



Momtography

Learning how to take beautiful, meaningful, photos of the everyday.

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01. Why does photography matter to moms....

Taking pictures may feel trivial to some. Photography is viewed as a laid back hobby. You pull out your cell phone and snap a quick photo when your kiddo does something cute. There's a great chance it just feels like an insignificant part of your day. We believe photography is so much more than that. There is so much meaning to be found in a photo.

We are moms who are knee deep in changing diapers, cleaning crumbs, and chauffeuring around from school to sports. It can be exhausting, and unseen and it is easy to wish these days away. We find ourselves counting down until nap time or bedtime, only to miss our sweet kids once they are asleep. The mundane moments of motherhood matter. These simple moments are what make up our kids' childhoods and we believe instead of wishing the moments away we should be documenting their beauty! When we slow down to take a photo and be present in the moment we are changing our perspective and focusing on the beauty of childhood and the faithfulness of God in our holy work of motherhood.





So, what is your why?

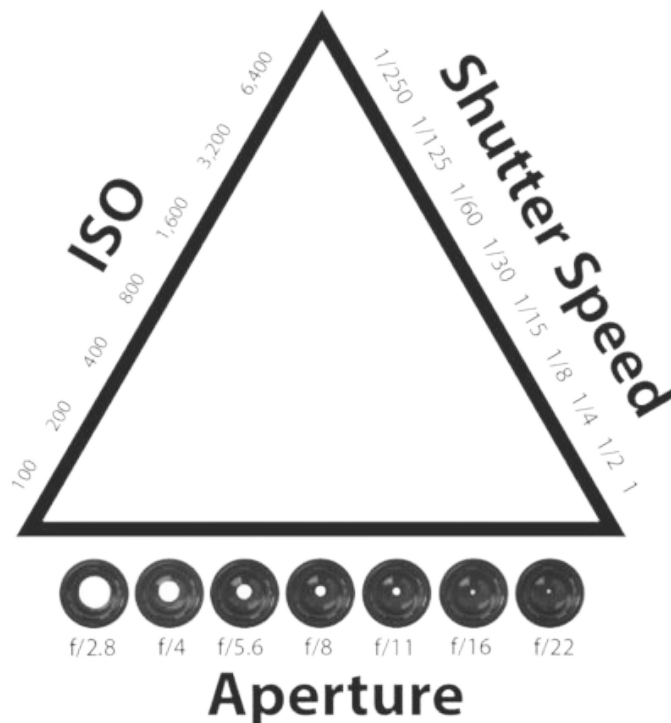
Why is it important for you to learn how to take photos of your kiddos? What would it mean for you and your family? Use the space below to write your why.

O2. Exposure Triangle

There are 3 components to the exposure triangle.

- Aperture,
- Shutter speed
- ISO

Learning about these 3 components will help you shoot in manual mode! To take a good photograph you will want to set each setting in a way that works with others. We will explain each provide a diagram to help you understand. We will also get some hands on practice. The key with shooting in manual mode is to PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE. You will take a lot of bad images to get the one good one and that is ok!



Aperture

Aperture is defined as the opening in a lens through which light passes to enter the camera.

Aperture can add dimension to photos by controlling the depth of field. Aperture can give you a blurred background with a beautiful shallow focus. It can also give you extremely sharp focus photos.

One of the most obvious effects on your photos aperture can have is on the brightness of your images.

A large aperture (a wide opening) will pass a lot of light, resulting in a brighter photograph. A small aperture does just the opposite, making a photo darker. A larger aperture is actually a lower number like 1.8 and a smaller aperture is a higher number like 4.0.

You will have adjust shutter speed, and ISO as you adjust your aperture. on't worry, we will practice a lot here! The more photos you take, the more it will all make sense!

Aperture



Aperture 1.8



Aperture 2.0



Aperture 2.5

Shutter speed

Shutter speed is responsible for two things in photography. It assists in changing the brightness of your image and can create dramatic effects by either freezing action or blurring motion.

Shutter speed is the length of time the camera shutter is open, exposing light onto the camera sensor. Essentially, it's how long your camera spends taking a photo. When you use a "slow" shutter speed (lower number) you expose your sensor for a significant period of time. If your shutter speed is long/slow moving subjects in your photo can appear blurred.

The other important effect of shutter speed is on exposure (or brightness of your image) If you use a long shutter speed, your camera sensor gathers a lot of light, and the resulting photo will be quite bright. By using a higher number shutter speed, your camera sensor is only exposed to a small fraction of light, resulting in a darker photo.

Here is an example of how playing with the shutter speed can create an intentional blur in your photos.

Camera settings were:

ISO 1,000

Aperture 13

Shutter Speed 1/20sec



ISO

In very simple terms, ISO is the camera setting that will brighten or darken a photo. As you increase your ISO number your photos will progressively become brighter. ISO helps you document images in darker settings and also allows you to be somewhat flexible about your aperture and shutter speed settings.

However, raising your ISO has benefits and also consequences. The higher you raise your ISO the more noise (or grain) you add to an image. If you go too high the image might not be useable. You should result to raising your ISO to brighten a photo if you are unable to get it as bright as you need by changing aperture and shutter speed.

Examples of ISO: 100, 200, 400, 800, 1000, 1600.

You will want to ask what your ISO should be set at while you are taking photos. I will be the first to tell you that so many factors play into this so it is a hard question to answer. Some factors include:

- The light in your environment
- Your subject. Is it a newborn who barely moves or a busy toddler who doesn't stop moving?
- The capabilities of your camera and lenses. Some cameras do wonderful in low light and some need the ISO really raised!

You should always try to stick to a lower ISO of your camera, which is typically ISO 100 or 200, whenever you can. If there is plenty of light, you are free to use a low ISO and minimize the appearance of noise as much as possible.

Let's Practice!

Examples



Aperture: 1.6
Shutter Speed: 1/800
ISO: 160



Aperture: 3.2
Shutter Speed: 1/125
ISO: 160

You'll notice the exposure (brightness) is the same in both images. I left the ISO the same to showcase how aperture and shutter speed affect images and proper exposure.

The larger aperture in the first image let in more light which allowed me to choose a faster shutter speed so there is no image blur.

The smaller aperture in the second image meant that I had to choose a slower shutter speed to properly expose the image. This resulted in image blur because the shutter wasn't fast enough to catch the movement.

If I would have adjusted the ISO in my second image to a higher number (say 400) I would have been able to higher the shutter speed and remove image blur while still properly exposing the image.

03. Lighting

Does lighting affect your images?

Yes it does! Lighting is one of the first things you should consider when taking a photo. A good understanding of light and how to properly utilize it can absolutely transform your photography.

The first, and best, thing you can do for lighting in your photos is to use natural light as much as possible. Turn off all artificial lights around you, including lamps and ceiling lights. Artificial light makes photos have an unnatural orange or yellow tint and can also cast really weird shadows.

Taking advantage of this tip to start will immediately make a huge difference in your photos.

See the example below. The first image I turned off all artificial light and used the natural light coming from my back porch doors into my kitchen. The second is taken with the ceiling light on during a later part of the day with no natural light. They are edited the same.

Natural light



Artificial light



03. Lighting

Lighting in your home.

As a mom, most of your images will probably be taken in your home. I have often heard that moms can't take photos in their houses because their home isn't pretty enough or they don't have good enough lighting. I am here to tell you, WRONG. You'll be surprised at all the pretty light you have in your house when you know what to look for!

Early morning- your home will probably have darker, moodier light and if you pay attention there can be really pretty shadows.

Afternoon- this is when your home will probably be at its brightest because the sun is high in the sky.

Evening- Some homes will have beautiful golden hour light in the evening as the sun is setting.

Each room in your home will have different types of lighting at different times of the day. The sun rises in the east and sets in the west. Pay attention to which way your windows face so you know what time of day to look for light.

Example- My kitchen has east windows so the light is best there in the morning.

My living room has south and west-facing windows and the light is different at each of the windows during different parts of the day.

Included in the lighting homework is a chart for you to take a day to pay attention to where the light is in your home.

Remember- the best way to learn which camera settings are best for which lighting is to PRACTICE. Keep taking photos friends!

03. Lighting

Types of natural light and how they affect your photos.

Let's chat about outdoor photography for a second and the different types of natural light that occurs outdoors! This lighting will also make a big difference in your images.

- **Overcast/shade-** The light is "diffused" by the clouds on overcast days. Overcast/shade is probably the easiest outdoor lighting to take photos because the light is falling evenly over everything. You won't have to worry about harsh light, or shadows being cast on your subjects.
- **Full sun-** There is no shade and this light occurs during the middle of the day when the sun is high in the sky. Full sun light is harsh and can wash out images and create shadows that are unwanted in images depending on where your subject is.
- **Golden hour-** This light happens 1-2 hours after sunrise and 1-2 hours before sunset. The sun casts a golden glow on everything. It is our favorite light to shoot outdoors!
- **Blue hour-** Blue hour is before golden hour in the morning and after golden hour in the evening when the sun is below the horizon. This light can be darker but it is before the sun sets completely.

The types of light will determine what your camera settings are at. The best way to learn this is to PRACTICE. Keep taking photos!

Lighting Homework

Let's practice! Pick the room in your house with the best natural window light. (or your favorite room to take photos in) and chose a time of day that the light from the window is good!

- First turn on the artificial lights and take a photo.
- Next turn off the lights and utilize the light from the window and take the photo again. Do you notice the difference? Which do you prefer?

On the following page is a place for you to chart the light in your house. Feel free to cross out the room names and choose which rooms you want to chart the light in your house in. Print it a few times and chart the light during different seasons. The sun rises earlier and sets later in the summer than it does in the fall and winter. Paying attention will make a huge difference in your images!

Here are some examples I took in my own home. The best light in my kitchen is in the morning and in my living room in the mid afternoon. Which is when these images where taken.



Light Chart

MORNING

AFTERNOON

EVENING

KITCHEN

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LIVING
ROOM

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BEDROOM

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DINING
ROOM

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ROOM:

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04. Composition

Telling a story with your image.

Composition is just how you arrange your photo. It is simple but a key aspect of taking beautiful photos.

There are many composition rules that photographers can follow.

We believe while you are learning to use your camera there are a few guidelines to keep in mind that can help you love your images!

- **Compose people intentionally.** Pay attention to where your child is in the photo. You can place them intentionally in the middle of the photo but you can also place them in the right third, or the left third.
- **Do not be afraid of white space.** Intentional empty space can really transform a photo.
- **Use the colors.** Dani and Chelsea are both intentional with the color clothing their children are wearing as often as possible when taking photos. They have also removed character clothing, and clothing with a lot of words on it from their children's wardrobes. (especially when they think they will be taking photos of their kids) Having colors that coordinate in images definitely makes a huge difference!
- **Try different angles.** Instead of taking a photo from straight on move to one side and try to take the same photo from that angle. Stand above your children as they do an activity and snap a photo from that angle. Some angles will work great, some might not, but you won't know unless you try!

04. Composition

Examples:

Angles: This is the same 15 minute span of my children painting. I just moved around them as they worked and tried different angles.



Colors: Here are examples of when I am intentional about outfit choices before taking photos vs. when I am not. I do believe there is a time to just take out your camera and take the photo no matter the outfit, but it does affect the final image!

