

Working with Light

~~ Course Outline ~~

[Printer Friendly Version](#)

Mastering the use of natural light in photography is an element with which many have difficulty. Learning to see the quality of the light and how light affects a photo can either create impact or just make it another snapshot. This course will take you through a series of steps to help you learn to both see and use natural light to its best advantage - based on the time of day, the quality of the light, which is influenced by the weather, and the direction of the light with which you have to work.

Subjects Covered

1. Sunrise/Sunset: Similar, yet two different conditions

For sunrise shots, you are up and out and waiting in the dark before the sun comes up and you are hoping that the sky cooperates. For sunset shots, you have the advantage of seeing the sun and clouds and are getting a prelude to what might happen next. Learn how to expose for images which either include or exclude the sun in the shot in order to capture the best color. Subjects and settings for dramatic images will be discussed.

Magic Hours:

These are the first couple of hours after sunrise and before sunset. The times just around sunrise and sunset have a special quality to them that brings out the colors in certain subjects not found during any other time of day. Learning what conditions are most favorable for getting the most from these times can be *the key* in creating a great shot.

2. Low Light Angle Techniques

Topics covered in this lesson include silhouettes, shadows, spotlight, and eyes. Tips and ideas on how to create and optimize these will be discussed.

3. Weather

Even if the weather conditions might not seem ideal, bad weather can add mood or impact to a photograph. Certain times of year can also provide other elements that can enhance the quality of a photo, including fog, frost, and dew drops. Tips on creating reflections and sun stars in dewdrops, maximizing fog and how to work with frost will be included in this lesson.

4. Midday

You always hear that the light is not very good during the middle of the day. This isn't always the case. There are certain places that the sun doesn't touch until this time of the day and sometimes animals are active at this time as well. Weather can also extend a morning of shooting throughout midday hours. Ways to lengthen your shooting hours as well as using the weather to your advantage will be covered.

5. After Hours

Shooting at night opens up a whole new avenue of subjects available to the photographer. Working with available light and using special lighting techniques to light up a subject will be the focus of this lesson. Also included will be ideas on taking images about one-half hour before sunrise or one-half hour after sunset.

6. Direction of Light

Exposure tips and subject suggestions for the three main light directions – back, side and front – will be the emphasis of this lesson. Back lighting is the hardest of all the light angles to get proper exposures and you will be shown how to best bring out the subject under this setting. Side and front lighting is less difficult, but I will cover techniques which will develop your understanding of these angles.