
EXPERT TIPS

BY THE BOOK

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METER MADE

An off-camera incident lightmeter will give you the best exposure for a scene, but if you know how to use your camera's built-in reflective meter, you can still get good results. Here are a few things to keep in mind.

- Use Auto Exposure Lock (AE-L) to take a light reading from one part of a scene, then lock that setting as the exposure for the shot.

- Use a gray card: Zoom in and focus on it to let the camera's metering system suggest an exposure based on a midtone. Use AE-L to hold this exposure setting while you reframe.

- Try bracketing your exposures.

You can do this manually, but your DSLR probably has an autobracking function that allows you to set the number of frames and stops of over- or underexposure to use.

ADAPTED FROM 500 LIGHTING HINTS, TIPS, AND TECHNIQUES BY ROD ASHFORD (ROTOVISION, 2007; \$20)

ANIMAL ARRANGEMENT

There are two common problems with most people's wildlife photos: The subject is either too far away or too centered in the frame, creating a static, boring composition. Look at the entire image in the viewfinder before you snap, and consider these tips for better animal pictures.

- Follow the Rule of Thirds for wildlife in motion, but be sure to place your subject so that it moves *into* the frame rather than exiting it.

- Get as close as possible to the animal. Aside from using a powerful telephoto lens, try waiting in a blind (a camouflaged structure) for wildlife to come to you.

- Use a wide-angle lens to show an animal in its environment.

- Try shooting from different angles and turning your camera vertically. 🔄

ADAPTED FROM THE BETTERPHOTO GUIDE TO DIGITAL NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY BY JIM MIOTKE (AMPHOTO BOOKS, 2007; \$25)