

THE CAMERA CLUB OF CENTRAL MINNESOTA



The Newsletter of the Camera Club of Central Minnesota

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November 2019

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.

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, November 4, 2019, 7:00pm-8:45pm, Mississippi Community Room 104.
Fall Colors, Go to some of your favorite places — parks, street scenes, farms, and countryside venues.

Monday, December 2, 2019, 6:45pm-8:45pm, Bremer Community Room 104. Send your “5 Best” of the year to jbregan063@gmail.com so that we can project them while we enjoy holiday treats.

Monday, January 2, 2020, 6:45pm - 8:45pm Bremer Community Room 104, to be determined.



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Lens Filters

Whether you're new to photography, or you've been around cameras for a long time, one thing you have probably heard about is lens filters. These small accessories can help photographers get better images in tricky lighting conditions. They even help protect the front element of your expensive lenses too. In this introduction, we will take a quick look at why you might want to use filters, the different types of lens filters, and what they will be able to do for you.

Okay, basics first. What is a lens filter? As the name implies, a filter is a glass accessory that sits in front of your lens. Its sole purpose is to filter out specific types of light from hitting your camera's sensor.

Many different types of filters are available on the market. They range from those that block UV light, to filters that can cut out sodium light that comes from street lights. There are also ND filters that act like a pair of sunglasses for your lenses, and graduated filters that help balance high contrast lighting

situations. There are even more specific types of filters too, and they can all do a job for you.

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Lens Filters (continued)

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- ◆ Why Lens Filters Are Used

Photographers use lens filters for different reasons. The main reason is that regardless of how good modern cameras are, there are still lighting situations which can make even the best sensors struggle. Perhaps the most common or well-known type of filter is the UV Filter. As you may have guessed, the job of a UV filter is to filter out UV light. Not all filters are named for the job that they do, so it does get a little trickier as you look at all of the options available. Don't fret, that's what this guide is for. So, what can filters do exactly?

They Can Help Make Colors Pop

Lens filters can really pump up color saturation in your images, or they can single out specific color wavelengths to give them a boost. A lot of photographers prefer to use filters on their lenses so that they can nail their images in camera rather than tinker with RAW files in post-processing. Filters can boost blue tones, make oranges and yellow much warmer, or make greens pop out of the scene. Filters aren't just limited to these colors: you can get one to help enhance just about any color.

Lens Filters Can Cut Out Reflections

Certain filters on the market can cut down on reflections from shiny surfaces such as water, metal, and glass. Light can wreak havoc on polished surfaces, and honestly, it can make a simple shot of a metallic object like a car become way too involved. Have you ever tried to shoot through a window only to be defeated by the reflec-

tion? Filters cut down on that glare so that you can get the shot you want with less trouble.

They Can Help Protect Your Expensive Lenses

Clear lens filters can be used on your lens to stop the front element from becoming scratched. Just remember that there is always a chance that inferior glass could affect your image. Your mileage may vary, so be careful. If you choose to use one for protection, do yourself a favor and buy a good quality one.

They Help You Get Correct Exposures

Perhaps the reason why filters are used the most is so that photographers can achieve correct exposures in very challenging lighting conditions. High contrast situations can lead to either having a completely blown out sky when you expose for your subject or an underexposed subject when you expose for the sky. Graduated filters are great at being able to balance situations like this.

Breakthrough Photography x4 Circular Polarizer

Have you ever seen amazing landscapes shots that included stunning waterfalls with white foamy water? Have you noticed that these shots were captured during bright sunlight hours? Capturing images like this without the use of filters that act like sunglasses on your lenses is impossi-

ble. You can also use the lens filters to capture motion in the clouds as they whiz by overhead during long exposures too. Filters can really help enhance your creativity.

How to Pick Out the Lens Filter That's Right for You

One would think that there is only one type of lens filter out there, but they would be wrong. There are actually a few types, but the most popular are circular filters and square filters. Circular filters are by far the easiest type to use: they simply screw into the threads on the front of your lens. Every lens has a specific filter thread size, so you have to know what size filter you need before you make a purchase.

The filter size you need will either be printed around the rim of the lens you are using, or written on the front face of the lens. Thread size is denoted by a circle with a straight line going through it from top to bottom. Whatever number is listed next to that symbol is the size of filter you need for that particular lens. Circular filters are easy: they can simply be screwed on and left there. Some circular filters rotate when placed on the lens so that you can vary the intensity of the effect from the filter. Once you're done, you unscrew the filter and put it back in its case.

Some lenses (especially ultra-wide and fish-eye lenses) have a bulbous front element which means traditional circular polarizers will not work. If you have lenses like this, you will need to use



HIGH CONTRAST SITUATIONS CAN LEAD TO EITHER HAVING A COMPLETELY BLOWN OUT SKY WHEN YOU EXPOSE FOR YOUR SUBJECT OR AN UNDERPOSED SKY.



square filters. Basically, these filters work by attaching a holder to the front of the lens, and then whatever filter you want to use will slide into the holder. They are simple to use, but a little more time-consuming.

We have recently been seeing filters that can be placed directly in front of the back element of the lens too. These are known as drop-in filters, and as the name suggests, they drop-in to a specialized compartment at the rear of the glass. There are rectangular filters too, which work in much the same way as the square filters mentioned above. Needless to say, your bases are covered no matter what type of lens filters you would like to use. Just keep in mind that you do not want to buy cheap lens filters. Adding any extra glass in front of your sensor can degrade your image quality if the filter is of poor quality. Spend a little extra and you won't have to worry about that.

UV Filters

A UV lens filter is a clear piece of glass that simply screws into your lens.

As mentioned above, UV filters are perhaps the best-known filter type because most camera stores will try to sell you one with any new lens. When rolls of film were still king, UV filters actually played a crucial role. Some films were so sensitive to UV light that without one of these filters, a blue cast could affect the film in the camera.

In the digital age this is no longer a problem, so what's the point of them? They still play a role if you plan on taking photos high up a mountain, or by large bodies of

water where UV rays are more prevalent. You'll find that in these scenarios, your images may gain some clarity. Otherwise, these usually inexpensive filters are offered as a great way to protect the front element on your expensive new lens: it's better to scratch the filter instead of the lens. Be careful, though. If you purchase a really cheap UV filter, you will likely end up degrading your image quality. If you buy one, make sure you buy a great quality one.

Polarizers

Polarizing filters are firm favorites with landscape photographers and those who shoot a lot near water or around metallic surfaces like cars. A polarizing filter will stop polarized light from hitting your sensor (or film). This will remove reflections and glare, while also making blues and greens in your scene much more saturated.

These circular filters are easy to use. You simply screw them on to the threads on your lens. When you rotate the filter, you will be able to see the effect it has on the images. We loved the Breakthrough X4 when we reviewed it, and for a good reason. Polarizers cut out quite a bit of light, but this one lets in about half a stop more compared to others on the market. They are also quite affordable.

ND Filters

The best way to think of ND filters is to imagine that they are sunglasses for your lenses. ND filters are available with differing levels of strength that can range from stopping only a little bit of light to producing full-on blackouts. These types of lens filters are used

mainly by landscape photographers who wish to create long exposures when the sun is out.

With one of these filters, you'll be able to slow your shutter so that you can create gorgeous images of waterfalls with fluffy, white water. You'll also be able to capture clouds streaking across the sky. Portrait photographers use them sometimes when they wish to create dynamic portraits of their subjects. As with all filters, be sure you get one that's made with quality glass; otherwise, you may experience color shifts in your images. This one is stellar and affordable. Just make sure you get the right size for your lens.

Light Pollution Filters

Light pollution filters are a little more specialized than others on this list. These lens filters are popular with photographers who practice astrophotography. They can cut out the damaging color cast seen in the night skies of cities around the world.

Sodium lamps in major metropolitan areas have made it virtually impossible to see the stars at night. With a light pollution filter in place, the wavelength of the sodium lamps is eliminated, and the yellow color cast will be removed from your images.

We absolutely loved how effective the IRIX Light Pollution filter was when we got to test it. We found that whether you're shooting in the city, or are out in the country shooting the Milky Way, the lens filter had a favorable effect on our images. here.



**A POLARIZING
FILTER WILL STOP
POLARIZED LIGHT
FROM HITTING
YOUR SENSOR.**



The Camera Club of Central Minnesota

Lens Filters (continued)



Graduated Filters

Graduated ND filters can be lifesavers when it comes to working with scenes where there is a considerable contrast situation. Have you ever wanted to take the perfect landscape shot but either had to expose for the sky and lost foreground details, or exposed for the foreground and blew out the sky? We all have, but that's where graduated ND filters come in to play.

You can find these filters in both hard-edged, and soft-edged styles. Softer styles will give you a more natural gradient.

These filters will allow you to darken down bright skies in your images so that the ex-

posure is balanced between the sky and the foreground. Sure, you can achieve this to some degree in post with Lightroom, Capture One, or Photoshop, but there is nothing like getting it right in camera. For landscape photographers, graduated filters are an absolute must-have. You can even get them in different colors for some pretty cool effects. The only limit is your imagination.

Warming and Color Correcting Lens Filters

Color shift/correction and warming lens filters do precisely what they say on the bottle. Photographers use these filters to enhance the overall color punch in their

images or even correct the colors before the pictures make their way to post-processing. Warming filters are capable of adding a gorgeous, soft sun-like glow to your photographs. The whole idea of these lens filters is to get your colors correct in camera. Having to play with colors in post is a pain, so if you can be one step ahead, then you're on your way.

There are many other types of lens filters on the market that we have not covered in this introduction. We have, however, shared the most common types of lens filters that you will likely run into regularly.

FOR LANDSCAPE PHOTOGRAPHERS, GRADUATED FILTERS ARE AN ABSOLUTE MUST HAVE..

Lightroom Processing Mistakes

As one of the most popular photo editing programs available, Lightroom Classic is a favorite of both beginning and veteran photographers.

However, Lightroom's complexity makes it difficult to master, and even professionals still make mistakes.

Even if you're an experienced photographer who's been using Lightroom for some time, double-check to ensure that you're not making any of these common photo editing errors.

Are You Making These Six Post-Processing Mistakes?

Notice something you relate to? Don't sweat it! We've taken this opportunity to not only identify some of the most com-

mon mistakes photographers make in post, but also how to fix them.

Keep in mind that most of those are also valid for other photo editing software like CaptureOne, Luminar 4, ON1 Photo Raw and others, not just Lightroom Classic.

1. You don't take the time to organize your photos

If you're like most photographers, you have more photos than you know what to do with. There's nothing wrong with this! However, uploading hundreds of photos at the end of each shoot adds up quickly to some overwhelming numbers. Luckily, Lightroom's built-in features make organizing

photos a breeze.

Lightroom Classic Library

Investing a few minutes into photo organization might save you hours down the road. Utilize Lightroom's features such as keywords, rating, and labeling along with carefully organized photo folders for the best results.

For even more actionable and practical tips for using Lightroom Classic, check out the Lightroom Mastery ebook. It's packed to the brim with knowledge, advice, tips & tricks, and training material to help you become a master of Lightroom Classic.

2. You keep every single



photo in the hopes of rescuing it with post-processing

I get it... it's easy to snap a shot of anything and everything, then import tons of photos into Lightroom to pick the best shots. Maybe you've organized your files using Lightroom's features (avoiding the first mistake we just covered), but you're reluctant to delete any of your outtakes.

Yes, it's difficult to part with a photo permanently by tossing it in the digital trash bin, but not everything you snap is going to be a winner. Perhaps you think that, with enough post-processing skill, you can rescue any shot. Unfortunately, that's not the case; sometimes, it's best to let a photo go.

After you've organized your photos but before you begin the editing process, toss your worst shots.

3. You don't bother to learn keyboard shortcuts

Like other digital editing programs, there's certainly no shortage of keyboard shortcuts in Adobe's Lightroom!

Some photographers find themselves intimidated or overwhelmed by the number of keyboard shortcuts available in Lightroom, but we promise that your post-processing workflow will be much improved (and hastened) once you train yourself to utilize these useful shortcuts.

Start small, but take a moment to analyze your workflow. Take note of the functions you use the most, and use keyboard shortcuts for one or two of them the next time you spend time in Lightroom. Then, slowly increase

your keyboard shortcut repertoire.

4. You never check clipping

Often, you may not even realize that you're adjusting aspects of your photos which will decrease the overall quality of the image, but you may be clipping your photos' tones with your modifications. In other words, your post-processing rituals may result in a loss of detail in the shadows and highlights of your images.

Shadows and Highlights Clipping

To ensure that you preserve the details you worked so hard to capture, press J in Lightroom Classic to check for clipped tones. While clipped shadows will highlight in blue, clipped highlights will become red. Once you're aware of the problem areas, utilize your knowledge of exposure adjustment to revive the lost details.

How's that for a good use of keyboard shortcuts?

5. You over-process your photos

With so many ways to edit your photos in Lightroom, it can be difficult to pick only a few adjustments. Many beginning photographers think that implementing a bit of every modification available to them will make for the best photos, but avoid this at all costs!

For example, be careful not to make skin unnaturally smooth, apply too many effects, overuse vignettes, or add too much fading or blurring. While careful use

of these features can highlight the qualities of an artful photograph, overdoing it may only cheapen the appearance of your hard work.

6. You don't bother with the histogram

The histogram – most photographers have heard of it, but many fail to fully understand the extent of its helpfulness as they process photos.

Lightroom Classic Histogram

Instead of ignoring the histogram, signing it off as another one of Lightroom's fancy details that's not really necessary to achieve the best edits, take some time to learn how it can help you accurately adjust the exposure of your images!

Because most of us rely on our vision alone during post-processing, we subject ourselves to errors caused by inaccuracies in our monitor's brightness or saturation. By using the histogram to determine whether or not you're maintaining appropriate highlights, shadows, and overall light levels, you overcome any discrepancies caused by a screen's poor calibration.

If your histogram's curves are concentrated to the right, your photo is likely too bright and it may have blow highlights. Similarly, curves shifted to the left indicate a photo that's too dark and that shadows have lost details.

No matter your skill level, Lightroom never fails to offer photographers with something new to learn. Don't be afraid to admit mistakes, make adjustments, and streamline your workflow.



WHILE CLIPPED SHADOWS WILL HIGHLIGHT IN BLUE, CLIPPED HIGHLIGHTS WILL BECOME RED.





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.

Tips for Landscape Photographers



Our goal as landscape photographers should be to always try and get the best possible image in camera: the exposure, composition, sharpness and lighting. Trying to fix a bad landscape photo is frustrating and usually does not end well. While capturing a great photograph straight out of the camera is a good habit to get into, processing can then take these great photos to the next level. I tell my fellow photographers that Photoshop (or any other editing tool) should not be a crutch, but fine tuned photo editing is a basic necessity in digital photography.

Below, I have added some of my favorite Photoshop adjustments that I think every landscape photographer should master:

Understanding the Histogram

The histogram is important both while taking the landscape photo as well as in editing. It is a graph that shows the tonal range of your image. This will help you judge the exposure of your landscape photo, so that you will know if you have highlights or shadows with no detail. There is no such thing as the perfect histogram since different subjects will produce different results. One such example is if you photograph a silhouette of a tree. Your histogram will have peaks at each end and very little in the middle. I tend to expose for the highlights and edit for the shadows. This way my highlights are not blown out.

Cropping and Leveling

The crop and leveling tool is one of the first steps I take in my processing. If for some reason I did not get a level horizon in cam-

era, I can easily fix this with Photoshop and then crop accordingly. Nothing is worse than working on an image, adding a vignette and then noticing it has a crooked horizon.

Color Correction

Images right out of the camera may not evoke the same feelings you had while taking the photograph. Even if your camera is custom or auto white balanced, you can utilize custom white balance within photoshop to create the look you want from a warm tone to a cool tone photograph.

Adjustment Layers

With Adjustment Layers you can make non-destructive edits to your image without affecting original image pixels. This allows you greater control over your edits. And then if you are not happy with the adjustments you made, you can easily delete or hide that layer. Since each layer contains data, you can determine how much of that data is visible in the final image with the use of blending modes or individual layer opacity.

Brightness and Contrast

Brightness and Contrast adjustments is a handy tool in fine tuning slight exposure flaws. It is important to be careful with these Photoshop adjustments and not overdo it.

Levels and Curves

While the brightness and contrast apply to the global (whole) image, the curves and levels Photoshop adjustment allow you to make more finely tuned adjustments. This option allows you to pick the exact black, white and grey points in the image.

