Saturday 8 August 2020

Amateur Photographer

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TESTED

Leica M10-R

The **world's most desirable camera** gets a new 40MP sensor

Improve your skies

- Capture more impressive skies in camera
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- Merge two exposures for perfect sunsets

FIRST LOOK

Sony A7S III

Hands-on with the latest video-focused Alpha

Street master

Vasco Trancoso shares the secrets behind his stunning street photography

TESTED

No-fuss filters

We try Kase Wolverine magnetic circular filters

Midget gems

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7days

A week in photography

The sky plays a vital but often overlooked role in the success of a landscape image, and nowhere in photography is the struggle between what the human eye sees, and what the camera sensor can record, more valiantly fought than in the heavens above. The sky is often so much brighter than the world below it, that it simply isn't possible to capture all the subtle details in both without intervention. Luckily there are cures for a wishy-washy sky, both in camera and on your PC, and this week we explore them. Also this week we share some sublime street photos from a true master, and test the latest incarnation of the camera that pretty much invented the genre – the exquisite Leica M10-R. Don't forget that you can avoid having to don a face mask by subscribing to AP and getting it delivered. You'll save money too. The details are on page 25. **Nigel Atherton, Editor**

COVER PICTURE © JEREMY WALKER

Our cover shot

Jeremy Walker took this beautiful shot at Derwent Fells, Cumbria, as the sun began to set behind a clearing rain storm

If you'd like to see your words or pictures published in Amateur Photographer, here's how:

SOMETHING TO SAY? Write to us at **ap.ed@kelsey.co.uk** with your letters, opinion columns (max 500 words) or article suggestions.
PICTURES Send us a link to your website or gallery, or attach a set of low-res sample images (up to a total of 5MB) to **ap.ed@kelsey.co.uk**.
JOIN US ONLINE Post your pictures into our Flickr, Facebook, Twitter or Instagram communities.

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See page 25 for details

This week in **1972**

gettyimages

TREASURES FROM THE HULTON ARCHIVE

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The Princess Royal at the 1972 Summer Olympics

by Daily Express

Princess Anne, the Princess Royal, takes a photograph with an Asahi Pentax SLR at the 1972 Summer Olympics in Munich, Germany. The Princess had hoped to compete in the 1972 Olympics but was not selected for the team that year – despite gold medal success in the previous year's European eventing championships and being named as BBC Sports Personality of the Year. She would have to wait until 1976 at the Montreal games, where she rode the Queen's horse *Goodwill* in Eventing. In doing so, Princess Anne became the first member of the British Royal Family to compete in the Olympic Games.

The Getty Images Hulton Archive is one of the world's great cultural resources. Tracing its origins to the founding of the London Stereoscopic Company in 1854, today it houses over 80 million images spanning the birth of photography to the digital age. Explore it at **www.gettyimages.com**.

It's good to share

Our favourite photos posted by readers on our social media channels this week

AP picture of

Gaucho by Paul Fine

Canon 1DX Mark II, 105mm, 1/125sec at f/4, ISO 100

Paul is a self-taught amateur photographer from Plymouth who took this shot on a pre-lockdown trip to Argentina, where he had the opportunity to visit a ranch and watch a gaucho rounding up his horses. The lead horse, called a 'madrina' or godmother, has a bell around its neck that the others diligently follow. As you can see, it was a hot, dusty

the week

day providing Paul with the perfect opportunity to capture this atmospheric black & white image. The shades and tones of the horses together with the dust work to great effect in monochrome. See more of Paul's work on his Instagram @cymrufach3231 as well as his Flickr page https://500px.com/cymrufach3231. **Chosen by Nigel Atherton, Editor as our #appicoftheweek**

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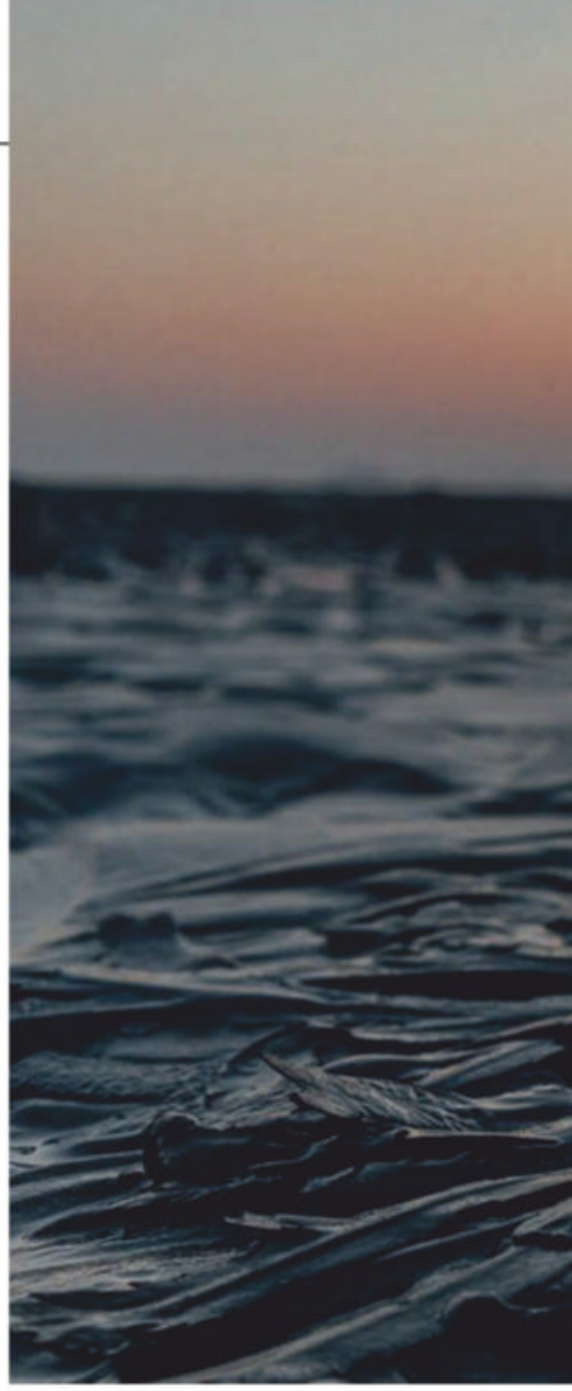

Bathroom
by Nina Sherman

Sony DSC-RX100M4, 1/100sec at f/1.8, ISO 400

London-based Nina was on the hunt for an alternative to her usual photographic style. As she tells us, 'As an amateur street photographer, taking candid photos of people is something I really missed during lockdown. Even as an introvert, I was longing for events and celebrations so I could start taking photographs of people again. Still life and landscape just wasn't really doing it for me until I came across a weekly photography challenge by the one-and-only Martin Parr, during an online search for "photography at home" ideas. I took this one for the theme "Bathroom". I soon discovered taking photos of still life could be fun!' Nina uploaded this picture to Instagram @ninasherman1 with the hashtag #appicoftheweek.

Chosen by Andy Westlake, Technical Editor

Lens Ball
by Claire Pulman

Sony Alpha 7 III, 35mm, 1/125sec at f/11, ISO 250

Claire is originally from County Durham and now lives in Worthing. When she started taking photos she had her own darkroom. Then in 2001 she sold all her darkroom kit and took the plunge over to digital. She loves taking sunsets and landscape photography – she also photographs weddings.

Claire explains about this image, 'I took this while the sun was going down. I wanted to take something different as I have often photographed this part of the beach. I went out with my lens ball and placed it on a mound of sand and seaweed. Using the Sony A7III I lifted the screen at the back of the camera to get it shooting straight through the ball. I did some limited editing – I decreased the highlights a bit and upped the shadows. I really like the different perspective the lens ball gives you.' See more at www.ClairePulmanphotography.co.uk.

Chosen by Amy Davies, Features Editor

Splash!
by Richard Bond

Sony Alpha 7 ILCE-7, 1/200sec, ISO 80

Richard is 77 and lives in Hayling Island, Hampshire. He has been a reader of *Amateur Photographer* for about 50 years. During lockdown he was self isolating with his wife and found photography a great way of keeping busy while confined to his home. He 'splashed out' on a SplashArt water drop photography kit and has since been taking photos of drops of milk or water as they create interesting splashes. As he says, 'I now have hundreds of interesting droplet images. Never a dull moment!'

Chosen by Geoff Harris, Deputy Editor

Want to see your pictures here? Share them with our Flickr, Instagram, Twitter, or Facebook communities using the hashtag #appicoftheweek. Or email your best shot to us at **ap.ed@kelsey.co.uk**. See page 3 for how to find us.

Ray Spence's winning image

Potato POTY winner

A PICTURE of a 'Spud getting a haircut' taken by Ray Spence has been named winner of the Potato Photographer of the Year 2020 competition. It was co-organised by regular AP contributor, Ben Brain. 'Many thanks to everyone who took part and to Fujifilm UK and the RPS for donating some great prizes and to PhotoCrowd for providing the competition platform and support. We didn't quite raise the $1m I was hoping for The Trussell Trust but the few grand we did raise will help support some much needed food banks.' See https://bit.ly/potatopoty.

Fujifilm's new compact EF-60 flashgun

New Fujifilm flashgun/ wireless commander

FUJIFILM has rolled out a compact flashgun, the EF-60. It supports radio-controlled wireless remote triggering when combined with the EF-W1 Wireless Commander, which is also new to the company's line-up. 'The shoe mount flash has a maximum Guide Number of 60 (ISO100m and flash coverage setting at 200mm equivalent) despite its compact form factor,' said the company. The flash coverage ranges from 24mm to 200mm and can be extended to approximately 16mm when the built-in diffuser is used. It also features an Auto Zoom function.

The EF-60 flash is available now priced at £389, whilst the EF-W1 Wireless Commander costs £199.

Photography Show virtual tickets available

THE PHOTOGRAPHY Show and Video Show is online only this year owing to the ongoing effects of Covid-19 but you can book a free 'digital seat'. The event, which is a mainstay of the UK photographic calendar, takes place on 20-21 September 2020. 'Visitors will be able to navigate over 120 stands from exhibitors including Canon, Nikon, Panasonic, Sony, Fujifilm and Olympus, where they can chat to industry experts, watch kit demonstrations and take advantage of exclusive show discounts – all from the comfort of their own home,' said a spokesperson. You can also listen to the full program of speakers via pre-recorded sessions and live-streamed Q&As. All entry tickets and passes booked or confirmed for the physical March 2020 event will be valid for the new 2021 dates (more information will be available at www.photographyshow.com).

According to the organisers, you will only need access to the internet, and most web browsers will support the event platform – so you don't need to install any special software. You can watch all content using the link provided for four weeks after the event has finished, but you won't be able to chat to your favourite brands, watch live sessions or participate in chats. Register at https://photographyshow.vfairs.com

The Photography Show and The Video Show is going online this year due to Covid-19

New Cokin 'Nuances' filters

COKIN has expanded its Nuances range of glass filters with the addition of the Nuances Infrared 720 and Extreme ND8. The infrared filter absorbs light in the visible spectrum and transmits it between 720nm and 950nm, while the Extreme ND8 neutral density filter reduces the amount of light passed by three stops. It sits alongside the existing ND64 (6 stops) and ND1024 (10 stops) models, allowing the use of longer shutter speeds and wider apertures during daylight. The company is also bringing out a new Extreme Full ND kit, which contains all three of these filters. For the Cokin Nuances Extreme ND8, the P-Series (M) costs £89.99, the Z-Pro (L) costs £119.99 and the X-Pro (XL) costs £129.99. For the Cokin Nuances Infrared 720, the P-Series costs £169.99, the Z-Pro £199.99 and the X-Pro, £229.99. Meanwhile the P-Series Nuances Extreme Full ND Kit costs £229.99. There's also a new 49mm Z-Pro Adapter Ring, which will set you back £37.99. For details see www.intro2020.co.uk.

Cokin has extended its range of filters with the introduction of Infrared 720 and Extreme ND8

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Simon - March 2020

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13320

RPS runs free online distinctions workshops

THE RPS is running a series of digital roadshows in September to answer a wide range of questions about achieving its three levels of distinction: Licentiate (LRPS), Associate (ARPS) and Fellowship (FRPS). The roadshows are organised by the Distinctions Department and the Distinctions Committee, and will take place via Zoom to show what is required to succeed at all three levels.

'We will be covering the various genres, Statements of Intent, prints and panelling, digital submissions and where to seek advice,' said an RPS spokesperson. 'We will show the latest successes, with applicants talking about their work, and on hand will be panel chairs and assessors to answer your questions.'

The events are free but you need to book. There are two identical live events each day, from 11am to 1pm and 7pm to 9pm. LRPS: 1 September; ARPS: 8 September; FRPS 15 September. Full details on the LPRS workshop and other events at bit.ly/rpsdistinctions.

Skylum updates Luminar

SKYLUM has released the latest update to its Luminar editing package, version 4.3. Available as a free update for Luminar 4 users, the update adds the ability to search photos (right), integration with the 500px online gallery, a new crop interface, and several performance improvements.

'With the 4.3 update, raw files now open faster than ever before in Luminar, meaning photographers can start working on their images more quickly,' a spokesperson said. 'Luminar tools also use less of the computer's memory, resulting in quicker and more responsive sliders. What results is a smoother and snappier experience... Those using older or less powerful computers should also see speed boosts to help them enhance their editing and management workflows.'

Other claimed improvements include faster 'Looks' (presets) processing for raw files, the ability to flip objects in the AI Augmented Sky feature plus easier copying and pasting of multiple skies. For new customers, Luminar 4 is available for £54. Full details and purchasing at www.skylum.com

Skylum Luminar version 4.3 is the latest edition of the company's editing package

Books

The latest and best books from the world of photography

© STEFANIA ROUSSELLE

Amour: how the French talk about love by Stefania Rousselle

Hardcover, Penguin, £12.99,
ISBN: 978-0-241-40613-7

Award-winning journalist and documentary-maker Stefania Rousselle had stopped believing in love. She had covered a series of assignments, from terrorist attacks to the rise of the far right. Her relationship had fallen apart and her faith in humanity was shaken. She decided to set out on a solo road trip across France, sleeping in strangers' homes, asking ordinary people the one question everyone wants to know the answer to: what is love?

From a baker in Normandy to a shepherd in the Pyrénées, from a gay couple estranged from their families to a widow who found love again at 70, *Amour* presents some profound stories about love, accompanied by lovely portraits. For those who have an interest in travel, portraiture and of course, love, this is a highly recommended book, especially at its bargain price. ★★★★☆ **Amy Davies**

Shirley Baker by Lou Stoppard (editor)

Hardcover, MACK, £35,
ISBN 978-1-912339-51-8

Shirley Baker developed her first photograph as a young girl 'from the darkness of the coal shed' in her hometown of Salford, sparking her lifelong fascination with documentary photography. She died in 2014, with her career spanning more than five decades. As such, she left behind a vast and extensive archive capturing British life. It's relatively rare, especially in the UK, to see photographs from this era by female photographers. With this book, we get a woman's perspective on post-war Britain.

Here we see changing landscapes, fashions, photographic and styles all in one volume. At the start of the book is an interesting essay by Lou Stoppard, giving more background to Baker's interesting life and the discovery of parts of her archive after her death. ★★★★☆ **Amy Davies**

Sony Alpha 7S III

Sony's 12MP full-frame mirrorless model is aimed squarely at videographers, as **Andy Westlake** finds out

At a glance

£3,800 body-only

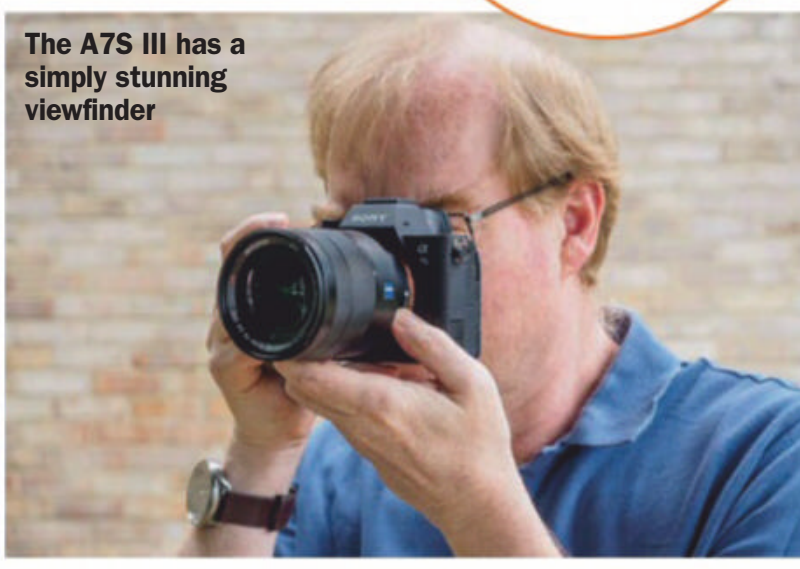
- 12.1MP full-frame BSI-CMOS sensor
- ISO 80-102,400 (ISO 40-409,600 extended)
- 10 frames per second shooting
- 759-point phase detection AF
- 9.44m-dot EVF, 0.9x magnification
- 3in fully articulated touchscreen
- 5-axis in-body stabilisation
- 4K video up to 120fps, Full HD up to 240fps

Viewfinder
The 9.44m-dot EVF offers QXGA (2048 x 1536) resolution – the world's highest by some margin – and a huge 0.9x magnification

Screen
This is the first Alpha 7 to employ a side-hinged fully articulated LCD, which is a very welcome advance for both stills and video

Touch
Sony has designed a completely new touch-sensitive menu system, which is a massive improvement over its previous cameras

Storage
The camera's twin card slots will both accept either UHS-II SD cards, or CFexpress Type A cards (used on a digital camera for the first time here)



The A7S III has a simply stunning viewfinder

SONY'S Alpha 7S line has always occupied a niche position within its full-frame mirrorless range. With a 12MP sensor capable of shooting at a staggering ISO 409,600, it was originally conceived as a high-sensitivity option for low-light photography. But the line really found its feet with the A7S II in 2015, which was capable of recording 4K video internally and earned a loyal following among filmmakers for its compact size, excellent footage and remarkable low-light capability. Now, better late than never, the next generation is here, and Sony's tag line is 'everything is new'.

Indeed the A7S III doesn't just represent a considerable update for the 'S' line. It's packed full of significant developments that make it by far the best Alpha 7 to date, in terms of user interface and handling. So while it may not be of direct interest to many photographers, it gives pointers to what we can expect to see in the mainstream Alpha 7 III's successor, that's sure to arrive in the not-too-distant future.

Like its predecessors, the Alpha 7S III is based around a 12MP full-frame sensor. However this is a completely new Exmor-R design with a back-illuminated structure, which also includes on-chip phase detection to provide 759 AF points across almost the entire image

The touchscreen is now fully articulated and can be used to change settings

area. In concert with the brand-new Bionz XR processor that's three times faster than before, this brings a radical improvement in terms of autofocus and speed. All of Sony's latest AI-driven AF technologies are on board and work during video recording, including real-time Eye AF. The camera provides a sensitivity range of ISO 80-102,400 as standard, extendable to ISO 40-409,600, and is capable of shooting at 10 frames per second – double the rate of the mark II.

However it's the video capability that Sony has really concentrated on. The A7S III may not match the eye-catching 8K resolution of the Canon EOS R5, but it could well be the more practical camera. It's capable of recording in 4K at up to 120fps, with 10-bit 4:2:2 colour and All-I compression at 600Mbps for maximum quality. Sony says that the camera's heat-dissipating structure means it can shoot 4K 60p video for an hour, in contrast to the EOS R5's 35 minutes. Its 5-axis in-body stabilisation now claims 5.5 stops benefit, and can be boosted by additional electronic stabilisation for super-steady handheld video footage, at the cost of a 1.1x crop. Meanwhile rolling-shutter distortion has been reduced by a factor of three. Other advanced video features include four-channel, 24-bit internal audio recording; 10-bit S-log2 and S-log3 profiles; 10-bit hybrid log gamma for instant HDR; and 16-bit raw output over HDMI to an external recorder.

Design improvements

In terms of physical design the A7S III is similar to the recent A7R IV, which means that's bulked up considerably compared to its predecessor, with a much bigger grip to accommodate the higher-capacity Z-type battery. Indeed at 130 x 98 x 82mm and a shade over 700g, it's the largest Alpha 7 yet. The video button has moved to a more convenient location on the top-plate, and the camera now sports a side-hinged vari-angle screen. While some see this as mainly a video feature, it's also great for shooting portrait-format still images at high or low angles. The A7S III also boasts the world's highest resolution EVF, which provides a stunningly large and detailed view.

One major operational change lies with Sony's user interface. We've been complaining for years about the firm's obtuse menus and lack of any touch interface, and at a stroke it's fixed both. The A7S III has a brand new menu design that groups related functions together far more logically into nested sub-menus, and is fully operable by touch. The onscreen Fn menu is also now finally touch-sensitive. This transforms the ease and speed with which you can find and change settings, making the A7S III easily the best-handling Sony camera to date.

First impressions

IT DOESN'T take long with the A7S III to be seriously impressed. Its 9.44m-dot viewfinder is incredible, and Sony's new touch interface addresses one of our longest-running gripes. It's clearly a camera that's aimed far more at videographers than photographers, but we fully intend to explore its abilities in detail in our upcoming review. We also hope that Sony retains most of its design improvements in the Alpha 7 III's eventual successor.

CFexpress Type A makes its debut

CFexpress Type A (centre) is smaller than either SD or CFexpress Type B/XQD

The Alpha 7S III becomes the first camera to accept CFexpress Type A memory cards, a new format whose specifications were first revealed in February 2019. Measuring 20 x 28 x 2.8mm, they're smaller than either SD cards or the CFexpress Type B cards used in other mirrorless models, which adopt Sony's older XQD form factor (38.5 x 29.8 x 3.8mm). Technically, for data transfer they use a single PCIe lane that provides a theoretical maximum speed of 1000Mpbs, half that of the larger Type B format (as it employs a dual-lane architecture). So in principle, they can comfortably handle the A7S III's 600Mbps maximum bit-rate, but wouldn't be capable of dealing with 8K, as output by the Canon EOS R5.

However, the A7S III demonstrates one key advantage of the smaller format. It enables dual card slots to be fitted into the camera without taking up too much space, while also allowing them to accept the hugely popular SD format too.

Capacity and pricing

Naturally, Sony is releasing CFexpress Type A cards alongside the camera. With a specified read speed of 800Mbps, and 700Mbps for writing, they will be available in 80GB and 160GB sizes for £210 and £400 respectively. A dual SD / CFexpress Type A card reader, the MRW-G2, will be available for £130.

Both of the Sony Alpha 7S III's card slots can accept either CFexpress Type A or UHS-II SD media

Viewpoint
David Henderson

On a photographic outing David encountered an unforgettable natural phenomenon

In my opinion, it's usually the experience of time spent taking pictures that's the real delight of photography. A good example is an unforgettable experience I had in the middle of a starling murmuration. Murmurations are a regular feature in *Autumn/Winter Watch*, but I can't recall Chris Packham reporting from within one. I have however, experienced such a phenomenon.

On a walk I initially saw a promising set of waterfalls, unusually swelled with more water than when the ark was needed, and I made a mental note to return. Soon after moving on I noticed a dark, frightening sky looming ahead with bright sun behind and a double rainbow quickly appeared. I realised that waterfalls blurring nicely, ominous clouds and rainbows might make a good picture and visions of the front cover of *Amateur Photographer* hastened my return to the falls. Alas, before I even got my camera out, the rain was hitting my face and the rainbows had gone along with thoughts of any front-cover glory.

The starlings arrive

A fairly photographically fruitless day ensued and as dusk approached I set off back to my car. I was soon surprised by a wave of about 50 starlings flying up the river valley a metre or so off the ground, screeching and clicking with a rather pungent aroma filling the air (not me, them). They came close to me – 'that was exciting' I thought and continued. After about five minutes they returned in greater numbers and I was 'trapped' between the river and a dry stone wall. Being of a rather nervous disposition, I pressed myself hard against the wall for the fear of a collision. They buzzed passed, the lowest birds at waist height, impervious to my presence with a constant, loud noise.

After the third pass I became emboldened and started to wonder what would happen if I stood in the middle of the flight path (it's a vicious rumour that I currently have an ASBO pertaining to Leeds Bradford Airport). I just had to do it, so after a couple of minutes I saw the dark living cloud approaching and moved over to the centre of the path. The screaming mass came straight on and just as I began to think it was a bad idea, the birds, in exquisite symmetry, moved up to blast inches over my head in a perfect 'avoidance formation' along the flock's length.

David's image of Hebden Moor. Who knows what's around the corner when out shooting

> 'I know I will never forget the privileged experience of sharing the murmuration'

The other birds to both sides simply went around me at waist level. It was all over in seconds but I know I will never forget the privileged experience of sharing the murmuration. A last pass of the birds came up the valley as darkness was falling and at a rough count I guessed at about 900 birds.

Needless to say the disappointing day's landscape photography was all but forgotten and I couldn't have asked for a more rewarding experience.

David is a keen landscape photographer and member of Selby Camera Club who enjoys Yorkshire's wealth of photo opportunities.

Do you have something you'd like to get off your chest? Send us your thoughts in around 500 words to the address on page 23 and win a year's digital subscription to AP, worth £79.99

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*In comparison to other brand's interchangeable lens camera systems with comparable focal length lens.

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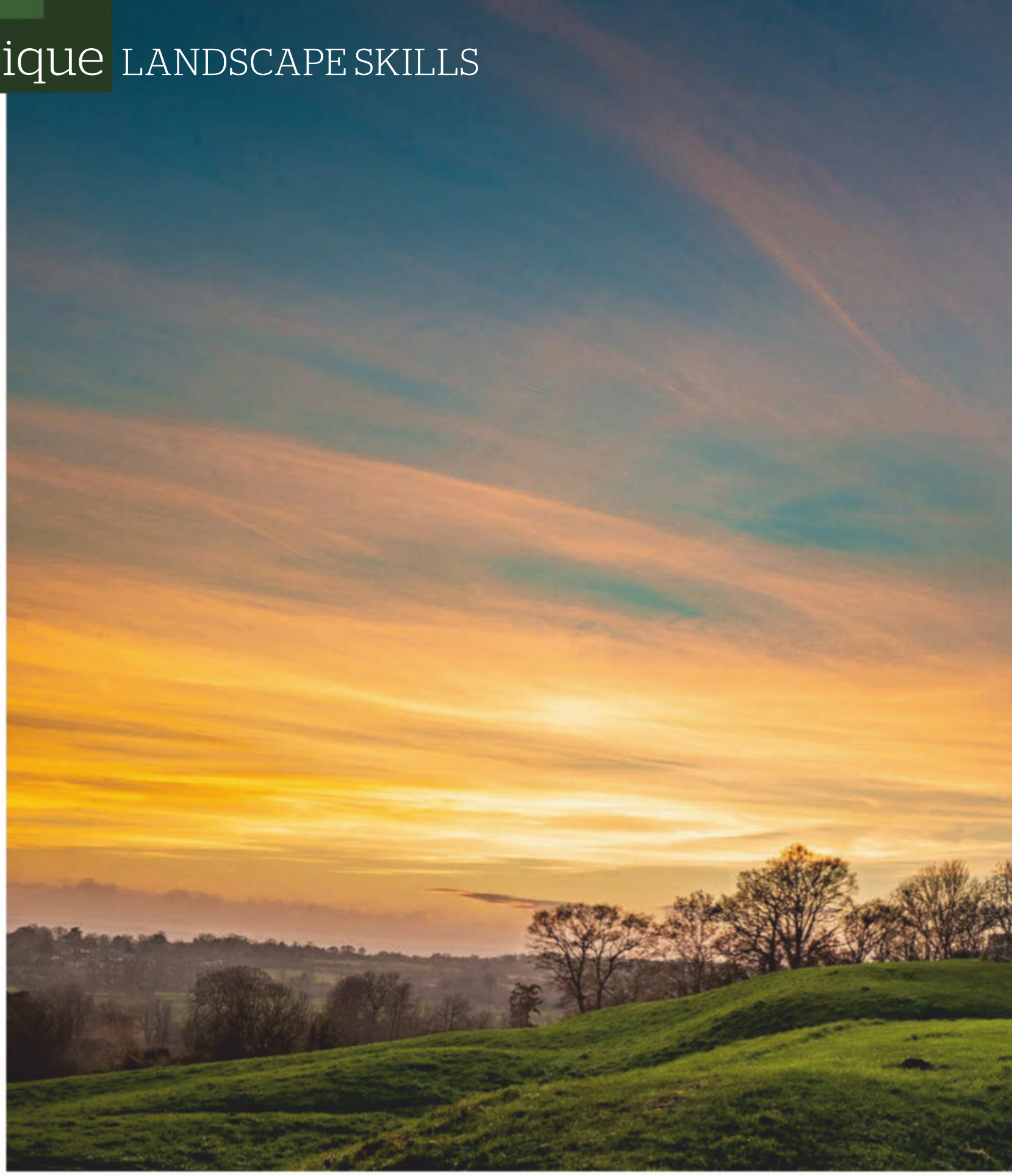


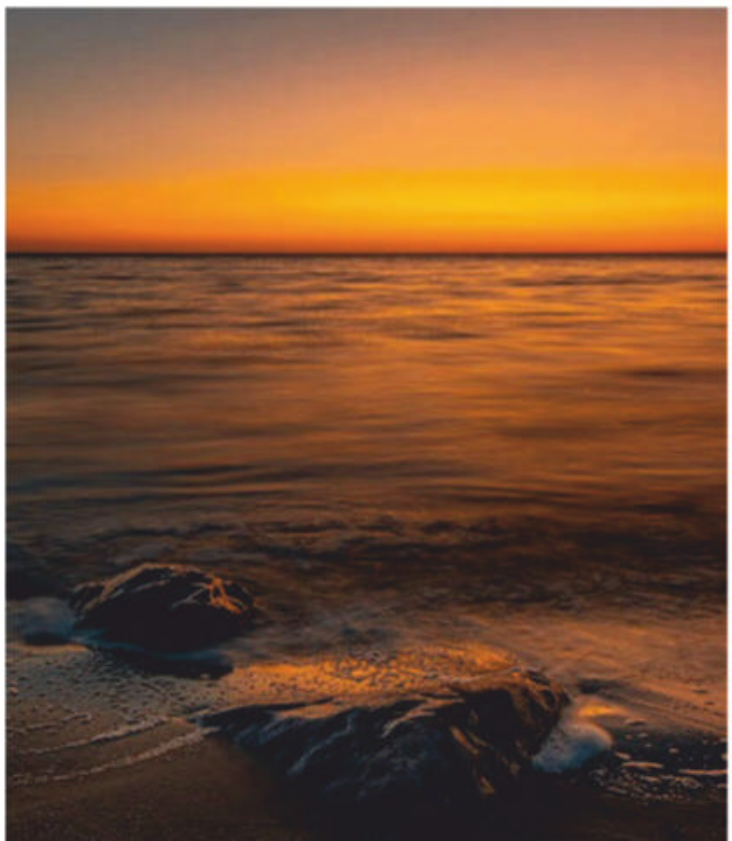
Reach for the skies

Discover how to get better skies both in-camera and in post-production. **James Paterson** is your guide

The most compelling landscape photos don't just document a place, they also convey a mood. The sky can play a vital role in building a sense of atmosphere – whether it be a brooding, rain-threatening grey, an uplifting display of sun rays or a sliver of colour on the horizon. A striking sky can elevate a landscape photo to new levels.

There are lots of photographic techniques we can employ to boost a sky, from lens-mounted filters to exposure settings. Then there's the editing side of things. Sometimes a sky may come out disappointingly lacklustre, or nowhere near as dramatic as we remember it to be. But often the detail is there, just waiting to be coaxed into life with simple tonal adjustments. As such, when it comes to enhancing skies we have plenty of options, whether in-camera or in post-production.

A striking sky can transform a scene and elevate a photo to new levels



Shoot in raw

There are plenty of techniques we can employ as photographers to get better skies, but perhaps the most effective method is good old-fashioned patience. By revisiting a place repeatedly, waiting for the perfect cloud formation, or hanging around for sunset, we might be rewarded with a glorious sky. When it occurs, we need to ensure our camera is set up to capture the maximum detail. Your camera's raw quality format is usually a better choice for landscapes than JPEG, as raws are capable of holding vastly more colour information and a wider dynamic range. This means they retain greater detail at the tonal extremes, so if you need to pull detail out of highlights in the sky, or rescue a foreground in deep shade, then raw gives you more options.

Exposing for the sky

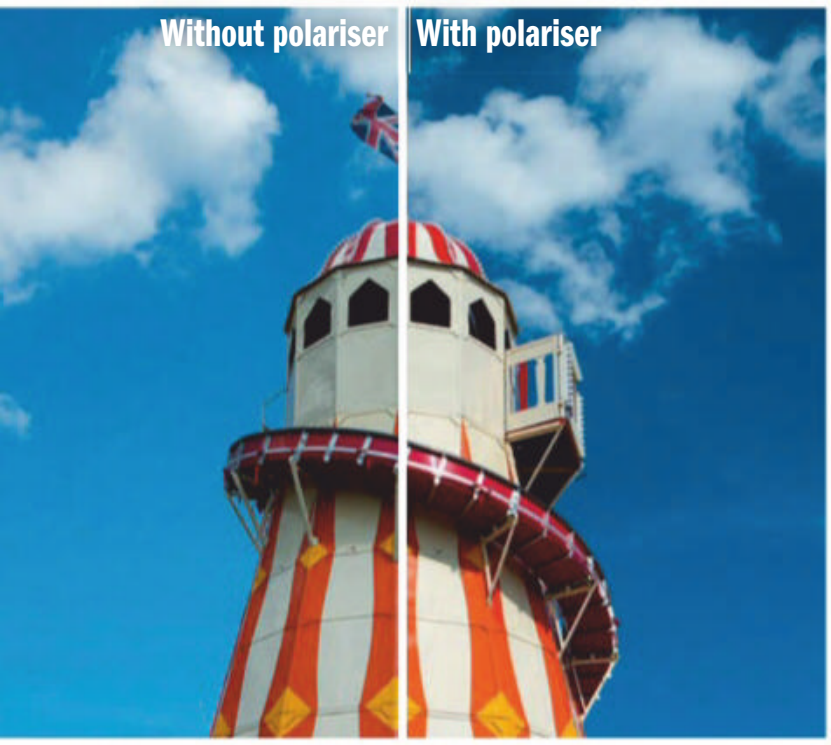
A blown-out sky is perhaps the most common exposure problem in landscape photography. If the highlights are clipped to pure white then the sky is usually ruined. To help prevent this, check the histogram. This graphical representation of your image as shades from black (left) to white (right) can be more accurate than simple reviewing the image. Just make sure that the graph reaches down to 'sea level' on the right side, rather than intersecting the side of the box.

Expose to the right

Some photographers like to employ the 'expose to the right' technique, which involves shooting as bright an image as possible without clipping the highlights, so that the histogram is stacked to the right. Then the brightness can be corrected afterwards. This ensures the minimum of image noise, as shadows are noisier than highlights.

Bracketing is another invaluable camera technique. This gives you a safety net by automatically varying your exposure for you. On most cameras you can set it up to shoot 3, 5 or more frames, and choose the number of stops between each. Afterwards you can choose the exposure that most suits the scene. If you use a tripod it also gives you the option to try out an HDR or exposure blending technique.

WHEN AND WHICH FILTERS TO USE



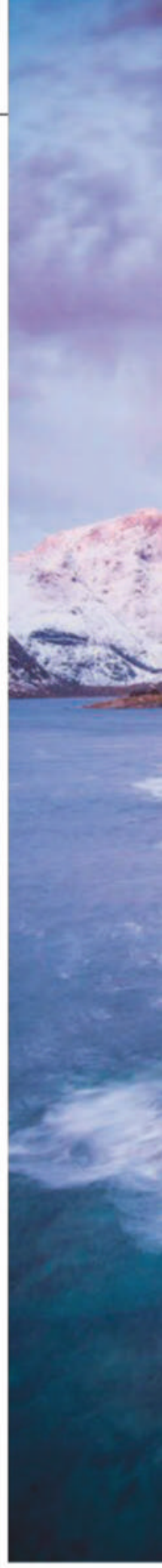
Polarising filters

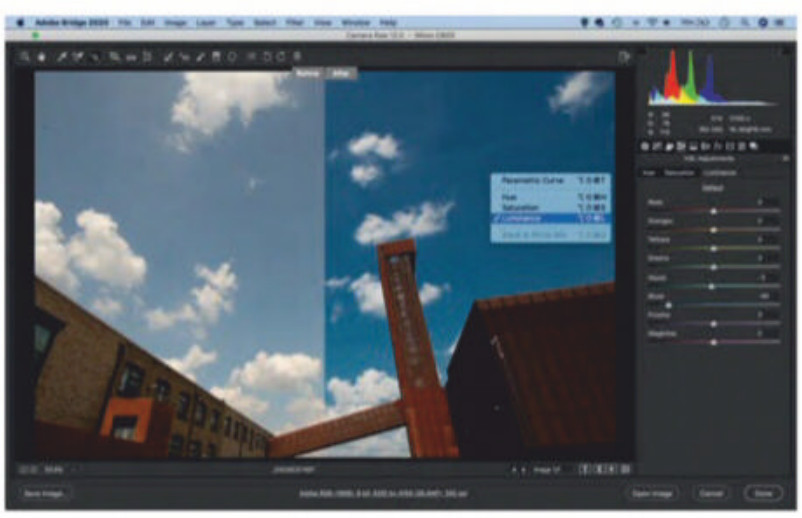
A circular polariser is one of the most useful in any photographer's kit bag, and it gives results that simply can't be replicated with Photoshop trickery. It works by filtering polarised light, which can have a dramatic effect on skies. The polariser can cut through atmospheric haze and make blue skies come out darker, richer and more dramatic. So it's very effective on blue skies with fluffy white clouds, but can also be useful on more subtle cloud-filled skies. And it's not just skies that can benefit – polarisers cut through reflections, so they can tone down specular highlights on foliage or wet rocks.

Circular polarisers have a rotating ring, which we can turn to cut out the polarised light. A polariser is most effective when you are shooting at 90 degrees to the sun (to find the right angle, try lining both your shoulders up with the sun then shoot in the direction that you're facing). However, keep in mind that when using a wideangle lens you might find that parts of the sky look darker than others, as the field of view will cover more than 90 degrees of the sky. A polariser will block a stop or more of light so you'll need to adjust your exposure accordingly by either increasing ISO, dropping the shutter speed or opening up your aperture.

Graduated NDs

In most scenes the sky will be brighter than the land below, which poses a constant problem for the landscape photographer – how to balance the exposure to record optimum detail in both areas? One of the most practical solutions is to use a graduated neutral density (ND) filter. This blocks light in part of the frame, so by positioning the transition along the horizon, you can darken a bright sky and balance out an exposure. Graduated ND filters come in different strengths for different skies, some have a hard transition and others a more gradual blend.





Intense blues

As well as tools that let you edit a specific area of the frame, you can also make use of tools that target a specific colour. The Targeted Adjustment Tool can be very useful for boosting colours in skies. In Camera Raw it's found in the toolbar and in Lightroom it's accessed from within the HSL panel. Simply grab the tool, right-click and set it to Saturation, then click and drag to the right over parts of the sky to boost the saturation of specific colour ranges (you can also use the HSL sliders for this, although the tool is often a better choice as it is capable of affecting several ranges at once). The tool can also be used to darken blues in a sky by setting it to affect luminance then dragging down over the colour.

AFTER

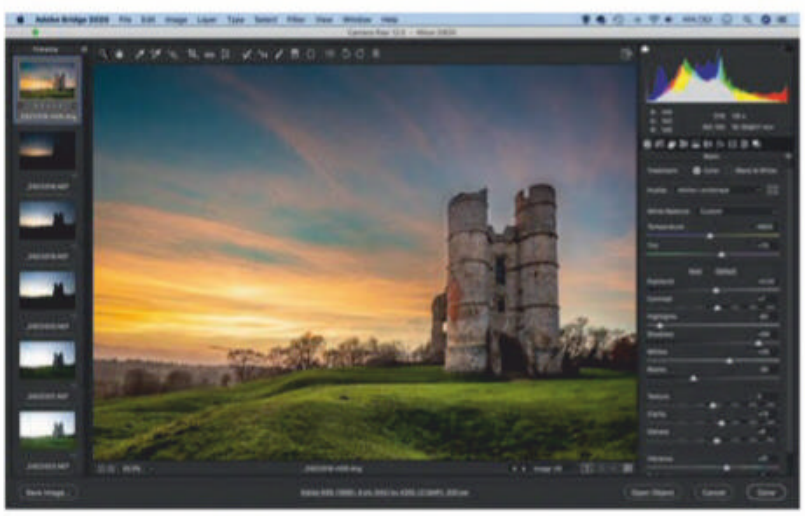
The Dehaze and Clarity sliders are great for making details in the sky more crisp

Tonal settings for skies

Upon opening your landscapes into Photoshop or importing into Lightroom, the best place to begin enhancing skies is in the Basic Panel. The Profile Browser is a good starting point. The Adobe Landscape Profile (only available for raw files) has been optimised to boost skies and pull out details in rocks and foliage. Once a profile is chosen, move on to the sliders below. The Highlights and Whites sliders can be useful if your sky is blown out, as they let you claw back detail in bright areas. The Dehaze slider can also boost skies by helping to cut through atmospheric haziness, and the Clarity slider can crisp up cloud details. These should all be used sparingly, as an over-processed sky will ruin a landscape.

BEFORE

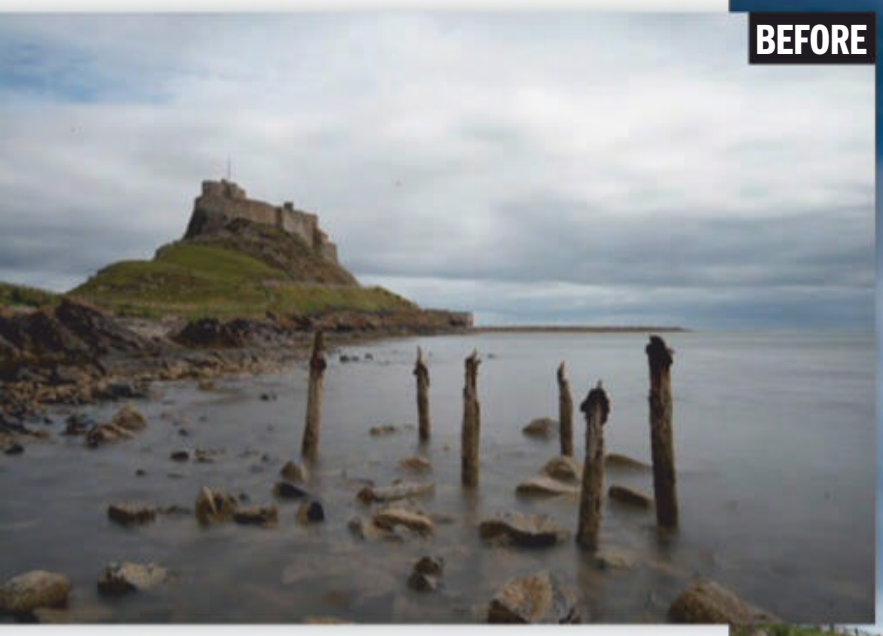
It is easy to get carried away, so keep referring to the original file to ensure you're not over-processing it



Merge an HDR image

If you have a bracketed sequence of frames then you can merge them into an HDR image in Lightroom/Camera Raw with ease. Simply highlight the set of images (Shift-click between the first and last in the set) then right-click them and choose Photo Merge > HDR. Simple controls in the HDR Merge command let you correct for ghosting (movement between frames) and fix slight misalignment between the images. Once merged, you'll have extra shadow and highlight detail to work with. The Graduated Filter and Adjustment Brush are the best tools for enhancing this extra detail. If you want further HDR options, try a dedicated HDR app like Photomatix or HDR Efex Pro, both of which can link in with your Lightroom workflow.

LOCAL ENHANCEMENTS



BEFORE

AFTER

There are a number of local enhancement tools you can use to boost different areas of the scene

Often skies will benefit from a local adjustment to boost the area. This is where Lightroom and Camera Raw's local adjustment tools come into play. They let us define an area – either by painting with the brush, dragging lines with the graduated filter, or making a circular adjustment with the radial filter – then we can adjust the tones in the designated area to enhance part of the frame. As such, they're ideal for pulling detail out of skies, boosting cloud formations and intensifying colours.

The Graduated Filter

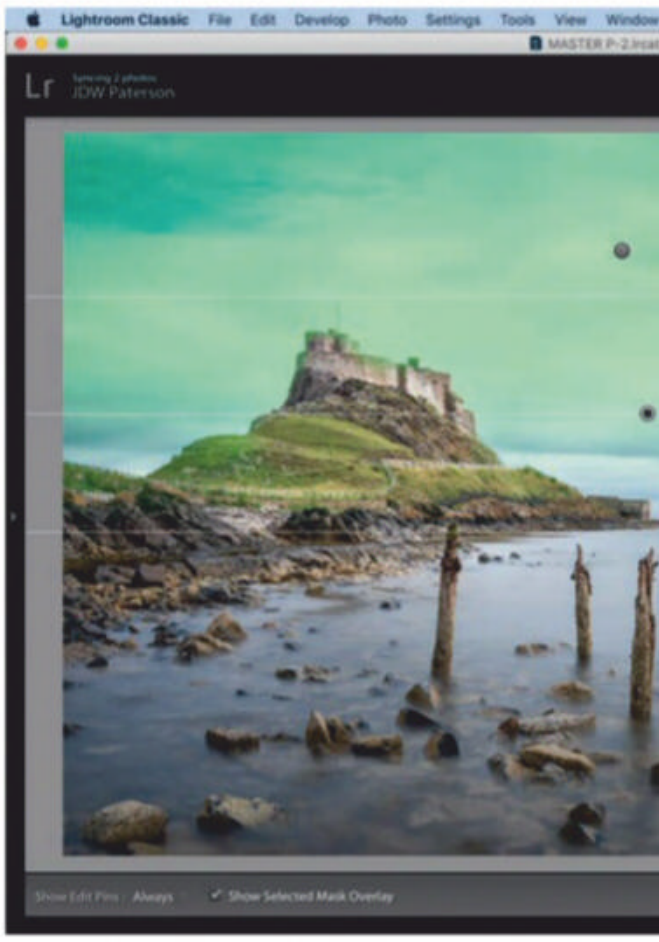
This is one of best tools in Lightroom/ Camera Raw for enhancing skies. Simply grab the tool from the toolbar then drag down from sky towards land, while holding Shift to keep lines perfectly horizontal (sometimes a second grad near the top of the sky can be effective too). The filter creates a graduated tonal shift, with a gentle transition between the two lines. You can hit O (or Y in Camera Raw) to toggle a mask overlay on or off, which helps you to visualise what is affected.

Tonal controls

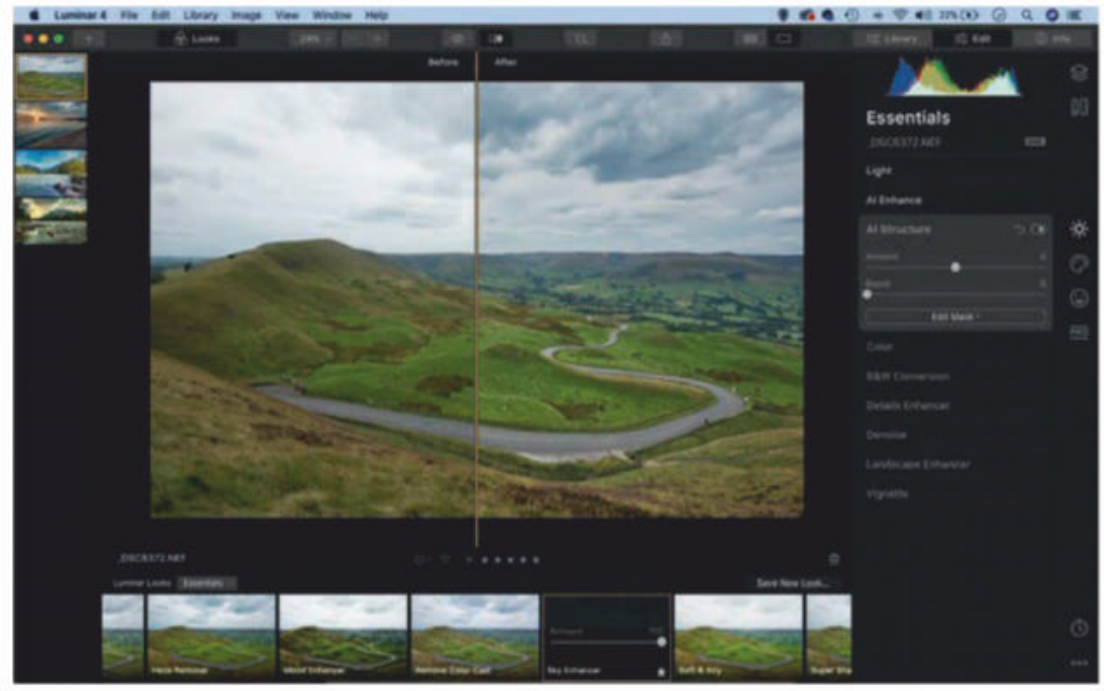
Once you've defined the area to be affected with the Graduated Filter tool, the next step is to fine-tune the tonal sliders to change the look of the sky. There are lots of different options. You could lower exposure to darken down a bright sky and balance it with the land below. Or you could increase Saturation to boost colours, or perhaps tweak Temperature and Tint to make it warmer, or maybe increase Dehaze and Clarity to add definition to the clouds.

Fine-tuning the overlay

In most scenes the horizon won't be a single straight line, there will be objects that jut upwards into the sky like the structure here. We can adjust the area affected by the graduated filter by subtracting or adding to it with a brush, so we can erase parts of the mask that affect foreground details. Simply click Brush in the settings to the right, hit O to turn on the overlay then either paint to add areas, or hold Alt and paint to subtract them. It might be helpful to toggle on Auto-Mask too. This can make brushing around fine details easier as the brush will seek out edges while you paint. You can also try using the Range Mask controls, which let you target certain tones based on their colour or brightness.



'In most scenes the horizon won't be a single straight line, there will be objects that jut upwards into the sky'



Luminar 4's automatic sky enhancement

Photoshop and Lightroom aren't the only options for boosting skies – there are many other excellent editors out there, from DxO's PhotoLab 2 to Capture One, Affinity Photo and the Nik collection. Then there's Skylum's Luminar 4, which takes a slightly different approach to boosting skies. Luminar lets you apply a range of different filters and one-click enhancements to your landscapes, then go on to fine-tune the look with more advanced tonal controls. One of the more unusual features is the AI sky enhancer, which employs artificial intelligence to analyse your image and isolate the sky, then apply automated tonal adjustments to boost colours and details in the area. A simple slider lets you control the strength of the effect.

Replace skies with a single click

New to Luminar 4 is a feature that is sure to delight some. The AI sky replacement feature automatically swaps out a sky with another of your choosing. There's a list of stock skies to choose from, or you can load in your own. Of course, we've been able to replace dull skies for years using Photoshop or Affinity Photo, but this is the first time the process has been entirely automated.

The command is very effective at isolating and cutting out the original sky, but if the horizon line has complex details like trees then some of the edges may not be perfect (although you can fine-tune the mask manually). In a scene such as the sunset image above, the feature impressively replaces the sky while retaining the original sun and the bird.

Not every sky works for every scene, but the results are often surprisingly natural. Once a sky is chosen, we can go on to fine-tune the positioning and adjust the tones so that the sky more closely matches the feel of the land below.

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LETTER OF THE WEEK

Olympus service now

I wanted to acknowledge the fantastic effort made by the Olympus UK Team in providing a regular stream of tutorials and support during the recent lockdown. They have really demonstrated what excellent customer service looks like and deserve every credit. Following the recent announcement about the Olympus Imaging division I truly hope the tireless work of the Olympus UK Team is recognised and that Olympus customers will still get the great levels of service the team provides. **Paul Francis**

With so much terrible customer service in the world I'm delighted to highlight the great work being done by the hard-working and much-loved Olympus UK team, who are among the very best in the industry.

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Olympus service then

I was sad to read of the demise of the Olympus camera division in Nigel Atherton's very interesting article in AP 11 July. As a camera enthusiast I have used many of the top brands over the years, starting with their superb OM-1 and OM-2. I remember how small and light they were to handle, and how solidly built, with very sharp Zuiko lenses.

I've never forgotten their superb after-sales service. On one occasion I had some black coating fleck that became dislodged in a prime lens. When I called them they said if I brought it to its London service base they'd look at it straight away. True to their word they offered me tea and biscuits whilst I waited (1 hour) and I got it back cleaned and wrapped as good as new. What service! How sad many will feel that it is selling its camera division off. **David Morey**

Just to be clear, Olympus is selling its camera division to another company. It is very premature to be talking about the 'demise' of Olympus cameras. They will still exist, hopefully for a long time to come, just under different ownership.

Sell or stick?

The shock news about Olympus and its sell-off must bring into question factors of loyalty and the brand's future. Some owners will offload their carefully chosen kit for fear of risks to values. As the used market becomes saturated and trade-in values fall, opportunities will arise for the astute to buy quality used Olympus kit at bargain prices. Knowing what Olympus users should do in the short term is a headache, but maybe patience, and holding fast may be the best strategy. Olympus produces some fine gear and hopefully under new ownership they will see a resurgence. **Lee Baker**

Macro combo

I enjoyed the article in AP 20 June. Garden macro photography (pic below) has kept me occupied through the period of social isolation, with my Fujifilm X-T1 and Samyang 100mm macro lens. I enjoy the combination of the lens manual focus and aperture ring, body exposure compensation adjustment and in-camera double exposure setting. Thank you for keeping AP going to the usual high standard during this challenging time. **Bob Sherrard**

Free software

Like David Leach (AP 20 June) I object to the monthly subscription for software but there are good alternatives. Affinity Photo is excellent for focus stacking though it failed to get a mention in your focus stacking feature (AP 13 June). Add Photools' IMatch and you've also solved Stanley Groom's organising issue (*Inbox* 27 June). The two combined will give you far more flexibility than Lightroom and cost the equivalent of

Bob's panel of images from his garden and local walks

John took this in 1973 with his OM-1 on infrared film

three months of the subscription model. And you will then own them. **Darwyn Sumner**

FastStone 1

Referring to Stanley Groom's letter in *Inbox* 27 June, I used to use Picasa extensively and also believe that Google was wrong to discontinue it, but have found a great alternative in FastStone Image Viewer. It is simple to operate, does not need you to import your images, and has straightening, crop and clone tools etc, but the one I use most is the Adjust Lighting tool, which allows you to recover Shadow and Highlight detail. I rarely use my copy of Photoshop any more. **Roy Phillips**

FastStone 2

May I suggest that reader Stanley Groom gives FastStone Image Viewer a try? It is an image browser, converter and editor and will do many of the things Picasa could do. Its printing capabilities are excellent, especially in how easy it is to lay out a page of more than one image, together with titling, captioning and adding borders. It is also very easy to link it to a more versatile editor. In my case a press of the E key will load an image into Affinity Photo for further editing. It is free but well worth a donation if you like it. **Edmund Spavin**

XnView

Regarding cheap, simple photo editors, I have been using XnView for years. It is very quick and easy to use, does everything I need, free to download for amateur use, and fairly inexpensive if you pay. I have given up on many 'better' programs – they just take too long. **Roy McCunn**

Or just use Picasa

In reply to Mr Groom's query about Picasa. This program is still available for download but without technical support. Just visit the website and download. **Chris Austen**

The Wild West (Riding)

I have been reading AP for many years – it is an inspiration to all who love taking photos. I am an avid collector of cameras old and new. I took this photo (above) with my first classic camera, an Olympus OM-1, using infrared film. It is one of a series that I took on the moors, near the disused lead mines above Pateley Bridge in Yorkshire in 1973 with a group of artists from RGS Pattern Book Co. All the guns were made of wood, and the hats from cardboard. We had a great time! I have only ever shown the photos to friends and family, so it would make an old lad very happy to see one of them in your magazine. **John Morgan**

Happy to oblige. Did you shoot these at High Noon?

Another great issue

Another great magazine (27 June). I can relate to *A journey around my room* as since retiring 11 years ago and not being able to afford a car I have photographed just about every part of our living room and kitchen, whilst being stuck at home.

Like Gavan Goulder (*Fighting the black dog*) I suffer badly with mental illness. I find it greatly therapeutic when I'm concentrating on the here and now in creating images with my camera – it helps me cope with life. Tim Clinch's *Black & white summer* sent me down memory lane to 1966 when I was a photographer in the Royal Air Force. The fun we had experimenting with our craft. Finally Jeremy Walker's trip from Nikon to Leica put a great smile on my face. I loved it, as I find Leicas like Marmite: distasteful. Forty years ago, as a medical photographer, we had a Leica M3, a Leica M4 and Nikon FM2s. The FM2s were so easy to use compared to the Leicas and I bought an FM2. Just before my 70th birthday, I felt I deserved the Nikon D850 and 28-300mm lens. I have no problem with the weight as I still work out! **John Heywood**

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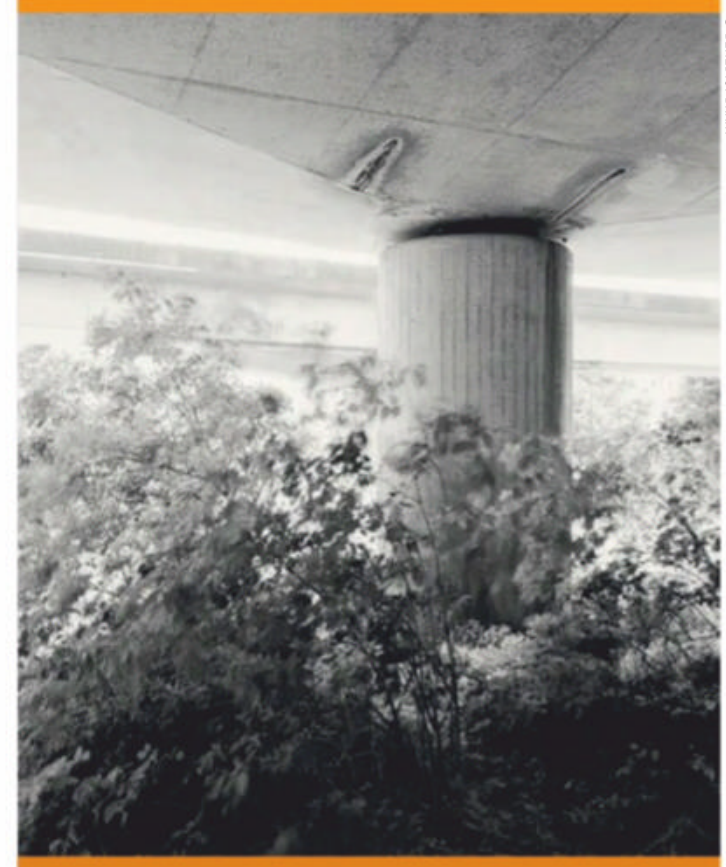

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Abstract creativity

Find out how to add layers of depth and meaning to landscape photography

A flying chance
Pro Tony O'Brien puts Nikon's D6 to the test, by shooting birds in flight

Does winning still matter?
Peter Dench explores the ups and downs of entering a photo contest

Get closer to nature
Paulina Szemraj shares her alternative techniques for capturing macro scenes

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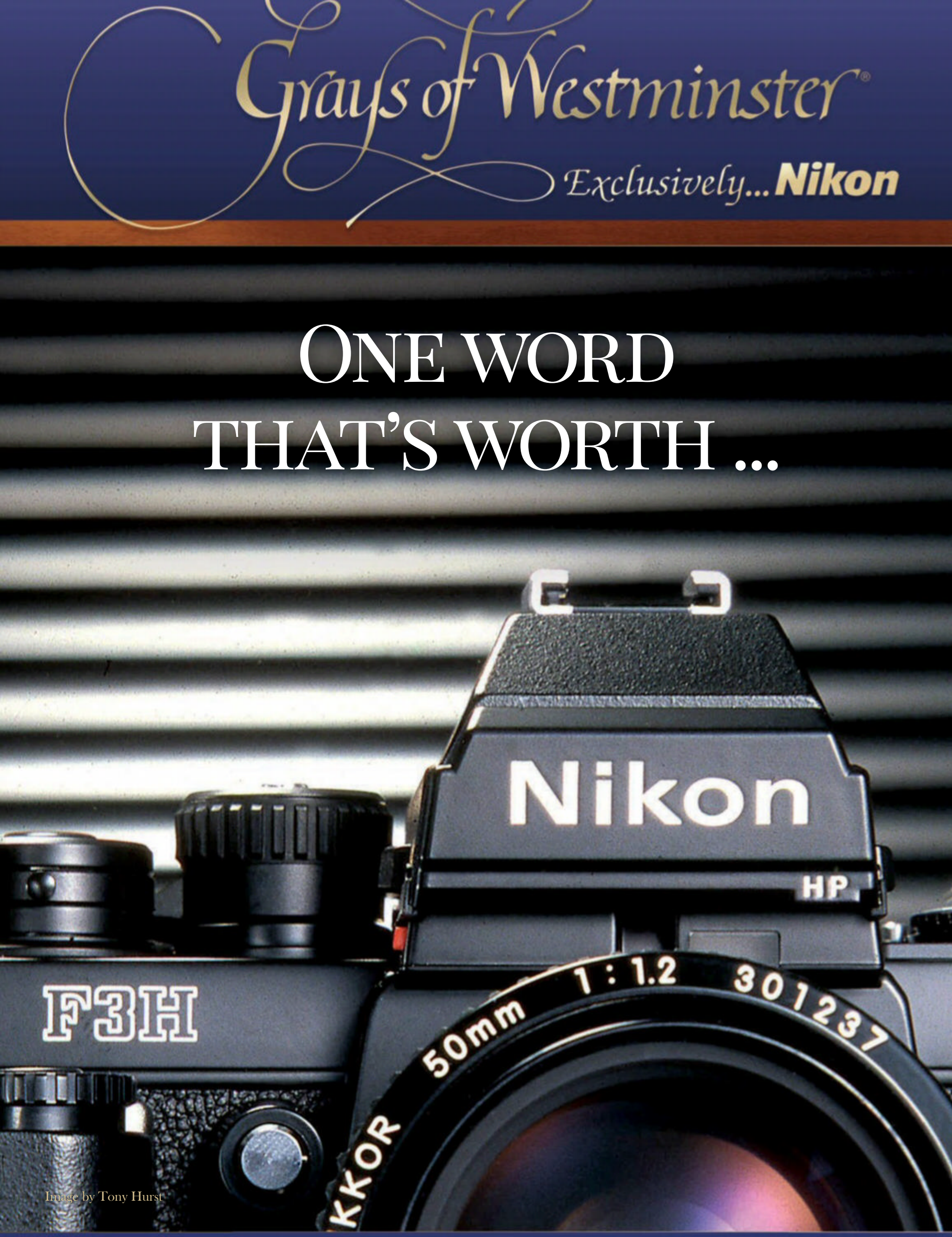

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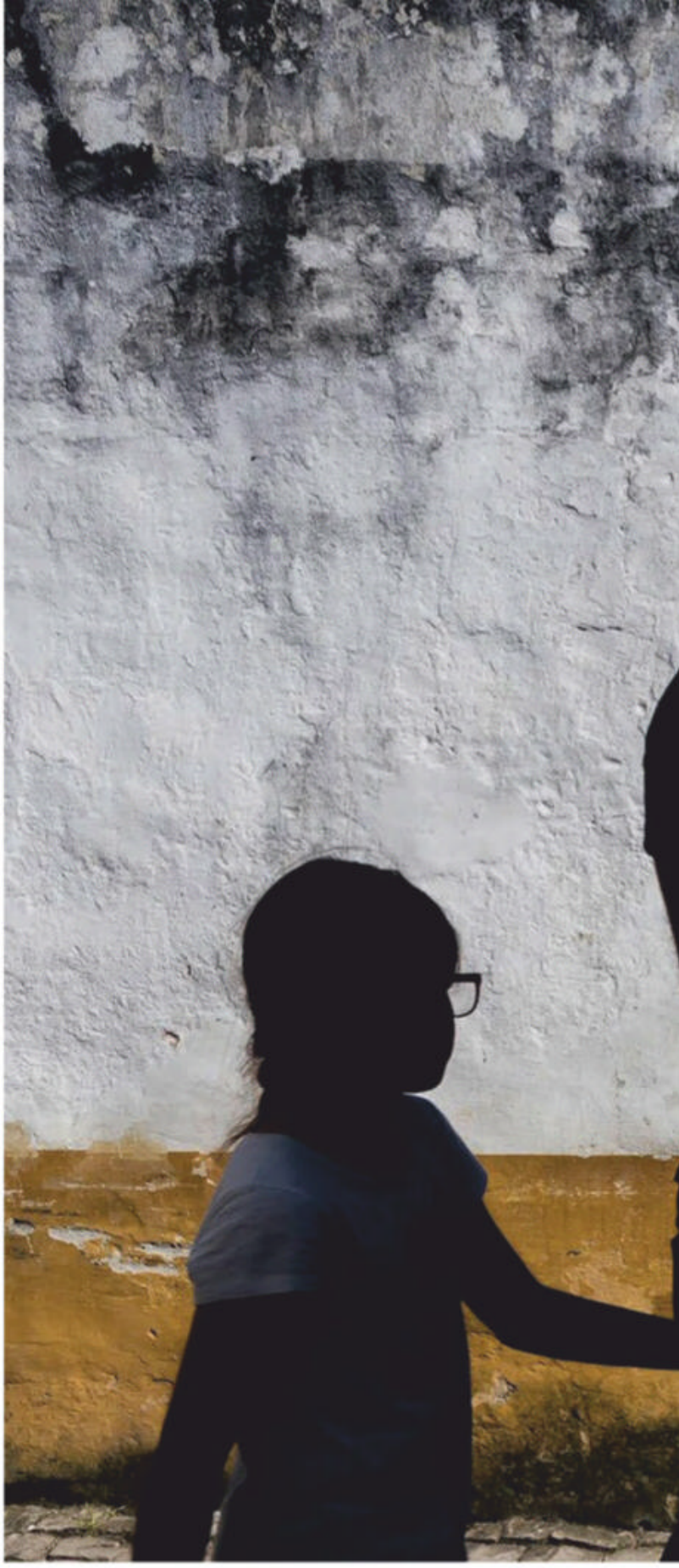
Under a burning sun

Vasco Trancoso captures the colour, contrast and geometry of the streets where he lives in his stunning book *99*. **Damien Demolder** finds out more



Just a few minutes on Google Street View reveals that Vasco Trancoso's home town is a pretty exciting place for a street photographer. The hard, direct and piercing Portuguese sun creates deep, sharp-edged shadows in the narrow streets. And every now and then those dense blankets of shade are slashed open by bright blades of golden light that streak across the pavements to play on the faces of the vibrant buildings. Contrasts of highlights and shade mix with conflicting colours, textures of wall tiles and flaking paint, and bejewelled by the shapes of natives going about their daily life against a backdrop of solid architectural lines.

You can see this too in Vasco's new book, *99* – a visual exploration of the compositional potential of a town called Caldas da Rainha.

Unlike a lot of photographers who claim to be documenting the life or people of a place, Vasco is happy to admit he is rather more interested in creating visually stimulating pictures. 'Above all,' he says, 'my work is an interpretation of the reality. I don't try to describe places I shoot faithfully, but rather to fictionalise the reality to discover myself.'

I like this idea as it frees us to shoot what pleases us instead of having to think the whole time about whether the picture is a useful part of some deeper story. We don't have to engage in worrying about issues, the truth or the viewer very much at all, and working this way liberates the photographer to concentrate on style. We can take things the way they present themselves to us – which is a nicely laid-back way of working. We are always being told we need to embed ourselves, to get to the bottom of the story, but here's Vasco telling us he takes life as it comes and at face value.

Staying close to home

Vasco used to be a gastroenterologist but when he retired he decided to dedicate himself to photography. Like most of us, he took pictures when he was younger but it wasn't until he stopped working that he had the time to devote to it seriously. He took up street photography and concentrated on working in the region in which he lives, with its beach (Foz do Arelho) and Óbidos Castle. Most of us instinctively look far from home when on the hunt for exciting pictures but Vasco isn't interested in the easy life.

'On the one hand, photographing close to home is a kind of tribute to my city and allowed me a rediscovery of the place. Trying to see the miracles of light and colour that happen in everyday life, that we often don't notice because we are very used to going through the same places for many years, was a challenge. I think creating something special out of ordinary moments is more difficult to do in our own city – where everything seems so boring and banal. This also gave me the opportunity to make a body of work in a place that had not yet been photographed in a creative way, whereas all the big cities in the world have been photographed exhaustively. It was an exercise in the ability to observe and be happy photographing a place where I also feel happy.'

Vasco's book is extremely colourful, with many pages on which colour is the subject over any of the physical elements in the scene. It is hard to believe that he used to shoot his street work exclusively in black & white. He tells AP that in 2016 his 'photographic voice' changed without him really thinking about it. 'Actually I love colour work more because it allows me to highlight certain elements and patterns in an image. Colour brings out extra meaning and better depth, layers and three-dimensionality – improving object recognition and the relationship between elements within the frame. In my interpretation of the street carnival colour is an important protagonist – avoiding a merely illustrative role. I like to enhance compositions with dark areas, transforming the image into an almost abstract

There's a strong running theme in 99 of people silhouetted against bright backgrounds

Even Vasco's self-portrait is very much in keeping with his style – shadows and geometry

'patchwork' – elevating composition beyond simple description. Shadows and silhouettes can act as a 'negative space' for colour. The impressionist painter Pierre-Auguste Renoir once said, 'I've been 40 years discovering that the queen of all colours is black.'

Contrast is another prominent factor in his images, with acres of deep blacks that must have cost the printer a fortune in ink. 'The sun in Portugal shines so intensely, making colours more brilliant and shadows deeper. It's not surprising that these light conditions have inspired me to produce contrast-rich compositions. The play of light and shadow always attracted me,' he explains. Vasco says that most of the contrast we see in the pictures comes from the scene itself rather than from software. He meters for the highlights which creates the deep shadows we see when the conditions are extreme. He uses the tone curve in Adobe's Lightroom to emphasise the contrast and adjusts exposure using Levels. 'I don't like over-editing,' he says.

In the field

I wondered how planned Vasco's shots are and whether he spends a long time in one place waiting for things to come together or if he wanders around taking his chances when they appear. 'I love walking around the streets randomly hoping that I might be surprised by something extraordinary.

'Sometimes I feel like a stealthy hunter looking for moments of beauty in the urban forest. With my senses on alert my happiness levels are raised, and when I think I have a good photo I feel in a state of grace. I'm fascinated by the unpredictability of it. I'm also seduced by the magic of light in the urban kaleidoscope especially when fragments of colours emerge between dark silhouettes and deep shadows.

'Usually I try to be surprised and walk the streets at random, guided by the light. Sometimes though I find a magnificent spot with wonderful light and I wait for the right actors. If this does not happen, I take note of the time and during the following days I pass at that same time waiting for a character to appear who makes all the pieces of the composition fit together. So my approach can change depending on the situation.'

The concept of the book

Vasco's book, *99*, is an interesting concept. The foreword is at the end, and there are no numbers on the pages and no captions alongside the images. Photographers often can't resist explaining their ideas and the thoughts behind each picture, but not here.

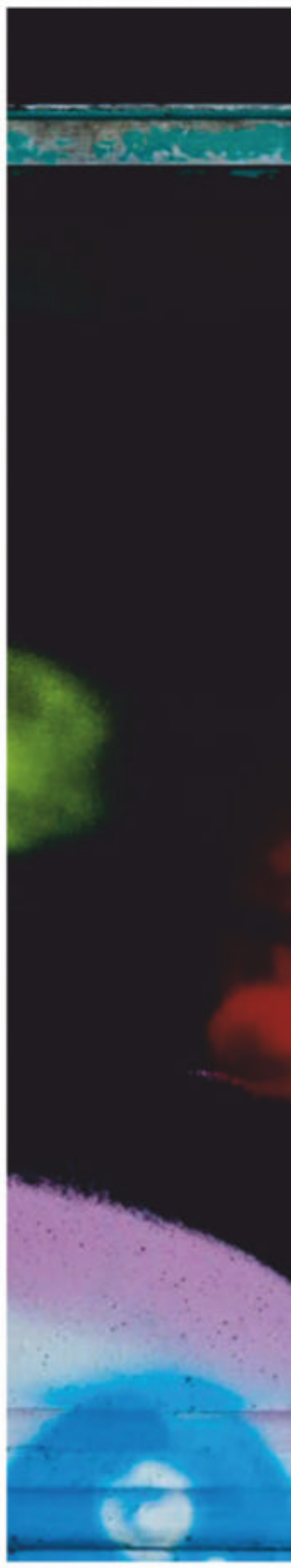
'I made the decision to place the images first in the book and the words afterwards, so not to influence the viewer before the pictures had been seen. During the process of designing the book I often remembered John Berger who, in his book *Ways of Seeing*, wrote that: "Seeing comes before words. The child looks and recognises before it can speak. It is seeing which establishes our place in the surrounding world."

'The book idea came only at the end of 2017. After shooting in colour for about two years I realised that maybe there was a body of work and that a book would make sense. I sought the opinion of many other photographers, and I got important advice from Nikos Economopoulos and David Gibson [who wrote the foreword for the book].

'Photographs only reach their final stage when printed – when we can feel them with our hands and the texture of the paper – and not just when seen through backlit screens. The photograph as a digital file is ephemeral and can disappear at any time, but in a book it has permanence.'

The layout of the book is also interesting; with images matched for standout characteristics across each spread to create a series of common themes that are about the photographic and artistic qualities of the pictures rather than the subject matter. This makes it a very visual book – I know that sounds obvious when it is a book about photography, but it really is about the photography, not the place, the people or the culture.

Those things feature, of course, but it's a real photographer's book as it is the pictures that are given precedence. While spreads are matched, occasional blank left-hand pages make us pause and reflect on what is on the right, and every now and then the style of image switches to create a break. It is all very nicely done, carefully thought out and designed to celebrate the



Bold primary colours and conflicting lines provide strong visual impact

Vasco matched the flowery skirt with the petals on the floor

Here the woman appears to be almost drowning in the colours around her

Great expanses of black are often punctuated with splashes of colour

Vasco's tips for street photography

1 Always have your camera with you, and go out a lot with it. You never know what will happen.

2 Live photography with passion – without restrictions and stay focused on each image you are making.

3 Look once and then go back to look again. Revisit the same places and try to discover new opportunities.

4 Patience is the key. To form your own photographic voice takes a long time. Without denying all the influences that you may have – be genuine. Try to be original.

5 Find inspiration by frequently looking at the books and exhibitions of great photographers.

qualities of light, dark and colour that most photographers find exciting.

'I tried to avoid a title for the book that was pretentious, but needed something that means the same in Portuguese and English because the book is bilingual. The simplest option was to choose the total number of photos: *99*.'

The book is more than bilingual as it is the pictures, not the text, that do the talking. We can all understand the messages they carry – no matter where we come from.

Weapon of choice

Interestingly, all the pictures in this book were shot on the original Leica Q compact camera. Vasco used to use a Canon EOS 5D III and a 5DS R with a wide zoom and a standard zoom, but found them too heavy and that their size made him stand out in the street. Switching to the Leica Q allows him to go unnoticed because the camera is so much smaller, but it also has a silent shutter – and Vasco likes the colours it produces. 'I am very adapted to this camera and this makes everything easier. I use the neck strap, but sometimes wrap it around my wrist to make it even less obtrusive still. I realised with the cameras I previously used my photographic voice was best expressed with a wideangle between 24mm and 35mm, so the 28mm of the Q allows me not only a great depth-of-field but broad perspectives and compositions with a greater distance between the various different layers.'

The bold geometry drags us into the scene here, whether we want to go or not

Patience or chance? Vasco says he sometimes waits and other times he just comes across a scene that works

Vasco's images all have extensive depth-of-field demonstrating a front-to-back sharpness that pulls in the close subjects as well as the environment in which they are captured. The effect lets us know that the backgrounds here are exactly as important as the foregrounds, and it is only the light and the colours used that separate one from the other. The depth-of-field also means that Vasco doesn't have to be too concerned with where the focus is in the shot, as on most occasions the camera won't be able to miss. 'In general I work with a high enough ISO, for example ISO 800, to give me a shutter speed of 1/500sec or 1/1000sec when I'm using a small aperture to gain that extensive depth-of-field. I look for a speed of around 1/1000sec because I often shoot while walking. This is all very much easier in Portugal because we usually have bright light and sunny days.'

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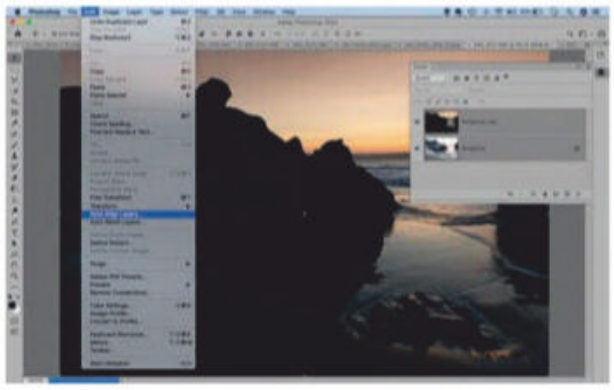
Gold blend

Exposing for a vibrant sunset can be tricky. **James Paterson** explains how to merge two bracketed frames in Photoshop for perfect results

When it comes to capturing a sunset sky it can be very tricky to balance out the exposure. The most vibrant part of the sunset sky is usually the area around the setting sun, but shooting into the sun usually results in a foreground in deep shadow. What if we want to capture detail in both the sky and land? One solution is to capture two or more bracketed exposures – one taken to record detail in the sky, the other for the land – then blend them together afterwards by taking the best parts of each exposure and combining them in Photoshop. This involves a combination of selections, layer masking and toning tricks. We'll explore the process here, and look at a few simple effects you can use to boost a sky in Photoshop.

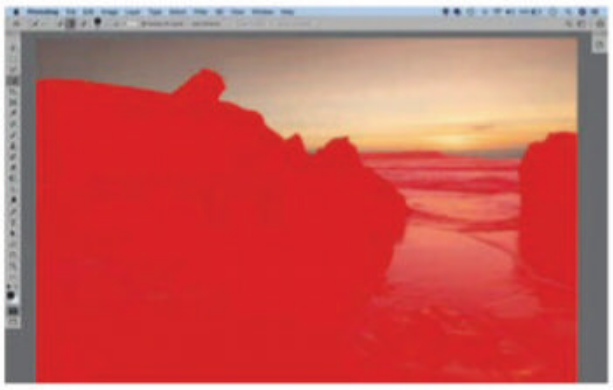
Initial toning

Photoshop is the best in the business at blending images together, so it's ideal for combining two exposures – one taken for the sky, the other for the land – into one seamless image. The first stage in this technique is to process the two images to boost the tones, which we've done here in Photoshop's Camera Raw plug-in. Of course, we can ignore the sky in the lighter image and the land in the darker one and simply concentrate on enhancing the area that we intend to use. For a sunset sky like this a boost in Temperature and Tint can help to give the image a warmer feel that enhances the mood (make sure both images have the same white balance settings). It's also a good idea to remove chromatic aberration, as colour fringing can occur along the horizon line, making it difficult to blend the images together.



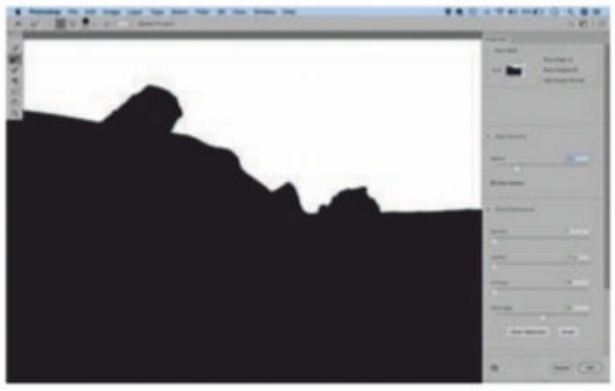
Open, combine and align

After processing both the images the next step is to open them both, then copy one on top of the other. Right-click the background layer in the Layers Panel then choose Duplicate Layer. Go to the Destination dropdown, choose the other image name and hit OK. This ensures the layer is copied over and placed in the same way as the other image. Next we can go to the other image and check that both are perfectly aligned by toggling the visibility of the top layer off and on. If the alignment is slightly off, we can use a handy command to correct things. Hold Cmd/Ctrl and click on both layers to highlight them, then go to Edit > Auto-Align Layers. Choose Auto and hit OK. Now the two images should be perfectly aligned.



Select the sky

The next step is to isolate the sky. We need to drag the brighter image to the top of the layer stack (so that it sits above the darker image), then make a selection. There are many ways to do this, from the Magic Wand to the Color Range command, Pen tool and even the Object Selection tool. Quick Selection is my go-to tool for most selections of complex shapes. Simply paint over the sky with it and it seeks out edges as we paint. If it snaps onto the wrong thing, hold Alt and paint to subtract from the initial selection. If, like here, the horizon is clearly defined, this should take no more than a few seconds to do. When making a complex selection press Q to toggle the pink Quick Mask overlay on or off, which helps to show the area that's covered.

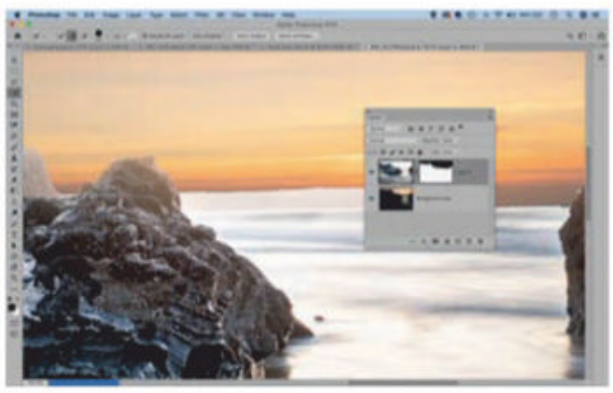


Improve the selection edge

Selections can be jagged and hard-edged, so it's best to run it through the Select and Mask command in order to improve the edge and pick up all the fine details and tiny gaps along it. Click the Select and Mask button at the top of the screen to enter the command. The Radius slider is the key feature within. By increasing the Radius, we expand the 'search area' along the edge, forcing the command to look further afield for similar pixels to include or exclude. As such, it's supremely useful when the horizon has fiddly details like trees running along it. We can also use the Refine Radius brush tool (found in the toolbar on the left) to paint a radius along the edge, which is helpful if we need to expand it in certain parts of the selection.

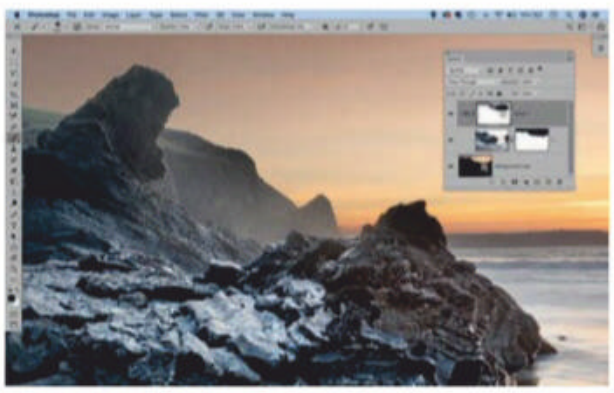
Combine the colourful sunset from one exposure and correctly exposed foreground from the other to create this balanced scene

AFTER



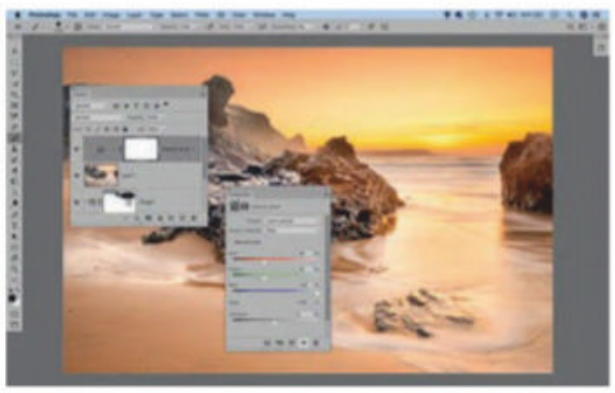
From selection to mask

Now our selection is complete we need to convert it into a Layer Mask. We can do this from within the Select and mask command using the Output dropdown, or if in the main interface we simply click the Add Layer Mask icon in the Layers Panel to convert an active selection to a mask. Everything outside of the selection will be hidden behind a black layer mask (if you find it hides the opposite of what you want, hit Cmd/Ctrl+I to invert the mask). Now the blown-out sky is hidden behind a mask, revealing the better sky on the layer below. However, the transition between the two will usually be too abrupt, so the next step is to make it a more gradual one.



Soften the transition

The great thing about layer masks is that they let us hide parts of a layer to reveal the detail on the layers below. When we add a mask to a layer, a little mask thumbnail appears alongside the image thumbnail. As long as this thumbnail is highlighted, we can paint black over the image with the brush tool to hide the layer and white to reveal it again. What's more, we can use a low opacity with the Brush tool to make semi-transparent areas, which helps here to create a gradual transition along the horizon line here. To take it further, we can preserve our original layer mask by making a layer group (Cmd/Ctrl+G). Now we can add a mask to the group and paint with black to gradually hide the layer along the edge.



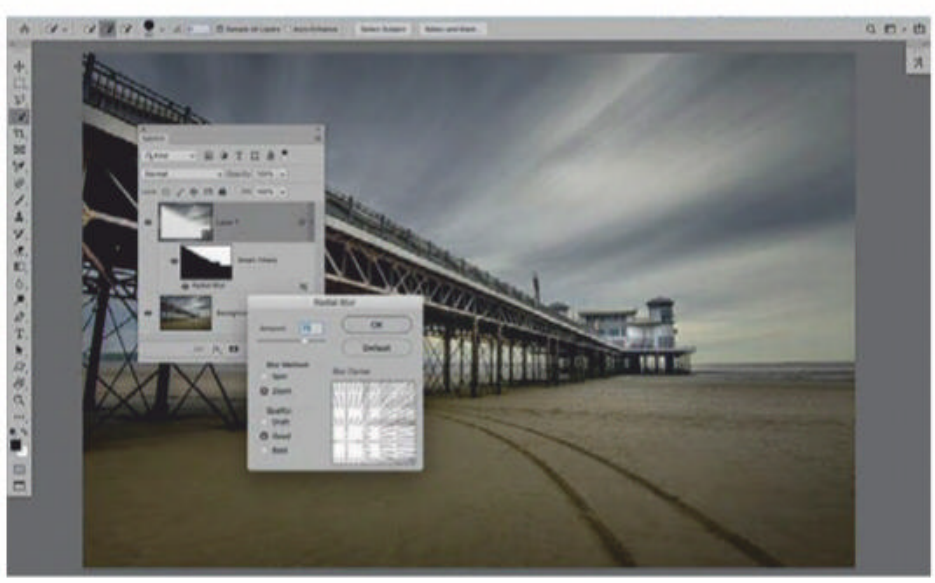
Tone the scene

For the finishing touches add a tonal effect on top of everything. This can help the two images to gel together more convincingly and look as if they belong together. Merge the two layers into a new layer using the keyboard shortcut Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+Alt+E, then go to Filter> Camera Raw Filter to tone the image using the Camera Raw controls. Alternatively, for a sunset image like this we can use a quick trick with the Channel Mixer to enhance the mood. Click the Create Adjustment Layer icon in the Layers panel and choose Channel Mixer. Choose Channel: Red then set Reds +200, Blues -50, Greens -50. Then choose Channel: Blue and set Blues +200, Reds -50, Greens -50. This creates a warm feel. If it's too strong, simply lower the layer opacity.

Try a new sky

The previous steps in this tutorial have been about blending two exposures of the same scene, but there's no reason why you can't use the same technique to add a completely different sky to your landscape if you like. Simply copy in a sky image, drag the layer to the bottom and then select and mask the original sky as shown here to reveal the new sky on the layer below. Of course, you can also experiment with the placement of the new sky by dragging it with the Move tool, or press Cmd/Ctrl+T to transform it if you need to resize, rotate or flip.

'The Radial Blur filter can also be used to create atmospheric rays of sunlight'



Mimic cloud motion

If you want to give a sky an impression of movement then why not blur the clouds. Of course, the best way to do this is with a strong neutral density filter and an exposure time that runs into minutes, but it's possible to mimic the effect in Photoshop. Select the sky with the Quick Selection tool and copy it to a new layer with Cmd/Ctrl+J. Right-click the layer and 'Convert to Smart Object' then hold Cmd/Ctrl and click on the layer thumbnail to load it as a selection. Next go to Filter > Blur > Radial Blur, set the blur to Zoom and adjust the strength and centre point and hit OK. To tweak the blur settings, double-click the smart filter on the layer to re-enter the Radial Blur command.

Create god rays

The Radial Blur filter can also be used to create atmospheric rays of sunlight, sometimes called 'god rays'. Follow the same technique (left) to copy and blur the sky, then change the Layer Blend Mode to Lighten. Next press Cmd/Ctrl+L for Levels and drag in the black and white levels to make the effect more pronounced. It's usually best to keep it subtle, so add a layer mask and paint with black to hide the rays in places where they are too strong. The effect works for part-cloudy skies like this, but if it doesn't give you strong rays you could try painting a few white blobs with the brush tool (experiment with different brush tips) then blur these instead.

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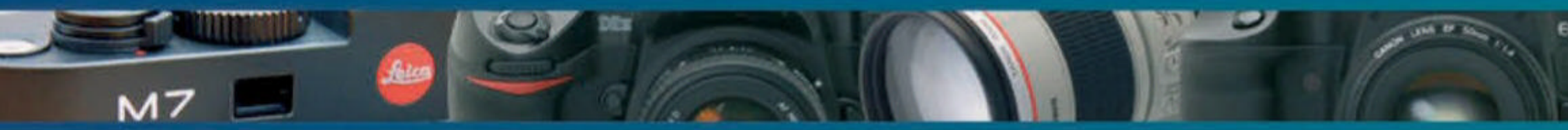

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SWAROVSKI 10x42 SL HABICHT+STRAP AND COVERS.....MINT- £465.00

Medium & Large Format

HASSELBLAD X PAN II WITH 45mm, STRAP, MANUAL.EXC+++BOXED £3,750.00
HASSELBLA X PAN LEATHER EVER READY CASE.....MINT- £225.00
HASSELBLAD 30mm f5.6 ASPH & FINDER & C/FILTER... MINT-BOXED £2,475.00
HASSELBLAD 35mm f3.5 HC FOR H SYSTEM + HOOD.....MINT-CASED £795.00
HASSELBLAD 28mm f4 HC FOR H SYSTEM.....MINT BOXED £1,075.00
HASSELBLAD 120mm f4 MACRO HC FOR H SYSTEM.....EXC++ £1,095.00
HASSELBLAD 150mm f4 SONNAR T* BLACK.....EXC++ £195.00
HASSELBLAD 150mm f4 SONNAR CF.....MINT-BOXED £395.00
HASSELBLAD 150mm f4 SONNAR SILVER.....EXC++ £175.00
HASSELBLAD 250mm f5.6 SONNAR SILVER.....EXC+ £179.00
HASSELBLAD HTS 1.5X TILT AND SHIFT ADAPTOR.....MINT BOXED £1,995.00
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HASSELBLAD PM90 PRISM FINDER.....MINT- £275.00
HASSELBLAD PME3 METERED PRISM FINDER.....MINT- £275.00
HASSELBLAD VFC-6 METERED PRISM.....MINT BOXED £175.00
HASSELBLAD A12 BACK CHROME.....MINT- £129.00
HASSELBLAD WINDER CW AND REMOTE.....MINT £275.00
BRONICA ETRS PRISM,FDR,BACK & 75mm EII LENS.....EXC++ £325.00
BRONICA ETRS WL/FINDER, BACK & 75mm EII LENS.....EXC++ £295.00
BRONICA AUTO EXTENTION TUBE E-14.....MINT BOXED £45.00
BRONICA POLAROID BACK FOR ETRSI, ETRS ETC.....MINT BOXED £59.00
BRONICA PLAIN PRISM FOR ETRS/ETRSI.....MINT £75.00
BRONICA PLAIN PRISM FOR ETRS/ETRSI.....EXC++ £59.00
BRONICA ROTARY PRISM FINDER FOR ETRS, ETRSI ETC.....MINT- £75.00
BRONICA MOTOR WINDER E.....EXC+++ £89.00
BRONICA 40mm f4 MC LENS FOR ETRS/ETRSI.....MINT £179.00
BRONICA 50mm f2.8 PE FOR ETRS/ETRSi.....MINT £199.00
BRONICA SPEED GRIP FOR ETRSW/ETRSI.....MINT- £49.00
BRONICA 150mm F3.5 ZENZANON S.....MINT- £165.00
BRONICA PLAIN PRISM FOR SQAi/SQA.....MINT- £99.00
BRONICA 40mm f4 ZENZANON S ULTRA WIDE FOR SQ.....MINT- £199.00
BRONICA 65mm F4 ZENZANON PS FOR SQ.....MINT-CASED £145.00
BRONICA 110mm F4 PS ZENZANON MACRO FOR SQ.....MINT-CASED £365.00
BRONICA 150mm F4 PS ZENZANON FOR SQ.....MINT-CASED £145.00
BRONICA 180mm f4.5 PS LENS & CASE.....MINT-BOXED £199.00
BRONICA SPEED GRIP FOR SQA/SQAI.....MINT- £69.00
BRONICA FILMBACK SQ-i220 FOR SQA/SQAi.....MINT BOXED £79.00
METZ 45 CL4 FLASH WITH SCA 386 FOR BRONICA.....MINT BOXED £150.00
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MAMIYA 135mm f4.5 SEKOR FOR C220/33 etc.....MINT CASED £150.00
MAMIYA 180mm f4.5 SEKOR FOR C220/330 etc.....MINT CASED £145.00
MAMIYA 645 SUPER WITH AE PRISM 80mm COMPLETE.....MINT £365.00
MAMIYA M645J COMPLETE WITH 80mm f2.8.....MINT- £299.00
MAMIYA 50mm f4 SHIFT LENS FOR 645 ETC.....MINT-CASED £365.00
MAMIYA 80mm f1.9 SEKOR C FOR 645 etc.....MINT £299.00
MAMIYA 150mm f3.5 SEKOR C FOR 645 SUPER etc.....MINT £145.00
MAMIYA 150mm F4.5 "G" WITH HOOD FOR MAMIYA 6.....MINT £295.00
MAMIYA 180mm F4.5 SEKOR Z W FOR RZ.....MINT £199.00
MAMIYA 250mm F4.5 LENS FOR RZ.....MINT- £195.00
MAMIYA 210mm F4 SEKOR C FOR 645.....MINT CASED £195.00
MAMIYA 180mm F4.5 SEKOR FOR RB.....MINT £169.00
MAMIYA 220 BACK FOR RZ 67.....MINT- £95.00
PENTAX 200mm F4 FOR PENTAX 67 + FILTER AND HOOD.....MINT- £199.00
PENTAX 55mm F4 SMC FOR 6X7.....MINT £175.00
PENTAX 55mm F2.8 FOR PENTAX 645.....MINT BOXED £199.00
ROLLEIFLEX SCHNEIDER 150MM F4.6 MAKRO FOR 6008.....MINT- £575.00
YASHICAMAT 124G TWIN LENS WITH CASE.....MINT- £375.00
YASHICA 124G TELEPHOTO AUX LENS SET.....MINT- £69.00

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NIKON F5 BODY WITH MANUAL & STRAP.....MINT-BOXED £499.00
NIKON F5 BODY.....MINT- £465.00
NIKON 10.5 f2.8 "G" IF-ED AF DX FISHEYE.....MINT BOXED £325.00
NIKON 35mm f1.8 "G" DX AF-S LATEST.....MINT BOXED £115.00
NIKON 35mm f2 A/F "D".....MINT--BOXED £195.00
NIKON 50mm f1.4 A/F "D".....MINT BOXED £175.00
NIKON 50mm f1.8 A/F "D".....MINT- £85.00
NIKON 50mm f1.8 "G" AF-S WITH HOOD.....MINT BOXED £145.00
NIKON 10 - 24 mm f3.5/4.5 "G" ED DX AF-S.....MINT- £399.00
NIKON 12 - 24mm f4 "G" DX IF-ED AF-S.....MINT BOXED £395.00
NIKON 12 - 24mm f4 "G" DX IF-ED AF-S.....MINT-CASED £365.00
NIKON 14 - 24mm f2.8 "G" ED AF-S LATEST.....MINT-CASED £999.00
NIKON 16 - 80mm f2.8-4EAF-S VR ED DX + HOOD.....MINT CASED £545.00
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NIKON 24 - 120mm f3.5/5.6 A/F "D" IF.....MINT BOXED £95.00
NIKON 24 - 120mm f4 "G" ED AF-S VR LATEST MODEL....MINT BOXED £745.00
NIKON 28 - 300mm f3.5/5.6 ED "G" AF-S VR LATEST.....MINT BOXED £495.00
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NIKON 70 - 300mm f4/5.6 AF "D" ED.....MINT- £125.00
NIKON 80 - 400mm f4.5/5.6 d EF ED VR LENS.....MINT-BOXED £495.00
NIKON DR-6 RIGHT ANGLED FINDER.....MINT BOXED £145.00
NIKON TC-14E II TELECONVERTER.....MINT BOXED £225.00
NIKON TC-17E II TELECONVERTER.....MINT BOXED £225.00
NIKON TC20E III 2X AF-S TELECONVERTER.....MINT BOXED £285.00
NIKON TC20E II 2X AF-S TELECONVERTER.....MINT-BOXED £175.00
NIKON DR4 RIGHT ANGLE FINDER.....MINT BOXED £89.00
KENKO PRO 300 2X TELEPLUS CONVERTER N/AFS.....MINT- £75.00
SIGMA 10 - 20mm f4/5.6 EX DC SLD HSM.....MINT-BOXED £199.00
SIGMA 300 - 800mm f5.6 EX DG APO HSM.....MINT-CASED £3,695.00
TOKINA 12 - 24mm F4 IF DX ASPHERICAL AT-X PRO.....MINT BOXED £275.00
TOKINA 11 - 16mm f 2.8 AT-X PRO DX WITH HOOD.....MINT--HOOD £245.00
TOKINA 35mm f2.8 ATX PRO DX MACRO 1:1 LATEST.....MINT BOXED £245.00

Nikon Manual Focus

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NIKON MD4 MOTOR DRIVE FOR F3/F3HP.....MINT BOXED £165.00
NIKON F3 BODY.....EXC+ £245.00
NIKON FM2n BLACK BODY.....EXC++ £325.00
NIKON FM2n CHROME BODY.....EXC+++ £245.00
NIKON FM2 CHROME BODY.....EXC++ £199.00
NIKON FE CHROME BODY.....EXC++ £125.00
NIKON FE CHROME BODY.....MINT- £145.00
NIKON FM BLACK WITH MF-16 BACK.....EXC+++ £169.00
NIKON FM BLACK.....EXC++ £145.00
NIKON FE2 BLACK BODY.....EXC++ BOXED £225.00
NIKON F2 A BLACK BODY.....EXC+++ £245.00
NIKON F2 A BODY FULLY WORKING.....EXC+ £199.00
NIKON F2 BODY FULLY WORKING.....EXC+ £169.00
NIKON F2 PHOTOMIC BODY CHROME.....EXC++ £275.00
NIKON F2 PHOTOMIC BODY CHROME.....EXC+ £199.00
NIKON F PHOTOMIC T WITH 50mm f2 NIKON LENS.....EXC++ £250.00
NIKON F "APOLLO" PHOTOMIC FTN WITH 50mm f1.4.....MINT- £399.00
NIKKORMAT FT CHROME WITH 35mm f2.8 S LENS.....EXC++ CASED £145.00
NIKKORMAT FT CHROME.....EXC+++ £75.00
NIKKORMAT FT2 BLACK WITH 50mm f2 LENS.....EXC++ CASED £165.00
NIKON 18mm f4 AI WITH HOOD & CASE AS NEW.....MINT £599.00
NIKON 24mm F2.8 AIS SUPERB SHARP LENS.....MINT-- £199.00
NIKON 28mm f2.8 AI.....MINT £165.00
NIKON 35mm f1.4 AIS REALLY SHARP LENS.....EXC++ £299.00
NIKON 45mm F2.8 GN NIKKOR.....MINT- £199.00
NIKON 50mm f1.4 Ai.....MINT- £195.00
NIKON 50mm f1.8 AIS SHARP LENS.....MINT £89.00
NIKON 55mm f2.8 MACRO AIS.....MINT- £165.00
NIKON 105mm f2.5 AI SUPERB SHARP LENS.....MINT- £165.00
NIKON 105mm f2.5 AIS FROM A COLLECTION.....MINT BOXED £295.00
NIKON 135mm f2.8 AIS.....MINT- £125.00
NIKON 1000mm f11 MIRROR LENS WITH CAPS.....EXC++ £495.00
NIKON 35 - 70mm F3.3/4.5 ZOOM NIKKOR MACRO AIS.....MINT- £169.00
NIKON 35 - 105mm F3.5/4.5 AIS ZOOM MACRO.....EXC++ £119.00
NIKON MD4 MOTOR DRIVE FOR F3/F3HP.....MINT- £145.00
NIKON MD4 MOTOR DRIVE FOR F3/F3HP.....EXC+++ £99.00
NIKON MD12 MOTOR DRIVE FOR FM2n/FE2/FE/FM/FM3.....MINT £145.00
NIKON PK13 AUTO EXTENSION RING.....MINT-BOXED £55.00
NIKON PK12 AUTO EXTENSION RING.....EXC++ £49.00
NIKON PK11 AUTO EXTENSION RING.....MINT £49.00
NIKON TC 200 CONVERTER.....MINT £69.00
NIKON S8 16 FLASH FOR F3/FM2/FM3/FE/FE2.....MINT-CASED £115.00
NIKON S8 16 FLASH FOR F3.....EXC++ £65.00

Olympus Manual

OLYMPUS OM4 BLACK BODY.....EXC++ £225.00
OLYMPUS OM2 SP.....EXC++ £129.00
OLYMPUS 38mm f2.8 ZUIKO MACRO LENS.....MINT-CASED £299.00
OLYMPUS 50mm f1.8 ZUIKO LENS.....MINT- £30.00
OLYMPUS 50mm f1.8 ZUIKO LENS.....MINT BOXED £49.00
OLYMPUS 80mm f4 ZUIKO MACRO LENS.....MINT-CASED £175.00
OLYMPUS 135mm f3.5 ZUIKO LENS.....MINT-CASED £69.00
OLYMPUS 2x TELECONVERTER.....MINT-CASED £35.00
OLYMPUS 65 - 116 TELESCOPIC AUTO TUBE.....MINT £95.00
OLYMPUS VARI-MAGNIFINDER.....MINT CASED £49.00
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LOTS OF OLYMPUS ACCESSORIES TOO MANY TO LISTFOR MACRO, FLASH PHONE
PLEASE RING FOR DETAILS AND PRICES ALL IN MINT OR CLOSE CONDITION PHONE

wanted...

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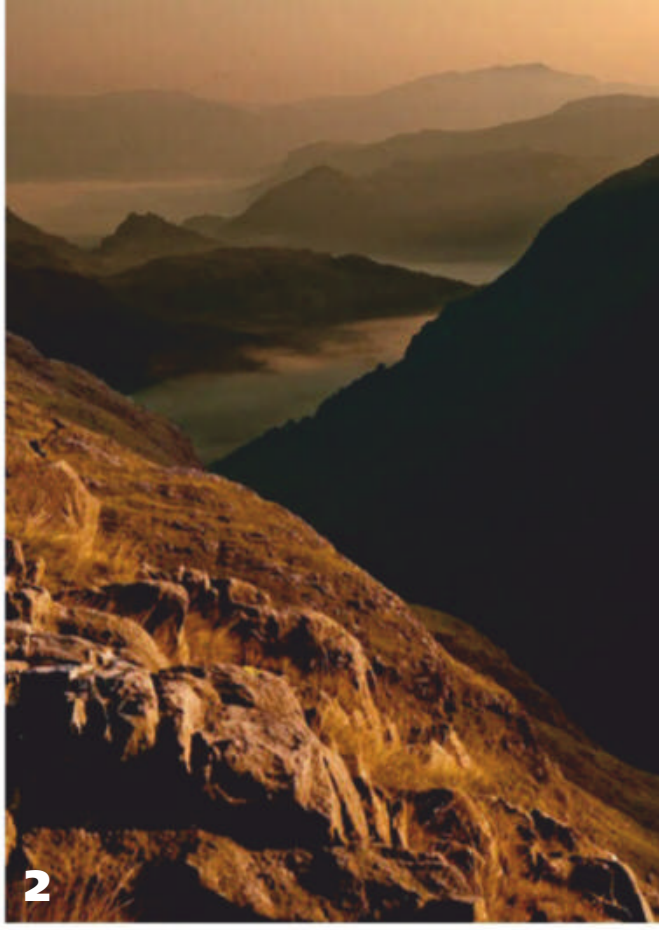


1 Safe Passage by Lynn Sharples An abstract and ethereal image. The distant boat completes the feeling of heading into the unknown.

2 Sunrise by Chris Jones The sharp foreground leads the eye to the atmospheric tonal changes in this excellent landscape capture.

5 MOT Failure by Chris Morris This is a beautiful shot and works well tonally. Who would have thought a steering wheel could be so interesting!

6 Melancholy by John Crowland This could be a still from a classic film. Well executed and very well thought out.

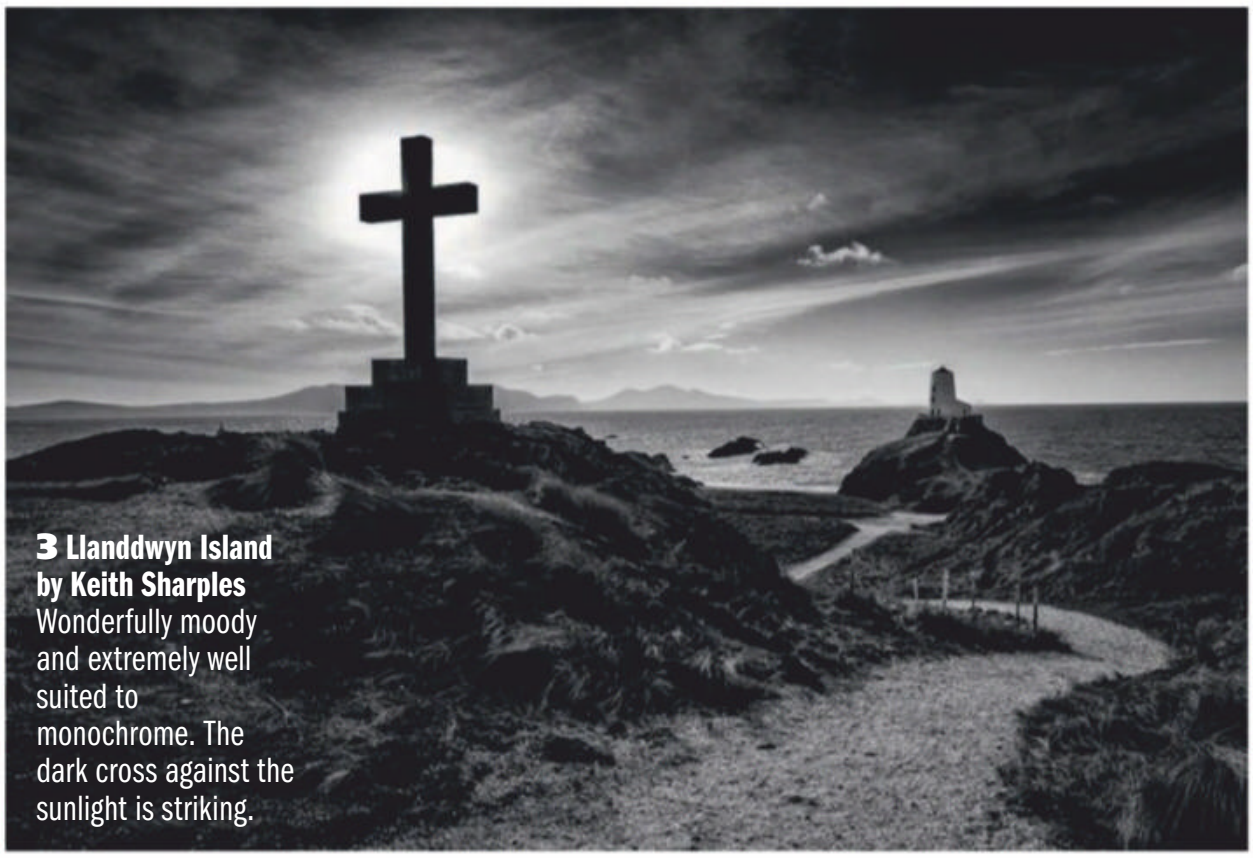
Join the Club

A club that, above all, wants its members to have fun while learning

When was the club founded?
We're not sure, but our longest-serving member Tony Falla, thinks it's somewhere in the late 1970s or very early '80s.

What does your club offer to new members?
New members are always made to feel welcome and are given a number of free evenings before being asked to join. As well as the indoor-programmed meetings we do try to get out and about frequently. We also have a mid-club which is far more informal. We have previously run a series of development evenings separate to the main club meetings to help develop an individual's equipment and software skills; we are looking to do something similar again in the future. Membership also provides affiliated membership to the Welsh Photographic Federation (WPF), which offers a number of benefits.

Describe a typical club meeting.
Our season runs from September to May with meetings taking place on the first and third Fridays of the month. The programme has a mix of speakers, competitions and workshops. We have around five competitions a year, mostly with a theme, which are a mix of print and digital. These lead into our Photographer of the Year award to the highest-scoring photographer throughout all the competitions. The workshops are based on the skills of club members; both what people can talk about and what others want to hear. And of course all our evenings have a tea and coffee break!



3 Llanddwyn Island by Keith Sharples Wonderfully moody and extremely well suited to monochrome. The dark cross against the sunlight is striking.

4 Who Ordered This? by Pat Hopkins The robin's quizzical expression has been well captured and lends the bird a great deal of character.

7 Steam Train by Iain McCallum This incredible drone shot shows a lot of technical skill. The train and its smoke cuts through the centre of the image perfectly.

Club essentials

Monmouth Photographic Club

Mitchel Troy Village Hall, Monmouth, NP25 4BD

Meets First and third Friday of the month September to May

Membership Around 30

Contact Iain McCallum at ism69@btinternet.com

Website www.monmouthphoto.co.uk

Do you invite guest speakers?
Previously we have had David Hurn speak at the club, which was amazing. As the programme secretary I like to get a good mix of speakers and we have had a diverse mix including Alyn Wallace, Nigel Forster, Damien Demolder, Jim Cossey, Cate Barrow and AP's very own Amy Davies speak as well as non-'traditional' artists such as Helen Sear. The programme always tries to react to suggestions and feedback from what people want to hear about.

Do members compete in regional or national competitions?
Yes, very much so. There's a thriving club-run national series of standalone competitions and battles within Wales and we try to enter as many of these as practical. We enter a number of the WPF competitions annually as well as some English ones. A number of members have also entered national competitions, with varied success.

How many members do you have?
Pre the COVID-19 shutdown we had around 30 members, which was on the increase from the previous years and heading in a very positive direction. A growing number of our members have received recognition for their work including CPAGB, BPE and AWPF.

Are any residential trips or outings planned?
Some members usually attend the annual weekend WPF conference in Carmarthen (previously held in Lampeter). We also have a number of day visits and overnight trips. Previously we have visited Dorset, the Peak District and Snowdonia, amongst others. Post-lockdown a number of local trips are planned that would allow for social distancing to be maintained, as we are sure that would put people at more ease.

What are the club's goals for the future?
To re-establish itself in the world post-COVID and get back to where we were previously. No doubt this will involve some change but hopefully in a way that supports its members and their needs. A number of members are talking about a trip to Anglesey once it's safe to do so. We aim to start having an impact on the WPF competition programme but mostly to enable members to continue improving their photography while keeping it enjoyable.

At a glance

£7,100 body only

- 40.9MP full-frame CMOS sensor
- ISO 100-50,000
- Optical viewfinder with rangefinder focusing
- Leica M mount
- 3-in 1.04m-dot touchscreen LCD

Leica M10-R

Andy Westlake takes a detailed look at Leica's latest high-resolution rangefinder, which sports a tailor-made 40.9MP sensor

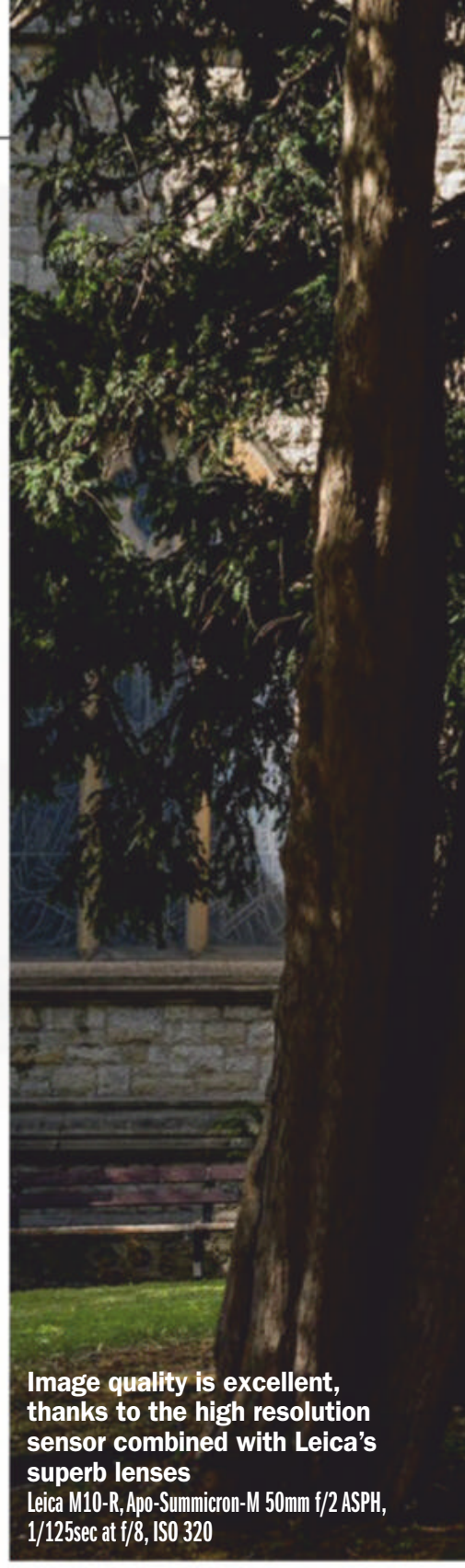


Image quality is excellent, thanks to the high resolution sensor combined with Leica's superb lenses
Leica M10-R, Apo-Summicron-M 50mm f/2 ASPH, 1/125sec at f/8, ISO 320

For and against

- ➕ The best colour images yet from an M-series rangefinder
- ➕ Exceptional build quality
- ➕ Straightforward operation with traditional photographic controls
- ➕ Large, clear viewfinder and superb rangefinder for focusing
- ➖ Touchscreen could be better integrated into the camera's controls
- ➖ 28mm framelines are difficult to see
- ➖ Poor battery life
- ➖ Extremely expensive

Data file

Sensor	40.9MP CMOS, 36x24mm
Output size	7864x5200
Focal length mag	1x
Lens mount	Leica M with 6-bit coding
Shutter speeds	16min – 1/4000sec
Sensitivity	ISO 100-50,000
Exposure modes	A, M
Metering	TTL; Spot, centre, multi (in live view)
Exposure comp	+/- 3EV in 0.3 EV steps
Continuous shooting	4.5 fps
Screen	3in, 1.04m-dot fixed touchscreen LCD
Viewfinder	Direct vision, 0.73x magnification
AF points	n/a
Video	n/a
External mic	No
Memory card	SD, SDXC, SDHC
Power	BP-SCL5 rechargeable Li-ion
Battery life	210 shots
Dimensions	139x38.5x80mm
Weight	660g with battery

ALL PRICES ARE APPROXIMATE STREET PRICES

Back in January, Leica introduced the M10 Monochrom, a rangefinder camera that shoots only in black & white. At the time, the big surprise lay in its sensor, which unlike the firm's previous mono models, clearly wasn't based on an existing colour design. Now the M10-R (for 'Resolution') explains why. It sports what is in effect a colour version of the same 40.9MP full-frame sensor, which has been custom-built for use with M mount lenses.

As a result, the M10-R offers the highest resolution yet from a conventional M-series camera, surpassing the M10-P with its 24MP chip. This finally puts the M system on a similar footing to full-frame mirrorless models such as the 45.7MP Nikon Z 7, or Leica's own SL2, which employs the same 47.3MP sensor as the Panasonic Lumix S1R. The only full-frame camera with a clear resolution advantage is the 61MP Sony Alpha 7R IV.

This matters, because one of the biggest selling points of Leica's rangefinders is the uncompromising quality offered by its M-mount lens range, and the M10-R should be able to exploit this better than ever before. It is, of course, very expensive, because Leicas always are. So is this camera an overpriced anachronism, or the best Leica M yet?

Features

First of all let's look at why Leica has used a new sensor, rather than the one it employed in the SL2 and Q2. The firm explains that this is essentially down to size: with the smaller dimensions

of the M10 body, it had to develop a specific, 'super compact' sensor for its latest generation of rangefinders. This in turn has allowed it to optimise the pixel and microlens architecture for use with M-mount lenses, many of which were made for use with film and project light into the corners of the frame at highly oblique angles, which conventional sensors can't handle. The sensor also forgoes an optical low-pass filter to maximise sharpness, while the cover glass doubles-up as an infrared-cut filter. This results in a thin, optically simple filter layer over the sensor, which should minimise corner blurring with wideangle lenses.

It's not just high resolution that the new sensor promises, though, but improved image quality all round, with a claimed dynamic range of over 13 stops. It also provides the same ISO 100-50,000 sensitivity range as the M10-P, so you don't have to give anything up in that respect.

In most other respects, the M10-R is very much a traditional rangefinder, and therefore looks decidedly basic by modern standards. In terms of design and operation, Leica has decided that there's no point in doing the same work twice, which means that it's almost identical to the M10 Monochrom (and the M10-P before that). I concur with Leica's judgement, which means that much of my following review is also borrowed from what I wrote about the Monochrom.

Being a rangefinder camera, focusing is manual only, with composition via a direct-vision optical viewfinder at the corner of the camera body. You can shoot in either aperture-priority or manual exposure modes, with traditional analogue controls for shutter speed, ISO, aperture and focusing. A simple TTL metering system measures light reflected off the focal-plane shutter, with blades painted in different shades of grey producing a centre-weighted bias.

Timed shutter speeds are available from 8sec to 1/4000sec in half-stop increments, set using the top-plate dial; with the dial in the B or A positions, this can extend as long as 16 minutes. Continuous shooting is available at 4.5 frames per second, and I was able to rattle off 8 or 9 raw frames in a burst before the camera slowed down (although Leica promises a 10-shot buffer).

Leica's venerable M mount dates back to 1954, and as a result is entirely mechanical, with no electronic communication between the camera and lens. But the camera can still identify the lens in use, using an optical sensor to read a set of black or white spots painted onto its mount – a system known as 6-bit coding. This allows the lens ID to be included in the EXIF data, while the focal length can be used to determine the minimum shutter speed when using Auto ISO, if you desire. The camera will still work absolutely fine with non-coded lenses, of course, and with older Leica optics you can specify which one you're using from a list in the camera's menu.

Leica's design philosophy is to strip the camera back to the essentials, which means it includes only what you really need for stills photography. So you get an exposure

The M10-R's files are well suited for conversion to black & white. Leica M10-R, Apo-Summicron-M 50mm f/2 ASPH, 1/180sec at f/8, ISO 100

bracketing control, a built-in intervalometer, and a 2- or 12-second self-timer, but that's about it. Notably, like the rest of the M10 series, this is one of the few current models that don't record video.

However the firm isn't really stuck in the past, and is quite happy to include up-to-date features when they're genuinely useful. Pressing the LV button on the back enters live view, which enables more accurate focusing and composition than the optical viewfinder, particularly with wideangle and large-aperture lenses. It also brings an expanded range of metering options, including multi-pattern and spot. The LCD is touch-sensitive for changing settings and browsing images, and Wi-Fi is built-in for transferring images to your phone using the Leica Fotos app, although Bluetooth is absent.

Build and handling

In terms of design, M10-R is essentially the same as previous M10 models, and is built like a tank, with a die cast magnesium alloy body shell and brass top and base plates. Everything about it exudes quality, with all the controls operating with satisfying precision. It has the characteristic M-series styling and layout, with curved ends and a stepped top-plate. One welcome concession to modern design is the addition of a small thumb 'hook' on the back, which provides a nice secure grip.

External controls are kept to the essentials, with analogue dials on the top-plate for shutter speed and ISO, and mechanical aperture and focus rings on the lens. Exposure compensation is applied by pressing a button on the front of the body and spinning an electronic dial on the back. The power switch surrounds the shutter button, and a frameline selector lever is found beneath the viewfinder window. That's all you need to operate the camera.

The 'digital' controls are likewise pared down to a minimum, with a d-pad positioned under your thumb, and a column of three large square buttons running down the left side of the LCD. Leica has done a great job of simplifying how these buttons work without restricting access to core functions; for instance in playback, the menu button essentially becomes the delete key. So despite the simplicity, it never really feels as if any buttons are missing.

Meanwhile the touchscreen gives quick access to secondary settings such as metering and drive modes, via an onscreen status display. However you can't always then change these settings by touch, which is about the only jarring experience I encountered when shooting with the camera. The touchscreen can be also used for browsing through your pictures in playback, and checking focus by double-tapping anywhere on the screen.

The M10-R is available in a choice of finishes, with the silver model providing the classic two-tone retro look, and the all-black version being the stealthier option for street shooters. For the first time since the original M10, the Leica red dot makes an appearance on the front, directly above the lens. The model name itself is engraved discreetly on the hot shoe.

The overall result is a camera that's as beautiful to behold, as it is simple and intuitive to use. It really does reduce photography down to the essentials, giving a very different shooting experience to modern auto-everything marvels. It's absolutely not an all-rounder in the manner of current high-end DSLRs and mirrorless models; instead the manual operation imposes a slower, more considered approach on your photography. Whether this is a good thing or not is purely down to personal preference.

Viewfinder and screen

As always for a rangefinder camera, the M10-R employs a direct-vision optical viewfinder, meaning that unlike a DSLR or mirrorless camera, you're not viewing the image as seen

The high resolution gives plenty of leeway for cropping
Leica M10-R, Apo-Summicron-M 50mm f/2 ASPH, 1/750sec at f/8, ISO 100

through the lens. Instead, the field of view is indicated using bright framelines in the finder window that are displayed in pairs and selected automatically by the lens: 50mm and 75mm, 35 and 135mm, and 28 and 90mm. They're parallax-corrected, moving diagonally across the frame as the lens is focused, and in principle indicate 100% of the lens's the field of view at a focus distance of 2m. At longer range you'll get more in the frame, and at closer distances, a little less.

The viewfinder is bright and clear, and at 0.73x magnification, of a very decent size. But you do need to squeeze your eye close to the window to see the 28mm frameline. This means those who wear glasses, or shoot left-eyed, may well struggle; as someone who does both, I found it almost impossible.

Basic exposure information is projected into the viewfinder using red LEDs, including the shutter speed, exposure compensation, and metering indicators when shooting in manual. This works OK, but the display looks very dated compared to the excellent hybrid optical-electronic viewfinder used by Fujifilm in its X-Pro and X100 series cameras.

If you want to shoot with wideangle lenses, you'll need to use a supplementary viewfinder. You can mount an optical finder on the hot shoe, but the process of switching back and forth between that and the rangefinder makes for a rather awkward shooting experience. The alternative is to switch to live view, but using this on the fixed rear screen isn't necessarily great either. The best option would be to use the optional Visoflex (Typ 020) electronic viewfinder, which is a 2.36m-dot unit that includes an eye sensor for switching automatically with the LCD. It also includes a GPS unit for geotagging your images, but costs £420.

Focusing

As already mentioned, focusing is manual only, using a coincident-image rangefinder. This approach was popular on film cameras up until the 1970s, and won't require any explanation for our more experienced readers. But for those unfamiliar with the concept, a second ghost image is overlaid on a bright spot in the centre of the viewfinder, and rotating the focus ring moves it relative to the main view. When the two are aligned, the lens should be correctly focused.

Getting used to this method takes a bit of practice. But once mastered, it's pretty quick and accurate, due in no small part to the fact that Leica's rangefinder is, by necessity, probably the finest ever made (indeed the complexity and precision of the mechanism is responsible for a significant fraction of the camera's price). The

Focal points

The M10-R mixes some modern technology with an old-fashioned rangefinder design

EVF

Leica's Visoflex (Typ 020) electronic viewfinder can be mounted on the hot shoe. It's particularly useful when shooting with wideangle, telephoto or macro lenses, and for accurately focusing super-fast lenses.

Power

In a nod to Leica's 35mm film M cameras, the SD card and battery are accessed by removing the baseplate. The Li-ion BP-SCL5 is charged externally, and rated for just 210 shots per charge.

Cable release

A mechanical cable release can be screwed into the shutter button. But there are no electronic connectors, such as USB or HDMI ports.

Stealth

The M10-R is based on the M10-P, which means it inherits the same super-quiet shutter.

6-bit coding

A series of optical sensors on the lens mount identifies the lens, as long as it has matched markings. The lens name is then included in the EXIF data.

Wi-Fi

Smartphone connectivity is provided by built-in Wi-Fi, allowing you to copy your favourite images from the camera for sharing.

The sensor's massive dynamic range allows lots of shadow detail to be recovered in raw processing
Leica M10-R, Apo-Summicron-M 50mm f/2 ASPH, 1/180sec at f/5.6, ISO 250

rangefinder spot is bright and sharply delineated in the viewfinder, and both images are crisp, which makes them easy to align. You just have to be aware that repeating vertical patterns can contribute to incorrect focusing.

Rangefinder focusing does have its limitations. Obviously there's just a single focus point in the centre of the frame, and when you're shooting at large apertures, using a focus and recompose technique can result in the kind of small focus errors that we might not have really noticed when shooting with film, but which appear very obvious when examining image files onscreen – especially at such high resolution. So it's best not to move the subject too far off-centre in your composition after focusing.

It's also important to understand that the accuracy of the focusing is limited by the rangefinder base, which is defined by the distance between the viewfinder and the secondary window on the camera's front. In practice, this means that it's not technically possible to focus super-fast lenses consistently accurately, especially given the even higher demands of the M10-R's sensor compared to the M10-P. So if you're contemplating pairing the camera with the £8,600 Noctilux 50mm f/0.95, for example, you'll only be guaranteed accurate focus if you use live view.

In this mode, the body is smart enough to engage a magnified display when it detects the lens being focused, but alternatively you can zoom in manually by pressing the button on the front of the body. The focus area can be moved freely around the frame for use with off-centre subjects, and focus peaking is available in a choice of colours. It's just worth remembering that the aperture will always be stopped down to what's set on the lens. This has the advantage of always previewing depth of field, but sometimes it can be better to open it up for precise focusing.

Performance

Shooting with the M10-R provides a very different experience to modern auto-everything cameras. With its ultra-quiet shutter and understated design, it's extremely discreet. Like the rest of the M10 series, it's about the closest you'll get to the simplicity of the old-fashioned analogue experience, before the introduction of autofocus and multi-pattern metering.

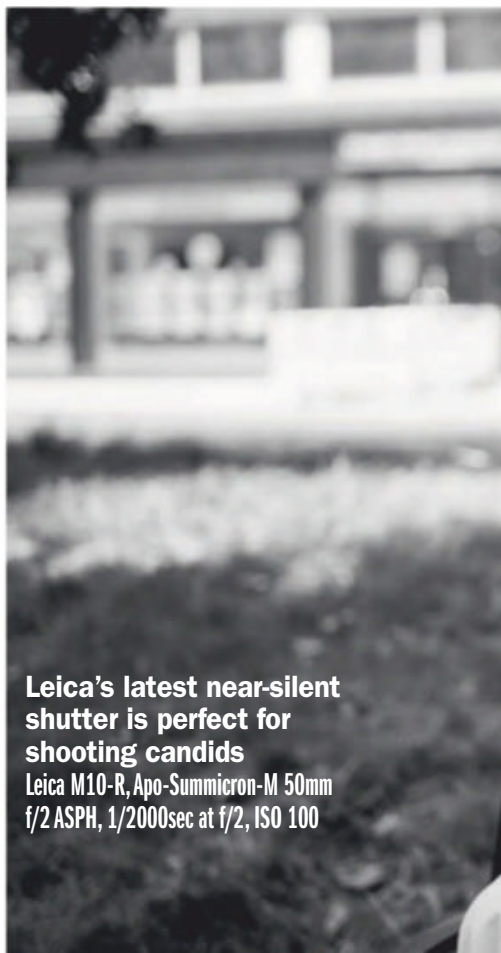
The camera takes a moment to get itself ready to shoot when you flick the power switch on. At this point you can choose to work in any way from either fully manual, to aperture priority with Auto ISO. Given that you can set the latter to use either a specific minimum shutter speed, or base it on the focal length of the lens in use (with the option of biasing towards high speeds to minimise any chance of blurring from camera shake), I can see little reason not to use it.

Whichever approach to shooting you take, it's important to understand the characteristics of the lightmeter. It's not like modern multi-pattern systems, able to analyse and understand almost any combination of light and shade. Instead, you need to adjust it manually according to the subject, giving an extra stop or two when faced with a bright sky, for example. As usual it's best to avoid overexposure whenever possible, as your ability to recover clipped highlights raw processing is pretty limited, especially when you need to maintain colour accuracy.

Leica's stated battery life, according to CIPA standards, is just 210 shots per charge, which counts as disappointing by any standards. I found it to be pretty representative of what you can expect to get in real-world use when shooting mostly with the viewfinder, with the occasional foray into live view and image playback. But with no USB port, there's no option to top the battery up in-camera, so I'd recommend carrying a spare or two. Curiously I got rather better stamina from the Monochrom.

Image quality

When it comes to assessing the image quality, there are really two things we need to consider. The first is whether it surpasses existing M-mount options, and the second is how it compares to



Leica's latest near-silent shutter is perfect for shooting candids
Leica M10-R, Apo-Summicron-M 50mm f/2 ASPH, 1/2000sec at f/2, ISO 100

other high-resolution full-frame cameras. To cut a long story short, it clearly outperforms the M10-P for resolution, and should get the most out of any M-mount lens for colour photography. The only caveat is that the M10 Monochrom is still better a better choice for those who are really serious about black & white.

I tested the M10-R primarily with the peerless APO-Summicron-M 50mm 1:2 ASPH, which is one of the finest lenses I've ever used. At low ISO settings the combination delivered remarkably clean images, with lots of detail from corner to corner. Not only does this offer the potential to make large, detailed prints (up to 24x16in/60x40cm at least), it also enables considerable leeway with cropping. This is handy when you're working with primes.

I've not generally been a fan of Leica's JPEG processing in the past, but the M10-R is capable of delivering attractive files, especially in sunlight. Auto white balance is generally well judged, if a touch on the cool side, while colours are strong without being overblown. The in-camera monochrome setting also gives attractive results. This means that you have decent source material to work with if you want to copy your images to your phone via Wi-Fi using the Leica Fotos app. However, you'll probably still want to tweak them in an app such as Snapseed for brightness and tonality before sharing them.

You'll get the most out of the camera, however, if you shoot raw, and here Leica's use of the DNG format is especially welcome, as you can work on your files straight away using your existing raw processor. You'll then be able to make full use of the sensor's impressive dynamic range, which gives plenty of scope to extract additional shadow detail during raw processing. With a bit of care, I was able to pull the shadows up by about four stops, which perhaps doesn't quite match the very best full-frame sensors available, but is pretty close (and far more than you need most of the time). Go any further, though, and you'll start to see ugly low-frequency colour noise appearing in the darker regions of the image. As always there's considerably less headroom for recovering clipped highlights, so it generally pays to err slightly on the side of underexposure.

Image quality holds up very well at high ISO settings, too. I'd be perfectly happy shooting at ISO 12,500, and maybe ISO 25,000 with a generous dose of noise reduction. But I'd draw the line at going up to ISO 50,000, due to ugly green and purple colour blotching that's near impossible to treat. As tends to be the case, high ISOs generally look nicer if you convert the images to black & white. AP

The metering often requires a little tweaking
Leica M10-R, 50mm f/2 ASPH, 1/350sec at f/6.8, ISO 100

Verdict

Amateur Photographer Testbench Recommended ★★★★½

THERE'S no doubt that the Leica M10-R is a lovely camera, although to me it doesn't have quite the same irresistible charm as its Monochrom sibling. But if your aim is simply to make high-resolution colour images, rationally it makes far more sense to buy something like the Sony Alpha 7R IV, with all the latest features such as in-body stabilisation and eye detection AF.

However, choosing a camera isn't just about specifications and buying into the latest technology. Ultimately, it's a creative tool that has to fit with the photographer's way of shooting, and in this respect the M10-R is unique. With its pared-back design, it has a straightforwardness to it that allows you to concentrate fully on the process of shooting. Used with a few small primes, it also makes for an extremely portable and discreet set-up with stunning image quality. It's not for everyone – the price alone determines that – but for some photographers it'll be perfect.

Of course, you'll need good lenses to get the most out of the 40.9MP sensor. However that's not necessarily a problem, as Leica's lenses have an enviable reputation for quality. It's also important to understand that a high-resolution sensor will get the best out of any lens you use, whether or not it's sharp wide open or into the corners of the frame. You just might not get proportionally higher image quality compared to the 24MP M10-P, all the time.

Ultimately, though, the M10-R really is an anachronism, especially as we can now buy small, discreet full-frame mirrorless models with excellent image quality elsewhere. But it's an utterly beautiful one, and long may Leica continue to make cameras like this.

FEATURES	6/10
BUILD & HANDLING	9/10
METERING	7/10
AUTOFOCUS	N/A
AWB & COLOUR	8/10
DYNAMIC RANGE	9/10
IMAGE QUALITY	9/10
VIEWFINDER/LCD	8/10

The Ensign Midget family with boxes, slip cases, film and an instruction book the size and shape of the camera

FILM STARS

The mighty Mi

John Wade recalls how Ensign reacted to the rise of 35mm and traces the life of the Midget

Back in the 1930s there was a craze for miniature roll film cameras. This was largely down to the launch, in 1925, of the Leica, the first truly viable 35mm camera. Once photographers accepted that a decent-sized image could be obtained from such a small negative, the race was on for manufacturers to jump on the bandwagon. A few began making their own 35mm cameras, but a significant number introduced new, smaller-than-usual roll film models whose negative sizes approximated the 35mm frame. And so, in 1934, the Ensign Midget was born.

There are five models. All are relatively easy to find today. They are very collectable and, for the photographer with a little patience and ingenuity, they can still be used.

The five Midgets

The cameras were designed by Swedish engineer Magnus Neill, who had designed the Ticka watch-type camera, and perhaps more significantly, the Ensignette, with which the Midget shared some aspects of its design. His intention was to make a camera that folded to a clean design that left no extraneous bulges, bumps, levers or knobs. Two models were initially launched. Both shot 3x4cm images and each had a similar design.

Folded, the camera measures just 9x4x1.5cm. Gripping two serrated panels top and bottom of the lens panel and pulling forward until four struts click-stop positively into position extends the depth from 1.5cm to 6cm. The Ensign Midget name is emblazoned each side of the lens in an attractive art deco style. To close the camera, the struts are pulled out slightly and the lens panel pressed back into the body.

Before the Midget: the Ticka watch-type camera and Ensignette, both designed by Magnus Neill

dget

The cameras are each equipped with two viewfinders. The first is a small reflecting brilliant type which, when the camera is held in the vertical position, views the subject through an aperture in the lens panel, and which, for horizontal pictures, folds out from behind the panel on a short arm. For eye-level viewing, a second metal frame cleverly unfolds from the top of the lens panel to line up with a sight that swivels up from the rear of the body.

The first model, designated originally as the A/N, offers shutter speeds of 1/25-1/100sec shutter speeds, apertures of f/6.3-f/22 and a lens that focuses from 3ft to infinity. The second model, originally known as the A/D, is similar in design but with a fixed focus lens and apertures designated only as 'small' and 'large'. A year after the launch of these two cameras, a simplified version was produced with a fixed focus lens, fixed aperture and a shutter which offers only 'I' and 'T' settings; the frame finder is simplified and there is no brilliant viewfinder.

As the new camera was launched, the price of the original models rose and the three cameras took on the names by which they are still known. Named after their cost in pre-decimal shillings, the cameras were known as the Model 22, Model 33 and Model 55 (22 shillings = £1.10p, 33 shillings = £1.65p, 55 shillings = £2.75p).

The last two models of the Midget were silver versions of the Model 33 and Model 55, launched in 1935 to commemorate the Silver Jubilee of King George V and Queen Mary. Each camera's rippled body was painted silver and sold in a smart grey leather slip case with a lavishly lined presentation box. The cameras were sold for the same price as their black counterparts.

How the Ensign Midget was advertised

Contact print from an Ensign Midget negative, taken probably sometime in the late 1930s

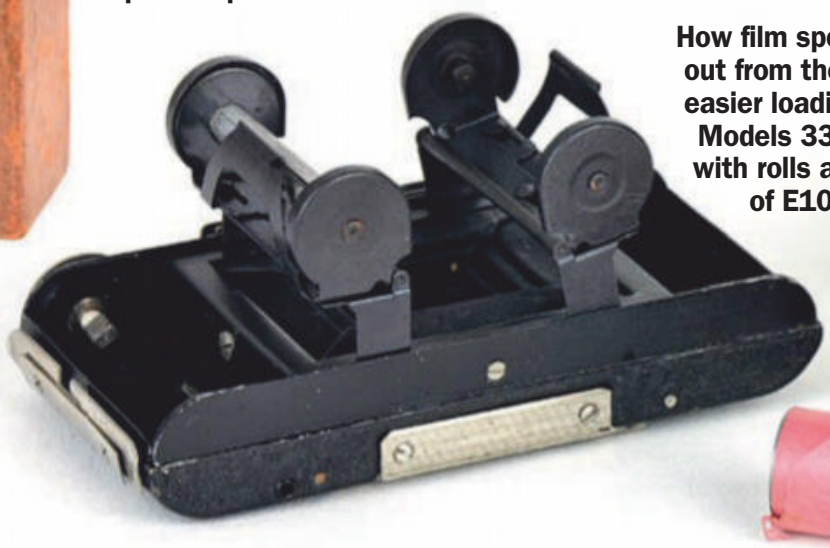
Enthusiastic marketing

If marketing of the time is to be believed, the Midget was designed to

The three basic models in their folded positions

The camera's tripod adapter

The unusually designed Ensign Midget developing tank



How film spools swing out from the body for easier loading on the Models 33 and 55, with rolls and a box of E10 film

appeal to every type of photographer. To quote from a 1930s Ensign catalogue…

'It is a camera that has an appeal to the experienced photographer because, with a Midget in his waistcoat pocket, he need never miss an opportunity. It is a camera that anybody, man or woman, can carry always, with the slightest inconvenience. Boys and girls like the almost secret proportions of the Midget too. The Midget has overcome the bugbear of bulk.'

When the Second World War broke out in 1939, Ensign suddenly discovered that it was the ideal camera in wartime as well, for soldier and civilian alike…

'A remarkable War-Time Camera. It goes into a tunic pocket with room to spare. It is essentially the camera for the man in camp. Just the thing to give to a fellow who is called up or to a woman in Service. Some people are making war-time diaries with these Midgets, taking snaps of subjects like children going to school with their gas masks, cars bearing war-time notices, men digging for victory on allotments, or of someone pasting strips of paper on the window. All these little war-time incidents make photographs which will be treasured later on.'

The accessories

Accessories for the Midget, which today might appeal to a collector more than a user, include an unusual developing tank in which the film is pulled out in a straight line along its length, rather than loaded into spirals in the conventional way. There are also a couple of enlargers. In the first, the negative is placed at one end of a tube containing a lens that focuses the image on a small piece of photographic paper under a light-tight lid at the opposite end before exposing the whole thing to daylight. The second enlarger, now rather rare, positions the negative on top of a lightbox containing both a white bulb for exposure and an orange pilot lamp for darkroom illumination, while a lens above focuses the image on a sheet of paper at the top of this somewhat precarious assemblage. Other accessories include an electric contact printer, developing and printing outfit, printing frame, developing dish, filter for the model 55 only, tripod attachment and cable release.

The life of the Midget was cut short in 1940 when its manufacturer went over to war work, and Ensign's premises in London were wiped out by a German bombing raid on the night of 24-25 September. The camera never resumed production after the war. AP

The Silver Jubilee cameras: a folded Model 33 in its presentation box alongside an unfolded Model 55

Using a Midget today

PRESSING a catch at one end of the body enables the entire back to be removed and, in Models 33 and 55, film loading is made easier by having spools that swing in and out of the body. The camera takes a film size called E10 which is obviously no longer made. Surprisingly, however, E10 film can still be found occasionally on eBay, although the expiry date is likely to be sometime in the 1940s or 1950s at best.

The film is, however, the same width as 35mm. So for those of a dexterous nature, and with access to a darkroom or changing bag, small rolls can be made by attaching normal 35mm film to cut-down backing paper from a roll of 120. You can even load raw 35mm into the camera. Either way, you won't have access to the backing paper numbers designed to be read through the camera's red window, so you need to know how much film to advance between exposures. One and a half turns of the Midget's wind key is about right to begin with, though you might want to allow more to compensate for inaccurate spacing as the take-up spool fills up. You also need to mask the red window to prevent stray light from reaching the film.

Using an Ensign Midget today is a task for the dedicated enthusiast. The rest of us can just admire it as a lovely little collector's item.

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0.3 Full ND £18.95	0.3 Soft ND £18.95	0.3 Hard ND £18.95	SRB 6 Stop £29.95
0.6 Full ND £18.95	0.6 Soft ND £18.95	0.6 Hard ND £18.95	SRB ND1000 £29.95
0.9 Full ND £18.95	0.9 Soft ND £18.95	0.9 Hard ND £18.95	Sunset Grad £18.95

Save £10 with square filter sets

Full ND Glass Pro Set	£79.95
Full ND Resin Set	£49.95
ND Soft Grad Resin Set	£49.95
ND Hard Grad Resin Set	£49.95

Sets include: 3 x filters & Wallet

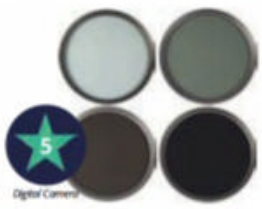
0.3 Full ND Pro Glass	£29.95
0.6 Full ND Pro Glass	£29.95
0.9 Full ND Pro Glass	£29.95
1.2 Full ND Pro Glass	£29.95
Set (0.3, 0.6, 0.9 & Wallet)	£79.95

Circular Filters

Sizes range from 25mm to 105mm depending on the filter.

Circular Polarisers
25mm-95mm
from £15.95

ND1000 Filters
46mm-82mm
from £24.95



Neutral Density Filters
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from £13.95

UV	from £11.95	Infrared	from £20.95	Colour Grad	from £14.95
ND Fader	from £29.95	Skylight	from £13.50	Star Effect	from £12.95
ND1000 Rugged	from £29.95	Black & White	from £12.50	ND Grad	from £15.95

Lee Filters

LEE Filters

Lee100 Holder
£79.95

SW150 Holder
£150.00

Lee100 Polariser	£229.95	Mark II Adaptors	£89.95
Lee100 Landscape Kit	£159.95	Screw-in Adaptors	£64.95
Lee100 Exposure Kit	£344.95	ND Filters	from £95.00
ND Filters	from £78.00	Big Stopper	£132.00
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Little Stopper	£95.99	Super Stopper	~~£129.95~~ £99.95
Super Stopper	£99.95	Polariser	£180.00
Landscape Polariser	£173.99	ND Filter Sets	£249.00
Filter Sets	from £100.00	Lightshield	£18.00

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Trent Monopod	£65.95
Docz Foot Stabiliser	£44.95
Iggy Mini Tripod Kit	£24.95
Eclipse Leo Tripod	£289.95
Punks Patti Tripod	£99.99
Punks Corey Tripod	£169.99
Punks Travis Tripod	£139.95

Ellie L Bracket	£64.95
QR11-LC L Bracket	£49.99
QR11-LG L Bracket	£49.99
QR4 Tripod Plate	£19.99
360-Clamp Head	£65.95

SRB On-it Carbon Fibre Monopod

- Max. H: 1500mm
- Min. H: 400mm
- Weight: 360g
- Max. Loading : 4kg
- Carrying Case

£29.95

SRB On-it Monopod Feet

£14.95

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£30 off

Lee Filters Seven5 Starter Kit
~~£109.00~~ £79.95

SALE

Seven5 Holder	~~£59.50~~ £44.95
Seven5 Adaptor Rings	~~£17.50~~ £13.95
Seven5 ND Grad Filters	~~£52.00~~ £39.95
Seven5 ND Filters	~~£64.95~~ £44.95
Seven5 Big Stopper	~~£65.00~~ £49.95
Seven5 Little Stopper	~~£68.00~~ £49.95
Seven5 Super Stopper	~~£64.95~~ £49.95
Seven5 Polariser	~~£190.00~~ £149.95
Seven5 Pouch	~~£33.95~~ £24.95
Seven5 Deluxe Kit	~~£460.00~~ £349.95

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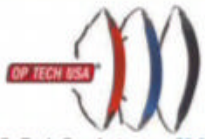
Dust Blowers	from £3.50
Rainsleeves	from £5.95
Cleaning Kits	from £5.95
Camera Wraps	from £8.95
Cleaning Cloths	from £1.50
Lens Pouch	from £8.50
White Balance Caps	from £9.95
Lens Caps	from £3.95
Body Caps	from £3.50
Rear Lens Caps	from £3.50



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Kase Wolverine Magnetic Circular Filters

Andy Westlake tests a brilliant set of filters that attach to your lens magnetically

● £235 ● kasefilters.com

SOMETIMES it's the naming that annoys me. Call your product after a notoriously ferocious predator, as filter maker Kase has done with its Wolverine range, and it just seems like you're trying too hard. My natural, perhaps overly cynical instinct is to dismiss them on the spot, as likely to be sheep in wolves' clothing. Thankfully, though, I gave these filters the benefit of the doubt, and agreed to try them out. Because it turns out they're the real deal. Indeed as high quality, easy-to-use filters go, they're absolute monsters.

The concept is deceptively simple. Screw an adapter ring into the front of your lens, to which the super-slim filters snap firmly into place magnetically. The circular polariser can be rotated freely on this magnetic mount, negating the need for a rotary frame. Once positioned, an ND filter can simply be stacked on top, again holding firmly in place. Cleverly, the filters can't be mounted the wrong way around; the magnets will repel each other if you try, so the filters won't hold in place.

It's hard to convey just how quick this approach is, compared to laboriously screwing filters into lens threads. Filters become much quicker and easier to use, which encourages you to use them creatively. The design means that there's no chance of light leakage ruining your shots when using strong neutral densities, either. Optically, the filters are superb, with barely any discernible impact on image quality. Indeed the only artefacts I saw from their use were some small additional flare spots when shooting directly into the sun. The ND filters are as neutral as they could possibly be, so you won't have to correct any unpleasant colour casts in raw processing. I didn't see any troublesome vignetting when stacking a polariser and ND either, even on the Laowa 15mm F2 Zero-D ultra-wideangle prime.

Case
The leather-look case has five slots for filters, and a brass clip for attaching it to a bag or strap.

Lens cap
The metal lens cap is lined with felt to avoid scratching your lens's front element. I found it came off a little too easily.

Stackable
You can use an ND and a polariser at the same time, with the latter going closest to the lens.

Adapter rings
You'll probably want to get a magnetic ring for each of your lenses. They're available in all sizes from 49mm to 82mm, for £12 each.

Amateur Photographer Testbench GOLD ★★★★★

No colour cast was visible even with all three filters stacked Sony Alpha 7 III, 24-105mm f/4, 4s at f/11, ISO 100

At a glance

- Magnetic filter set
- Includes polariser, 3-stop ND, and 6-stop ND
- Magnetic lens cap
- Carry case included

KITS AND SIZES

Kase's Magnetic Circular kits come in three sizes; 77mm, 82mm, and 95mm for use with ultra-wide lenses. Stepping up to the Professional kit adds a 10-stop ND filter, but at a significant premium. Prices range from £220 for the 72mm Entry Kit up to £395 for the 95mm Professional Kit.

Verdict

When a clever idea comes along you wonder why everyone else isn't doing it. Kase's Wolverine circular filters fit right into this category, as they're so quick and easy to use, with excellent results. As always there are compromises: the adapter rings add awkward bulk to small lenses if you choose to leave them attached, block the use of hoods and your lenses' original caps, and don't accommodate graduated filters. But if you can live with that, they're an excellent option, particularly when you want to carry minimal kit.

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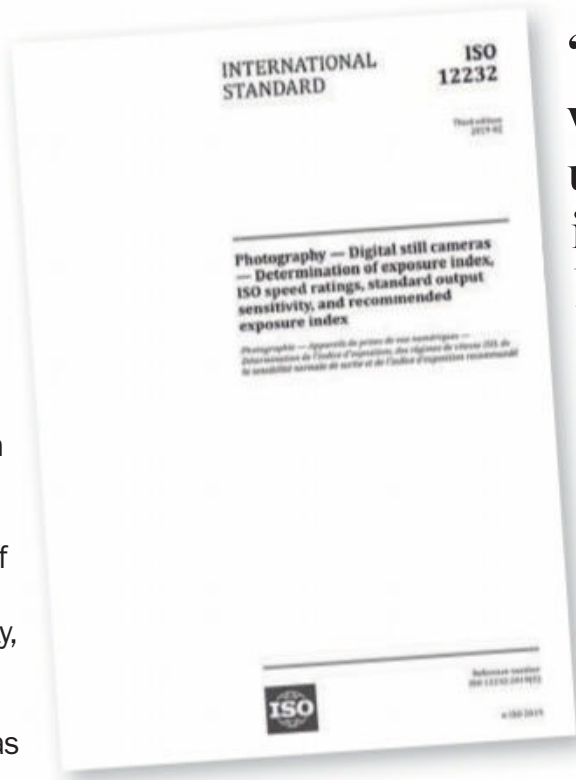
Professor Newman on...

The new standard

The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) has an important role in defining certain terms

One of the topics plagued by misinformation is 'ISO'. If you look around common photographic information sources on the topic it's hard to find one that is correct, and many are grossly misleading. The gold standard for what 'ISO' means is, of course, the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). Its standard, which defines 'Photography – Digital still cameras – Determination of exposure index, ISO speed ratings, standard output sensitivity, and recommended exposure index' is international standard number 12232. This standard was first published in 1998, at the inception of digital still photography. It represented what the standards committee thought were likely to be the concerns of people using digital still cameras.

In 2006 the second edition was published. It introduced the ways by which ISO is determined today, the 'Standard Output Sensitivity' and 'Recommended Exposure Index' methods. The Japanese photographic industry body CIPA mandates that its members must use these methods. By 2006 the camera manufacturers had been finding the previous manner of determining ISO, which sought to do so by measuring image noise related to exposure, less than useful. They had started using their own methods, based on the relationship of image lightness and exposure, and had standardised those through CIPA. In the 2006 edition of the ISO standard, its representatives ensured that these methods became part of a worldwide standard.



INTERNATIONAL STANDARD

ISO 12232

Photography — Digital still cameras — Determination of exposure index, ISO speed ratings, standard output sensitivity, and recommended exposure index

ISO

> 'Definitions of words are of utmost importance in a document like this'

In 2019 the third edition was published. I was involved in a few conversations concerning what this new version said, but those discussing (with one exception) seemed not to have actually read it. In the end, I decided to buy a copy, to reach my own conclusions about changes from the previous version.

All about clarification

As to what the changes were, the answer was 'not much'. This new standard seemed to be about clarification. It put to bed some of the misinformation contained in the sources that I referred to in the first paragraph, in the meantime making some explicit definitions. Definitions are of utmost importance in a document like this – a commonly used word may take on a very specific meaning.

One such word is 'sensitivity'. It is a word used by photographers to denote the quantity determined by ISO. Many of the mistakes in articles about ISO arise from writers coming to their own conclusions about what it means. Sensitivity is not a word ISO has used in its speed ratings, which have been referred to as a 'speed' or 'exposure index'. In the 2006 version of the standard it only appeared in the phrase 'Standard Output Sensitivity', the name of one of the new exposure indices that was added to that version of the standard. This phrase needed to be carefully parsed, with an understanding that the word 'output' was used adjectivally to apply to the word 'sensitivity', that is, it denoted the 'sensitivity' of the output to exposure. To be precise, this is an incorrect use of 'sensitivity', which generally means how small a stimulus can be detected, not what is the response to that stimulus – that is 'responsivity'.

The 2019 version of the standard makes clear how sensitivity should be interpreted and it is very non-intuitive. 'Photographic sensitivity: general term used for numerical values calculated based on the exposure at the focal plane of a DSC which produces a specified DSC image signal level, such as the standard output sensitivity or recommended exposure index.'

Bob Newman is currently Professor of Computer Science at the University of Wolverhampton. He has been working with the design and development of high-technology equipment for 35 years and two of his products have won innovation awards. Bob is also a camera nut and a keen amateur photographer

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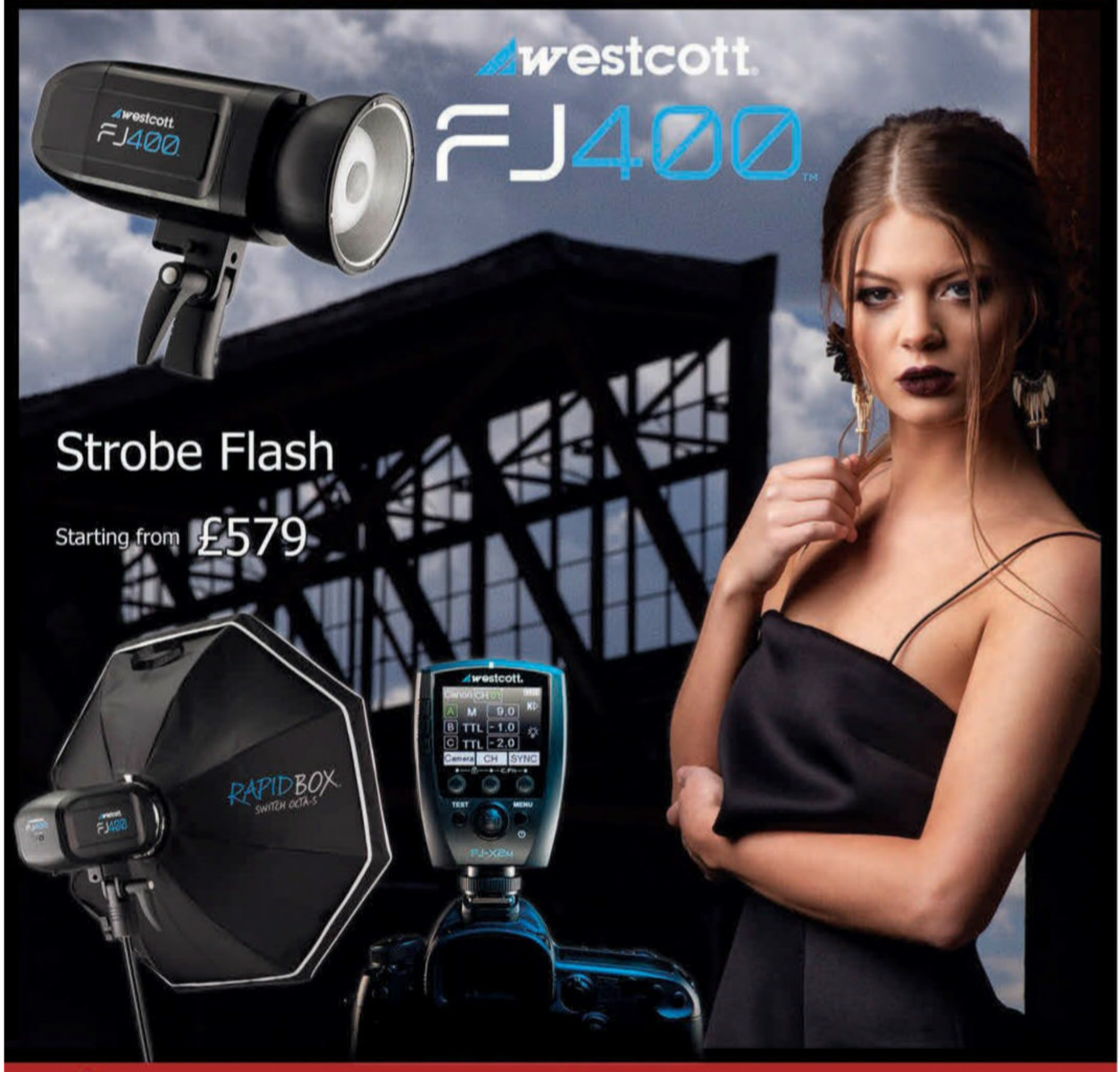

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Buying Guide

347 lenses listed & rated

Our comprehensive listing of key specifications for DSLR lenses

DSLR Lenses

Interchangeable lenses come in a huge array of types for shooting different kinds of subjects

IN GENERAL, the easiest way to expand the kinds of pictures you can take is by buying different types of lenses. For example, telephoto lenses let you zoom in on distant subjects, while macro lenses enable close-ups of small objects. Large-aperture lenses allow you to isolate subjects against blurred backgrounds, or shoot in low light without having to raise the ISO too high. Meanwhile, all-in-one superzooms cover a wide range of subjects, but usually with rather lower optical quality.

Lens mounts

Each manufacturer has its own lens mount and most aren't compatible with one another. For example, a Canon DSLR can't use Nikon lenses, although you can use independent brands if you get them with the right mount.

Built-in focus motor

Most lenses now incorporate an internal motor to drive the autofocus, although some are still driven from the camera body. DSLR lenses often use ultrasonic-type motors for fast focusing, but some now have video-friendly stepper motors as widely used in mirrorless systems.

Filter thread

A thread at the front of the camera will have a diameter, in mm, which will allow you to attach a variety of filters or adapters to the lens.

Maximum aperture

Wider apertures mean you can use faster, motion-stopping shutter speeds.

OUR GUIDE TO THE SUFFIXES USED BY LENS MANUFACTURERS

AF	Nikon AF lenses driven from camera
AF-S	Nikon lenses with Silent Wave Motor
AF-P	Nikon lenses with stepper motors
AL	Pentax lenses with aspheric elements
APD	Fujifilm lenses with apodisation elements
APO	Sigma Apochromatic lenses
ASPH	Aspherical elements
AW	Pentax all-weather lenses
CS	Samyang lenses for APS-C cropped sensors
D	Nikon lenses that communicate distance info
DA	Pentax lenses optimised for APS-C-sized sensors
DC	Nikon defocus-control portrait lenses
DC	Sigma's lenses for APS-C digital
DG	Sigma's designation for full-frame lenses
Di	Tamron lenses for full-frame sensors
Di-II	Tamron lenses designed for APS-C DSLRs
Di-III	Tamron lenses for mirrorless cameras
DN	Sigma's lenses for mirrorless cameras
DO	Canon diffractive optical element lenses
DT	Sony lenses for APS-C-sized sensors
DX	Nikon's lenses for DX-format digital
DS	Canon's Defocus Smoothing technology
E	Nikon lenses with electronic apertures
E	Sony lenses for APS-C mirrorless
ED	Extra-low Dispersion elements
EF	Canon's lenses for full-frame DSLRs
EF-S	Canon's lenses for APS-C DSLRs
EF-M	Canon's lenses for APS-C mirrorless
EX	Sigma's 'Excellent' range
FA	Pentax full-frame lenses
FE	Sony lenses for full-frame mirrorless
G	Nikon lenses without an aperture ring
HSM	Sigma's Hypersonic Motor
IS	Canon's Image-Stabilised lenses
L	Canon's 'Luxury' range of high-end lenses
LD	Low-Dispersion glass
LM	Fujifilm Linear Motor
MP-E	Canon's high-magnification macro lens
OIS	Optical Image Stabilisation
OS	Sigma's Optically Stabilised lenses
PC-E	Nikon tilt-and-shift lenses
PF	Nikon Phase Fresnel optics
PZD	Tamron Piezo Drive focus motor
RF	Canon full-frame mirrorless lenses
S	Nikon's premium lenses for mirrorless
SAM	Sony Smooth Autofocus Motor
SDM	Pentax's Sonic Direct Drive Motor
SMC	Pentax Super Multi Coating
SP	Tamron's Super Performance range
SSM	Sony Supersonic Motor lenses
STF	Sony and Laowa Smooth Trans Focus
STM	Canon lenses with stepper motor
TS-E	Canon Tilt-and-Shift lens
UMC	Ultra Multi Coated
USM	Canon lenses with an Ultrasonic Motor
USD	Tamron Ultrasonic Drive motor
VC	Tamron's Vibration Compensation
VR	Nikon's Vibration Reduction feature
WR	Weather Resistant
Z	Nikon's lenses for mirrorless cameras

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DSLR Lenses

LENS	RRP	SCORE	SUMMARY	IMAGE STABILISATION	SONY ALPHA	CANON	FOUR THIRDS	NIKON	PENTAX	SIGMA	FULL FRAME	MIN FOCUS (CM)	FILTER THREAD (MM)	DIAMETER (MM)	LENGTH (MM)	WEIGHT (G)
					MOUNT									DIMENSIONS		
CANON DSLR																
EF 8-15mm f/4 L USM	£1499		Impressive-looking fisheye zoom lens from Canon			·					·	15	n/a	78.5	83	540
EF-S 10-18mm f/4.5-5.6 IS STM	£299	4★	A superb ultra-wideangle that's a must-have for anyone shooting landscapes and cityscapes	·		·						22	67	74.6	72	240
EF-S 10-22mm f/3.5-4.5 USM	£990	4★	A good performer, with solid MTF curves and minimal chromatic aberration			·						24	77	83.5	89.8	385
EF 11-24mm f/4 L USM	£2799	5★	Long-awaited by Canon full-frame users, this is the world's widest-angle rectilinear zoom lens			·					·	28	n/a	108	132	1180
EF 14mm f/2.8 L II USM	£2810	4.5★	Impressive resolution at f/8 but less so wide open			·					·	20	n/a	80	94	645
EF-S 15-85mm f/3.5-5.6 IS USM	£900	4★	Four-stop image stabilisation and Super Spectra coatings, together with a useful range	·		·						35	72	81.6	87.5	575
EF 16-35mm f/2.8 L II USM	£1790	4.5★	A good performer with strong results at f/8 in particular			·					·	28	82	88.5	111.6	635
EF 16-35mm f/2.8 L III USM	£2150		Revamped wideangle zoom includes new optics in a weather-sealed lens barrel			·					·	28	82	89.5	127.5	790
EF 16-35mm f/4 L IS USM	£1199	4★	Versatile and with a useful IS system, this is a very good ultra-wideangle zoom for full-frame cameras	·		·					·	28	77	82.6	112.8	615
TS-E 17mm f/4 L	£2920		Tilt-and-shift optic with independent tilt-and-shift rotation and redesigned coatings			·					·	25	77	88.9	106.9	820
EF 17-40mm f/4 L USM	£940	4★	Designed to match the needs of demanding professionals – and does so with ease			·					·	28	77	83.5	96.8	500
EF-S 17-55mm f/2.8 IS USM	£795	4★	Very capable lens with three-stop image stabilisation, Super Spectra coating and a circular aperture	·		·						35	77	83.5	110.6	645
EF-S 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6 IS STM	£195		Versatile, affordable standard zoom featuring four-stop image stabilisation	·		·						25	58	69	75.2	205
EF-S 18-55mm f/4-5.6 IS STM	£220		Latest standard zoom for Canon's APS-C EOS DSLRs, with compact design and updated optics	·		·						25	58	66.5	61.8	215
EF-S 18-135mm f/3.5-5.6 IS STM	£478		Uses stepper motor for silent and fast autofocus that's also well suited to video work	·		·						39	67	76.6	96	480
EF-S 18-135mm f/3.5-5.6 IS USM	£500		Versatile zoom with new Nano USM focus technology and optional power zoom adapter	·		·						39	67	77.4	96	515
EF-S 18-200mm f/3.5-5.6 IS	£740	4★	Automatic panning detection (for image stabilisation) and a useful 11x zoom range	·		·						45	72	78.6	102	595
EF 20mm f/2.8 USM	£610		Wideangle lens with a floating rear-focusing system and a USM motor			·					·	25	72	77.5	70.6	405
EF 24mm f/1.4 L II USM	£2010		Subwavelength structure coating, together with UD and aspherical elements			·					·	25	77	83.5	86.9	650
EF 24mm f/2.8 IS USM	£750	4★	Small wideangle optic with image stabilisation	·		·					·	20	58	68.4	55.7	280
EF-S 24mm f/2.8 STM	£165	4★	Bargain price, tiny carry-everywhere size and a highly competent imaging performance			·						16	52	68.2	22.8	125
TS-E 24mm f/3.5 L II	£2550		Tilt-and-shift optic with independent tilt-and-shift rotation and redesigned coatings			·					·	21	82	88.5	106.9	780
EF 24-70mm f/2.8 L II USM	£2300	5★	Professional-quality standard zoom lens with a fast aperture			·					·	38	82	88.5	113	805
EF 24-70mm f/4 L IS USM	£1499		L-series zoom said to be compact, portable and aimed at both professionals and amateurs	·		·					·	38	77	83.4	93	600
EF 24-105mm f/4 L IS II USM	£1129	4★	Reworked workhorse zoom for full-frame cameras uses an all-new optical design	·		·					·	45	77	83.5	118	795
EF 24-105mm f/3.5-5.6 IS STM	£479	3.5★	A versatile standard zoom lens that's an ideal route into full-frame photography	·		·					·	40	77	83.4	104	525
EF 28mm f/1.8 USM	£570		USM motor and an aspherical element, together with a wide maximum aperture			·					·	25	58	73.6	55.6	310
EF 28mm f/2.8 IS USM	£730	3.5★	Lightweight and inexpensive lens, with a single aspherical element	·		·					·	30	52	67.4	42.5	185
EF 28-300mm f/3.5-5.6 L IS USM	£3290		L-series optic with expansive range, image stabilisation and a circular aperture	·		·					·	70	77	92	184	1670
EF-S 35mm f/2.8 Macro IS STM	£399		Features an innovative built-in dual-LED light for close-up shooting	·		·						13	49	69.2	55.8	190
EF 35mm f/2 IS USM	£799		First 35mm prime from Canon to feature an optical stabilisation system	·		·					·	24	67	62.6	77.9	335
EF 35mm f/1.4 L II USM	£1799	5★	An outstanding addition to the L-series line-up			·					·	28	72	80.4	104.4	760
EF 40mm f/2.8 STM	£230		A portable and versatile compact pancake lens. A fast maximum aperture enables low-light shooting			·						30	52	68.2	22.8	130
TS-E 45mm f/2.8	£1200		Tilt-and-shift lens designed for studio product photography			·					·	40	72	81	90.1	645
EF 50mm f/1.2 L USM	£1910		Very wide maximum aperture and Super Spectra coatings, and a circular aperture			·					·	45	72	85.8	65.5	580
EF 50mm f/1.4 USM	£450	5★	Brilliant performer, with a highly consistent set of MTF curves. AF motor is a tad noisy, though			·					·	45	58	73.8	50.5	290
EF 50mm f/1.8 STM	£130	5★	Lightest EF lens in the range, with wide maximum aperture and a Micro Motor			·					·	35	49	69.2	39.3	130
TS-E 50mm f/2.8L Macro	£2500		One of a trio of tilt-and-shift macro lenses, this replaces the TS-E 45mm f/2.8			·					·	27	77	86.9	114.9	945
EF-S 55-250mm f/4-5.6 IS STM	£265		A compact telephoto lens featuring smooth, quiet STM focusing when shooting movies	·		·						110	58	70	111.2	375
EF-S 60mm f/2.8 Macro USM	£540	4★	Great build and optical quality, with fast, accurate and near-silent focusing			·						20	52	73	69.8	335
MP-E 65mm f/2.8 1-5x Macro	£1250		Macro lens designed to achieve a magnification greater than 1x without accessories			·					·	24	58	81	98	710
EF 70-200mm f/2.8 L USM	£1540		Non-stabilised L-series optic, with rear focusing and four UD elements			·					·	150	77	84.6	193.6	1310
EF 70-200mm f/2.8 L IS II USM	£1900	5★	A great lens but also a costly one. Peak resolution at 0.4 cycles-per-pixel is simply amazing	·		·					·	120	77	88.8	199	1490
EF 70-200mm f/2.8 L IS III USM	£2150		Updates Canon's excellent pro workhorse zoom with water-repellent fluorine coatings	·		·					·	120	77	88.8	199	1480
EF 70-200mm f/4 L USM	£790		A cheaper L-series alternative to the f/2.8 versions available			·					·	120	67	76	172	705
EF 70-200mm f/4 L IS USM	£1210	5★	A superb option for the serious sports and action photographer	·		·					·	120	67	76	172	760
EF 70-200mm f/4L IS II USM	£1300		Upgraded premium telephoto zoom promises five stops of image stabilisation	·		·					·	100	72	80	176	780
EF 70-300mm f/4.5-5.6 IS II USM	£499	4.5★	Mid-range telephoto zoom offers really good optics and fast, silent autofocus	·		·					·	120	67	80	145.5	710
EF 70-300mm f/4-5.6 L IS USM	£1600	5★	An L-series lens with a highly durable outer shell	·		·					·	120	67	89	143	1050
EF 70-300mm f/4.5-5.6 DO IS USM	£1700		Three-layer diffractive optical element and image stabilisation	·		·					·	140	58	82.4	99.9	720
EF 75-300mm f/4-5.6 III	£300		Essentially the same lens as the 75-300mm f/4-5.6 III USM but with no USM			·					·	150	58	71	122	480
EF 75-300mm f/4-5.6 III USM	£350	2.5★	Good but not outstanding. The inclusion of a metal lens mount is positive, though			·					·	150	58	71	122	480
EF 85mm f/1.2 L II USM	£2640	4★	A well-crafted lens, with fast and quiet AF with good vignetting and distortion control			·					·	95	72	91.5	84.0	1025
EF 85mm f/1.4L IS USM	£1570	5★	Sublime, highly desirable portrait lens combines large aperture and optical image stabilisation	·		·					·	85	77	88.6	105.4	950
EF 85mm f/1.8 USM	£470	5★	Non-rotating front ring thanks to rear-focusing system, as well as USM			·					·	85	58	75	71.5	425
TS-E 90mm f/2.8	£1670		Said to be the world's first 35mm-format telephoto lens with tilt-and-shift movements			·					·	50	58	73.6	88	565
TS-E 90mm f/2.8L Macro	£2500		One of a trio of tilt-and-shift macro lenses, this replaces the TS-E 90mm f/2.8			·					·	39	77	86.9	116.5	915
EF 100mm f/2 USM	£559		A medium telephoto lens with a wide aperture, making it ideal for portraits			·					·	90	58	75	73.5	460
EF 100mm f/2.8 Macro USM	£650	4★	A solid performer, but weak at f/2.8 (which is potentially good for portraits)			·					·	31	58	79	119	600
EF 100mm f/2.8 L Macro IS USM	£1060	5★	Stunning MTF figures from this pro-grade macro optic	·		·					·	30	67	77.7	123	625
EF 100-400mm f/4.5-5.6 L IS II USM	£1999	4.5★	L-series construction and optics, including fluorite and Super UD elements	·		·					·	98	77	94	193	1640
EF 135mm f/2 L USM	£1360		L-series construction with two UD elements and wide maximum aperture			·					·	90	72	82.5	112	750
TS-E 135mm f/4L Macro	£2500		One of a trio of tilt-and-shift macro lenses, with 1:2 magnification			·					·	49	82	88.5	139.1	1110
EF 180mm f/3.5 L Macro USM	£1870		L-series macro lens with inner focusing system and USM technology			·					·	48	72	82.5	186.6	1090
EF 200mm f/2.8 L II USM	£960		Two UD elements and a rear-focusing system in this L-series optic			·					·	150	72	83.2	136.2	765
EF 300mm f/4 L IS USM	£1740		Two-stop image stabilisation with separate mode for panning moving subjects	·		·					·	150	77	90	221	1190
EF 400mm f/5.6 L USM	£1660		Super UD and UD elements, as well as a detachable tripod mount and built-in hood			·					·	350	77	90	256.5	1250

ALL PRICES ARE RRPS, STREET PRICES MAY VARY

We've tried our hardest to ensure that the information in this guide is as complete and accurate as possible. However, some errors will inevitably have crept in along the way: if you spot one, please let us know by emailing ap.ed@kelsey.co.uk. Unfortunately we don't have space to list every single product on the market, so we don't include the most expensive speciality items. **Before making a purchase we advise you to check prices, along with any crucial specifications or requirements, with either a reputable retailer or the manufacturer's website.**

DSLR Lenses

LENS	RRP	SCORE	SUMMARY	IMAGE STABILISATION	SONY ALPHA	CANON	FOUR THIRDS	NIKON	PENTAX	SIGMA	FULL FRAME	MIN FOCUS (CM)	FILTER THREAD (MM)	DIAMETER (MM)	LENGTH (MM)	WEIGHT (G)
					MOUNT									DIMENSIONS		
LAOWA DSLR																
12mm f/2.8 Zero D	£899		Ultra-wideangle lens for full-frame DSLRs that exhibits minimal distortion		·	·		·	·		·	18	77	74.8	82.8	609
15mm f/4 1:1 Macro	£449	4★	Wideangle lens, with 1:1 Macro available in Canon, Nikon, Pentax, Sony E and Sony A		·	·		·	·		·	12	77	83.8	64.7	410
24mm F14 2x Macro Probe	£1599		Unique specialist macro lens with submersible front barrel and built-in LED lights			·		·			·	47	n/a	38	408	474
25mm f/2.8 Ultra Macro 2.5x - 5x	£399		Unusual lens designed solely for ultra-close-up shooting, with magnification from 2.5x to 5x			·		·	·		·	17.3	n/a	65	82	400
60mm f/2.8 2X Ultra Macro	£319	3.5★	With 2:1 Macro, an all-in-one option for normal portrait photography as well as ultra-macro		·	·		·	·		·	18.5	62	95	70	503
100mm f/2.8 2:1 Ultra Macro APO	£469		Full-frame macro lens with twice-life-size magnification and apochromatic design			·		·	·		·	24.7	67	125	72	638
105mm f/2 (T3.2) STF	£649	4★	Designed for full-frame DSLRS, and features an apodisation element that renders lovely bokeh		·	·		·	·		·	90	67	98.9	76	745
NIKON DSLR																
8-15mm f/3.5-4.5 E ED Fisheye AF-S	£1299		Fisheye zoom for full-frame DSLRs that gives a circular view at 8mm and full-frame coverage at 15mm					·			·	16	n/a	77.5	83	485
10-20mm f/4.5-5.6 G VR AF-P DX	£330	3.5★	Inexpensive wide zoom for DX DSLRs has effective image stabilisation but rather average optics	·				·				22	72	77	73	230
10-24mm f/3.5-4.5 G ED AF-S DX	£834	4★	MTF performance is good from wide open to f/11, only breaking down past f/22					·				24	77	82.5	87	460
10.5mm f/2.8 G ED DX Fisheye	£678		DX format fisheye lens with Nikon's Close-Range Correction system and ED glass					·				14	n/a	63	62.5	300
12-24mm f/4 G ED AF-S DX	£1044	4★	This venerable optic may be a little weak at f/4, but otherwise it's a good performer					·				30	77	82.5	90	485
14mm f/2.8 D ED AF	£1554	5★	A really nice lens that handles well and offers excellent image quality					·			·	20	n/a	87	86.5	670
14-24mm f/2.8 G ED AF-S	£1670	5★	A remarkable piece of kit, producing sharp images with little chromatic aberration					·			·	28	n/a	98	131.5	970
16mm f/2.8 D AF Fisheye	£762		Full-frame fisheye lens with Close-Range Correction system and 25cm focus distance					·			·	25	n/a	63	57	290
16-35mm f/4 G ED AF-S VR	£1072	5★	A fantastic lens that deserves to be taken seriously, with very little CA throughout	·				·			·	28	77	82.5	125	685
16-80mm f/2.8-4E ED VR AF-S DX	£869	4★	This new standard zoom for DX-format users is designed as a travel lens for APS-C DSLRs	·				·				35	72	80	85.5	480
16-85mm f/3.5-5.6 G ED VR AF-S DX	£574	4★	Boasting Nikon's second-generation VR II technology and Super Integrated Coating	·				·				38	67	72	85	485
17-55mm f/2.8 G ED-IF AF-S DX	£1356	4★	A higher-quality standard zoom for DX-format DSLRs					·				36	77	85.5	110.5	755
18-35mm f/3.5-4.5 G ED AF-S	£669	5★	Wideangle zoom with instant manual-focus override for full-frame DSLRs					·			·	28	77	83	95	385
18-55mm f/3.5-5.6 G II AF-S DX	£156	3.5★	Entry-level standard zoom lens					·				28	52	73	79.5	265
18-55mm f/3.5-5.6 G VR II AF-S DX	£229		Popular 3x zoom lens that is remarkably compact and lightweight, offering great portability	·				·				28	52	66	59.5	195
18-55mm f/3.5-5.6 G AF-P DX	£149		A compact, lightweight DX-format zoom that's an ideal walk-around lens					·				25	55	64.5	62.5	195
18-55mm f/3.5-5.6 G VR AF-P DX	£199		A compact, lightweight DX-format zoom lens with Vibration Reduction	·				·				25	55	64.5	62.5	205
18-105mm f/3.5-5.6 G ED VR AF-S DX	£292	4.5★	Kit lens for Nikon D90 & D7000 with Silent Wave Motor and Vibration Reduction	·				·				n/a	67	76	89	420
18-140mm f/3.5-5.6 G ED VR AF-S DX	£579		A compact and lightweight DX-format zoom, this lens is a great all-rounder	·				·				45	67	78	97	490
18-200mm f/3.5-5.6 G IF-ED VR II AF-S VR DX	£762	4.5★	Four-stop VR II system, two ED and three aspherical elements in this DX superzoom lens	·				·				50	72	77	96.5	560
18-300mm f/3.5-5.6 G ED-IF VR	£850	4★	DX-format zoom lens with wideangle to super-telephoto reach	·				·				45	77	83	120	830
18-300mm f/3.5-6.3 G ED VR	£849		New DX-format 16.7x zoom with super-telephoto reach – a compact walk-around lens	·				·				48	67	78.5	99	550
19mm f/4 E ED PC	£3300		Super-wideangle tilt-and-shift lens for architecture and landscape photography					·			·	25	n/a	89	124	885
20mm f/1.8 G ED AF-S	£679		A fast FX-format prime lens that's compact and lightweight					·			·	20	77	82.5	80.5	335
20mm f/2.8 D AF	£584		Compact wideangle lens with Nikon's Close-Range Correction system					·			·	25	62	69	42.5	270
24mm f/2.8 D AF	£427		Compact wide lens with Close-Range Correction system					·			·	30	52	64.5	46	270
24mm f/1.4 G ED AF-S	£1990	5★	Nothing short of stunning. Aside from its high price, there is very little to dislike about this optic					·			·	25	77	83	88.5	620
24mm f/1.8 G ED AF-S	£629		Fast FX-format lens that aims to appeal to landscape, interior, architecture and street photographers					·				23	72	77.5	83	355
24mm f/3.5 D ED PC-E	£1774		Perspective Control lens with Nano Crystal Coating and electronic control over aperture					·			·	21	77	82.5	108	730
24-70mm f/2.8 G ED AF-S	£1565	5★	An excellent set of MTF curves that show outstanding consistency, easily justifying the price of this lens					·			·	38	77	83	133	900
24-70mm f/2.8 E ED VR	£1849	5★	Nikon's latest pro-spec standard zoom looks like its best lens yet	·				·			·	38	82	88	154.5	1070
24-85mm f/3.5-4.5 G ED VR	£520	5★	FX-format standard zoom with Auto Tripod detection and VR	·				·				38	72	78	82	465
24-120mm f/4 G ED AF-S VR	£1072	5★	Constant maximum aperture of f/4 and the addition of VR makes this a superb lens	·				·			·	45	77	84	103	710
28mm f/1.4 E ED AF-S	£2080		Boasts a dust- and drip-resistant build for reliable shooting in challenging weather conditions					·			·	28	77	83	100.5	645
28mm f/1.8 G ED AF-S	£619	5★	If you crave a wide aperture and prefer a single focal length then this Nikon prime delivers					·			·	25	67	73	80	330
28mm f/2.8 D AF	£282		Compact wideangle lens with a minimum focusing distance of 25cm					·			·	25	52	65	44.5	205
28-300mm f/3.5-5.6 G ED AF-S VR	£889	4.5★	Technical testing shows this zoom to be, as Nikon claims, the 'ideal walkabout lens'	·				·			·	50	77	83	114	800
35mm f/1.8 G AF-S DX	£208	5★	Designed for DX-format DSLRs, a great standard prime lens					·				30	52	70	52.5	200
35mm f/1.8 G ED AF-S	£479		Fast FX-format prime lens with bright f/1.8 aperture. Versatile and lightweight					·			·	25	58	72	71.5	305
35mm f/2 D AF	£324	3★	At wide-aperture settings this optic achieves respectable resolution, which decreases with aperture					·			·	25	52	64.5	43.5	205
35mm f/1.4 G ED AF-S	£1735	5★	A Nano Crystal-coated lens designed for the FX range					·			·	30	67	83	89.5	600
40mm f/2.8 G AF-S DX Micro	£250	5★	A budget-priced macro lens that delivers the goods on multiple fronts					·				20	52	68.5	64.5	235
45mm PC-E f/2.8 D ED Micro	£1393		Perspective Control (PC-E) standard lens used in specialised fields such as studio and architecture					·			·	25	77	82.5	112	740
50mm f/1.4 D AF	£292	5★	Entry-level prime puts in a fine performance while offering backwards compatibility with AI cameras					·			·	45	52	64.5	42.5	230
50mm f/1.4 G AF-S	£376	5★	Internal focusing and superior AF drive makes this a good alternative to the D-series 50mm f/1.4	·				·			·	45	58	73.5	54	280
50mm f/1.8 D AF	£135		Compact, lightweight, affordable prime, will stop down to f/22					·			·	45	52	63	39	160
50mm f/1.8 G AF-S	£200	5★	A cut-price standard lens for FX shooters or a short telephoto on DX-format DSLRs					·			·	45	58	72	52.5	185
55-200mm f/4-5.6 G VR AF-S DX	£314	3.5★	Designed for DX-format cameras, with Vibration Reduction and SWM technology	·				·				110	52	73	99.5	335
55-200mm f/4-5.6 G VR II AF-S DX	£251		Offers a versatile focal range and an ultra-compact design, perfect for smaller DX-format DSLRs	·				·				110	52	70.5	83	300
55-300mm f/4.5-5.6 G VR AF-S DX	£378	3★	Offers a wide telephoto coverage, but better options available	·				·				140	58	76.5	123	530
58mm f/1.4 G AF-S	£1599	4★	FX-format full-frame premium prime lens with large f/1.4 aperture					·			·	58	72	85	70	385
60mm f/2.8 D AF Micro	£405	5★	Nikon's most compact Micro lens, with Close Range Correction (CRC) system					·			·	22	62	70	74.5	440
60mm f/2.8 G ED AF-S Micro	£500		Micro lens with 1:1 reproduction ratio, as well as a Silent Wave Motor and Super ED glass					·			·	18	62	73	89	425
70-200mm f/2.8 G ED VR II AF-S	£2085	5★	Very little to fault here, with stunning image quality and consistent results at different focal lengths	·				·			·	140	77	87	209	1540
70-200mm f/2.8 E FL ED VR AF-S	£2650		Latest update to Nikon's pro workhorse fast telephoto zoom brings electronic aperture control	·				·			·	110	77	88.5	202.5	1430
70-200mm f/4 G ED VR	£1180	5★	Latest 70-200mm offers third-generation VR and weight savings over its more expensive f/2.8 cousin	·				·			·	1000	67	78	178.5	850
70-300mm f/4.5-5.6 G ED AF-S VR	£556	4★	Feature-packed optic, with a VR II system, 9-bladed diaphragm, SWM and ED glass	·				·			·	1500	67	80	143.5	745
70-300mm f/4.5-5.6 E ED VR AF-P	£750		Nikon's first full-frame lens to feature a stepper motor for autofocus	·				·			·	1200	67	80.5	146	680
70-300mm f/4.5-6.3 G AF-P DX	£300		Budget telephoto zoom with stepper motor for AF and space-saving collapsible design					·				110	58	72	125	400
70-300mm f/4.5-6.3 G VR AF-P DX	£350		Adds extremely useful optical stabilisation to Nikon's budget compact telephoto	·				·				110	58	72	125	415
80-400mm f/4.5-5.6 G ED VR AF-S	£1899	5★	Successor to the 80-400mm f/4.5-5.6D ED VR, focusing is excellent at tracking fast-moving subjects	·				·			·	175	77	95.5	203	1570
85mm f/3.5 G ED AF-S DX VR	£522		DX-format Micro lens with a 1:1 reproduction ratio, VR II system and ED glass	·				·				28	52	73	98.5	355
85mm f/1.4 G AF-S	£1532	5★	Fast mid-tele lens with an internal focusing system and rounded diaphragm					·			·	85	77	86.5	84	595
85mm f/1.8 G AF-S	£470	5★	Rear-focusing system and distance window in this medium telephoto lens					·			·	80	67	80	73	350
85mm f/2.8D PC-E Micro	£1299		Perspective Control (PC-E) telephoto, designed to be ideal for portraits and product photography					·			·	39	77	83.5	107	635
105mm f/1.4 E ED AF-S	£2049		A 105mm FX-format prime lens with bright f/1.4 aperture, ideal for portraiture					·			·	100	82	94.5	106	985
105mm f/2.8 G AF-S VR II Micro	£782	4.5★	A very sharp lens, with swift and quiet focusing and consistent MFT results	·				·			·	31	62	83	116	720
105mm f/2 D AF DC	£980		A portrait lens with defocus control					·			·	90	72	79	111	640
135mm f/2 D AF DC	£1232		Defocus-Image Control and a rounded diaphragm in this telephoto optic					·			·	110	72	79	120	815

DSLR Lenses

LENS	RRP	SCORE	SUMMARY	IMAGE STABILISATION	SONY ALPHA	CANON	FOUR THIRDS	NIKON	PENTAX	SIGMA	FULL FRAME	MIN FOCUS (CM)	FILTER THREAD (MM)	DIAMETER (MM)	LENGTH (MM)	WEIGHT (G)
					MOUNT									DIMENSIONS		
180mm f/2.8 D ED-IF AF	£782		Useful telephoto length and internal focusing technology, together with ED glass					·			·	150	72	78.5	144	760
200mm f/4 D ED-IF AF Micro	£1429		1:1 reproduction range in this Micro lens, with a Close-Range Correction system					·			·	50	62	76	104.5	1190
200-500mm f/5.6 E ED VR AF-S	£1179		A super-telephoto zoom lens compatible with Nikon FX-format DSLR cameras	·				·			·	220	95	108	267.5	2300
300mm f/4 E PF ED VR AF-S	£1230	5★	Light, compact AF-S full-frame telephoto lens with ED glass elements	·				·			·	140	77	89	147.5	755
PENTAX DSLR																
DA 10-17mm f/3.5-4.5 HD Fisheye ED	£499		Updated fisheye zoom lens gains refreshed cosmetic design, new optical coatings and removable hood						·			14	n/a	70	67.5	317
DA* 11-18mmF2.8 ED DC AW HD	£1399		Premium fast ultra-wideangle zoom, includes all-weather construction and innovative focus clamp						·			30	82	90	100	704
DA 12-24mm f/4 smc ED AL IF	£1050		Two aspherical elements, ELD glass and a constant aperture of f/4 in this wide zoom						·			30	77	83.5	87.5	430
DA 15mm f/4 smc ED AL Limited	£820		Limited-edition lens with hybrid aspherical and extra-low-dispersion elements						·			18	49	39.5	63	212
FA 15-30mm f/2.8 ED SM WR HD	£1500		Weather-resistant ultra-wideangle zoom with fast maximum aperture and fixed petal-type hood						·		·	28	n/a	98.5	143.5	1040
DA* 16-50mm f/2.8 smc ED AL IF SDM	£950	3.5★	A nice balance and robust feel, but poor sharpness at f/2.8 (which significantly improves from f/4 onwards)						·			30	77	98.5	84	600
DA 16-85mm f/3.5-5.6 ED DC WR	£600		Weather-resistant, this zoom features a round-shaped diaphragm to produce beautiful bokeh						·			35	72	78	94	488
DA 17-70mm f/4 smc AL IF SDM	£630		Featuring Pentax's Supersonic Direct-drive (SDM) focusing system						·			28	67	75	93.5	485
DA 18-50mm f/4-5.6 DC WR RE	£230		Super-thin standard zoom that's weather-resistant and features a round-shaped diaphragm						·			30	58	71	41	158
DA 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6 smc AL WR	£229		A weather-resistant construction and an aspherical element, as well as SP coating						·			25	52	68.5	67.5	230
DA 18-135mm f/3.5-5.6 DA ED DC WR	£600	3.5★	A weather-resistant mid-range zoom lens						·			40	62	73	76	405
DA 18-270mm f/3.5-6.3 smc ED SDM	£699		15x superzoom for company's K-mount DSLRs featuring two extra-low-dispersion (ED) elements						·			49	62	76	89	453
DA 20-40mm f/2.8-4 ED Limited DC WR	£829		With state-of-the-art HD coating, a completely round-shaped diaphragm, and weather resistant						·			28	55	68.5	71	283
DA 21mm f/3.2 smc AL Limited	£600		This limited-edition optic offers a floating element for extra-close focusing						·			20	49	63	25	140
FA 24-70mm f/2.8 ED SDM WR	£1149		Full-frame-compatible premium standard zoom – includes a HD coating to minimise flare and ghosting						·		·	38	82	109.5	88.5	787
FA 28-105mm f/3.5-5.6 ED DC HD	£549		Standard zoom lens for the K-1 full-frame DSLR that's much more affordable than the 24-70mm f/2.8						·		·	50	62	73	86.5	440
FA 31mm f/1.8 smc AL Limited	£1149		Aluminium body; when used on a Pentax DSLR offers a perspective similar to that of the human eye						·		·	30	58	68.5	65	345
FA 35mm f/2 smc AL	£550		A compact wideangle lens that weighs a mere 214g						·		·	30	49	64	44.5	214
FA 35mm f/2 HD	£399		Updated version of classic Pentax fast prime features new multi-layer HD coating						·		·	30	49	64	44.5	193
DA 35mm f/2.8 smc Macro	£640	4.5★	Despite slight edge softness, this lens performs excellently and is a pleasure to use						·			14	49	46.5	63	215
DA 35mm f/2.4 smc DS AL	£180	5★	A budget-priced prime lens for beginners						·			30	49	63	45	124
DA 40mm f/2.8 smc Limited	£450		Pancake lens with SMC coating and Quick Shift focusing system						·			40	49	63	15	90
FA 43mm f/1.9 smc Limited	£729		Focal length is ideal for portraits as well as everyday use, and features an SMC multi-layer coating						·		·	45	49	64	27	155
FA* 50mm f/1.4 SDM AW HD	£1200		Premium fast prime with dustproof, weather-resistant design and electromagnetic aperture						·		·	40	72	80	106	910
FA 50mm f/1.4 smc	£399		Compact fast prime with film-era double-Gauss optics and traditional aperture ring						·		·	45	49	63.5	38	220
DA 50mm f/1.8 smc DA	£249	4★	Affordable short telephoto lens ideal for portraits						·			45	52	38.5	63	122
D-FA 50mm f/2.8 smc Macro	£550		Macro lens capable of 1:1 reproduction and with a Quick Shift focus mechanism						·		·	19	49	60	67.5	265
DA* 50-135mm f/2.8 smc ED IF SDM	£1200	4★	Constant f/2.8 aperture; well suited to portraiture and mid-range action subjects						·			100	67	76.5	136	765
DA 50-200mm f/4-5.6 smc ED WR	£210		Weather-resistant construction, Quick Shift focus system and an SP coating						·			n/a	49	69	79.5	285
DA* 55mm f/1.4 smc SDM	£800	4.5★	Despite questions about the particular sample tested, this lens scores highly						·			45	58	70.5	66	375
DA 55-300mm f/4.5-6.3 ED PLM WR RE	£400		Compact weather resistant telephoto zoom has video-friendly fast and silent autofocus motor						·			95	58	76.5	89	442
DA 55-300mm f/4-5.8 ED WR	£399		Weatherproof HD telephoto lens featuring quick shift focusing system						·			140	58	71	111.5	466
DA 60-250mm f/4 smc ED IF SDM	£1450	4.5★	With a constant f/4 aperture and an ultrasonic motor for speedy focusing						·			110	67	167.5	82	1040
DA 70mm f/2.4 smc AL Limited	£600		Medium telephoto lens with an aluminium construction and a Super Protect coating						·			70	49	63	26	130
D-FA* 70-200mm f/2.8 ED DC AW	£1850		Fast telephoto zoom in Pentax's high-performance Star (*) series developed for best image rendition						·		·	120	77	91.5	203	1755
D-FA 70-210mm F4 ED SDM WR	£1199		Compact telephoto zoom with constant f/4 maximum aperture and weather-resistant construction						·		·	95	67	78.5	175	819
FA 77mm f/1.8 smc Limited	£1050		With Pentax's Fixed Rear Element Extension focusing system for 'sharp, crisp images'						·		·	70	49	48	64	270
D FA* 85mmF1.4 SDM AW	£1999		Upcoming large-aperture short telephoto prime promises premium optics and weather-sealing						·		·	85	82	95	123.5	1255
D-FA 100mm f/2.8 Macro WR	£680	5★	Street price makes this something of a bargain for a true macro offering full-frame coverage						·		·	30	49	65	80.5	340
FA 150-450mm f/4.5-5.6 ED DC AW	£2000		Super-telephoto lens with weather resistance, designed to produce extra-sharp, high-contrast images						·		·	200	86	241.5	95	2000
DA* 200mm f/2.8 smc ED IF SDM	£1000	4.5★	SDM focusing system on the inside, and dirtproof and splashproof on the outside						·			120	77	83	134	825
DA* 300mm f/4 smc ED IF SDM	£1300		This tele optic promises ultrasonic focus and high image quality thanks to ED glass						·			140	77	83	184	1070
SAMYANG DSLR																
8mm f/3.5 UMC Fisheye CS II	£274		Wideangle fisheye lens designed for digital reflex cameras with APS-C sensors		·	·	·	·	·			30	n/a	75	77.8	417
10mm f/3.5 XP MF	£950		World's widest-angle rectilinear lens promises 130° field of view with minimal distortion			·					·	26	n/a	95	98.1	731
10mm f/2.8 ED AS NCS CS	£429		Features a nano crystal anti-reflection coating system and embedded lens hood		·	·	·	·	·			24	n/a	86	77	580
12mm f/2.8 ED AS NCS Fisheye	£430		Fisheye ultra wideangle prime lens for full-frame DSLRs		·	·	·	·	·		·	20	n/a	77.3	70.2	500
14mm f/2.4 XP MF	£899		High-end ultra-wideangle prime with premium optics and large maximum aperture			·					·	28	n/a	95	109.4	791
AF 14mm f/2.8	£649	4.5★	Samyang's first AF SLR lens features very decent image quality and weather-sealed construction			·		·			·	20	n/a	90.5	95.6	485
14mm f/2.8 ED UMC	£363		Ultra-wideangle manual-focus lens; bulb-like front element means no filters can be used		·	·	·	·	·		·	28	n/a	87	94	552
14mm f/2.8 MF Mk II	£439		Updated manual focus prime with weather-sealing and de-clickable aperture ring			·		·			·	28	n/a	87	96.3	641
6mm f/2.0 ED AS UMC CS	£389		Fast wideangle lens for digital reflex cameras fitted with APS-C sensors		·	·	·	·	·			20	n/a	89.4	83	583
20mm f/1.8 ED AS UMC	£430		Large-aperture manual focus wideangle lens for full-frame DSLRs		·	·	·	·	·		·	20	77	83	113.2	520
24mm f/1.4 AS UMC	£499		Fast ultra-wideangle manual-focus lens comprising 13 elements arranged in 12 groups		·	·	·	·	·		·	25	77	95	116	680
24mm f/3.5 ED AS UMS TS	£949	3★	Tilt-and-shift wideangle lens for a fraction of the price of Canon and Nikon's offerings		·	·	·	·	·		·	20	82	86	110.5	680
35mm f/1.4 AS UMC	£369	4.5★	While manual focus only, this prime impressed us in real-world use, making it something of a bargain		·	·	·	·	·		·	30	77	83	111	660
50mm f/1.4 AS UMC	£299		Manual-focus fast standard prime for full-frame DSLRs		·	·	·	·	·		·	45	77	74.7	81.6	575
AF 85mm f/1.4	£599	3★	Autofocus fast short telephoto portrait lens for use on Canon or Nikon full-frame DSLRs			·		·			·	90	77	88	72	485
85mm f/1.4 IF MC	£239		Short fast telephoto prime, manual focus, aimed at portrait photographers		·	·	·	·	·		·	100	72	78	72.2	513
85mm f/1.4 MF Mk II	£389		Evolved large-aperture manual focus telephoto is weather-sealed and the aperture can be de-clicked			·		·			·	110	72	78	72.2	541
100mm f/2.8 ED UMC Macro	£389		Full-frame compatible, the Samyang 100mm is a true Macro lens offering 1:1 magnification		·	·	·	·	·		·	30	67	72.5	123.1	720
135mm f/2 ED UMC	£399		Manual focus portrait prime has fast aperture for subject isolation and background blur		·	·	·	·	·		·	80	77	82	122	830

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DSLR Lenses

LENS	RRP	SCORE	SUMMARY	IMAGE STABILISATION	MOUNT: SONY ALPHA	MOUNT: CANON	MOUNT: FOUR THIRDS	MOUNT: NIKON	MOUNT: PENTAX	MOUNT: SIGMA	MOUNT: FULL FRAME	MIN FOCUS (CM)	FILTER THREAD (MM)	DIMENSIONS: DIAMETER (MM)	DIMENSIONS: LENGTH (MM)	DIMENSIONS: WEIGHT (G)
SIGMA DSLR																
4.5mm f/2.8 EX DC HSM	£739		Circular fisheye lens designed for digital, with SLD glass and a gelatin filter holder			·		·		·		13	n/a	76	77.8	470
8mm f/3.5 EX DG	£799		The world's only 8mm lens equipped with autofocus also boasts SLD glass			·		·		·	·	13	n/a	73.5	68.6	400
8-16mm f/4.5-5.6 DC HSM	£800	4★	Excellent performance at 8mm, which sadly drops at the 16mm end		·	·		·	·	·		24	72	75	105.7	555
10mm f/2.8 EX DC	£599		A Hyper Sonic Motor (HSM) and built-in hood feature in this diagonal fisheye lens			·		·		·		13	n/a	75.8	83	475
10-20mm f/3.5 EX DC HSM	£650	5★	An absolute gem of a lens that deserves a place on every photographer's wish list		·	·		·	·	·		24	82	87.3	88.2	520
12-24mm f/4 DG HSM | A	£1649	5★	Premium full-frame wideangle zoom designed to have minimal distortion in its wideangle imagery			·		·		·	·	24	n/a	101	132	1150
12-24mm f/4.5-5.6 II DG HSM	£649		Ultra-wideangle zoom for full-frame SLRs, available in all of the main mounts		·	·		·	·	·	·	28	n/a	87	120.2	670
14mm f/1.8 DG HSM | A	£1679		World's first f/1.8 ultra-wideangle prime lens for full-frame DSLRs			·		·		·	·	27	n/a	95.4	126	1170
14-24mm f/2.8 DG HSM | A	£1399	5★	Pro-specification fast ultra-wide prime for full-frame DSLRs includes weather-sealed construction			·		·		·	·	26	n/a	96.4	135.1	1150
15mm f/2.8 EX DG	£629	4★	This fisheye optic puts in a very solid performance – not to be dismissed as a gimmick!		·	·		·	·	·	·	15	n/a	73.5	65	370
17-50mm f/2.8 EX DC OS HSM	£689		FLD and aspherical elements, a constant f/2.8 aperture and Optical Stabilisation	·	·	·		·	·	·		28	77	83.5	92	565
17-70mm f/2.8-4 DC Macro OS HSM	£449		Compact redesign of this well-received lens launches the 'Contemporary' range	·	·	·		·	·	·		22	72	79	82	470
18-35mm f/1.8 DC HSM	£799	5★	Said to be the world's first constant f/1.8 zoom; DoF equivalent of constant f/2.7 on full frame			·		·		·		28	72	78	121	810
18-200mm f/3.5-6.3 DC OS	£449	4★	Excellent resolution and consistent performance, but control over CA could be a little better	·		·		·		·		45	45	79	100	610
18-250mm f/3.5-6.3 DC OS HSM	£572	4.5★	A very capable set of MTF curves that only shows minor weakness at wide apertures	·	·	·		·	·	·		45	72	79	101	630
18-250mm f/3.5-6.3 DC Macro OS HSM	£500		Ultra-compact 13.8x high zoom ratio lens designed exclusively for digital SLR cameras	·	·	·		·	·	·		35	62	73.5	88.6	470
18-300mm f/3.5-6.3 DC Macro OS HSM	£499		Compact and portable high ratio zoom lens offering enhanced features to make it the ideal all-in-one lens		·	·		·	·	·		39	72	79	101.5	585
20mm f/1.4 DG HSM | A	£799	5★	An outstanding wideangle fixed-focal-length lens			·		·		·	·	27.6	n/a	90.7	129.8	950
24mm f/1.4 DG HSM | A	£799	5★	The latest addition to Sigma's 'Art' line of high-quality fast primes			·		·		·	·	25	77	85	90.2	665
24-35mm f/2 DG HSM | A	£949	5★	The world's first large-aperture full-frame zoom offering a wide aperture of f/2 throughout the zoom range			·		·		·	·	28	82	87.6	122.7	940
24-70mm f/2.8 DG OS HSM | A	£1399	5★	Latest premium fast standard zoom for full frame includes optical image stabilisation	·		·		·		·	·	37	82	88	107.6	1020
24-105mm f/4 DG OS HSM | A	£849	4.5★	Serious full-frame alternative to own-brand lenses at a lower price, with no compromises in the build	·	·	·		·		·	·	45	82	89	109	885
28mm f/1.4 DG HSM | A	£1099	4.5★	High-quality, weathersealed fast wideangle prime for full-frame DSLRs			·		·		·	·	28	77	82.8	107.1	865
30mm f/1.4 DC HSM | A	£360		Unique fast prime for APS-C DSLRs that gives 45mm equivalent 'normal' angle of view		·	·		·	·	·		30	62	63.3	74.2	435
35mm f/1.4 DG HSM | A	£799	5★	Superb large-aperture prime; first lens in company's 'Art' series		·	·		·	·	·	·	30	67	77	94	665
40mm f/1.4 DG HSM | A	£1100	5★	Large and heavy prime promising natural-looking perspective and top-quality optics			·		·		·	·	40	82	87.8	131	1200
50mm f/1.4 DG HSM | A	£849	5★	This lens has a unique design that pays off in truly excellent image quality		·	·		·		·	·	40	77	85.4	100	815
50-100mm f/1.8 DC HSM | A	£829	5★	This APS-C-format lens aims to cover the focal lengths of three prime lenses in one			·		·		·		37.4	82	93.5	170.7	1490
50-500mm f/4.5-6.3 DG OS HSM	£1499	4★	A 10x zoom range, SLD elements and compatibility with 1.4x and 2x teleconverters	·	·	·		·	·	·	·	180	95	104.4	219	1970
60-600mm f/4.5-6.3 DG OS HSM | S	£1899		Weathersealed 10x zoom encompasses huge range from standard to super-telephoto	·		·		·		·	·	60	105	120.4	268.9	2700
70mm f/2.8 DG Macro | A	£499		The first macro lens in Sigma's Art line-up features an extending-barrel focus-by-wire design			·		·		·	·	26	49	71	106	515
70-200mm f/2.8 EX DG OS HSM	£1539		Two FLD glass elements, said to have the same dispersive properties as fluorite	·	·	·		·	·	·	·	140	77	86.4	197	1430
70-200mm f/2.8 DG OS HSM | S	£1349	5★	Superb large-aperture telephoto zoom shows high sharpness and minimal chromatic aberration	·		·		·		·	·	120	82	94.2	202.9	1805
70-300mm f/4-5.6 APO DG Macro	£235		This telezoom lens has a 9-bladed diaphragm and two SLD elements		·	·		·	·	·	·	95	58	76.6	122	550
70-300mm f/4-5.6 DG Macro	£170	3★	Generally unremarkable MTF curves, and particularly poor at 300mm		·	·		·	·	·	·	95	58	76.6	122	545
85mm f/1.4 DG HSM | A	£1199	5★	Optically stunning fast short telephoto prime is the ultimate portrait lens for DSLR users			·		·		·	·	85	86	95	126	1130
100-400mm f/5-6.3 DG OS HSM | C	£799	4.5★	Relatively lightweight telezoom comes with weather-sealing and choice of push-pull or twist zoom	·		·		·		·	·	160	67	86.4	182.3	1160
105mm f/1.4 DG HSM | A	£1499	4.5★	Sigma's 'bokeh monster' super-fast portrait lens is weathersealed and comes with a tripod foot			·		·		·	·	100	105	115.9	131.5	1645
105mm f/2.8 EX DG OS HSM Macro	£649	4.5★	An optically stabilised macro lens, this super-sharp lens is one of our favourites	·		·		·		·	·	31.2	62	78	126.4	725
120-300mm f/2.8 DG HSM | S	£3599		First lens in company's 'Sports' series; switch enables adjustment of both focus speed and focus limiter		·	·		·	·	·	·	150	105	124	291	3390
135mm f/1.8 DG HSM | A	£1399	5★	Super-fast portrait prime designed to provide sufficient resolution for 50MP DSLRs			·		·		·	·	87.5	82	91.4	114.9	1130
150mm f/2.8 EX DG OS HSM Macro APO	£999		A macro lens offering image stabilisation	·		·		·		·	·	38	72	79.6	150	950
150-600mm f/5-6.3 DG OS HSM | C	£1199		Budget 'Contemporary' version of Sigma's long-range telephoto zoom is smaller and lighter	·		·		·		·	·	280	95	105	260.1	1930
150-600mm f/5-6.3 DG OS HSM | S	£1599		This portable, high-performance telephoto zoom from Sigma's Sports line is dust and splashproof	·		·		·		·	·	260	105	121	290.2	2860
180mm f/2.8 EX DG OS HSM Macro APO	£1499	5★	1:1 macro lens featuring three FLD glass elements and floating inner-focusing system	·	·	·		·		·	·	47	86	95	204	1640
300mm f/2.8 APO EX DG HSM	£2899		Extra Low Dispersion (ELD) glass, multi-layer coatings and a Hyper Sonic Motor		·	·		·	·	·	·	250	46	119	214.5	2400
SONY DSLR																
11-18mm f/4.5-5.6 DT	£609	3★	A solid overall performance that simply fails to be outstanding in any way		·							25	77	83	80.5	360
16mm f/2.8 Fisheye	£709		Fisheye lens with a close focusing distance of 20cm and a 180° angle of view		·						·	20	n/a	75	66.5	400
16-35mm f/2.8 ZA SSM II T*	£1999	4.5★	High-end Zeiss wideangle zoom lens ideal for full-frame Alpha DSLRs and SLTs		·						·	28	77	83	114	900
16-50mm f/2.8 SSM	£569	4★	Bright short-range telephoto lens		·							100	72	81	88	577
16-80mm f/3.5-4.5 ZA T*	£709	4.5★	Carl Zeiss standard zoom lens		·							35	62	72	83	445
16-105mm f/3.5-5.6 DT	£559	3★	An ambitious lens that is good in parts, although quality drops off at 105mm		·							40	62	72	83	470
18-135mm f/3.5-5.6 DT SAM	£429		A versatile zoom with Direct Manual Focus	·	·							45	62	76	86	398
18-250mm f/3.5-6.3 DT	£559	3.5★	Good overall, but performance dips at longer focal lengths		·							45	62	75	86	440
20mm f/2.8	£559	3.5★	Wideangle prime lens with rear focusing mechanism and focus range limiter		·						·	25	72	78	53.5	285
24mm f/2 ZA SSM T*	£1119		An impressively bright wideangle Carl Zeiss lens		·						·	19	72	78	76	555
24-70mm f/2.8 ZA SSM II T*	£1899	5★	Carl Zeiss mid-range zoom lens with superb optics ideal for full-frame Alpha DSLRs		·						·	34	77	83	111	955
28-75mm f/2.8 SAM	£709		A constant f/2.8 aperture and a Smooth Autofocus Motor (SAM) in this standard zoom		·						·	38	67	77.5	94	565
30mm f/2.8 DT SAM Macro	£179	4★	Macro lens designed for digital with 1:1 magnification and Smooth Autofocus Motor		·							12	49	70	45	150
35mm f/1.4 G	£1369		With an equivalent focal length of 52.5mm, a wide aperture and aspherical glass		·						·	30	55	69	76	510
35mm f/1.8 DT SAM	£179		Budget-price indoor portrait lens		·							23	55	70	52	170
50mm f/1.8 DT SAM	£159	4.5★	A very useful lens that performs well and carries a rock-bottom price tag		·							34	49	70	45	170
50mm f/1.4	£369	5★	While this lens performs well overall, performance at f/1.4 could be better		·						·	45	55	65.5	43	220
50mm f/1.4 ZA SSM	£1300	4★	Carl Zeiss design said to be ideal for quality-critical portraiture and low-light shooting		·						·	45	72	81	71.5	518
50mm f/2.8 Macro	£529		A macro lens with a floating lens element		·						·	20	55	71.5	60	295
55-200mm f/4-5.6 DT SAM	£219		Designed for cropped-sensor cameras, with a Smooth Autofocus Motor		·							95	55	71.5	85	305

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DSLR Lenses

LENS	RRP	SCORE	SUMMARY	IMAGE STABILISATION	SONY ALPHA	CANON	FOUR THIRDS	NIKON	PENTAX	SIGMA	FULL FRAME	MIN FOCUS (CM)	FILTER THREAD (MM)	DIAMETER (MM)	LENGTH (MM)	WEIGHT (G)
					MOUNT									DIMENSIONS		
55-300mm f/4.5–5.6 DT SAM	£309		Compact, lightweight telephoto zoom offering smooth, silent operation		·							140	62	77	116.5	460
70-200mm f/2.8 G SSM II	£2799		High-performance G Series telephoto zoom lens		·						·	120	77	87	196.5	1340
70-300mm f/4.5-5.6 G SSM	£869	3.5★	G-series lens with ED elements, Super Sonic wave Motor and a circular aperture		·						·	120	62	82.5	135.5	760
70-400mm f/4-5.6 G SSM II	£1799		Redesign of original features a new LSI drive circuit and promises faster autofocus		·						·	150	77	95	196	1500
85mm f/1.4 ZA Planar T*	£1369		Fixed-focal-length lens aimed at indoor portraiture		·						·	85	72	81.5	72.5	560
85mm f/2.8 SAM	£219		A light, low-price portraiture lens		·						·	60	55	70	52	175
100mm f/2.8 Macro	£659		Macro lens with circular aperture, double floating element and wide aperture		·						·	35	55	75	98.5	505
135mm f/1.8 ZA Sonnar T*	£1429		A bright, Carl Zeiss portrait telephoto lens		·						·	72	77	84	115	1004
135mm f/2.8 STF	£1119		Telephoto lens fitted with apodisation element to give attractive defocus effects		·						·	87	80	80	99	730
TAMRON DSLR																
10-24mm f/3.5-4.5 SP AF Di II LD Asph IF	£511	3.5★	Good consistency at 10mm and 18mm, but a steep decline at 24mm		·	·		·	·			24	77	83.2	86.5	406
10-24mm f/3.5-4.5 Di II VC HLD	£580	4.5★	Wideangle zoom of APS-C with dust and splashproofing and optical stabilisation	·		·		·				24	77	83.6	84.6	440
15-30mm f/2.8 SP Di VC USD	£950	4★	Excellent value, this is the only wideangle zoom with image stabilisation and an f/2.8 aperture	·	·	·		·			·	28	n/a	98.4	145	1100
15-30mm f/2.8 SP Di VC USD G2	£1279		Second-generation image-stabilised fast wide zoom includes weather-sealing and faster AF	·		·		·			·	28	n/a	98.4	145	1110
16-300mm f/3.5-6.3 Di II VC PZD Macro	£600	4★	Versatile mega-zoom, a very good all-in-one solution, as long as you won't need to enlarge to A2 size	·	·	·		·				39	67	99.5	75	540
17-35mm f/2.8-4 Di OSD	£629	4★	Most compact and lightest full-frame ultra-wideangle zoom in its class			·		·				28	77	83.6	90	460
17-50mm f/2.8 SP AF XR Di II VC LD Asph IF	£541	4.5★	Very strong performance at longer focal lengths but weaker at the other end	·		·		·				29	72	79.6	94.5	570
18-200mm f/3.5-6.3 AF Di II VC	£169	4★	Lightweight all-in-one lens for APS-C DSLRs with Vibration Compensation	·	·	·		·				49	62	75	96.6	400
18-270mm f/3.5-6.3 AF Di II VC LD PZD IF Macro	£663	3★	The next-generation incarnation offers a new form of ultrasonic engine	·	·	·		·				49	62	74.4	88	450
18-400mm f/3.5-6.3 Di II VC HLD	£650	4★	The longest-ranging telephoto zoom yet made turns in a surprisingly decent performance	·		·		·				45	72	79	123.9	710
24-70mm f/2.8 SP Di VC USD	£1099	5★	Fast zoom with image stabilisation for both full-frame and APS-C cameras	·	·	·		·			·	38	82	88.2	116.9	825
24-70mm f/2.8 SP Di VC USD G2	£1249		Upgraded fast zoom with improved image stabilisation and moisture-resistant construction	·		·		·			·	38	82	88.4	111	905
28-75mm f/2.8 SP AF XR Di LD Asph IF Macro	£460		Standard zoom with constant f/2.8 aperture and minimum focusing distance of 33cm		·	·		·	·		·	33	67	73	92	510
28-300mm f/3.5-6.3 Di VC PZD	£529		A new, full-frame, high-power zoom incorporating PZD (Piezo Drive)	·	·	·		·			·	49	67	75	99.5	540
35mm f/1.4 SP Di USD	£930		Premium large-aperture prime with moisture-resistant construction, billed as Tamron's best-ever lens			·		·			·	30	72	80.9	104.8	815
35mm f/1.8 SP Di VC USD	£580	4.5★	Moderately wide prime combines ultrasonic focusing, image stabilisation and a fast aperture	·	·	·		·			·	20	67	80.4	80.8	480
35-150mm F2.8-4 Di VC OSD	£799		Unusual image-stabilised full-frame zoom designed for portraits, with large maximum aperture	·		·		·			·	45	77	84	126.8	796
45mm f/1.8 SP Di VC USD	£580	4.5★	A lens that rewrites the standard focal length with a fast aperture coupled with optical stabilisation	·	·	·		·		·	·	29	67	80.4	89.2	940
60mm f/2 SP AF Di II LD IF Macro	£550	5★	Macro lens designed for APS-C sensor cameras, with 1:1 reproduction ratio		·	·		·				23	55	73	80	400
70-200mm f/2.8 SP AF Di LD IF Macro	£817	4★	No image stabilisation and no advanced AF system, but at this price it's a steal		·	·		·	·			95	77	89.5	194.3	1150
70-200mm f/2.8 Di VC USD	£1099		Compact yet full-size telephoto zoom with vibration compensation	·	·	·		·			·	130	77	85.8	188.3	1470
70-200mm f/2.8 SP Di VC USD G2	£1350	5★	Excellent telephoto zoom with updated autofocus and image stabilisation plus sealed construction	·		·		·			·	95	77	88	193.8	1500
70-210mm f/4 Di VC USD	£699	4.5★	Lightweight telezoom promises high optical performance, image stabilisation and weather-sealing	·		·		·			·	95	67	76	176.5	860
70-300mm f/4-5.6 SP VC USD	£300	4★	Ultrasonic Silent Drive (USD) technology for focusing and Vibration Compensation	·	·	·		·			·	150	62	81.5	142.7	765
70-300mm f/4-5.6 AF Di LD Macro	£170	3.5★	Low-dispersion glass and compatible with both full-frame and cropped-sensor DSLRs		·	·		·	·		·	95	62	76.6	116.5	435
85mm f/1.8 SP Di VC USD	£749	5★	The first full-frame 85mm f/1.8 lens with image stabilisation, that's also moisture resistant	·	·	·		·			·	80	67	85	91	700
90mm f/2.8 SP AF Di Macro	£470	4★	A very nice macro lens that is capable of producing some fine images		·	·		·	·		·	29	55	71.5	97	405
90mm f/2.8 Di Macro 1:1 VC USD	£579		Redesign of the 90mm f/2.8 SP AF Di Macro; comes with vibration compensation	·	·	·		·			·	30	58	115	76.4	550
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150-600mm f/5-6.3 SP VC USD	£1150	4★	Longest focal length of any affordable enthusiast zoom on the market and produces excellent results	·	·	·		·			·	270	95	105.6	257.8	1951
180mm f/3.5 SP AF Di LD IF Macro	£896	5★	Two Low Dispersion elements and internal focusing system in this 1:1 macro lens		·	·		·	·		·	47	72	84.8	165.7	920
TOKINA DSLR																
AT-X 10-17mm f/3.5-4.5 AF DX Fisheye	£550		Fisheye zoom lens with Water Repellent coating and Super Low Dispersion glass			·		·				14	n/a	70	71.1	350
AT-X 11-16mm f/2.8 PRO DX II	£449		Popular large-aperture ultra-wideangle zoom with a handy focus-clutch mechanism to engage MF		·	·		·				30	77	84	89.2	550
ATX-i 11-16mm f/2.8 CF	£449		Gains a new waterproof top coating for the front element and updated cosmetic design			·		·				30	77	84	89	555
AT-X 11-20mm f/2.8 PRO DX	£499	4★	Compact, ultra-wideangle lens with a fast maximum aperture and decent optical performance			·		·				28	82	89	92	560
AT-X 12-28mm f/4 PRO DX	£529		Replacement for 12-24mm f/4 wideangle zoom; for Nikon DX DSLRs			·		·				25	77	84	90	600
AT-X 14-20mm f/2 PRO DX	£849		Wideangle zoom with super-fast, super-bright, constant f/2 aperture for shooting in very low light			·		·				28	82	89	106	725
AT-X 16-28mm f/2.8 PRO FX	£757	5★	A pro-end wideangle zoom aimed at full-frame cameras			·		·			·	26	n/a	90	133	950
Opera 16-28mm f/2.8 FF	£699	4★	This large-aperture wide zoom for full-frame DSLRs is an updated version of the AT-X 16-28mm f/2.8			·		·			·	28	n/a	89	133.5	940
AT-X 17-35mm f/4 PRO FX	£830	5★	One of the most capable super-wide zooms available, though only available in Canon and Nikon mounts			·		·			·	28	82	89	94	600
AT-X 24-70mm f/2.8 PRO FX	£679		Three precision-moulded all-glass aspherical lens elements and a fast, constant f/2.8 aperture			·		·			·	38	82	89.6	107.5	1010
Opera 50mm f/1.4 FF	£900		Premium fast prime designed for high-resolution DSLRs, with dust and weather-resistant construction			·		·			·	40	72	80	107.5	950
AT-X 70-200mm f/4 PRO FX VCM-S	£691		Features a new Vibration Correction Module and ring-shaped ultrasonic style autofocus motor	·				·			·	100	67	82	167.5	980
AT-X 100mm f/2.8 AF PRO D Macro	£360	4★	Some weaknesses wide open, but reasonable MTF curves make this a decent optic			·		·			·	30	55	73	95.1	540
VOIGTLANDER DSLR																
40mm f/2 Ultron SL II - S	£479		Compact, manual-focus 'pancake' prime designed for use with Nikon full-frame DSLRs					·			·	25	52	66.3	37.5	260
58mm f/1.4 Nokton SL II - S	£479		Traditionally designed manual-focus prime for Nikon full-frame DSLRs includes mechanical aperture ring					·			·	45	52	67.6	45.5	320
ZEISS DSLR																
15mm f/2.8 Milvus	£2329		This super-wideangle lens has an angle of view of 110° and uses an advanced retrofocus design			·		·			·	25	95	102.3	100.2	947
18mm f/2.8 Milvus	£1999		Compact super-wideangle lens with premium optics including a floating focus system for close-ups			·		·			·	25	77	90	93	721
21mm f/2.8 Milvus	£1299		Premium wideangle lens with complex optics designed to be free of distortion			·		·			·	22	82	95.5	95	851
25mm f/1.4 Milvus	£1999	5★	Optically excellent, large-aperture manual focus wideangle lens with weather-sealed construction			·		·			·	25	82	95.2	123	1225
25mm f/2 Distagon T*	£1350		A landscape lens with a fast aperture			·		·	·		·	25	67	73	98	600
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35mm f/2 Milvus	£829		Compact, moderate wideangle manual focus prime			·		·			·	30	58	77	83	702
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85mm f/1.4 Milvus	£1379	5★	Fast 85mm manual-focus prime lens that's perfect for portraiture			·		·			·	80	77	90	113	1280
100mm f/2 Milvus Macro	£1299		A manual-focus macro lens with absolutely superb optics and half-life-size reproduction			·		·			·	88	67	80.5	104	843
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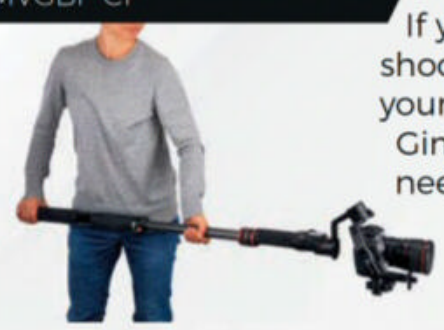

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Final Analysis

Damien Demolder considers...

'Semi-nude man and his camera' c. 1930 by Kirn Vintage Stock

You know how some pictures just appeal to you immediately and you can't work out why? This is one of those pictures for me. The reason it caught my eye is pretty obvious, and is probably the same reason it caught yours too. That's a very nice camera!

I more-than suspect I was drawn to this image as it embodies everything that my children think about me as a photographer. I'm afraid you are all bundled into that profile as well: one united caricature of middle-aged nerdiness – whether you are male or female. Or, indeed, other than middle-aged.

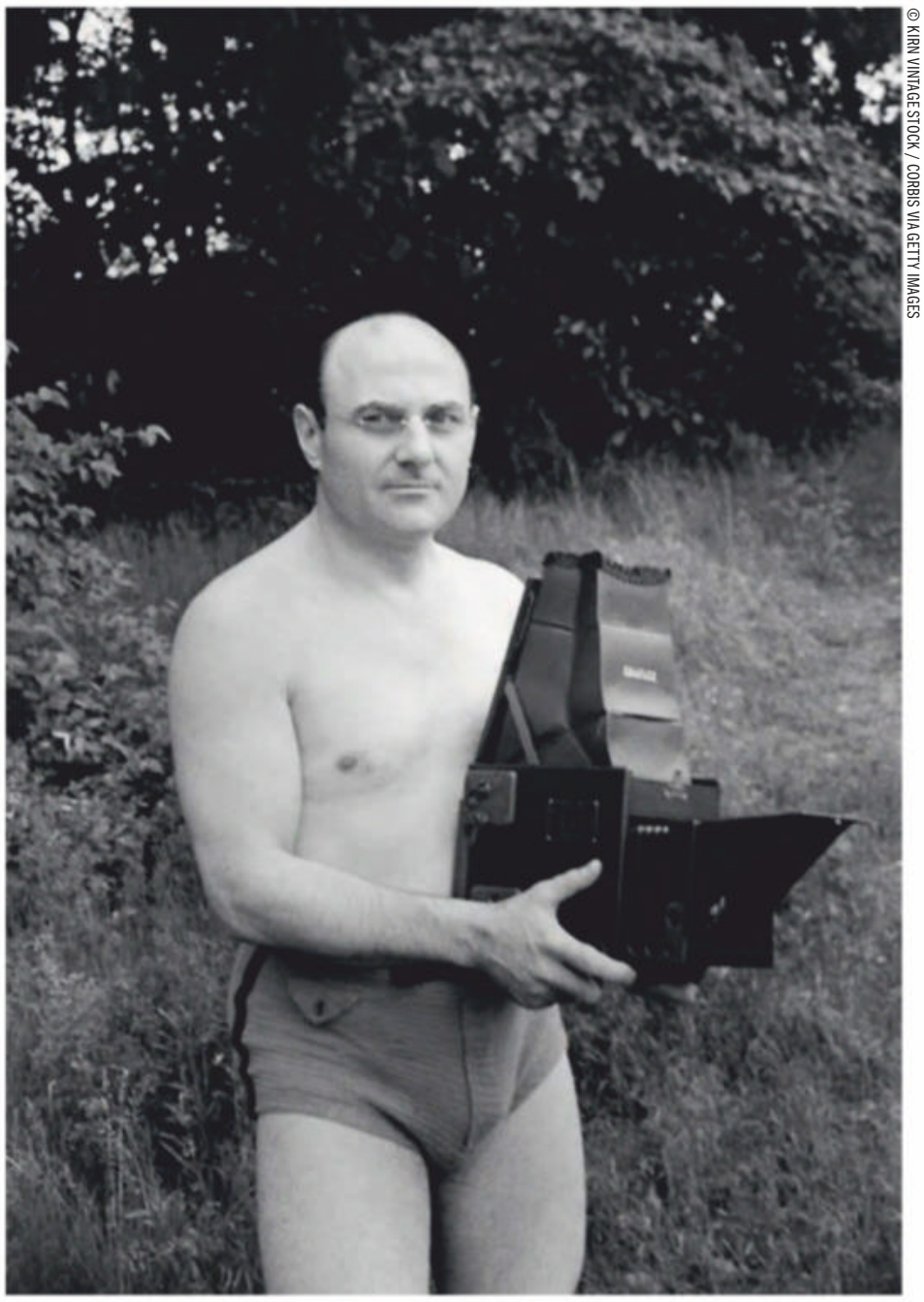
I found this picture in the Kirn Vintage Stock collection section of the Corbis Historical archive. The archivist has titled the picture 'Semi-nude man and his Camera, ca. 1930'. A single line of contemptuous and dismissive text describes the scene: 'A balding man in his swim trunks holds a Graflex box camera in the 1930s'. I think you'll agree that's pretty damning, and deeply insulting. The Graflex RB was a highly sophisticated single lens reflex camera! It had a choice of backs that could all rotate to allow upright and landscape format photographs to be taken on sheet film without the need to turn the camera on its side. And automatically stopped-down apertures too. It was only a 'box camera' in as much as all cameras are basically a cuboid construction with an opening to let the light in. Box camera indeed!

When I first started reading AP I was about 14 years old, and I didn't look much like our friend here. After some dalliance at sea photographing people eating and a period in advertising photography I joined the venerable *Photo Technique* magazine, and I still didn't look like that – I was only in my mid-twenties after all. When I left AP, in my mid-forties, I thought that I didn't look like this chap, but suspect I was closer to him than I cared to admit. Now I am a little older I don't look exactly like him but can finally acknowledge that I rather like his style and am slightly envious of his relaxed confidence. Not to mention his lovely, lovely, Graflex camera. I think what I recognise in him, and admire about him, is that he knows what he likes, where his priorities are and he seems very happy to be himself. He's just out in the warm weather with his trunks on, taking pictures – what, I ask any of you, could be better than that?

Camera proud

I would imagine in his day our semi-naked balding man was very proud of his camera, and if he was a member of a Photographic Society I should think his buddies would have been impressed by it too. He may have been well-known within his circle of acquaintances outside The Society – normal society, if you like – as 'The Photographer One' and asked to do the occasional wedding/bar mitzvah/baptism. He would have been flattered to be asked, but at the same time quietly felt a little out of his depth – 'Weddings really aren't my thing you know?'

However well respected he was as a person and/or as a photographer less than 100 years on we've already forgotten his name. We have no idea whether he favoured landscapes, urban scenes or those slightly saucy ladies you find posing in pink feathery boas in the countryside when you're out in your trunks with your camera.



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I imagine he was a better-than-average dentist, had an open-top sports car and that photography was a serious hobby. It would have allowed him to express his artistic side in a way that his slightly routine and mundane day job didn't anymore. And, of course, it was a way to spend his money.

He certainly knew how to turn on the pizazz anyway, and I congratulate him on that, and it isn't easy for dentists to poke around in their own sensitive side. Looking in the mirror now I still don't look like him – on the outside, at least. Inside, though, perhaps we could have been twins.

Photographer and journalist Damien Demolder has worked in the photographic publishing industry since 1997 and is the former Editor of *Amateur Photographer*. He writes regularly about photography for a number of leading publications and has also been a judge on a number of prestigious international photo competitions. See his website at **www.damiendemolder.com**.

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