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## Camera Basics: Different Modes

### Auto

- Auto mode tells your camera to use its best judgment to select shutter speed, aperture, ISO, white balance, focus and flash to take the best shot that it can.
- With some cameras auto mode lets you override flash or change it to red eye reduction.
- This mode will give you nice results in many shooting conditions.

### Portrait Mode

- Your camera will automatically select a large aperture (small number) which helps to keep your background out of focus (ie it sets a narrow depth of field – ensuring your subject is the only thing in focus and is therefore the centre of attention in the shot).
- Portrait mode works best when you're photographing a single subject so get in close enough to your subject (either by zooming in or walking closer) so that your photographing the head and shoulders of them.
- Also if you're shooting into the sun you might want to trigger your flash to add a little light onto their face.

### Landscape Mode

- This mode is almost the exact opposite of portrait mode in that it sets the camera up with a small aperture (large number) to make sure as much of the scene you're photographing will be in focus as possible.
- Ideal for capturing shots of wide scenes....landscapes.
- A tripod (or solid surface...like a rock or stump) is often needed for landscape photography to ensure your camera is still.

### Macro Mode

- Macro mode lets you move your closer into your subject to take a close up picture. It's great for shooting flowers, little fingers, eyelashes or other small objects .
- You can usually get to within 2-10cm for point and shoot cameras.
- You won't want to use your camera's built in flash when photographing close up objects or they'll be burnt out.

### Sports Mode

- It is ideal for photographing any moving objects including people playing sports, pets, cars, wildlife etc.
- Sports mode attempts to freeze the action by increasing the shutter speed.
- When photographing fast moving subjects you can also increase your chances of capturing them with panning of your camera along with the subject and/or by attempting to pre focus your camera on a spot where the subject will be when you want to photograph it (this takes practice).

### Night Mode

- Night mode (a technique also called 'slow shutter sync') is for shooting in low light situations and sets your camera to use a longer shutter speed to help capture details of the background but it also fires off a flash to illuminate the foreground (and subject).

- You should use a tripod or your background will be blurred – however it’s also fun to take shots with this handheld to purposely blur your backgrounds – especially when there is a situation with lights behind your subject as it can give a fun and experimental look (great for parties and dance floors with colored lights).
- **Snow Mode** – to help with tricky bright lighting at the snow
- **Fireworks Mode** - for shooting firework displays
- **Kids and Pets Mode** – fast moving objects can be tricky – this mode seems to speed up shutter speed and help reduce shutter lag with some pre focusing
- **Underwater Mode** – underwater photography has it’s own unique set of exposure requirements
- **Beach Mode** – another bright scene mode
- **Indoor Mode** – helps with setting shutter speed and white balance
- **Foliage Mode** - boosts saturation to give nice bold colors

### Program Mode (P)

- Program mode is similar to Auto but gives you a little more control over some other features including flash, white balance, ISO etc.

### Aperture Priority Mode (A or AV)

- This mode allows you to choose the aperture and where your camera chooses the other settings (shutter speed, white balance, ISO etc) so as to ensure you have a well balanced exposure.
- Aperture priority mode is useful when you’re looking to control the depth of field in a shot (usually a stationary object where you don’t need to control shutter speed).
- Choosing a larger number aperture means the aperture (or the opening in your camera when shooting) is smaller and lets less light in. *small number means small amount in focus*
- This means you’ll have a larger depth of field (more of the scene will be in focus) but that your camera will choose a slower shutter speed.
- Small numbers means the opposite (ie your aperture is large, depth of field will be small and your camera will probably choose a faster shutter speed).

### Shutter Priority Mode (S or TV)

- You select a shutter speed and the camera then chooses all of the other settings.
- For example when photographing moving subjects (like sports) you might want to choose a fast shutter speed to freeze the motion. On the flip-side of this you might want to capture the movement as a blur of a subject like a waterfall and choose a slow shutter speed. You might also choose a slow shutter speed in lower light situations.

### Manual Mode

- In this mode you have full control over your camera and need to think about all settings including shutter speed, aperture, ISO, white balance, flash etc.
- It gives you the flexibility to set your shots up as you wish.
- Of course you also need to have some idea of what you’re doing in manual mode so most digital camera owners that I have anything to do with tend to stick to one of the priority modes.

## Photographing Kids

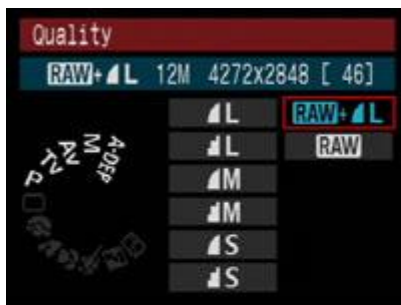
### Good Light Outdoors & Indoor

- Cloudy days are the perfect time to take close up pictures of the kids outside. Have them turn their face upward and watch as their eyes just sparkle!

- On a sunny day you wouldn't be able to do this without having squinty eyes and irritable kiddos. Analogy to a water hose: Direct sunlight is like the jet setting, soft/diffused/cloudy light is more like the rain shower setting.
- Cloudy days also allow colors to "pop" more than they would in bright sunlight.
- Best time for photos is before the sun is at its peak....so early morning (kids are freshest then too) or evening. The "Golden Hour" is an hour before sunset or an hour after sunrise. The light is wonderful.
- Natural light – find a window in your house with some soft light coming through (*by soft I mean not bright enough to make a shadow if you place your hand in front of it*) turn off the flash and shoot away... the soft click of a shutter will bother a baby much less than a bright flash startling them every few seconds.
- If you have to use your flash, stand farther away from your subject and use your camera's zoom to get in close or dial down the intensity of the flash.

## General Tips

- Always, shoot at the best quality your camera will allow... you never know when you will catch that one great shot. Need your manual to find the best setting.



*A sample Canon menu  
In this situation a medium file  
size would be adequate*



*A sample Nikon menu with ideal settings.*



- Get down at their level! Lay down on the floor and capture them playing.
- Put them on a bright blanket with neutral clothing or bare skin
- Playing Peek a boo with them (peeking out from under a blanket can be a lot of fun too)
- Give them something to do...bubble machines, chalk, favorite toy
- Books. Books. Books. Make sure to choose a book that can add to the photograph if possible.
- Let them **Explore** and **Discover** (usually outside) and make sure to capture their **Interest**
- Ask them about their **Belly Button** --toddlers love to find their belly button
- Capture them looking out a **Window**.
- Take advantage of cute **Hats** or fun **Clothing**
- Capture their **Eyelashes**

## Getting them to Stay Put

- Crawling kids: Give them a little something to pull up on. If they aren't walking yet, a small chair or stool will do the trick. As much as they love to pull up, they are usually pretty hesitant to let go, so they tend to stay put for a few minutes.
- Walking kids: A small chair or bench. They can use it as a table to play on (ie. with toy cars, or dolls) and of course for sitting on.
- The second option for a little one is containment... you can use anything, a laundry basket, suitcase, washtub... the possibilities are endless. Just be sure to make a game of it. Keep the mood fun by drumming on the sides or clapping your hands and smiling.

## What to do with your Photos

- Get them off your camera onto your computer. BACK EVERYTHING UP (with an external drive)!
- Edit them (never in-camera) with free programs like Picasa or Picnik (full version \$25 a year). Invest in Photoshop Elements, Lightroom or Photoshop CS5. Google or Youtube are ideal for finding tutorials on how to use any editing program.
- Print them. Walmart (for UNEDITED photos)...Technicare Imaging, Don's Photo, McBain Camera (for EDITED).
- Display them. Photobooks, canvas, calendars, upload to Facebook or flickr. Scrapbooks.

Please contact me if you have any questions! One of the best things to do is read your camera manual!

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