

June is bursting out all over!

Will the nice early summery weather we have had so far in lockdown continue through June? Hopefully we will be able to take advantage of the easing of the lockdown restrictions to be better able to enjoy the outdoors. This of course means even more photo opportunities, so it's a good time for some reminders about photography in the sun.



Virginia Langer

Traditionally, bright sunshine was regarded as the perfect weather for photography, and the advice from Kodak with early film cameras was to stand with the sun coming from behind, over your shoulder. However, while making the most of the light with simple cameras made sense years ago, it does not apply with today's technology, be it in any of our digital cameras or phone cameras. So, let's have a look at some of the key points:

- Taking portraits with the subject facing the sun is not a good idea as it can lead to squinting and very flat modelling of the light.
- Turning the subject by 45 degrees will help with both these issues, but the light may still be producing harsh shadows. Turning on automatic fill-flash in this case can help to reduce the contrast, and if a wide-brimmed hat is being worn flash is almost always needed to lighten the shadows on the face and eyes.
- Take care with sunglasses, which can obscure the eyes; the eyes are often the key to conveying life and character in a portrait. Be aware of people with photochromic spectacles, which can go very dark without the wearer being aware of the effect on a photograph.
- Making use of available shade, either say under a tree or by waiting for a cloud, can lead to more successful images.
- Photographing directly into the sun, using flash to illuminate the shadows, can result in great images, especially if you can capture rim lighting on the subject, as on the photo by Damian



Damian Morris

Morris. If you have one, this is the time to use a lens hood to cut down the risk of flares. With some subjects like the flower image by Virginia Langer, flash is not needed as the translucency of the petals creates beautiful lighting.

- For larger scenes and landscapes, strong sunlight almost always produces the least attractive rendition, due to the extreme contrast and harsh shadows. The best time for these is in the hour or so before and after sunrise and sunset. Do be aware of the change in the colour of the light at those times. The lovely warmth of the light around sunset can greatly enhance the image. It is possible though that this can be lost if your camera is set for automatic white balance, so it pays to understand white balance and

how to use it effectively.

- If you are dealing with a lot of harsh shadows and if your camera has the facility, capturing your images in RAW instead of jpeg format will allow you to bring back lots of detail in post-processing which may otherwise be lost.

If you have any questions or need help with anything photographic during this time, do feel free to contact us through the website at www.overtonphoto.club or email me personally and I will try to help or pass you on to someone who can.

John Hodge