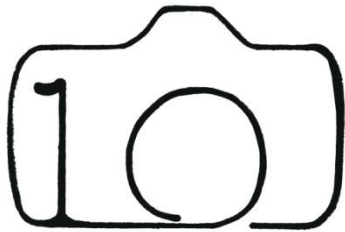


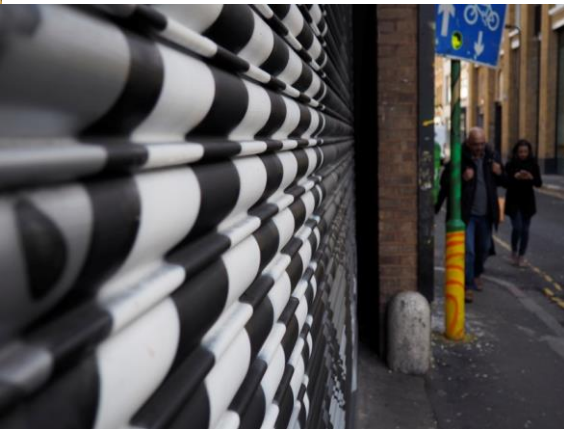
# Street and urban



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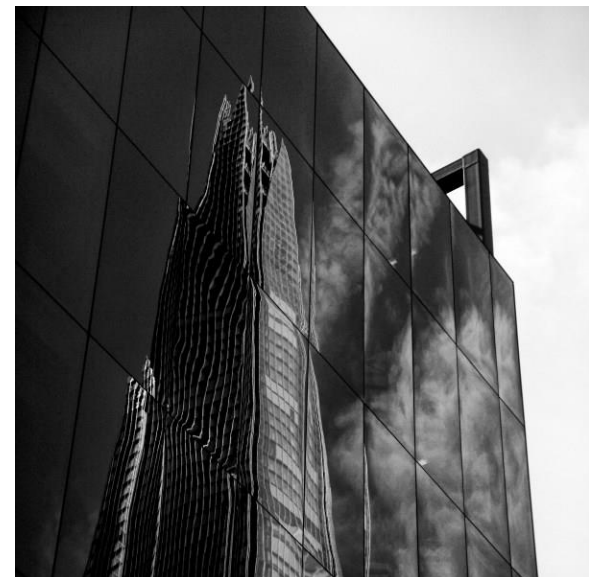
# Finding your subjects

Street photography is creative and can be about informing, humour, the unusual, light or pattern and is based on capturing the moment. The term candid is often used with street photography which is not posed. However, street photography may have subjects that notice the photographer and pose for them. This is all under the bracket of street photography. It is about an interaction with you and your environment. Because of this completely personal response to this type of photography, finding your subjects may be completely different from one person to another.



These are points to help you draw out your style:

- Take the time to stop and absorb life, this helps you start to see subjects and the characters.
- Look at the light and try to work with it.
- Avoid wide angle, this just pushes away your subject. Zooming in helps you frame your subject better.
- Try not to fit everything in one frame, your compositions will be too busy.
- Look for humour.
- Explore your environment, you may find a better view by moving around.
- Look for the unusual.
- Try to tell a story.
- Try to predict movements and events.



# Health and safety and rules

Be respectful. Street photography is intrusive so be aware that not all subjects will approve being photographed.

When you are in a public area, you are allowed to take pictures. However, even if you are in a public space, you must respect privacy. Before doing any street photography look at the laws for each country you plan to take photographs in. Laws can differ greatly from one country to another. As the photographer it is your responsibility to find these out and act within these laws.

Be careful of your equipment and where you place it. Your bag can quite easily be a trip hazard or stolen. Do not walk with out looking. I see a lot of photographers walk backwards and not think to check what is behind them. Always be aware of your surroundings and do not put yourself or others in danger.



# Composition rules

Just because street photography can be a lot quicker than landscape photography, do not forget composition rules. These can transform your images from a snap to something very creative.

Try to recreate images of all the composition rules so that they become second nature;

- Rule of thirds
- Leading lines
- Pattern and texture
- Symmetry
- Rule of odds
- Natural framing
- Simplicity
- Angle of view



# Composition tips

- Choose the main subject of interest
- Think about what it is you want to say/ show
- Decide if you want to shoot vertically or horizontally
- Alter your position
- Use composition rules
- Avoid distracting backgrounds
- Look for the unusual
- Try not to fit everything into the one frame, less is more
- Take lots of pictures to make sure you get what you want

# Focal lengths and what lenses to use

For street and urban photography, a telephoto lens will allow you to stand back from your subject and therefore go unnoticed. This normally will give more natural expressions. A kit lens is also good, but for the best results you will most probably use it at its longest focal length. Remember the shorter the focal length the closer you have to be to your subject. A 50mm lens will be very creative because it mirrors the angle of view we see. In addition, it generally has a wider aperture on offer such as F1.4 which can be useful to produce shallow depth of field and allow more light in when in lower light conditions.



# Shutter speeds for handheld shots

Shutter speeds need to be fast in order to be able to hand hold your camera and not get camera shake. A tripod should not be used in street photography because it is too cumbersome and awkward.

What ever lens you are using, a general rule of thumb is never to go slower than 1/60<sup>th</sup> second and this needs to be faster the longer the focal length is. For example if you use a 200mm lens do not go slower than 1/250<sup>th</sup> second. This is because the longer the lens the greater the magnification on scene and movement.



Lens	Lowest shutter speed
18-55mm	1/60 <sup>th</sup> sec
28-105mm	1/125 <sup>th</sup> sec
300mm	1/500 <sup>th</sup> sec





# Different apertures for different subjects



Normally for street photography when you are photographing people we tend to use wider apertures in order to reduce the depth of field to separate the subject from the background. Make sure when using wider apertures that you focus on the right point.



If it is a wider scene you may want to use F8 or F11 to give more depth.

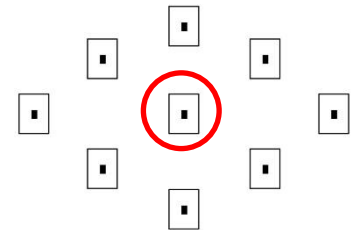
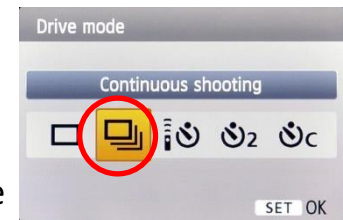


# Focus points and drive modes

Rapid fire is good for moving subjects in order to capture the shot. If you think about the nature of street photography, it is about capturing the moment. Something that is constantly changing and not within our control. Rapid fire is perfect for this type of photography, you can take a series of images to give more of a guarantee.

It is important to remember that some camera functions are disabled when in this mode so it is not ideal to keep it in permanently. Flash is not effective in this mode, but because in street photography we use natural light this is not a problem.

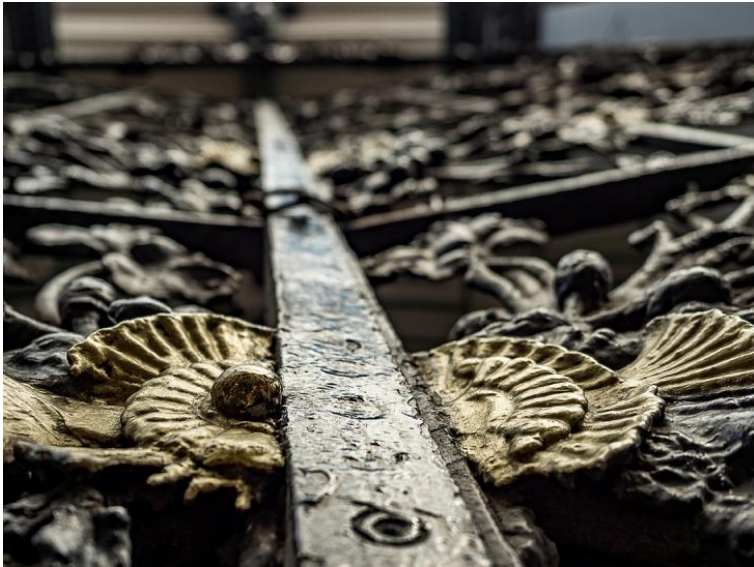
Your focus point is best kept out of auto selection focus and to fix it to the centre focusing square. This means you can quickly focus lock on your subjects and not have to deal with the unpredictability of the auto point selection. This is especially important when the subject is not necessarily in the centre or dominant in the frame.



# Different modes to use

**Aperture priority** mode allows you to lock in the aperture. You need to keep an eye on the shutter speed to make sure it is fast enough for you to hand hold. If not you can increase the ISO until it is. Alternatively, you can use auto ISO so that you do not have to keep an eye on the shutter speed.

**Manual mode** is good for when you are in challenging light. You can measure the exposure using a grey card and this means the your camera meter will not be fooled by the difficult light.



# Metering from a grey card and using manual mode

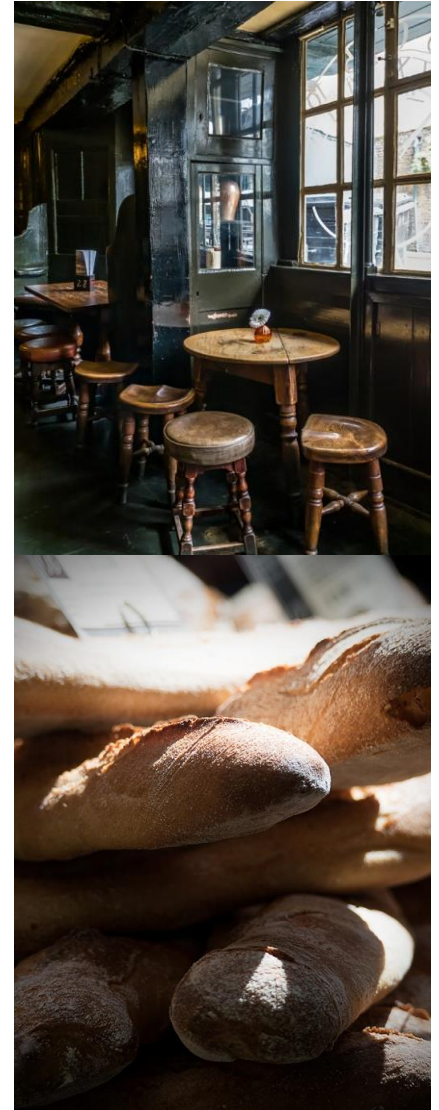
Cameras will always set the subject to a mid grey. A meter measures the light and tells you what settings you need to put the subject to a mid grey.

However, this does not necessarily mean that it is correct for the subject, because the subject could be darker or lighter than a mid grey.

A grey card can be used to meter from, as it is a true mid-point for your camera. Therefore, when you have subjects that fall outside of a mid tone you can place the card in the shot and meter from this.

The internal of some camera bags have a mid grey lining which can be used in the same way.

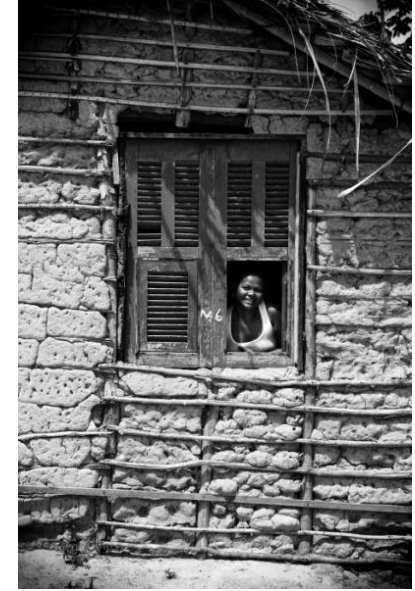
You can then set your camera in manual mode and you know that the light has been measured off a mid grey tone.



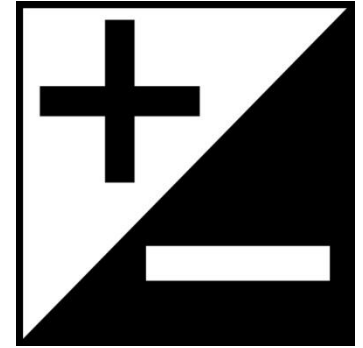
# Working with light

This is the one thing that as a street photographer you are unable to change much. You have to work with the light available and because of this you need to think about what direction and quality it is. This is because light can have a huge impact on contrast and exposure.

Think about what light your subject is in. What direction is the light? Is your subject backlit? Is the light uneven on them? All of these things can impact on your metering.



# Exposure compensation



Light meters work on the theory that the subject being photographed is a mid-tone. This is how all cameras are programmed. While this is normally fine, they can incorrectly expose subjects that are considerably lighter or darker. This will result in the subject being over or under exposed.

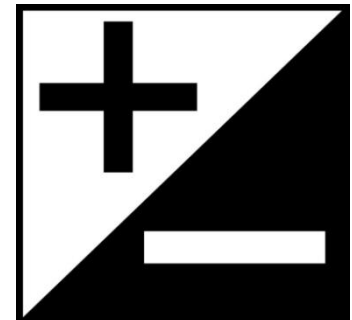
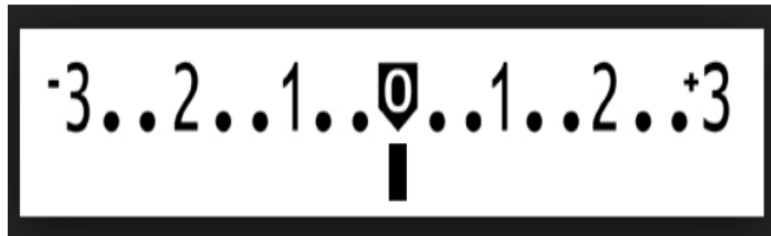
Exposure compensation is adjusting for the metering to correct for the error.

# Exposure compensation

EV exposure compensation should be used to adjust for the camera incorrectly exposes details such as the dark sky. A camera will normally overexpose dark skies because it wants to turn the dark tone to a mid tone.

Exposure compensation is for when your subject is very light or dark.

Minus makes the image darker and plus makes it lighter.



# Exposure compensation

A camera tries to average the scene to an 18% or mid grey. If your subject is brighter or darker than this it will be incorrectly exposed. This then needs to be adjusted by using exposure compensation.

**A lighter than mid grey subject needs to be over exposed**

**A darker than mid grey subject needs to be under exposed**

Cameras will always set the subject to a mid grey. A meter measures the light and tells you what settings you need to put the subject to a mid grey.

However, this does not necessarily mean that it is correct for the subject, because the subject could be darker or lighter than a mid grey.



# Meter locking (using the \* or AEL button)



Original image too dark



Zoom into subject to isolate this brightness



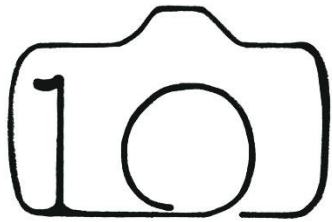
Then press the exposure lock button (on some cameras it is best to keep pressed in)



Zoom out again to original framing, focus and take the picture

You can lock your exposure from any point. This resets after the shot has been taken. This is different to using bracketing or the exposure compensation dial because the light is measured from a specific part of the scene and not all of it. In addition to this, the stop difference measured can be greater than a compensation dial can offer.

On Canon cameras this is the star button and all other cameras it is the AEL button.



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