

Night/Low Light Photography – Hints and Helps

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While most photographers pack up and go home at sunset, for those interested in night and low light photography the fun and challenge is about to begin. The intrigue is that the success of a picture taken at night or in low light conditions is the quality of light whether it is natural (the moon) or artificial (a flash or street light). More than any other technique, night or low light photography will increase the photographers understanding of light and different lighting situations. The following information is meant to be an aid in helping leaders and members increase their knowledge about the art of night and low photography.

Recommended Equipment:

- A camera with manual settings or bulb capability
- Sturdy tripod strong enough to support the camera
- Cable release
- A penlight or a small flashlight
- Notebook for recording data

Technique:

- Aperture (f/4-f/22, it depends)
- Shutter speed (1 second to minutes to hours)
- ISO (100-800)
- Flash may come in handy
- The longer the focal length of the lens the more potential for movement/distortion especially with long exposures

Ideas:

- Street scenes, cityscapes and townscapes
- Buildings (churches often are light at night)
- Neon signs
- Snow covered areas with a bright moon or ambient light
- Fireworks
- Firelight
- County fair carnival
- Star trails
- Writing with light
- Christmas lights
- Traffic tail-light trails

Resources:

- Books
 - The Complete Guide to Night and Low-Light Photography by Lee Frost
 - Photography at Night by Richard Newman
 - Many others
- Internet sites such as:
 - Betterphoto.com
 - Kodak.com
 - Photo.net
 - Nationalgeographic.com/photography
 - Takegreatpictures.com