

**Camera Settings** (available options depend on the make and model of the camera)

### *File Formats*

JPEG is a standard format for all cameras, compact and SLR, but loses quality in order to create small files and save disc space.

RAW is a higher quality format which records much more data. However, it needs suitable software to process the files. Many cameras can record 'RAW + JPEG'.

Some cameras record in DNG or TIFF, also high quality formats.

### *Flash*

'Off' preserves lighting and atmosphere of location, but can make long exposures and 'camera shake' in low light. Built-in flash usually has a range of only about 3-4m.

### *Program/Auto mode*

Camera sets aperture and shutter and sometimes ISO & flash (see below).

### *Aperture priority (A or Av)*

The aperture is the hole in the lens which lets in light.

Wide apertures (eg 2.8, 4) let in more light and give a shallow depth of field (which is the amount of front to back focus).

Small apertures (eg 16, 22) let in less light and give more depth of field.

Depth of field is also affected by the subject distance and lens focal length.

### *Shutter priority (S or Tv)*

The shutter is the mechanism that opens and closes to let in light.

Shutter speed is normally fractions of a second.

Speeds slower than around 1/60s run the risk of camera movement causing blur - rest the camera on something or use a tripod or flash if this happens.

Use long exposures to create a deliberate blur/motion effect.

### *ISO sensitivity*

This is how sensitive to light the recording sensor is set to.

High ISO ( $\geq 800$ ) allows faster shutter speeds and smaller apertures, but can cause unwanted 'noise' (a gritty effect over the image).

Low ISO ( $\leq 200$ ) gives better quality but requires slower shutter or wider aperture.

### *White Balance (WB)*

Adjusts the image colour to suit the colour of different light sources, such as daylight, tungsten filament bulbs or shady conditions.

Use creatively to add a warm or cold colour cast to an image.

### *Focus*

Most SLR cameras allow choice over how they focus, and where in the frame. They allow 'focus lock' when the shutter is part-pressed and held while reframing, and manual focusing.

## **Creating the Photograph**

(this is much more subjective, and the things below are guidelines, not rules...)

### *Composition*

Central subject can give a static or restful look

Off-centre can be more dynamic and often considered more interesting.

At the edge of the frame can seem unstable or in motion - use for effect.

### *Lines, diagonals, perspective*

Horizontal lines can convey a restful feel.

Strong diagonals a sense of action & movement.

Converging lines give a sense of depth and distance, exaggerated with a wide angle lens and reduced with telephoto.

Make sure the camera is level unless you want a tilt, and then make it a strong one.

### *Foreground and background*

Use the foreground - get close & fill it rather than have the subject distant.

Look carefully at the whole background to avoid distracting objects & colours.

Relative sizes of foreground & background objects give a sense of depth.

### *Colours*

Strong, warm colours such as red can make a subject stand out, and be distracting if in the background.

Cooler blues and greens can seem to recede and can give a calmer feel.

Complementary colours can help things stand out or provide balance within image.

### *Angle of view*

Most photos are taken from eye level.

A low camera can make things seem large and dramatic, or give a child's eye view.

A high viewpoint can make them appear small or less significant.

Use the viewpoint with a wide angle lens to exaggerate these effects.

### *Light*

This is what photography is all about.

Harsh or soft lighting can dramatically change the mood and structure of a photo.

Light and shade give it contrast and bring out shapes and forms.

Notice the type, colour and direction of light in your pictures, & how this affects them.

### *Shapes and patterns*

Strong shapes, repeated patterns etc can give interest to an image.

A broken or disrupted pattern even more so.

### *'Curious associations'*

Things can seem different or more interesting when associated with other objects, or if they seem out of context somehow.