

U3A Hillingdon Digital Photo Group

“EVENT” PHOTOGRAPHY

25th March 2019

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“EVENT” PHOTOGRAPHY

- “Event” photography is *mainly* like most outdoor photography, but I consider that there are basically 2 types with which to be familiar:
 - “Static events”
 - “Action events”
- They have their similarities and differences
- *NB: the presentation only deals with “general events” & not (e.g.) specialist ones like music gigs in low light*

“Static” Events

- Such as:
 - Flower/garden shows, historical re-enactments, parades, theatre productions, etc.



- where there is little “rapid action”

“Action” Events:

- Such as:
 - Soccer/rugby matches, horse (etc.) racing, motorsports, cycle & foot racing, flying displays, rowing,



- > much faster movements &/or changes of direction.
- **Note:** from here-on where you see something like “(S17)”
-> **look at the Slide with that Number for the Image**

Common Factors to Remember

- **Often, “less in more”**: Main “objects” should be largest – don’t [lose them](#) ^(S17) in the sky/buildings/”other stuff”
- **“Main Objects”** - Concentrate on these for **“Impact”** ^(S18)
“Zoom settings” &/or zoom lenses: fill the “frame” – *or “zoom with your feet” by walking towards the subject.*
- **Backdrops**: bland/low contrast/[complicated backdrops](#) ^(S19)
fool camera metering and causes under/over exposure
- **Lighting**: Keep Sun &/or strong artificial lighting behind you to illuminate subjects, and avoid “flaring” if in front
- **Thus use Common Sense**: *and think about the subjects before pushing the shutter button!*

“Static” Events

- Venues may be crowded-> you could be close to subjects
- Wide-angle settings/lenses are useful in such locations
- Identify “targets” & wait until you can get clear shots
- “Depth of Field” in shots may be limited – so don’t use wide apertures unless you:
 - Have no alternative (*or use “High ISO” to compensate?*)
 - Want to “isolate” the subjects from the backgrounds
- Overhead lighting can cause lens “flaring” on shots
- Arrival timing may not be critical at some events except at *historical re-enactment events, theatre productions, etc.*

“Action” Events - General

- More challenging than “Static” ones!
- Time is critical – arrive as early as possible!
- Venues are often larger than “Static” events & you are
 - Either very close to crowd-lines
(*especially for public road and indoor events*)
 - > Probably needs wide(ish)-angle lens settings & high shutter speeds to freeze the action
 - Or relatively far from crowd-lines:
(*>20-100m+ – depends on the event*) :
 - > Needs long(ish) focal length lens, and high shutter speeds (*unless “panning”*) for sharp images
- Track target **before** shooting/**carry on after stopping**

“Action” Events – Position

- Choose your location carefully, and:
- Don't stand in crowd-line centres -> you will be jostled & get poor shots of the subjects passing rapidly past you
- Go to ends of lines, with *fewer people*, to get better choice of position & views of subject approaching ^(S20) /departing.
- If “track”/crowd-line has bends = good because subjects will probably change direction there -> **stand to one side!**
- Shoot subject “at an angle” showing side & front/rear ^(S21)
-> *more effective than totally “side-on”* ^(S22) shots.
- Out-of-doors, *moderately* cloudy skies can result in more “atmospheric” shots than totally blue/totally cloudy, skies – *especially if subjects are* silhouetted against clouds ^(S23).

“Action” Events – Shutter Speeds

- **Shutter speed** is important for Action Photography:
 - Too slow-> subjects will be blurred ^(S24) *(unless panning)*
 - Too fast-> “sense of movement” can be lost ^(S25)
- **For most shots**-> Use 1/250th-1/500thS, but for fast-moving subjects (*e.g. motor vehicles, jet aircraft* ^(S26), *birds, animals* ^(S27)) maybe need 1/1000th-1/4000thS
- If “**panning**” with fast-moving subjects:
Use 1/60thS (*possibly slower*) to 1/250thS (*max!*)
-> sharp subjects & blurred backgrounds ^(S28)

“Action” Events – Aperture & Focus

- High shutter speeds can require Wide Apertures to compensate for lighting-> restricts Depth of Field:
 - Too large -> subjects could be out-of-focus &/or autofocus can't cope quickly enough
 - Too small -> limits usable shutter speed
- **For most shots**->Use F4-F8 for high shutter speed
- However, Autofocus may still not cope with fast moving targets, so switch to Manual focus &
 - Pre-focus on the point/at the distance where you expect the target to be when shooting

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“Action” Events – Viewfinders!

- This will “annoy” many, but Action Shot success is hard to achieve if using rear screens (*& those on phones!*) !
- Especially when subjects move rapidly to Left/ Right as you are trying to look at
 - the screen *close to your eyes,*
- **& ALSO**
 - *at the distant subject at the same time.*
 - Our eyes and brains aren’t “built to do that”
 - and that gets worse as we get older!
- So, if your camera has an optical viewfinder, or maybe an electronic one (*older ones are poor but modern ones are better*), then **try to use that instead of the rear screen!** “

Preparation – BEFORE “The Day”

- Plan **WELL** in advance and check:
 - Event website, &/or “event-specific” webpages.
 - Photo kit restrictions (*camera size, lens size, tripod/monopod?*)
or “No cameras allowed” (*especially at indoor events*) !!
(*& if taking dogs then check any relevant restrictions/prohibitions*)
 - Traffic controls/parking restrictions/diversions & car park locations - especially if you carry “heavy” stuff!
 - Buy tickets in advance – saves money & time,
& pay-at-gate often not possible for popular events.
 - *How to set your camera up and use it correctly!*
 - **NB: If the camera takes interchangeable lenses then check the sensor for dust & get it cleaned if needed**

Preparation – “Essential Stuff”

- Take:
 - Right clothing/bags for location & weather, especially if sunny/hot or cold/wet &/windy
 - Maps, tickets, parking pass *(if required)* & fully charged phone/satnav to ensure you find the venue!
 - The **right** photo kit *(next slide)*

Preparation – ON “The Day” – Photo Kit

- Your photo kit:
 - Camera & **fully-charged spare** batteries, or make sure the internal battery is fully charged
 - Spare formatted & **empty** memory cards
(formatted in the camera is best)
 - If the camera takes interchangeable lenses then the right lenses – *and the lens hoods & then **USE** them!*
 - Tripod/monopod? - weight might be more hindrance than help & these *are often banned at many events*
 - Separate flashgun & batteries? – but, same again, often banned at indoor events
 - Photo kit bag for all above, + a cover if likely to rain!!

Preparation – ON “The Day” – “Other Stuff”

- **Other useful stuff, e.g.:**
 - Snacks/drinks - on-site catering IS expensive, & may be far from likely shooting locations.
 - Folding chairs/stools if you will be standing a lot
 - Paper towels/tissues to wipe things clean/dry, & plastic bags for rubbish!
 - Possibly a trolley to carry the stuff, *but get the right one as many are too heavy or fragile*
 - *Although that can sometimes be fixed!*



Finally, “ON The Day”

- There **WILL** be delays & queues **everywhere**, *and so:*
 - Allow **plenty of extra time** for:
 - Traveling (*avoid “popular”/sat-nav routes!*), entry to car parks, getting to/through security/ticket-checks, loo(!) & food queues, finding shooting locations (*& maybe even to exit at the end of the day!*)
 - *Thus, arrive as early as you reasonably can!*
- At “Action” events, keep within defined spectator areas – you will be safer there than elsewhere.

Linked Images



The Subject is lost in the Distance!

Linked Images



Zoom in Close for “Impact”

Linked Images



The Subject is lost in the Complicated Background

Linked Images



The Subject is approaching at an Angle

Linked Images



The Subject is seen Front & Side

Linked Images



The Subject is seen from the side → less “Impact”

Linked Images



Shutter Speed Too Low - Subject is blurred

Linked Images



Subject captured against “Moody” Sky & Clouds

Linked Images



Shutter Speed Too High – Sense of Motion is Lost

Linked Images



High Shutter Speed about right to capture the Effect of the “Motion”

Linked Images



High Shutter Speed about right to capture the Effect of the “Motion”

Linked Images



Low Shutter Speed & Panning to capture the Effect of the “Motion”