

# Night Photography

Experiment, experiment, experiment.

Take lots of photos, make loads of mistakes, but learn from them and *have fun*.

## Long exposures

Camera must be on tripod or on solid support.

Use RAW (or RAW + JPG), auto white balance.

Set a low ISO setting.

Use Manual or Bulb mode (depends on camera).

Set aperture to your taste – try f8 to start with.

Use a remote release, if you have one.

Set Bulb shutter setting (depends on camera) and a long shutter speed of “a few seconds or minutes”. (Use a blank card in front of lens to stop unwanted light.)

Focus manually – use a torch to find the subject. *Lens caps go in a zipped pocket.*

Turn off lens/camera image stabilisation (Marked on your lens as IS, OS, VR, VC.)

## Exposing

If using remote release use Bulb shutter setting and press and hold the button for the duration of the exposure.

Or if using self-timer then set a long exposure time and press the shutter before the action.

Experiment with exposure times, apertures and ISO settings.

Don't touch the camera or tripod when taking shots.

Mirror-up setting will reduce camera vibration.

Long-exposure noise reduction setting turned on may help if you don't have good noise reduction software but it will waste shooting time.

Think about the background.

## Torch painting

Long exposure settings. Open shutter. While pointing torch at camera, move torch around subject; draw or write things. Close shutter. Review, adjust exposure, be more creative.

## LED toys, Laser pointers

Long exposure settings. Open shutter and be creative! Close shutter. Review, adjust exposure and be more creative. ***Lasers must not be pointed at people or cameras.***

## **Photography in pitch dark**

Take exposures for about 30 seconds with lens at largest aperture (smallest f number) and highest ISO setting you're comfortable with. Repeat, doubling the exposure time (1 min, 2 min, 4 min) until you get an acceptable exposure. Eventually you will be able to get an image because there is always stray light.

## **Light trails**

Point camera at road – at a suitable distance away from traffic to avoid distracting drivers. **NO FLASH TO BE USED.** Use long exposure settings. Manually focus in the middle of the trail. Await first vehicle and then expose for a few seconds. Experiment and recompose.

## **Strobe Flash**

(For Canon 580/600 speedlite or Nikon SB-900/910)

Use long exposure settings and focus on subject. Low power flash so increase ISO. Set strobe flash setting (multi-flash) to repeat many times a second. Open shutter. Fire flash with action. (Golf swing, tennis swing, cricket swing, juggle, wave arms.) Close shutter. Review, adjust exposure settings, flash position and strobe timing.

## **Flash painting**

Long exposure settings. Flashgun on manual settings and not attached to camera. Open shutter. Fire flash at subject – as many times as necessary. Close shutter. Review, adjust exposure, adjust flash power, adjust flash zoom, and use different flash directions. Try flash from behind the subject.

## **Mixture of Techniques**

When shutter is open use flash, torches, toys and movement for something special.

## **The Moon**

Long lens mounted on sturdy tripod. ISO 100, 1/250th, f8 or thereabouts. Focus manually, use Live View if possible. Take your shot and then wish for a longer lens.

## **Stars and Galaxies**

Wide lens mounted on sturdy tripod. Point at clear part of sky. High ISO: 1600+. Large aperture (f2.8 or thereabouts), focussed manually at infinity, use Live View if possible. Expose for around 15s – although much longer if you want trails. Review and adjust exposure. Images will need cleaning up afterwards in Photoshop. For long star trails take multiple 1 minute shots and blend together afterwards.