

Storrington Camera Club Hints & Tips



Street
Photography
Ideas
from Brian Lloyd
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(Streetsnappers)

Feel the Fear

- What kind of Street Photographer are you?
 - In your face
 - Capture the scene
 - Abstract
 - Don't do something that you hate
- Work out what your fears are.
 - Are they rational?
 - What's the worst that can happen?
- Get in the right headspace
 - Legally
 - Morally
 - Ethically

Check the law

- UK: Public space
 - No Permission required
 - If I can see it, I can shoot it
 - If it feels wrong, it probably is e.g. homeless person
 - You don't need special permission to photograph children in a public place (so long as the pictures are not intended for commercial or illegal purposes), but you are advised to seek consent regardless. Children cannot legally give their permission to be photographed, so you need to seek permission from a parent or legal guardian.
- Private land e.g. Canary Wharf; Covent Garden
- Other countries: Check on Wikipedia or Law.Photography
 - Spain: if you take a picture of somebody in public, you will have to ask them for permission if they are recognisable. You can still shoot in public since you have a freedom of panorama, if

Feel the Fear Tips

- People aren't interested in you and probably won't notice
- Blend In: look like a tourist
 - smaller camera, dark clothes, move slowly
 - Get rid of all camera noises and lights
 - Be stealthy, but not furtive
 - Relax, smile inwardly and be happy
- Desensitisation
 - Start further away and move closer
- Imagine the space is empty and keep shooting
- Start in more crowded places:
 - cities, marches, protests, festivals

Feel the Fear: More tips

- “Video mode”: pan across scene, shoot at right moment
- Avoid eye contact (unless needed for picture to work)
 - Joel Meyerowitz
 - Bruises the scene and changes subject’s behaviour
- Pretend you’re confused/ disguise what you’re doing
 - Fumble and look at settings on camera: Garry Winogrand
 - Shoot without looking through viewfinder: Mark Cohen
 - Last resort as can breed bad habits from the start?

Street Photography Tips

- Keep the lens cap off and camera ready to shoot
- Wear old clothes: may need to get down low
- Work the scene and angles
 - Step forwards, to sides, crouch down, get closer, back away
 - Look at the edges of the frame
 - Keep shooting
 - Choose the best afterwards at home
- No chimping!
- Take breaks
- Always have a camera with you
- Keep practicing

Street Photography Negative Space

- Puts the focus on the subject
- Gives more importance to subject
- Imposes a sense of scale
- Leading lines
- Less is more: try to use light, dark or a solid colour for space

Street Photography Practice

- Stop making excuses
- Hone observation skills
- Improve your ability to judge the light
- Improve your timing
- Work on the way you see the world
- Work on the way you interact with the environment
- Work on your weak points

Layers in Street Photography

- Layers in the image add volume and depth
- 3 often works well, with one or more out of focus?
- Aim for interest in the foreground, mid- and background
- Look for useful subject matter from front to back
- Use light and shadows as extra layers
- Use subjects as a visual punctuation mark
- Work on placement of subjects in frame
- Use reflections as an extra layer
- Use steamy windows with a shadowy figure inside and great lighting to create abstract layers

Lenses in Street Photography

- Prime lenses generally preferable:
 - Quicker to use
 - Better image quality
 - Quieter, smaller and lighter
 - Wider depth of field at any aperture
 - Faster: e.g. f1.4 or f1.8
- Experiment with 24-50mm to see which suits your style
- 28mm full frame (18-19mm cropped sensor)
 - Gives more context and subject matter/layers
- 35mm full frame (23-24mm cropped sensor)
 - 70° field of view similar to human eye, closer to reality
- Take one lens and get to know it well
 - Understand what it “sees”

Street Photography Settings

- Keep it simple so you can shoot quickly and instinctively
- Walkaround setting: prepare in advance
 - Adjust using exposure compensation
- Shutter speed minimum 1/250 to freeze movement
- Aperture f8 or smaller if light very bright f11 or f16
 - Context needed, layers front to back, good depth of field
- Auto ISO: as high as needed
 - Get to know your camera, noise is a price worth paying
- Metering mode: multi/ evaluative/ matrix
- RAW to one card, jpeg to other
 - RAW: options open if need to change WB, mono conversions
 - Jpeg to use film simulations in Fuji for constant aesthetic

Street Photography Focussing

- Street Photographers appear to be 50:50 AF:MF
- Focus ideally MF using zone pre-focussing
 - e.g. specific 35mm lens at f8, focus set to 9 feet/3m
 - Zone from 5-30 feet acceptably sharp
 - The wider the lens, the larger the zone
 - Only workss effectively with prime lenses 35mm and wider
- Charts available on www.photopills.com, app for a cost
- Apps may be available for a cost www.setmycamera.com

PhotoPills chart (other apps are available)

DEPTH OF FIELD (DOF) TABLE

Camera

Canon EOS 7D, 7D Mark II

Focal length

50 mm

Units

feet

Calculate

DoF Near/Far Plane

Subject distance (feet)	f/8.0	f/9.0	f/9.5	f/10	f/11	f/13	f/14	f/16
9	7.74 10.76	7.61 11.02	7.54 11.17	7.47 11.33	7.31 11.7	7.15 12.14	6.98 12.68	6.79 13.34
10	8.46 12.22	8.31 12.56	8.22 12.75	8.14 12.97	7.96 13.45	7.76 14.04	7.56 14.77	7.34 15.68

Street Photography at Night

- Find good light: decent contrast, areas of light and dark
- Understand the effects of the light
 - What mood are you trying to create
 - Does light source suit the mood: warm/cool
 - Uneven light creates form and depth
- Settings: aperture priority
 - f1.4 lens or wider
 - Shutter speed minimum 1/60s
 - Auto ISO set range 800-12,800: noise adds to atmosphere
 - Shoot in RAW with auto WB, dynamic range 100% (Fuji)
 - Manual focus

Street Photography at Night

- Slow down: linger at perfect light source
- Try different lenses if available
- Create mystery
- Develop a style
- Aim for dark images:
 - Use exposure compensation -1 to -2 to give deep shadows
- Create layered images using reflections/ condensation
- Work the scene
- Take more care:
 - Always have an escape route in mind
 - Stick to busier areas
 - Shoot with friends