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GET OUT THERE AND TAKE SOME DAMN PHOTOS!
SELFHELPHOTOGRAPHER.COM

Concert Photography Cheat Sheet



CONTENTS

Concert Photography Cheat Sheet	1
CONTENTS	2
The Settings	3
Focus Mode	3
Focus Point(s)	3
White Balance	3
Metering Mode	4
Shooting Mode	4
Exposure Settings	4
Conclusion	6

The Settings

Focus Mode

For concert photography you want to use some form of continuous focus. Most cameras offer at least two, if not all three of the following options:

- Continuous
- Tracking Focus
- Face/Eye Detection

You will want to test the continuous focus options your camera offers to find which performs the best for you. Then use that option for your concert photography.

Focus Point(s)

While you'll have the camera in continuous focus, you still need to be sure the camera is focusing on what you want it to. Most cameras offer focus tracking in conjunction with continuous focus using one of three options:

- Single focus point
- A focus point grouping
- Face/Eye Detection

I recommend a single focus point or a grouping. The problem with face/eye detection is that it can switch faces unexpectedly, which could cause you to miss focus on a critical shot.

However, I again recommend testing this to see which gives you the best performance for your camera.

White Balance

People often go mad trying to white balance for concert photography, and that's a huge mistake. Concerts use crazy lighting to create an atmosphere for the performance, and instead of trying to remove that atmosphere, you should embrace it.

To do that, I recommend using your camera's Flash White Balance setting. This will give you a constant white balance that will render accurate colors with the crazy concert lighting.

If your camera doesn't allow you to use the flash white balance setting when a flash is not attached to the camera, you can either set the custom white balance color temperature to 5200 Kelvin, or use the Sunlight white balance setting.

Metering Mode

You want your subject exposed properly, and in the crazy, ever changing light of a concert, you need to make sure the camera is metering off of the subject, and the subject only.

Spot metering is the only way to guarantee this. Just make sure you find out if your camera locks the metering point to the center focus point, or if it allows it to move with your focus point.

Shooting Mode

Manual Mode? Not necessarily. If you're VERY comfortable with your camera and are confident that you can quickly change your exposure to adapt to the changing lighting of the concert, then manual mode is great.

If you are still getting familiar with your camera or you just don't feel you'll be able to respond to the changing light fast enough, then Shutter Priority Mode is the way to go.

Shutter Priority will give some control back to the camera, allowing the camera to adapt the exposure for you, but you'll still have enough control to make sure the photos turn out amazing.

Exposure Settings

If you are shooting in shutter priority mode:

Shutter Speed: 1/250 or faster*

ISO: Start at ISO 3200 or 6400

Aperture: The camera will set this for you

Once you have your initial settings dialed in, take a test photo and evaluate your exposure. If you need to adjust it the exposure, use the exposure compensation function, increasing it to over expose and decreasing it to under expose.

Make sure you pay attention to the camera to make sure it's able to set the aperture to meet your exposure parameters. If it is unable to do so, you'll need to increase the ISO to allow it to do so.

**TEST THIS TO INSURE YOUR PHOTOS ARE SHARP. Don't take the shutter speed for granted*

If you're shooting in manual mode:

Aperture: Use the smallest aperture setting possible (ex: f1.8, f3.5, etc..)

Shutter Speed: 1/250 or faster*

ISO: After setting your Aperture and Shutter Speed, set the ISO to balance the exposure to 0EV (while pointing the camera at your subject)

Once you have your initial settings dialed in, take a test photo and evaluate your exposure. If you need to adjust it, increase the ISO to over expose, or decrease the ISO to under expose.

Make note of the new exposure value as you'll want to maintain that as you're shooting throughout the concert.

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Conclusion

I am excited to help you with your concert photography, and I am really looking forward to seeing what you can do with your camera, but using your camera for amazing concert photos is much more than just using a cheat sheet, 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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