

Simple Tips to Master Landscape Night Photography

Night photography is tricky. If you, do it well, it can capture night-time landscapes spectacularly, showing the skies full of stars and city lights. It is also a good opportunity to experiment with various equipment and camera settings. If you use slow shutter speeds, you get long exposure times.

Taking photographs at night is all about preparation, practice, and experimentation. The more you do these, the better you get at night photography. Here are some things you can consider as night photography tips to enhance your night time photography skills.

1. Scout the Location

Since you will be taking pictures in the dark, you need to scout your location beforehand. It is not a good idea to look around for the perfect location in the dark. Check out different locations during the day, and take notes on the possible obstacles or challenges. Then choose the one that you feel is the most suitable. Look into the following parameters.

- Does the site have enough artificial light?
- Are the lights multi-coloured enough to make the pictures look interesting?
- Is it possible for you to maximize the available light?
- Which angle looks best for your night time photography?

2. Prepare for Long Night Photography Sessions

When you indulge in night time photography, you need to be mentally and physically prepared for spending long hours outdoors in the dark. It takes a lot of effort and time to get good night time photography shots. Setting up your tripod and adjusting your camera settings in the dark is not easy, especially when the weather is cold and your hands are freezing. It will be a good idea to take a few hand warmers or gloves with you.

3. Carry a Flashlight

Even if you're planning to do your night photography in an urban area, it might be hard to see your camera's controls or your tripod's screws in the street lights. Make sure you carry a flashlight with you. A small flashlight can do wonders as a light source in such situations. You'll need to use it to make your way through the dark. You might also use it for lighting part of your images.

4. Shoot in Manual Mode

Shooting in manual mode gives you more control over the photographs you take. That's because you can fully control your camera settings for the different shots. Night photography is more effective if you do it slowly and methodically. You'll have to give time to your camera settings to adjust properly in the dark before you start shooting.

5. Lower the Aperture

It is best to lower your aperture for night photography. Depending on the type of camera and lens you are using, you can determine how low it needs to be. Your goal is to get as much light as possible from the f-stops. Remember, if you do not have enough light, the objects in your photographs will not come out clear, and you won't be able to capture the beauty of the landscape or creature you're shooting properly.

6. Keep the Camera ISO as Low as Possible

This is another thing of your camera settings that you need to be careful about for good night photography. You might think shooting with low light requires a high ISO setting. But that's not true if you are shooting during night hours. A high ISO setting will add more grain to your pictures, which

would become an issue for the quality of your shots. Keep the ISO as low as possible. You can adjust the ISO setting by taking a few test shots to see which setting gets you the clearest pictures.

7. Use a Tripod

In night photography, you usually need to use long shutter speeds. This is because you need to absorb as much light as possible from the environment. To keep your shots focused for long (usually for 10 seconds or more), you need to use a sturdy tripod. Thus, carrying a tripod is a must when you're going for night time photography.

8. Shoot in Bulb Mode

If you are doing night photography with extra-long exposures, you will need to shoot in bulb mode. Extra-long exposures are those that are longer than 30 seconds. Make sure to set your DSLR to its bulb mode. This will be the ideal setting for taking good-quality pictures, as it will lighten your shots. To keep your camera stable, you might also want to buy a remote shutter release.

9. Always Shoot RAW

For effective night photography, make sure you shoot RAW. JPEG generally downgrades the picture quality, which can literally kill off your shots. Sticking to the RAW mode will give you leverage. You'll be glad that you shot RAW when you're done with your sessions and are beginning to edit or process your images. Post-processing is a lot easier if your photos are shot RAW. You can even play around with the colours a little bit without damaging the quality of your images.

Some suggestions for Night Time Photography

1. Urban Photography

Capture a city view at night. Look for different shades of colors seen in the buildings, the water, and the sky. Take the image from an angle, highlighting the infrastructure of the city.

2. Landscape Photography (Star trails)

The stars in the sky are moving (okay, it is really the earth's rotation, but they appear to be moving across the sky). If you lengthen your shutter speed too much, the stars will have little trails which appear as a blur in your shot. You may not see it until you get the pictures home and look at them on the computer screen, but it will be there and will ruin the shot.

3. Architecture Photography

Capture the night view of a large city full of buildings filled with colourful lights at night. Take the picture from an angle that makes it look like an airplane view – it could make the city look even more gorgeous than it actually is.

4. Street Photography

Street lights are the night street photographer's best friend. I have said this many times before. Without night street lights, there is no night street photography. These lights illuminate everything.