

THE CAMERA CLUB OF CENTRAL MINNESOTA



The Newsletter of the Camera Club of Central Minnesota

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March 2018

Club Meetings and Other Bits of Information

The Camera Club of Central Minnesota will be meeting on the first Monday of each month with the second Monday of the month as back up starting in January 2017. We will meet at the Public Library in St. Cloud from 6:45 to 8:45 pm.

The club has monthly photo topics, image sharing and critique, hands on demonstrations of photographic gear and software, member online gallery links, discussions about photography, and is open to all.

Remember, all your photo assignments and meeting dates are online at:

<http://cameraclubmn.com>

Assignments

Monday, March 12, 2018 (rooms not available on the 5th), Bremer Community Room 104. : Rural: Could be fields, animals, harvesting, country landscapes, etc.

Monday, April 2, 2018, Bremer Community Room 104, Moving Water: waterfalls, dams, fountains, streams, etc.

Monday May 7, 2018, Bremer Community Room 104, People: showing emotion, activities, musicians, etc.



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Notes from the February Meeting

February 5 was a very cold night which kept about half of the number of our members from attending the club meeting. However, two new people attended our meeting which brought new insights into our club. Both are working photographers.

Also, Larry Grover recommended that we plan some site visits to various locations for making photos of new locations.

We continued our standard practice of viewing photos from several locations. New techniques in making photos were discussed and demonstrated.

In all, we had a good meeting, introducing new people, making plans for future meetings.

Camera Apps

As the mobile camera (a part of the phone or the tablet) is continuously improved upon, coupled with apps that are able to provide a range of functions beyond taking simple photos, both amateur and professional photographers are able to use their device without having to purchase expensive, dedicated cameras. Given that the software aspect of photography is saturated with thousands of apps, a new method of improving picture

quality and range has been physical accessories that can take the art of photography to a new level. As a result, this article discusses the best accessories that can be coupled with the device to help photographers make the most of their mobile cameras.

DJI Osmo Mobile Self-Stabilization Smartphone Gimbal

As phones are often used while on-the-go, so



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Camera Apps (continued)



...TAKING A PICTURE IN THE DARK CAN BE DIFFICULT TO SEE BEFORE THE FLASH IS ON...



are the photos that are taken which can result in photographers having to sacrifice stability. From unsteady hands to the conditions of the environment, the Osmo Self-Stabilization Gimbal is a tool that can significantly reduce the degree of shakiness. Although more expensive compared to other tools that enhance stability, the stabilization gimbal is designed to capture the perfect shot without any additional input from the user. With a handle that is easy to grab instead of the side of the phone, users can capture more cinematic shots using a single hand. What makes the Osmo gimbal unique is that all of the buttons that are needed to operate the phone to capture images and videos are found to all of their shots without ever having to take it off the gimbal, ensuring a high level of stability that cannot be replicated by free hand shots.

10X Zoom Mobile Phone Camera Lens Telescope

For those who are seeking a tool that can help extend the range at which the device can capture images, the 10X zoom lens is a perfect accessory for amateur and professional photographers alike. To transform the regular camera into one that is able to capture distances that are comparable to professional cameras, the 10X zoom lens is small and lightweight so that it is easy to carry around. Giving users the ability to see objects that are otherwise hidden as a result of distance, the lens offers an unparalleled level of versatility with the images that can be taken.

Furthermore, the 10X zoom uses a clip-on approach for attaching to the actual camera so that there are no hardware adjustments that have to be made while being compatible with all mobile devices. As the nature of the zoom is limited on the default camera, the 10X zoom lens is an accessory that is highly recommended to enhance long-distance photography.

APEXEL 7 in 1 Phone Camera Lens Kit

For a multitude of different lenses, the APEXEL kit is one of the most comprehensive tools that are available on the market. With 7 different lenses packed into a convenient box, users are able to transform their camera in a matter of seconds to capture the best shots in any environment.

For example, the lenses in the kit include ones for:

- a fish eye effect,
- kaleidoscope,
- wide angles,
- acro,
- telescope,
- super wide,
- CPL lens,

as well as other accessories including a clip and bag.

With all of these different lenses that are extremely small, users are able to carry them anywhere without the traditional bulk that is common with regular camera lenses. One of the best features of the APEXEL kit is that all of the lenses are designed to attach to the clip that simply connects to the phone. With this degree

of easy, swapping out the various lenses is extremely easy and quick. At only \$18 for the complete set, the cost per lens is only slightly \$2, making it one of the most affordable accessories that can be purchased for greater image versatility.

Mobile phone camera fill light

For those who regularly take images in darker environments, the camera fill light is a must-have tool that can significantly increase the brightness of the photo without needing to drain the battery of the device from the flash. Through the camera fill light, an independent battery is used so that users do not have to use the flash either from the camera or screen. Furthermore, taking a picture in the dark can be difficult to see before the flash is on and hence the fill light can be used to see how the image would look like even before it is taken. As a swivel is used to attach it to the phone, the fill can be used for both the front and rear-facing camera so that all of the images that are taken in dark environments can be brightened. With 16 cameras and 3 different light modes, the camera fill light is a great tool for enhancing images that are taken in darker environments.

Tripod Bluetooth with Remote Control

In terms of being able to take images and videos in a stationary setting, tripods are often used to hold the camera at the perfect angle and height. In the realm of mobile photography, the

Tripod Bluetooth is an inexpensive model that can be used to enhance stationary shots. With a holder than can be adjusted to the size of various phones, both iOS and Android users are able to use the holder with very few limitations in terms of physical compatibility. One of the best features of the tripod is that it also comes with a remote that can activate and turn off the camera to either take a picture or record a video. With the range that can be accessed through the remote, users can take images that would otherwise not be possible without the controller. Given the inexpensive price of both the tripod and remote, the Tripod Bluetooth is an essential accessory for mobile photographers who need to use a tripod

ONN Bluetooth Selfie Stick

For those who regularly take selfies, a selfie stick is essential for the best shots and angles. With an extender that has an attached button on the handle, users can easily take images of themselves from a variety of distances in a way that is extremely easy. Using a variable length stick, having to extend the arm or cram people together to take the perfect photo is unnecessary as the stick is able to capture images from all distances and angles. Highly versatile in nature, the ONN Bluetooth Selfie Stick can fit nearly all phones while the mount does not use any batteries but instead can be charged with a Micro USB cable so that users do not have to carry around replacement batteries. Extending from 1 inch to 10 inches, the ONN selfie stick is one of the best versions available for those who take

selfies or group photos.

Given that photography through mobile phones continues to grow as a result of better camera technology and apps, the accessories that are listed in this article are essential for those who want to increase the quality of their image as well as the versatility of their camera. From tools that help to stabilize images to others that enable for unprecedented range, a larger number of accessories have been made available as a result of the popularity in using the phone as a serious photography tool.



What Not to Do in Photography

When you read articles on photography sites like this one, those articles tell you what you should be doing. But there's value in understanding what not to do as well. Here is a list of five things successful photographers don't do.

Don't Put Just Any Image on Your Website

These days, many of your clients - perhaps most of them - will get the first view of your photography when they visit your website.

That being the case, the photos you put on your website need to be spectacular. And that's not just the first photo or the first handful of photos, either.

Every single image you have on your website needs to be technically sound, show your personal aesthetic, be composed perfectly...you get the point.

You only get one chance at a good first impression, so inspect your website images and be sure you're only putting forward your very best work.

Editor's Tip: *The first step in having a great photography website is in the domain name you choose. With a .pics or .photo domain from Uniregistry, you can set yourself up for success with a photography-specific domain that shows just how professional you are. Check out .pics and .photo domain names for your website*

today.

Critical Mistakes You're Making With Your Photography Website

Since photography is a service industry, you need to not only be a great photographer, but a great business person as well. And part of that is getting images and photography products to your clients in a timely fashion.

Obviously the timeline for each job might vary - you can process and print images from an hour-long family portrait session much quicker than you can from a wedding. But either way, you need to establish a timeline with your client regarding

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What Not to Do in Photography (continued)



NIGHTTIME PROVIDES YOU WITH PHOTOGRAPHIC OPPORTUNITIES THAT YOU WILL NEVER ENCOUNTER DURING DAYLIGHT HOURS.

when they can expect their images, and stick to that timeline so they get what they pay for sooner rather than later.

Don't Ask "What Were Your Settings?"

In photography, the camera settings you use are dependent upon the situation. That is, there isn't one magic combination of settings that will get you a well-exposed image every single time. Yet, new photographers often ask more experienced photographers, "What were your settings for that photo?"

Though there's something to be said for trying to learn from more experienced photographers, this question won't get you anywhere.

The best approach is to practice - a lot - and dial in settings that are appropriate to each different situation you encounter.

Don't Spend a Lot of Time Trying to Impress Other

Photographers

Other photographers don't pay your bills, your clients do. So, if you're going to spend time and energy trying to impress anyone, make it your clients!

It's nice to have some street cred with other photographers, and it's a good ego boost to have others in your profession look to you as a dynamite photographer. But in the end, as long as your clients are happy with the images you take, that's what truly matters.

Gear Acquisition Syndrome - GAS - is a very real thing for many photographers.

They mistakenly believe that if they get an expensive camera with a bunch of expensive lenses that they'll suddenly be a better photographer.

And though I fully admit that a Nikon D850 is a better photography tool than a smartphone, in the end, they're both just tools pho-

tographers use to get a job done.

In reality, the best gear you have is you! Your creative eye, your understanding of composition and lighting, and your understanding of how to use the gear you have is what's really important.

A good exercise is to go to a photography website like Flickr and find groups centered around a specific camera or lens that you own.

Then have a look at the images in those groups to see what's possible and get inspired to use the gear you already have.

It's a great way to stop lust-ing after new gear and focus instead on maximizing your ability to use the photography tools you already have to create awesome photos.

Getting Started With Night Photography



Some people are put off by night photography. I'm not entirely sure why, but I suppose everyone has their reasons. Whatever your reasons may be, however, I highly recommend setting them aside and going out with your camera after night falls.

Nighttime provides you with photographic opportunities that you will never encounter during daylight hours. Sure,

you'll have to work a little harder to make the most of these opportunities, but I think you will agree the end result is worth it.

Pack The Right Tools

Let's get started. Pack a tripod. Landscape photographers will be accustomed to lugging around a tripod, but if you're someone who rarely finds a use for one, now is the time to break it out. Due to the lack of light, you're

going to need to use shutter speeds that are significantly lower than what you would use during the day.

To achieve these slower speeds without introducing camera shake, you're going to need a tripod. Or some means of stabilizing your camera. Makeshift "tripods" are all around you — fence posts, trash bins/dumpsters, traffic cones. Think creatively and you can more than likely forgo

the traditional tripod.

A lens (or camera) with image stabilization is also a good option, but there are limitations to how slow of a shutter speed you can use while handholding and still get a clean shot.

Remote Trigger.

This isn't absolutely necessary, but if you want to further minimize the potential for camera shake then a remote trigger is the answer, as it allows you to trip the shutter without having to put your hand on the camera. Alternatively, you could set the camera's self-timer.

Fast Lens.

A fast lens, which lets in more light, makes handholding a bit easier. You're going to get more mileage out of a lens that opens up to f/1.8 as opposed to one that maxes out at f/4 or f/5.6 (common with kit zooms). But none of that really matters when you're using a tripod.

Long Exposures.

Long exposures are rather obvious when it comes to night photography. But don't

make the mistake of thinking that long exposure photography rests strictly with landscape photographers and astrophotographers.

For those living in urban areas, cityscapes are the name of the game. Use the skyline, lights, clouds, and reflections to craft your long exposure gems. You can also use long exposure technique to photograph light trails or motion blur within crowds.

Street Photography.

There's no reason at all that street photography can't be done at night. The aforementioned crowd blur qualifies as street photography, but for a more conventional take, you will need to crank up your ISO.

Don't fear the noise. I'm willing to bet you'll be able to find subjects in the same places you would during the day. The night will give rise to some interesting light sources (street lights, neon signs, etc.) and even more intriguing shadows. Wait for a visually appealing interaction between subject, light, and shadow to occur, then get your shot.

Portraits.

Night portraits follow similar guidelines as night street photography in terms of lighting, but you'll probably want to avoid those unflattering overhead street lights and the long shadows they cast. Of course, there are no perfect available light sources at night, but store windows represent your best bet as they are large, somewhat soft sources.

Final Thoughts On Getting Started With Night Photography

Some of the "rules" of successful photography after dark are different than those we all follow for daylight photography, but the essence of the craft remains — you're capturing light. Once the sun goes down you have to get creative and rethink your technique but I trust you will find that night photography is both thrilling and rewarding.

Use the ideas above to get started, expand on those ideas over time and enjoy the magic of shooting at night.



IF YOU WANT TO CHANGE THE WAY YOUR PHOTOS LOOK FOR THE BETTER, ONE OF THE BEST THINGS YOU CAN DO IS GET A PRIME LENS AND USE IT EXCLUSIVELY FOR A WHILE.

Prime Lenses

If you want to change the way your photos look for the better, one of the best things you can do is get a prime lens and use it exclusively for a while.

This can be a hard step for some photographers to take, though, especially if you're new to the game and have thus far relied on the zoom lens that came with your camera body.

But trust me - prime lenses will change the way you work,

and your photos will benefit greatly.

Here's why...

Editor's Tip: If you don't have a prime lens yet, and don't want to spend a ton of money, buy a pre-owned lens.

Get Sharper Photos

One of the best features of a prime lens is the fact that it offers improved sharpness over zoom lenses. The

reason for that is because prime lenses have fewer elements, thereby fewer opportunities for the light passing through the lens to degrade.

While we're at it, prime lenses have less distortion, vignetting, and other aberrations than zoom lenses. So not only can you get photos that are sharper, but photos that are cleaner, too.





CAMERA CLUB OF CENTRAL MINNESOTA

Membership is \$25 per year. Members should provide: Email Address, Mailing Address, and Phone Number.

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The Camera Club of Central Minnesota publishes a monthly newsletter which is distributed via e-mail. The newsletter will contain information about up-coming meetings, summaries of previous meeting, recommendations for photographers, announcements of photographic workshops, and other material that seems appropriate.

If you would like to send suggestions, comments, or other communications concerning the club or newsletter, please send your e-mail to rheath@tds.net.

Prime Lenses (continued)

Learn to Be Creative

Zoom lenses are great, don't get me wrong. But since you can stand pat and change the focal length with a twist of the lens barrel, zooms can lead to a little bit of laziness.

Primes have a fixed focal length, though, so you're forced to get more creative when taking shots. You have to move closer to the subject or further away, and in doing so, you think about the shot more, how to frame it, and how to compose it more effectively.

Work With Less Light

Prime lenses are revered for their ability to work well in low-light situations. That's because primes often have larger maximum apertures than zooms.

For example, if you shoot with the 18-55mm kit lens that came with your camera, it's largest aperture is likely f/3.5-5.6, depending on the level of zoom. But if you use a 50mm f/1.8 prime lens, you can open up the aperture to f/1.8 and collect much more light.

As a consequence, you can also use a faster shutter speed, too. That's advantageous for situations in which the lighting is on the dim side, but you don't want to have blurred movement in the shot.

Travel Light

Though some higher-end prime lenses are a bit bulky, by and large, primes are much lighter than zoom lenses. Combined with a smaller form factor, that means that you can travel light with a prime lens. Without being bogged down with a ton of gear, you can more quickly and efficiently move around to get the shots you need.

And don't think that because prime lenses

have a fixed focal length that they aren't versatile...

One of the best features of prime lenses is that they can often be used for a variety of purposes.

A 35mm prime lens, for example, is great for portraiture, landscapes, street photography, and many other pursuits. That holds true whether you use a crop sensor or full frame camera.

So, again, with just a single prime lens, you can tackle all sorts of subjects without being weighed down.

