

INTRODUCTION TO DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY

Course Overview

by Ian M Butterfield



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Ian M Butterfield
Correspondence Address:
2 Tennyson Close, Heaton Mersey Stockport, Cheshire, SK4 2ED

Studio Address:
Ian's Studio, Woodbank Works, Turncroft Lane, Offerton, Stockport, SK1 2ED

Telephone: 07777 678 770
www.ians-studio.co.uk / ian@imb.biz





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A woman exercises on the sea front at Los Cancajos

*Date: 9 Jan 2014
Camera: Canon EOS 5D Mark III
Lens: EF24-105mm f/4L IS USM @105 mm
Exposure: 1/800s, f/8, ISO 100
Exp mode: Aperture priority
Metering mode: Pattern
Exp comp: 0 EV
Ref: 20140109A-G00340*



MEET YOUR TUTOR

Hopefully by now you know who I am. I am Ian M Butterfield.

I have worked full-time as a professional photographer since 2003. Like most photographers, I do the usual portraits and commercial shoots. I have done weddings in the past, but that has never been a major part of my business.

Photographically there are two key areas that I have focused on over the years. These are Theatre Photography and Travel Photography.

Theatre & Travel Photography

I am the official photographer for three local theatres in the Stockport area and I have photographed hundreds of shows. As an actor and (amateur) theatre director myself, I

have a natural affinity to this type of photography.

Travel photography has been a passion for many years, and I sell my images through photographic libraries. It used to be possible to make a reasonable income from stock photography sales but over the last decade prices have fallen dramatically and libraries have dramatically increased their percentage from each sale. While I still love the genre it no longer possible to make a living from just doing travel photography.

Ian's Studio

Due to these changes in the world of photography, I changed the emphasis of the business to training and mentoring both amateur and professional photographers. In 2011,

*Video setup at Ian's Studio,
Stockport, Greater
Manchester*

*Date: 26 Feb 2021
Camera: Canon EOS 5D Mark
III
Lens: EF24-105mm f/4L IS
USM @75 mm
Exposure: 1/6s, f/6.3, ISO 100
Exp mode: Manual
Metering mode: Pattern
Exp comp: 0 EV
Ref: 20210226A-G1671*

I opened “Ian’s Studio” as a base for my training activities.

In addition to training sessions at the studio, I have been asked to speak at various camera clubs and other local organisations.

Cruise & Maritime Voyages

In 2015 I was asked by CMV to become one of their regular guest speakers on their voyages. Between 2015 and 2019 I was a speaker on 14 different voyages on 4 different ships. The duration of the voyages ranged from 9 nights up to 70 nights - a total of 340 nights on board. Sadly in 2020, due to COVID-19, CMV ceased trading and my association with them came to an end.

Live stream & Talks

In 2020 I started a weekly live stream on YouTube – where I talk

about different photography topics, provide feedback on viewer’s images and do live Q&A sessions.

I have over 20 different 45-min talks currently available, covering a wide range of photographic topics. In addition to this I have a Biblical Archaeology talk which is illustrated with my own photographs from an expedition through the Sinai Peninsula following the footsteps of Moses. Other talks are currently in development.

In addition to talks, I offer “PhotoDoctor” sessions where I provide feedback on images and rescue shots that may, at first glance, appear to have failed. I also run other activities such as photography challenges, live demonstrations of photographic techniques and lead photo walks.

*“I just wanted to say how much we enjoyed your lectures during the three weeks on Marco Polo – you engaged with the audience very well and imparted the information in a way useful to absolute beginners and keen amateurs
We have been to lectures by photographers on at least three previous cruises and felt that you were the best that we have seen.”*

- CM, Cruise Passenger, MV Marco Polo

*“Ian was a guest speaker on the Marco Polo cruise ship during a 10 week voyage around South America. His popular talks on photography were varied, interesting and useful, applicable to those of all abilities. Ian was inspirational and made us want to try out simple new techniques to capture wonderful memories of this trip. He also provided helpful information on how to save our images in a logical and orderly manner and gave 1:1 support to passengers as needed to resolve photography issues.
But Ian was much more than a photographic speaker. He set up fun competitions, he gave out advice and tips for our destinations, he shared his own photography and travelogues of the destinations as well as life on board, and he gave fascinating talks on topics unrelated to photography.
Ian really added value to our voyage. Thank you”*

- K&A, Cruise



COURSE OVERVIEW

The Introduction to Digital Photography course consists of eight modules ideally taken over eight weeks. Each week you will receive a series of training videos to watch, printed notes and an exercise to do that will reinforce the topics we have looked at over that week.

During the week you should watch the videos at a time and pace that suits you. When you have watched the videos complete the photographic exercise and submit the images for feedback. The method for submitting the images will be confirmed in your joining instructions.

Each week there will be a weekly group zoom call with me where you can ask questions and get answers. The time and day of the week for the call will be confirmed in your joining instructions.

The following modules make up the course.

1. Composition & Point of View
2. Understanding Cameras and Lenses
3. “What the f?!?” – Understanding f-numbers, aperture, shutter speed & ISO
4. Exposing Yourself – Understanding Camera Exposure
5. Understanding and Controlling the Light
6. Introduction Digital Image Management and Editing
7. Coping with Difficult Conditions and Bad Weather
8. Developing as a Photographer

Over the next few pages we will look at each of the eight modules in turn.

Havana Street Scene, Cuba

*Date: 21 Mar 2017
Camera: Canon EOS 5D Mark III
Lens: EF70-200mm f/2.8L IS II USM @200 mm
Exposure: 1/5000s, f/2.8, ISO 640
Exp mode: Aperture priority
Metering mode: Pattern
Exp comp: 1/3 EV
Ref: FK0321A-G04792*



MODULE 1 - COMPOSITION & POINT OF VIEW

In this first module, we look at what makes a great image.

The biggest improvement that any photographer can make to his/her work is to learn how to compose an image.

We start this module by looking at three simple guidelines – Subject, Focus, Simplify.

Then we look at perspective and point of view. Just changing where we make photographs from can change a very ordinary image into an extraordinary one.

We will look at using the following techniques: The use of worm's eye and bird's eye views and the use of angles and tilts.

The first module in course contains a bonus lesson where we look at the importance of feedback in our photography journey.

Not only is it important to receive feedback but by learning how to give feedback we can improve our own images while help others improve too.

*Blackpool tower at night
with streaming lights*

Date: 20 Oct 2007

Camera: Canon EOS 5D

Lens: EF24-105mm f/4L IS

USM @24 mm

Exposure: 13s, f/16, ISO 100

Exp mode: Aperture priority

Metering mode: Pattern

Exp comp: -1 EV

Ref: EZ1020B-E06936



MODULE 2 - UNDERSTANDING CAMERAS AND LENSES

In module 2 we look briefly at different types of camera and how cameras work, we look at how to clean and care for your camera – including a discussion on sensor cleaning.

We explain what a “crop factor” (or focal length multiplier) is and how it affects the images we take.

We look at two characteristics of lenses: “focal length” and “speed”, and how changing the focal length affects an image.

We consider the optimum focal length for different types of photography and how we can use focal length to introduce foreshortening and distortion into our images.

In this session we look at how camera focus and focusing modes and when you should use each different type of focusing mode.

We also look at image stabilisation and some specialist lenses such as macro lenses.

Close-up of a pink rose

Date: 5 Apr 2015

Camera: Canon EOS 5D Mark III

Lens: 105mm @105 mm

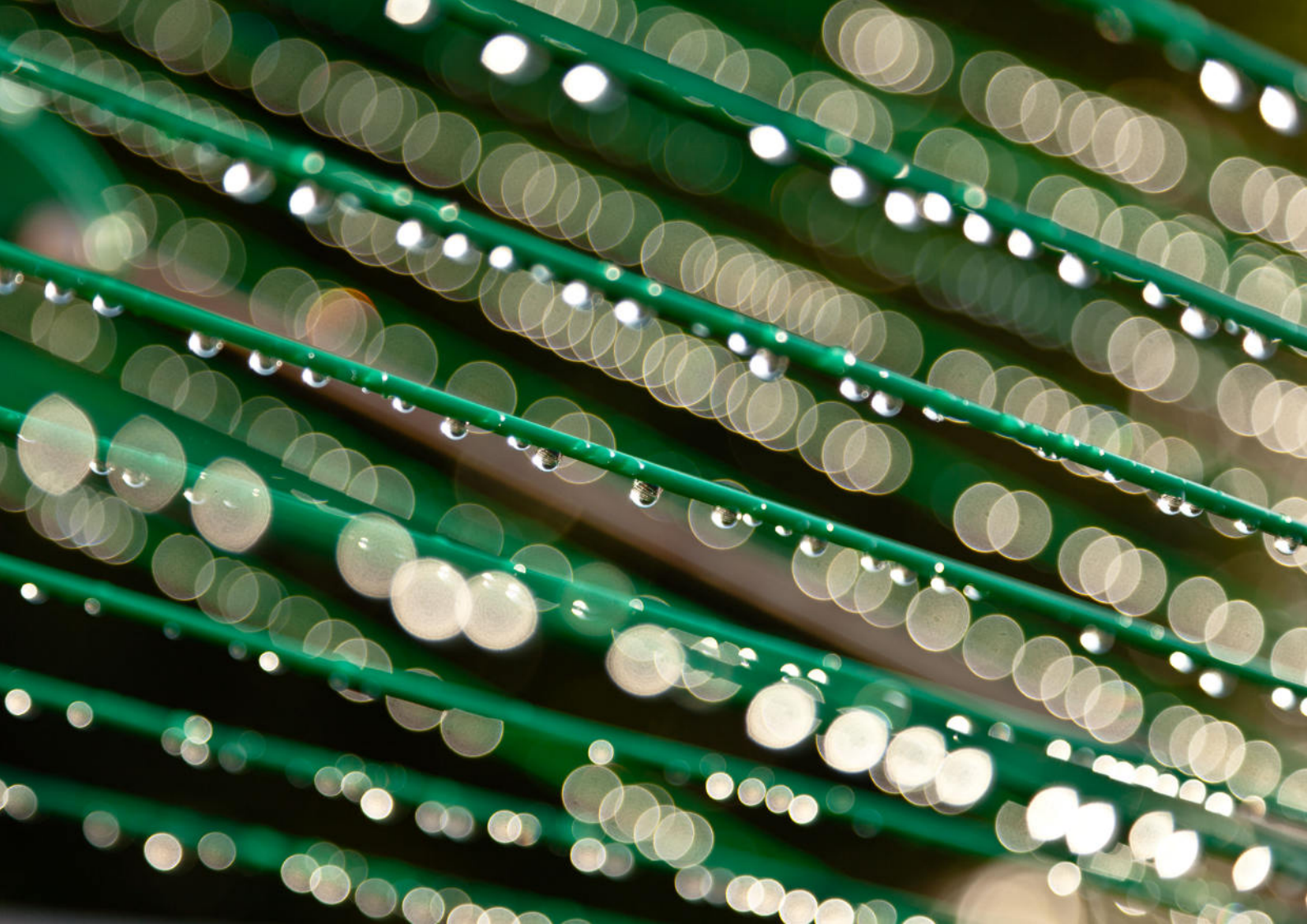
Exposure: 1/80s, f/5, ISO 100

Exp mode: Aperture priority

Metering mode: Pattern

Exp comp: 1/3 EV

Ref: 20150405A-G04361



MODULE 3 - “WHAT THE F ?!?” - UNDERSTANDING F-NUMBERS, APERTURE, SHUTTER SPEED & ISO

In our third module we look in detail at the three main variables which make up an exposure: f-stops/aperture, shutter-speed and ISO.

We then consider how changing any of these settings can affect the images you create.

We also look at how the three variables relate to each other. Look at camera modes including those which allow us to adjust each of the three variables

This module also explains about depth of field (what is in acceptable focus), how this relates to where we focus and we look at how to maximise depth of field.

Finally we consider how the three variables (aperture, shutter speed and ISO) are related to each other.

Water droplets on a rotary washing line, creating bokeh patterns

Date: 6 Feb 2012

Camera: Canon EOS 5D

Lens: EF24-105mm f/4L IS USM @105 mm

Exposure: 1/400s, f/4, ISO 100

Exp mode: Aperture priority

Metering mode: Pattern

Exp comp: -1/3 EV

Ref: 20120206A-E01395



MODULE 4 - EXPOSING YOURSELF - UNDERSTANDING CAMERA EXPOSURE

This module follows on directly from “What the f!?” (above) and looks at how we use the three settings we looked at in the previous module to calculate the desired exposure for a given image.

We cover the steps for calculating an exposure manually and the show how the camera does most of those steps for us.

We look look at the different ways in which your camera can calculate an exposure and why it sometimes will get it wrong.

We then consider histograms, dynamic range and exposure compensation so you will know when the camera has got the exposure wrong and how to correct it.

We look at two more advances techniques: bracketing and high dynamic range.

Finally we look at some of the different camera modes and how those modes differ when calculating the exposure of an image.

Fountain with winter sun

*Date: 2 Jan 2012
Camera: Canon EOS 5D
Lens: EF24-105mm f/4L IS
USM @70 mm
Exposure: 1/250s, f/8, ISO
100
Exp mode: Aperture priority
Metering mode: Pattern
Exp comp: -2 EV
Ref: 20120102A-E00032*



MODULE 5 - UNDERSTANDING AND CONTROLLING THE LIGHT

In the fifth module we look at the fourth variable that affects exposure - light itself.

We start by looking at the colour of light and compare the differences between how we see the colour of light and how cameras see it.

We continue this theme looking at white balance and colour corrections - including times we shouldn't colour correct.

Next we look at different light sources (such as ambient light and flash) and then how we can modify light using filters, reflectors, diffusers and flags.

We finish the module by looking at two techniques where we are taking control of the light. Fill-in flash and night photography.

Cathedral of the Northern Lights, Alta, Finmark, Norway at night

Date: 5 Nov 2017

Camera: Canon EOS 5D Mark III

Lens: EF24-105mm f/4L IS USM @28 mm

Exposure: 2.50s, f/8, ISO 100

Exp mode: Aperture priority

Metering mode: Pattern

Exp comp: -1/3 EV

Ref: 20171105A-G09741



MODULE 6 - INTRODUCTION TO DIGITAL IMAGE MANAGEMENT

When you start doing digital photography one thing becomes very clear very quickly - you end up with a lot of images that you need to find.

Many photographers find after a couple of years that they struggle to find photographs. So the sooner you can adopt a system for managing your images the better the chances are that you will not get overwhelmed with the photographs.

As part of this module we look at the differences between shooting JPG and RAW formats and why it is recommended that most

photographers start shooting RAW images as soon as possible.

We look at strategies for naming and filing your images.

Almost all RAW formats are proprietary and camera/manufacturer specific - we discuss the advantages of converting RAW images to the open standard DNG format.

The module concludes with a brief tour and introduction to Adobe Lightroom.

Screen shot of Adobe
Lightroom



MODULE 7 - COPING WITH DIFFICULT CONDITIONS AND BAD WEATHER

Until this point in the course we have been looking at how different settings affect the image that we create.

However the real world isn't like that. We don't start with a setting and look for the conditions to use it in - we start with the conditions and need to find the appropriate settings.

This module is designed to help you do that. We look at a variety of difficult conditions and what we need to do to still make great images in them.

We don't just cover the settings you need but we look at real world practical advice for using and protecting your camera kit in

conditions such as rain, snow and in the cold.

The second half of this module is a real case study - a trip I made to Rome early in my career when the weather conditions were not what I expected or hoped for.

In that section I look at the techniques I used and the lessons I learned from that experience and how that has influenced my photography ever since.

Snowscape at the top of the Fjellheisen cable car, Tromso, Troms, Norway

Date: 7 Nov 2017

Camera: Canon EOS 5D Mark III

Lens: EF24-105mm f/4L IS USM @67 mm

Exposure: 1/60s, f/8, ISO 250

Exp mode: Aperture priority

Metering mode: Pattern

Exp comp: 2 EV

Ref: 20171107A-G09844



MODULE 8 - DEVELOPING AS A PHOTOGRAPHER

As we come to the final module of the course we look at the question of “What next?”

Hopefully, the course will have inspired you with your photography and you will want to take it further.

In this module we look at setting goals and objectives for your photography, including some example goals for you to consider.

Next we look at the whole question of upgrading and buying new gear, with specific advice on when to upgrade and a brief look at tripods because

this is an area where it is easy to make a mistake when purchasing.

We finish the course with a quick overview of our intermediate level training offering for those who want to consider doing one or more of those training sessions.

Fountain with winter sun

*Date: 2 Jan 2012
Camera: Canon EOS 5D
Lens: EF24-105mm f/4L IS
USM @70 mm
Exposure: 1/250s, f/8, ISO
100
Exp mode: Aperture priority
Metering mode: Pattern
Exp comp: -2 EV
Ref: 20120102A-E00032*



FAQs

What sort of camera do I need?

The course is designed for mirrorless cameras, DSLRs, and bridge cameras. You will need to be able to get your camera off 'automatic' to make best use of the course. If you are unsure please contact me with the make/model of your camera and I can tell you if it is suitable.

How long are the videos?

Each module will have approximately 90mins worth of video – broken down into individual videos of about 10mins each in length so that you don't have to watch everything in one go.

What if I don't understand something in the video?

Hopefully my explanations will be clear and this won't arise. But if it does then in the first instance I would suggest watching the section again, sometimes things will make more sense on a second viewing. If you are still struggling after that then we can talk about it in the weekly zoom Q&A call – that's what those calls are for.

Do I have to do each module in one week?

You will receive a new module each week, and I will encourage you to try to watch the videos and do the exercises in that particular week. You will learn better by keeping the

Horse-chestnut (conker) on a path

Date: 28 Sep 2013

Camera: Canon EOS 5D Mark III

Lens: EF24-105mm f/4L IS

USM @105 mm

Exposure: 1/30s, f/4, ISO 640

Exp mode: Manual

Metering mode: Pattern

Exp comp: 0 EV

Ref: 20130928A-G00526

momentum going. But we all know life gets in the way – and that’s the advantage of pre-recorded training – you can watch the videos when YOU have the time to do so.

What if I do miss a week?

That’s the beauty of video based training, you can watch when your schedule permits. And if you are a week behind everyone else you will still get all the modules, and you will still get feedback on your images.

How many weeks will the weekly zoom Q&A calls go on for?

The last zoom Q&A call will be one week after the final module is sent out. That’s one of the reasons why I will try to encourage you to keep in step with the course.

What if I can’t get my ‘homework’ done on time?

Obviously the ideal is for you to complete the exercises for one module before moving on to the next, as the exercises are designed to reinforce the lessons taught in the videos – however, if you need longer to get them done then take the time to do them – it is better that you do the exercise later than not do them at all.

How long after the end of the course can I still submit images for feedback?

Again the ideal is that you do the exercises alongside the modules they are for but I will continue to provide feedback on images from the exercises for up to six weeks after the course finishes.

How many times can I watch the videos?

The videos will continue to be available to you after the course is over – so if you ever need a refresher on any topic you can re-watch any of the videos.

Do you offer a money-back guarantee?

Yes (but you won’t need it!). You can use module 1 as a taster. If at any time before you receive module two, you decide the course isn’t for you, then please let me know and I will refund your full fee no questions asked.

Can I pay for the course in instalments?

This is not something I offer as standard. There’s lots of reasons for this not least the difficulties in administering such a system. Having said all that, I may sometimes offer this to individuals who have a specific need for it. Feel free to ask me and I will review each request on a case by case basis.

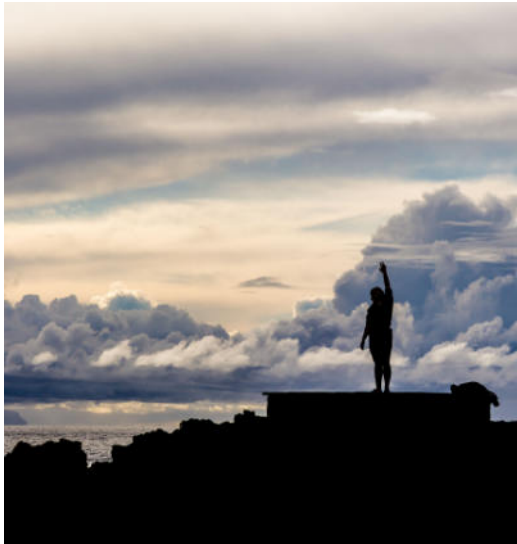
Are there any discount codes available?

There might be – I do sometimes run offers particularly when a course is first announced. Keep an eye on my websites, social media and newsletters.



Don't Forget!

Tag your images with
#InspiredByIansStudio
so we can see what
you've created.



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Photography Guide written by:*

*Ian M Butterfield for Ian's Studio
www.ians-studio.co.uk
+44 (0)7777 678 770
contactme@ians-studio.co.uk*

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