

Welcome to  
Imber Court Photo Training  
Online Diploma Course  
Module 13



**IMBER COURT**  
PHOTO TRAINING

# Understanding Your DSLR

## Project – Slow Shutter Speeds & Low Light Images

There are two parts to this project and you will need to submit two images one for each part to us.

In Part 1 of this project we are looking for an image taken using a slow shutter speed and showing movement of some description. You will need to use a tripod or rest the camera on a solid surface to avoid camera shake.

Consider lighting conditions and time of day for these images! The image must contain an interesting structure of some description that remains pin sharp. An example may be a pier at dusk with the sea moving around it or simply a fast moving stream or river with some rocks, a bridge or some other object's that are stationary.

You will need to get the exposure spot on so try using aperture priority, set the smallest hole possible and keep your ISO at its lowest setting. If you shoot in RAW you will have the ability to adjust any shadow or highlight areas of the shot prior to submission.



An ND (neutral density) filter will help you with this project although it is not essential. An ND filter reduces exposure in daylight and will allow you to capture images at slow shutter speeds without overexposing.

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In Part 2 of this project we are looking for an image captured during the night in low light conditions. Below is a small project for you to try at home before venturing out into the dark.

## Equipment

You will need the following:

**A tripod** – Make sure you are familiar with how it works.

**A Cable Release** – If you haven't already purchased one of these then have a look in your camera handbook on the accessories page and you should see the recommended model for your camera. Try to avoid the wireless versions as they can be temperamental although for some cameras this is the only type you can use. The cable release overrides the shutter release button and enables you to take images without pressing the button which can cause camera shake when shooting long exposures.

**A small torch** – To help you find the camera controls when outside in the dark!

## Location

Choose a location in your garden or out in the street, you are going to try and capture a shot of your house or street in the dark. This is just a practice don't worry too much about composition etc. This is just to get you used to the method of capturing this type of image.

## Focus

You may find that autofocus struggles to work in the dark so set your focus to manual. Allow your eyes time to adjust to the dark when focussing.

**White Balance** – Set your WB to whatever the lighting conditions are. If you are in complete darkness, e.g. just moonlight with no ambient light in the shot then set to daylight. If there is ambient light from houses or street lighting the set to Incandescent on a Nikon or Tungsten on a Canon.

**ISO** – Start with your ISO set to 100 or 200 whatever is the lowest. We will come back to ISO later!

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**Camera Shooting Mode** – Set your mode dial to 'M' Manual, in this mode you will need to select both shutter speed and aperture. A quick read in your camera manual will show you how to do this. On most cameras use the wheel that you usually adjust shutter speed and aperture with. You will see that when turning the wheel in manual mode the shutter speed changes. For cameras with only one wheel you will need to hold down the Av +/- button on the back of a Canon camera and turn the wheel to adjust the aperture. On a Nikon you will need to hold down the +/- button on the top of the camera to adjust the aperture with the wheel. On cameras with two wheels one will adjust the shutter speed and one will adjust the aperture. For other makes check your handbook or contact us.

- Set the camera shutter speed to 10 seconds, remember whole seconds appears as follows – 10”.
- Set the aperture to f11
- Take the shot
- If the shot is too dark then try again with a 20second shutter speed
- If the shot is too bright then try again with a 5second shutter speed
- You need to experiment a bit to get the correct exposure by making the shutter speed longer if underexposed and shorter if overexposed.
- Remember you can also try turning your ISO up if the image is too dark.



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An 8 second exposure of a bus on Westminster Bridge

