

-3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2

PHOTOGRAPHY CHEAT SHEET POCKET CARD

Overexposed photo

1/2.0

1/T

1/5.0

1/0.0

1/11

1/10

1/22



Subject in focus, everything else blurred
(shallow depth of field)

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TRAVEL
Photography
TIPS
SERIES

1/8000

1/4000

1/2000

1/1000

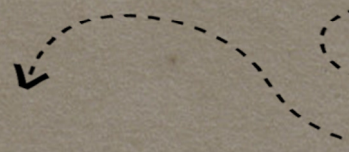
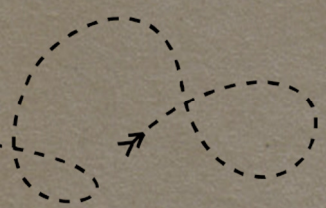
1/500

1/250

1/125

1/60

1/30



Free/pan motion

Static/slow moving objects

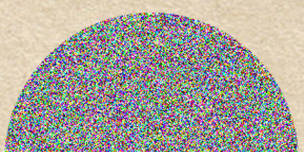
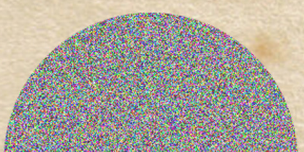
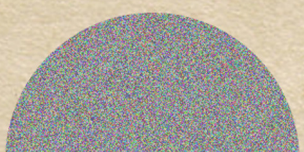
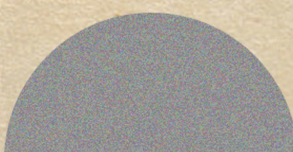
Made in Melbourne and around the Globe

200

400

800

1600



Photography Cheat Sheet Pocket Card

Your travel reference

Are you new to Photography? Is it too confusing to set up your camera? Automatic will sure do better than me, isn't it? These are all interesting questions and that is why we have decided to draw a simple Photography Cheat Sheet Pocket Card. Now you have a foldable reference guide to keep in your bag in case you do not remember what the setting does. Print it, fold it and open it when you need

Download it here with other free material that will help you during your travel and photography life

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Understanding Exposure



If you leave your camera at standard setting you will see a value of “0” in your view finder. Usually you can move this up to +2 or -2. But why do you want to do that? It may happen that the light meter of your camera is not able to properly read the external light. This can occur in extreme conditions like when you have sun and shadow areas in a summer day at 12pm.

Suggestion: if unsure do not touch this setting. Moreover, if you forget it you will have the remaining photos either over or under exposed. This is not really a setting you want to start playing with

The **Photography Cheat Sheet Pocket Card** ([hownload here](#)) shows the scale as real black, for under exposed (+3) to almost white (-3) for over exposed

Aperture



Fantastic! So you decided to move on from the *Automatic* setting. Why? most probably because you want to add something to the photo, your *interpretation*.

When do you use this setting? When you want to control the depth of field. That means that you want to focus only on a small area and leave the background/foreground blurred or you want to have the all image, or most of it, in focus, typical of a landscape photo.

The smaller is the f number you use (f/1.4, f/1.8 and so on) the smaller is the area in focus. You may want to use this setting for portraits, food or details photography

The higher the f number is (f/11, f/18 etc) the bigger is the area in focus. Landscape is the typical example

As simple as that. Meanwhile you change the Aperture setting, the camera will automatically calculate the Shutter speed and the ISO (if in Auto)

Suggestion: familiarize with this setting leaving ISO in auto. Then play setting ISO at your choice

The **Photography Cheat Sheet Pocket Card** ([download here](#)) shows the scale from a large lens aperture, that is low f value, for shallow depth of field, to small lens aperture, that is high f value, for wide depth of field

Shutter Speed



This is the second decision you can make for your photo, the shutter speed.

Do you want to freeze the action in front of you and therefore you use a very low shutter speed (1/4000 of sec, 1/500sec etc) or you want to give a sense or movement (1/2sec, 2sec etc) and in this case you most probably need to use a tripod

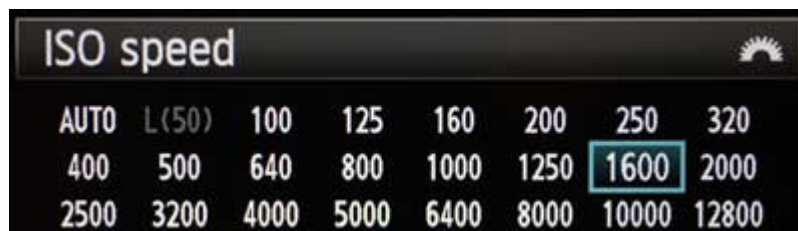
Meanwhile you change the Shutter setting, the camera will automatically calculate the Aperture and the ISO (if in Auto)

Suggestion: familiarize with this setting leaving ISO in auto. Than play setting ISO at your choice

The **Photography Cheat Sheet Pocket Card** ([hownload here](#)) shows the scale from very long Shutter speed (1sec and more) with almost static objects, this can be a landscape, to very short Shutter speed (1/2000sec or less) with super quick moving objects as an airplanes.

ISO Setting

This is the third decision you can take for your photo, the ISO setting.



The lower the ISO the cleaner the photo, the higher the ISO the noisier becomes the image. So why anybody would choose to use the higher ISO? Because the higher the ISO the more space you will have to play with either Aperture or Shutter speed. I will add more in the next paragraph, *The If World*

When you increase the ISO setting, the camera will automatically decrease the Aperture f value (if setting is in A/Av) or decrease the Shutter Speed (if setting is in S/Tv)

Suggestion: start leaving ISO in auto mode. One thing less to worry about, Next step take control of it

The **Photography Cheat Sheet Pocket Card** ([download here](#)) shows the scale from the lowest ISO, usually 100, without any noise, to the highest ISO (6400 or more) with an emphasized high noise.

If you are doing street photography or portrait in the night without flash use an high ISO value. If you are making a landscape photography with a tripod use always ISO 100, even in the night (the shutter speed will be long, but that's ok because your camera will be stable on a tripod)

The If World

So what IF I change this setting or IF I change that setting? What will happen IF....? Lots of information, now let's see the practice

If I go for **landscape photography** with a tripod I use a standard setting of ISO 100 and Aperture mode between f/8 and f/20. I do not care about the shutter speed. It can be as long as 30sec but that's ok because I have a stable tripod where I leave my camera. Easy setting

If I go for **food photography** in a bar, restaurant or cafe I expect lower light. I set the ISO to 400 (the quality is still very good) and the lowest Aperture mode (ideally f/2.8 or f/4). I would expect the shutter speed to be low enough to have a sharp photo.

If I go for **market/street photography** and I want to freeze the action I go for ISO 400 and shutter speed of 1/100 or lower if you use a zoom lens. If you are more after the depth of field, than play with the Aperture value as we did with food photography

If I go for **portrait photography** I set the ISO to 200-400 (the quality is still very good) and a low Aperture mode (ideally f/2.8 or

f/4). I would expect the shutter speed to be enough low to have a sharp photo.

How can I understand if my photo will be sharp?

Suggestion : Rule of thumb is that the photo will be sharp if the denominator in the Shutter Speed is equal or higher in value than the zoom you are using. If you are taking a photo with a 50mm lens you need to have a shutter speed of 1/50 or lower, if the zoom is 200mm than the shutter speed should be 1/200 or lower. I would not personally go at an higher value than 1/50 without the tripod.

If you are worried about sharpness because the Shutter Speed is too long, than increase the ISO (that will help to decrease the Shutter Speed value till 1/80). It is better to have a noisy, however sharp photo, than a blurry photo.

There are extreme conditions. If you need to go with a shutter speed lower than 1/80 try to lean with your camera on a pole/wall. It will give more stability.

Shutter Speed and Aperture



Photography Cheat Sheet Pocket Card – Your travel reference

Once you feel more confident you can try to go in full Manual mode.

You can control at the same time both the Aperture and the Shutter speed.

Suggestion : You can start making the photo in either Aperture or Shutter Speed mode. You see the camera values. You change to Manual mode and you start different setting from the automatic ones detected by the camera.

What about the other camera brands

All the images here refer to either Canon or Nikon. What about the other brands?

Sony and Olympus are very similar to Nikon although A and S are inverted.

Pentax is instead similar to Canon

Either ways they all work as described above, just naming convention

Remember to download here the **Photography Cheat Sheet Pocket Card** with other free material that will help you during your travel and photography life.

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*The love for travelling.....
...the passion for photography*



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