

# Beckham Digital Tutorials



## Exposure - Understanding it and Getting it Right

This DVD is a new concept for us because our tutorials usually start when we get the images into our computer. We have said many times in those tutorials that what makes the difference between a good image and a great one is not one magical step in our image editors, but a number of small steps. Each step not significant on their own, but when we combine them and we see the results of these small steps, we appreciate the massive difference we have made to the image.



Well, the same is true with that part of our photography right up to when we press the shutter button.

In the past we have generally made an assumption that we are starting the manipulations with the best image possible in terms of exposure. Photoshop is complex enough, without throwing exposure into the mix too.

There are also a number of steps we can take leading up to the pressing of the shutter button that are even more important than our image editing. If we do not capture the very best exposure we can when we are in front of our subject, then we are placing ourselves at an enormous disadvantage for the next stage on the computer.

So, why have we decided to make a tutorial DVD on this subject and at this time? Because we see more failures for these reasons than anything else. [There is no such thing as a correct exposure and this DVD will explain and demonstrate why](#)



The real world contains a wider range of tones than we can capture on film, paper or on a digital sensor. What we see with our eyes through the camera is NOT what we get. We use our knowledge of exposure to work to our advantage. This DVD will deal with Exposure in a very practical way. In short we are going to take you through our workflow from before we even press the shutter button to the final image, but we are going to deal with Exposure in detail, because it is the key to great images.

## Intro - There is no such thing as Correct Exposure - 16:14 mins



In this section we explain why there is no such thing as a Correct Exposure. Yes, on rare occasions we can get lucky, but not very often, certainly not often enough as we need to create consistently good images in all lighting conditions.

The facts are these:- Your Film camera or your Digital camera does not record what you see, no matter how much you paid for that camera.

## Your Cameras Light Meter gets things wrong - 27:03 mins

Learning this was a milestone for us as it opens the way to consistently good exposures. We do need to know how the light meter in our camera works, not from a technical point of view, but a practical one.

We need to know so that we also recognise when our camera is getting things wrong, which it does remarkably often. Only when we have that basic idea of how the camera does measure exposure, will we be able to get the best from the camera.

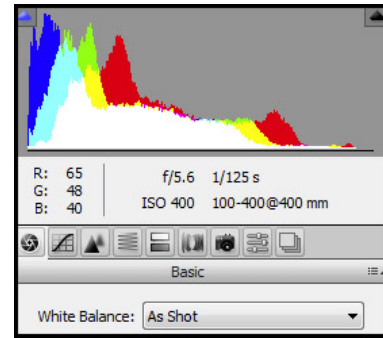


This is a **MUST KNOW** part of exposure. If we don't get this part right, we place ourselves at an enormous disadvantage when we do get the images into our image editor.

## Do we shoot Raw or Jpeg - 23:07 mins

In this section we have two videos, one of which we have taken from our Photoshop CS4 DVD called Shooting Raw.

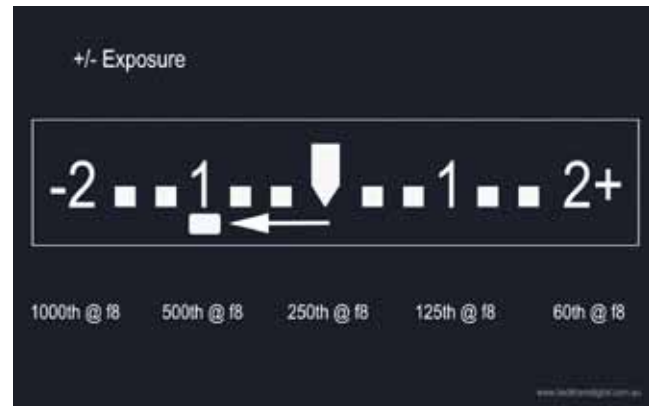
Here we demonstrate the difference in our manipulation successes when we use a high resolution Jpeg image and a high resolution Raw image. We think the results speak for themselves, but we take some time to take you through the reasons for our choices. That choice is to always shoot in Raw format.



## Exposure Compensation - 11:23 mins

Most Digital SLR cameras will have the ability to offer you exposure compensation. Why do the camera manufacturers do this, the answer is that they know that the camera's light meter will lie to us. It will be fooled for a whole range of reasons and the photographer has to take over and make some compensations.

Different camera types will have different ways to do this, so we cannot be camera specific in our video. If you are not using exposure compensation in your photography, it may be an idea to check your camera instruction booklet to find out how. It is a vital part of being able to get the best exposure we possibly can.



## Exposure Compensation The Next Step - 26:52 mins



If we are going to learn how to identify the need to apply exposure compensation, then we need to be aware of the next step.

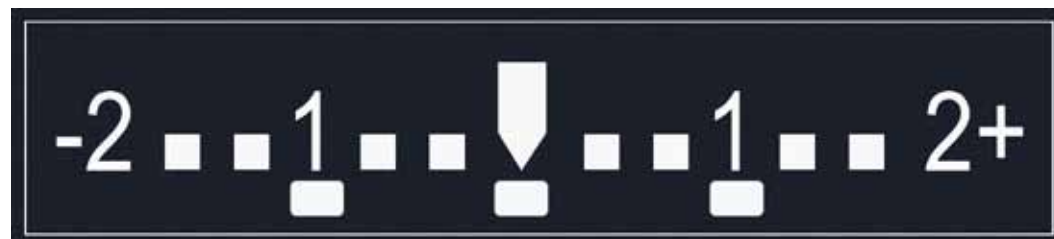
That next step is how we make the best of our exposure in our image editor. Here we use Photoshop CS4, but the techniques can be applied to any version of Photoshop and Elements versions 6 to 8.

So after taking advantage of a great Exposure, we now use Camera Raw to create a great image, one with interest and impact.

Without exposure compensation this image would not have been possible and would probably have been put down as one of our failures.

## Automatic Exposure Bracketing - 22:53 mins

Digital SLR cameras will allow us to set up automatic exposure bracketing. The scope of this will vary from camera to camera. Typically we will be able to set up the automatic taking of 3 images with varying exposures.



In some cases the scope can be set to either 2, 3, 5, or in some cases 7 separate exposures. Once this option is set, we can then decide on the exposure range, typically a third of a stop, two thirds, one stop or considerably more.

As well as setting up the automatic exposure bracketing we can also often link that to our continuous shooting mode. This can make life so quick and easy and open up other possibilities too.

If that is not enough, we can often then take our three bracketed exposures and bias them towards more exposure or less. We use these options all the time in our own photography. This is a practical and workable option as are all of those described on this disk. They are all techniques we use almost all the time.

## A Two Image Project - 11:23 mins



Even if we accept there is not a great chance of getting the perfect exposure, it doesn't prevent us from trying. Taking into account all the information and techniques so far dealt with on this DVD, we get as close as we can to that perfect exposure in difficult lighting conditions here.

Here, we have used two of three hand held exposures of the same scene using automatic exposure bracketing. We originally shot 3 images all one stop different in exposure and then selected the the two images that best exposed the foreground and the background.

Using layers and layer masks we put these two separate images together and created a great result. As you would expect, two separate hand held images will not be totally in

register with one another and more often than not they will be far enough out to give us some problems. However, we not only deal with that using layer masks to prove it can be done, but we also demonstrate a remarkable technique that is available in Photoshop CS3 and CS4 that does all the hard work for us.

Our example images are included on the DVD in the extras section. Open them up and see for yourself, but do bear in mind these images were created while recording this video. These are not images created later, but right in front of you. I think it is important to know that we don't create the videos and then go away and spend hours on the images, they are a part of the video recording process.

## High Dynamic Range Photography - 21:48mins

These tutorials are all about exposure and getting that right, but the natural next step is HDR photography . Here we offer just a glimpse at HDR. The Idea of HDR is this.

Accepting that our digital sensor cannot record the range of contrasts that our eyes can, we take a series of images with our camera on a tripod making sure we capture exposures for the lightest tones and the darker tones in the subject.

Using dedicated software we demonstrate how we can combine those exposures to create the image on the right.

Our HDR example contains detail in the light tones and the dark tones too. Something impossible with just one image. We think that HDR is likely to be something that is improved over the years, maybe combining camera technology and improvements in HDR software. This is an interesting glimpse at the technique.

