both dials.

The second way that it might work is that you have to press and hold the ISO button. This is how changing the ISO works on all Nikon DSLRs. Most other cameras don't require you to hold the button down, but if you press the button and then release it and find the ISO option isn't available, then you may need to hold the button while spinning the control dial.

Now that you know how to access the ISO function, you'll want to know what you're looking at when you change it. Depending on your camera, you'll be able to see your ISO setting in a few different places.

On pretty much every camera, the screen on the back should activate and show you your ISO options. If your camera has a screen on the top, you may also see it there.



Finally, when you look in the viewfinder, you should see your ISO somewhere along the bottom of the display. It is usually on the right hand side.



Changing The Aperture

If you have two control dials on your camera, then one of those two control dials will change the Aperture for you. It's commonly the rear control dial but it could be the front/top dial.



Start by spinning the front/top dial. When you spin the dial, you should see a number changing on the back screen. *(And just like with the ISO, you can also see the number on the top LCD (if you have one), or at the bottom of the viewfinder.)*



The number that's changing will likely be between 3.5 and 22, and it may have an "f" in front of it. If you see some other number changing that is in the hundreds or is a fraction, then the other dial changes your Aperture.

If your camera only has one control dial, you need to press and hold a button on your camera while spinning your control dial in order to change your Aperture. The button will be marked with a symbol that looks like this:



Depending on your camera, the button will be either on the back or the top.



Wherever it is, press and hold that button while spinning your control dial. When you do that, you should see the Aperture number changing. *(If nothing is changing as you're spinning the dial, then your camera has gone into sleep/powersave mode. Just half press the shutter button to wake up the camera. and then try to change the Aperture again.)*

Changing The Shutter Speed

Changing the Shutter Speed is pretty easy.

If your camera only has one control dial like the Canon Rebel series and the Nikon D3000 or D5000 series cameras, that dial changes the Shutter Speed by default.



If your camera has two control dials, then one of those two dials will change the Shutter Speed.



In that case, if you use the rear control dial to change your Aperture, then the front dial will control the Shutter Speed. If the front dial controls the Aperture, then the rear controls the Shutter Speed.

As with the ISO and the Aperture, you should be able to see the Shutter Speed changing on the back LCD of your camera, on the top LCD (if you have one), or at the bottom of the viewfinder.)



Conclusion

Thank you very much for taking the time to read this guide. Changing your ISO, Aperture and Shutter Speed is the first step in taking control of your camera and learning how to use it to create the image you want to create, and I'm happy to have the opportunity to help you learn how to do that. If you'd like to learn more about how to use your camera so that you can reliably take photos that look exactly the way you want them to, check out my [Guide to Shooting in Manual Mode video course](#).

And then...

**GET OUT THERE
AND TAKE
SOME DAMN
PHOTOS!**