

**Making Everything Easier!™**

# Digital SLR Settings & Shortcuts FOR DUMMIES®

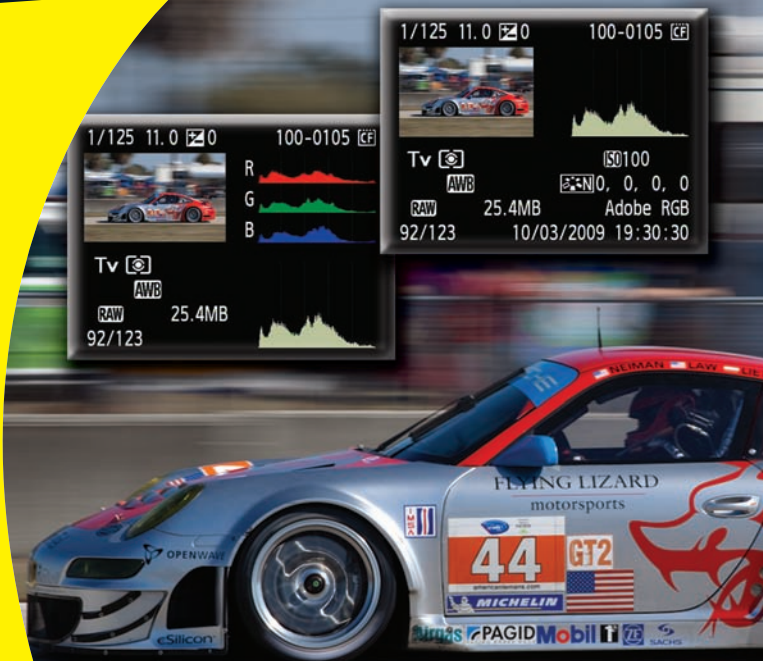
## **Learn to:**

- Get good starting exposure settings before you shoot
- Make adjustments on the fly to get the best results
- Capture formal and casual portraits, high-speed action, and the beauty of nature

**IN FULL COLOR!**

**Doug Sahlin**

*Author of Digital Portrait  
Photography For Dummies*



# Get More and Do More at Dummies.com®



Start with **FREE** Cheat Sheets

Cheat Sheets include

- Checklists
- Charts
- Common Instructions
- And Other Good Stuff!

To access the Cheat Sheet created specifically for this book, go to  
***[www.dummies.com/cheatsheet/dslrsettingsshortcuts](http://www.dummies.com/cheatsheet/dslrsettingsshortcuts)***

## Get Smart at Dummies.com

Dummies.com makes your life easier with 1,000s of answers on everything from removing wallpaper to using the latest version of Windows.

Check out our

- Videos
- Illustrated Articles
- Step-by-Step Instructions

Plus, each month you can win valuable prizes by entering our Dummies.com sweepstakes.\*

Want a weekly dose of Dummies? Sign up for Newsletters on

- Digital Photography
- Microsoft Windows & Office
- Personal Finance & Investing
- Health & Wellness
- Computing, iPods & Cell Phones
- eBay
- Internet
- Food, Home & Garden

## Find out “HOW” at Dummies.com

\*Sweepstakes not currently available in all countries; visit Dummies.com for official rules.



***Digital SLR***  
***Settings & Shortcuts***  
FOR  
**DUMMIES®**

**by Doug Sahlin**



WILEY

Wiley Publishing, Inc.

## Digital SLR Settings & Shortcuts For Dummies®

Published by

**Wiley Publishing, Inc.**

111 River Street

Hoboken, NJ 07030-5774

[www.wiley.com](http://www.wiley.com)

Copyright © 2011 by Wiley Publishing, Inc., Indianapolis, Indiana

Published by Wiley Publishing, Inc., Indianapolis, Indiana

Published simultaneously in Canada

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, scanning or otherwise, except as permitted under Sections 107 or 108 of the 1976 United States Copyright Act, without either the prior written permission of the Publisher, or authorization through payment of the appropriate per-copy fee to the Copyright Clearance Center, 222 Rosewood Drive, Danvers, MA 01923, (978) 750-8400, fax (978) 646-8600. Requests to the Publisher for permission should be addressed to the Permissions Department, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 111 River Street, Hoboken, NJ 07030, (201) 748-6011, fax (201) 748-6008, or online at <http://www.wiley.com/go/permissions>.

**Trademarks:** Wiley, the Wiley Publishing logo, For Dummies, the Dummies Man logo, A Reference for the Rest of Us!, The Dummies Way, Dummies Daily, The Fun and Easy Way, Dummies.com, Making Everything Easier, and related trade dress are trademarks or registered trademarks of John Wiley & Sons, Inc. and/or its affiliates in the United States and other countries, and may not be used without written permission. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. Wiley Publishing, Inc., is not associated with any product or vendor mentioned in this book.

**LIMIT OF LIABILITY/DISCLAIMER OF WARRANTY:** THE PUBLISHER AND THE AUTHOR MAKE NO REPRESENTATIONS OR WARRANTIES WITH RESPECT TO THE ACCURACY OR COMPLETENESS OF THE CONTENTS OF THIS WORK AND SPECIFICALLY DISCLAIM ALL WARRANTIES, INCLUDING WITHOUT LIMITATION WARRANTIES OF FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE. NO WARRANTY MAY BE CREATED OR EXTENDED BY SALES OR PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS. THE ADVICE AND STRATEGIES CONTAINED HEREIN MAY NOT BE SUITABLE FOR EVERY SITUATION. THIS WORK IS SOLD WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT THE PUBLISHER IS NOT ENGAGED IN RENDERING LEGAL, ACCOUNTING, OR OTHER PROFESSIONAL SERVICES. IF PROFESSIONAL ASSISTANCE IS REQUIRED, THE SERVICES OF A COMPETENT PROFESSIONAL PERSON SHOULD BE SOUGHT. NEITHER THE PUBLISHER NOR THE AUTHOR SHALL BE LIABLE FOR DAMAGES ARISING HEREFROM. THE FACT THAT AN ORGANIZATION OR WEBSITE IS REFERRED TO IN THIS WORK AS A CITATION AND/OR A POTENTIAL SOURCE OF FURTHER INFORMATION DOES NOT MEAN THAT THE AUTHOR OR THE PUBLISHER ENDORSES THE INFORMATION THE ORGANIZATION OR WEBSITE MAY PROVIDE OR RECOMMENDATIONS IT MAY MAKE. FURTHER, READERS SHOULD BE AWARE THAT INTERNET WEBSITES LISTED IN THIS WORK MAY HAVE CHANGED OR DISAPPEARED BETWEEN WHEN THIS WORK WAS WRITTEN AND WHEN IT IS READ.

For general information on our other products and services, please contact our Customer Care Department within the U.S. at 877-762-2974, outside the U.S. at 317-572-3993, or fax 317-572-4002.

For technical support, please visit [www.wiley.com/techsupport](http://www.wiley.com/techsupport).

Wiley also publishes its books in a variety of electronic formats. Some content that appears in print may not be available in electronic books.

Library of Congress Control Number: 2010941210

ISBN: 978-0-470-91763-3

Manufactured in the United States of America

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1



WILEY

## Dedication

This book is for the lovely and talented Roxanne, also known as “Nature Girl.” Thank you for coming into my life. I love you, Sweetheart.

## About the Author

**Doug Sahlin** is an author and photographer living in Venice, Florida. He is a professional photographer specializing in fine art photography. He also photographs weddings and events and writes books about computer applications like Adobe Acrobat and Adobe Photoshop. Doug’s latest books have been about digital photography. In the past years he’s written *Digital Photography Workbook For Dummies*, *Digital Portrait Photography For Dummies*, and *Canon EOS 7D For Dummies*. To find out more about Doug and see some of his work, visit [www.dasdesigns.net](http://www.dasdesigns.net).

## Author’s Acknowledgments

Photography is my passion, and I love to share information with other photographers. That’s why I was so excited when Steve Hayes discussed the concept of this book with me. Thank you, Steve, for bringing this book to fruition. Many thanks to Nicole Sholly for doing a stellar job of coordinating everything with the editorial team at Wiley and for keeping me on my toes. Kudos to Mike Sullivan for making sure all the technical aspects of this book were correct. Thanks to literary agent extraordinaire Margot Hutchison for her part in this project.

Thanks to my friends and fellow authors for their support and inspiration. Hats off to my family for their continued support, especially Karen and Ted. Thanks to the furry kids, Niki and Micah, for being a constant source of amusement. And thanks to the lovely Roxanne for coming into my life and sharing my passion.

## **Publisher's Acknowledgments**

We're proud of this book; please send us your comments at <http://dummies.custhelp.com>. For other comments, please contact our Customer Care Department within the U.S. at 877-762-2974, outside the U.S. at 317-572-3993, or fax 317-572-4002.

Some of the people who helped bring this book to market include the following:

### ***Acquisitions and Editorial***

**Project Editor:** Nicole Sholly

**Executive Editor:** Steven Hayes

**Copy Editors:** Laura K. Miller and  
Virginia Sanders

**Technical Editor:** Michael Sullivan

**Editorial Manager:** Kevin Kirschner

**Editorial Assistant:** Amanda Graham

**Sr. Editorial Assistant:** Cherie Case

**Cartoons:** Rich Tennant ([www.the5thwave.com](http://www.the5thwave.com))

### ***Composition Services***

**Project Coordinator:** Katie Crocker

**Layout and Graphics:** Ana Carrillo, Erin Zeltner

**Proofreaders:** Lindsay Littrell,  
Mildred Rosenzweig

**Indexer:** Potomac Indexing, LLC

---

## **Publishing and Editorial for Technology Dummies**

**Richard Swadley**, Vice President and Executive Group Publisher

**Andy Cummings**, Vice President and Publisher

**Mary Bednarek**, Executive Acquisitions Director

**Mary C. Corder**, Editorial Director

## **Publishing for Consumer Dummies**

**Diane Graves Steele**, Vice President and Publisher

## **Composition Services**

**Debbie Stailey**, Director of Composition Services

# Table of Contents

---

<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
About Digital SLR Settings & Shortcuts For Dummies .....	1
Foolish Assumptions .....	2
Conventions Used in This Book .....	2
What You Don't Have to Read .....	2
What I Encourage You to Read .....	2
How This Book Is Organized .....	3
Part I: Action .....	3
Part II: Animals .....	3
Part III: Landscapes and Nature .....	3
Part IV: People .....	4
Part V: Places .....	4
Part VI: Things .....	4
The Appendix: Beyond Point and Shoot Photography .....	4
Icons Used in This Book .....	4
Where to Go from Here .....	5
 <b>Part I: Action .....</b>	 <b>7</b>
<b>Chapter 1: Children Playing Sports .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Chapter 2: Runners .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Chapter 3: Bikers .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Chapter 4: Sporting Events .....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Chapter 5: Race Car (Stop-Action) .....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Chapter 6: Race Car (Motion Blur) .....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Chapter 7: Horse Racing .....</b>	<b>29</b>
 <b>Part II: Animals .....</b>	 <b>33</b>
<b>Chapter 8: Wading Birds .....</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>Chapter 9: Birds in Flight .....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>Chapter 10: Birds of Prey .....</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>Chapter 11: Small Birds .....</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>Chapter 12: Pet Birds .....</b>	<b>48</b>

Chapter 13: Cats Playing .....	51
Chapter 14: Cat Portrait .....	54
Chapter 15: Dogs Playing .....	57
Chapter 16: Dog Portrait .....	60
Chapter 17: Animals at a Zoo .....	64
Chapter 18: Animals in the Wild .....	67
Chapter 19: Dangerous Animals in the Wild .....	70
Chapter 20: Fish in a Public Aquarium .....	74

## ***Part III: Landscapes and Nature..... 77***

Chapter 21: Desert .....	79
Chapter 22: Forest.....	82
Chapter 23: Landscapes .....	86
Chapter 24: Landscape Panorama.....	91
Chapter 25: Mountains.....	95
Chapter 26: Swamps .....	99
Chapter 27: Sunrise .....	102
Chapter 28: Beach at Sunset .....	106
Chapter 29: Ocean Waves.....	110
Chapter 30: Lakes .....	113
Chapter 31: Rivers.....	116
Chapter 32: Streams .....	119
Chapter 33: Still Water (Reflections) .....	123
Chapter 34: Waterfall.....	127
Chapter 35: Landscapes in Stormy Weather .....	131
Chapter 36: Flower Close-Up .....	135
Chapter 37: Insect and Other Creepy-Crawly Close-Ups .....	138
Chapter 38: Lightning .....	142
Chapter 39: Nature Details .....	145
Chapter 40: Rain .....	148



Chapter 41: Rainbows .....	151
Chapter 42: Snow .....	154
Chapter 43: Starry Skies .....	158
Chapter 44: Star Trails .....	161
Chapter 45: Nature in Foggy Weather.....	165

***Part IV: People..... 169***

Chapter 46: Children Playing .....	171
Chapter 47: Artist Creating .....	174
Chapter 48: Adults Playing Sports.....	177
Chapter 49: Candid Portrait.....	180
Chapter 50: People of Other Cultures .....	183
Chapter 51: Child's Birthday Party.....	187
Chapter 52: Family Gathering.....	190
Chapter 53: Graduation .....	193
Chapter 54: Parades .....	197
Chapter 55: Wedding (Journalistic) .....	200
Chapter 56: Wedding (Traditional) .....	204
Chapter 57: Wedding Formals .....	207
Chapter 58: Wedding Reception .....	211
Chapter 59: Backlit Portrait .....	215
Chapter 60: Self-Portrait .....	218
Chapter 61: Beach Portrait .....	222
Chapter 62: Double Exposure .....	225
Chapter 63: Candlelight Portrait .....	228
Chapter 64: A Happy Couple.....	231
Chapter 65: Formal Portrait.....	235
Chapter 66: Portrait of a Person at Work .....	238
Chapter 67: Extreme Close-Up Portrait.....	241
Chapter 68: Head-and-Shoulders Portrait .....	244

Chapter 69: Group Portrait .....	247
Chapter 70: Lifestyle Portrait .....	251
Chapter 71: Outdoor Portrait .....	254
Chapter 72: Newborn Baby Portrait .....	258
Chapter 73: Portrait by Window Light .....	261
Chapter 74: Portrait of Mature Person .....	265
Chapter 75: Musicians .....	268
Chapter 76: Silhouette Portrait .....	272
Chapter 77: Man and His Best Friend .....	275
Chapter 78: High Key Portrait .....	278
Chapter 79: Low Key Portrait .....	281
 <i>Part V: Places .....</i>	 <b>285</b>
Chapter 80: Churches .....	287
Chapter 81: City Skyline .....	291
Chapter 82: City at Dusk .....	294
Chapter 83: City Streets at Night .....	297
Chapter 84: City in Wet Weather .....	300
Chapter 85: Street Life .....	304
Chapter 86: Amusement Park .....	308
Chapter 87: Marinas .....	311
Chapter 88: Famous Places .....	314
Chapter 89: Historical Landmarks .....	318
 <i>Part VI: Things .....</i>	 <b>323</b>
Chapter 90: Buildings .....	325
Chapter 91: Architectural Details .....	329
Chapter 92: Famous Buildings .....	332
Chapter 93: Lighthouses .....	335

<b>Chapter 94: Cars and Motorcycles</b> .....	<b>339</b>
<b>Chapter 95: Boats</b> .....	<b>343</b>
<b>Chapter 96: Ferris Wheels</b> .....	<b>346</b>
<b>Chapter 97: Fireworks</b> .....	<b>350</b>
<b>Chapter 98: Still Life</b> .....	<b>353</b>
<b>Chapter 99: Flower Arrangement</b> .....	<b>356</b>
<b>Chapter 100: HDR Photography</b> .....	<b>359</b>

## *Appendix: Beyond Point and Shoot Photography* ..... **362**

Mastering Your Camera Controls .....	362
Getting to know your camera .....	364
Previewing images .....	365
Understanding How a Picture Is Made .....	365
Understanding how exposure works in the camera .....	365
Controlling depth of field .....	366
Understanding shooting modes .....	367
Understanding focal lengths .....	368
Using the Histogram .....	370
Understanding ISO .....	371
Using Fill Flash .....	372
Composing Your Images .....	372
Visualizing Your Photograph .....	374
Establishing a Post Shoot Ritual .....	374
Camera Accessories .....	375
Choosing a camera bag .....	376
Using filters .....	376
Steadying the camera with a tripod .....	377
Choosing other accessories .....	379
Working with RAW Files .....	380

## *Index* ..... **381**



## Digital SLR Settings & Shortcuts For Dummies

---

# Introduction

---

Many people graduate to a digital SLR and think it's the ticket for creating great photos. Well it is, but there's a bit of technique involved. Part of that is your creativity and the way you see the world around you. You translate the vision that is in your head into an image when you capture it with your digital SLR.

To fully master your digital SLR and create compelling photos, you have to venture forth into a brave new world that involves making decisions about settings that will enable you to capture the images you see in your mind's eye. This does not happen when you shoot in your camera's Automatic mode. When photographers have the urge to branch out, they turn to the manual for help. And then they get more confused. Which is where this book comes in. My goal in writing this book was to demystify taking photographs with a digital SLR.

## *About Digital SLR Settings & Shortcuts For Dummies*

If you need to know how to photograph your children playing sports, there's a chapter for that. If you want to know how to photograph a racecar traveling 200 miles per hour, there's a chapter for that as well. In fact there are 100 chapters that show you which settings to use to take specific images.

Some of the things you can do with this book include learning to

- ✓ Determine which shooting mode to use for each picture-taking scenario.
- ✓ Photograph marathoners running, bicyclists racing, and horses galloping.
- ✓ Photograph artists at work, waterfalls, and pet birds.
- ✓ Photograph a newborn baby, animals in the wild, and city skylines.
- ✓ Overcome the challenges and pitfalls inherent to certain picture-taking scenarios. (I include a "Troubleshooting" section at the end of each chapter to help you overcome these challenges.)
- ✓ Master depth of field to control what's in focus.
- ✓ Make the histogram work for you.
- ✓ Calculate the 35mm equivalent of a focal length.

In addition, you'll learn many tips and tricks from a professional photographer who's been there, done that.

## *Foolish Assumptions*

There are certain prerequisites for using this book effectively. First and foremost, you must have a digital SLR with at least one lens. Second you must have the desire to break free from the point and shoot mentality and stop using the automatic and scene modes. You must also have the desire to be a better photographer. Your digital SLR is a wonderful tool for expressing to others how you see the world. But it takes some thought and creativity to create a picture that makes people give it more than just a casual glance. If you have the desire to break free from the mode of point and shoot photography, read on.

## *Conventions Used in This Book*

To help you navigate this book efficiently, I use a few style conventions:

- ✓ Terms that I want to emphasize are *italicized* (and defined).
- ✓ Web site URLs are shown in a special monofont typeface, like `this`.
- ✓ Numbered steps that you need to follow are set in **bold**.

## *What You Don't Have to Read*

This book is designed to show you how to master specific picture taking scenarios. You don't have to read every chapter in this book, only the ones that pertain to the pictures you want to take. If you really want to cut to the chase, you don't have to read the introductory paragraph in each chapter.

## *What I Encourage You to Read*

I do suggest that you read the "Setting the Camera" section of each chapter. This section shows you the logic behind the settings I suggest you use to take each type of picture. I also suggest that you read the steps in the "Taking the Picture" section as they contain important information and tidbits related to taking the photo. So if you're in a real hurry to learn how to take a picture of your wife twirling a baton while cooking tacos — kidding — or any picture scenario in this book, all you need to do is open the book to the chapter, dial the

Camera Settings into your camera, read through the steps, and take the picture. And please take lots of pictures. That's how you'll master the settings and steps and make them your own.

I also strongly suggest that you read the appendix: "Beyond Point and Shoot Photography." This appendix contains a lot of information about digital photography, including some very important information about the sensor in your camera model, and the difference it can have on the way a lens sees the scene in front of you. All digital camera sensors are not created equal.

If you don't have time to read the entire appendix, please read "Understanding focal lengths." This section takes about five minutes to read and demystifies what different focal lengths will do and how these focal lengths react on cameras with different size sensors.

## *How This Book Is Organized*

*Digital SLR Settings & Shortcuts For Dummies* is split into six parts. You don't have to read it sequentially, and you don't even have to read all the chapters in any particular part. You can use the Table of Contents and the index to find the information you need and quickly get your answer. In this section, I briefly describe what you'll find in each part.

### *Part I: Action*

This part of the book shows you how to photograph action. If you've wanted to photograph a marathon runner, a bike racer, or freeze a racecar dead in its tracks, you'll find out how to take those kinds of pictures in this part. You'll learn some creative techniques for portraying motion artistically as well.

### *Part II: Animals*

If you want to create a portrait of your cat, take a picture of your dog catching a Frisbee, or photograph birds, I show you how to take these kinds of pictures and more in this part of the book. I also show you which settings and techniques to use to photograph animals in the wild, dangerous animal, and birds of prey.

### *Part III: Landscapes and Nature*

If you live near a beautiful state park, or are going on vacation to a place like Yosemite, this is the section where I show you the settings you use to capture great pictures of the landscapes and nature you find there. In this section, I show you the settings to use to take pictures of waterfalls, sunsets, mountain ranges, rainbows, flowers, and much more.

## *Part IV: People*

Whether you want to create a great portrait of your wife, or capture a candid shot of your child being himself, this is the part of the book where I show you how to take these types of pictures. You'll also find settings you use to photograph weddings, people at work, and so on.

## *Part V: Places*

There are interesting things in the places you visit and the place where you live. In this part, I show you how to photograph these things. So if you have a beautiful church, historic buildings, or memorable skyline you want to photograph, check out the chapters in this part.

## *Part VI: Things*

If you've had your share of photographing people and places, you may be interested in photographing things like buildings, lighthouses, cars, motorcycles, and so on. If so, the chapters in this section are right up your alley.

## *The Appendix: Beyond Point and Shoot Photography*

The appendix introduces you to the wonderful world of digital SLR photography. It demystifies technical photography terms in non-technical lingo. It introduces you to the different shooting modes you'll use and discusses other items such as lens focal lengths, how an image is exposed, and much more.



Read this appendix before you read any other part of the book, and you'll have a huge heads up on the information I discuss in each chapter.

## *Icons Used in This Book*

What's a Dummies book without icons pointing you in the direction of really great information that's sure to help you along your way? In this section, I briefly describe each icon I use in this book.





The Tip icon points out helpful information that is likely to make your job as a photographer easier.



This is like a virtual piece of string. When you see this icon, it contains a fact that you should remember to help you perform the task at hand more efficiently.



This icon notes a pitfall that your friendly author has discovered so that you won't make the same wrong move.



When you see this icon, you'll find an interesting technique to try that's associated with the photograph I show you how to create.

## *Where to Go from Here*

Now that you've read the Introduction, you have a good idea of what's in this book. To learn the settings and steps involved in taking a specific photograph, jump to the Table of Contents or index. Find the chapter for the type of photograph you want to take, read that chapter, and take some photographs.



Refer to this book whenever you need settings to take a specific type of photo. But first I recommend you read the appendix, "Beyond Point and Shoot Photography." After you do, the individual chapters will be much easier to digest.

Use your camera often, take lots of pictures, and have a great time taking pictures of the people, places, and things that matter to you.



# Part I

# Action

## The 5th Wave

By Rich Tennant



**I**f you like action such as a marathon runner racing toward the finish line, a horse and rider negotiating a steeplechase obstacle, or a race car gobbling up asphalt at top speed, but don't know how to capture the beauty of motion and speed with your digital camera, the chapters in this part will get you going in the right direction. In this part, I show you the settings to use to freeze action and to artistically depict the beauty of athletes and machinery in motion.



# 1 Children Playing Sports



Corbis Digital Stock

## Camera Settings

- ✓ **Metering Mode:** Evaluative
- ✓ **Drive Mode:** Single Shot or Continuous
- ✓ **Shooting Mode:** Shutter Priority
- ✓ **Shutter Speed:** 1/250 of a second
- ✓ **ISO Setting:** The lowest ISO setting for available light conditions
- ✓ **Focus Mode:** Continuous Auto-Focus
- ✓ **Auto-Focus Point:** Single auto-focus point
- ✓ **Focal Length:** 100mm or longer (35mm equivalent; see “Understanding focal lengths” in the appendix)
- ✓ **Image Stabilization:** On



If you're a soccer mom, you probably drive your kids to and from each soccer practice and match. Did you ever think of taking pictures of your children while they play? The resulting pictures can provide many wonderful memories in years to come. You just need to bring your camera to every practice and match. Your camera gear, your wonderful athlete, and the settings in this chapter provide the recipe for some wonderful images.

## Setting the Camera

You may find creating great pictures of your children playing sports very rewarding. You can be the proud dad who shows all your coworkers what a great athlete and kid you're raising. You can use a Single Shot Drive mode for this type of photography or Continuous Drive mode to capture a series of images of your child scoring a goal. To stop action, shoot in Shutter Priority mode. The suggested shutter speed freezes the action. The focal length gets an up-close-and-personal image without requiring that you get up close and personal when taking it.

## Taking the Picture

You have to be quick when you're photographing children playing sports. Unless you're really fit, they can give you a run for your money — especially if you're photographing football practice while your son is racing down the field toward the goal line.

1. **Enable the camera settings discussed earlier in this chapter.**
2. **Patiently wait until the kids begin playing.**
3. **When your child is ready to score a goal or do something exciting, zoom in on her, and then press the shutter button halfway to achieve focus.**

When you photograph with Continuous Auto-Focus mode enabled, the camera updates focus when your child moves, as long as you keep your finger pressed halfway on the shutter button. You may have difficulty composing an image when your child is in the heat of battle, but do your best. If your child is at a practice session, ask the coach whether you can get near the sidelines and photograph your child dribbling the soccer ball (see Figure 1-1).



PureStock

**Figure 1-1:** Photograph your athlete from a unique vantage point.

#### 4. Press the shutter button fully to take the picture.

If you photograph by using Continuous Drive mode, the camera continues taking pictures as long as you continue to hold your finger on the shutter button. The camera stops taking pictures when you release the shutter button.



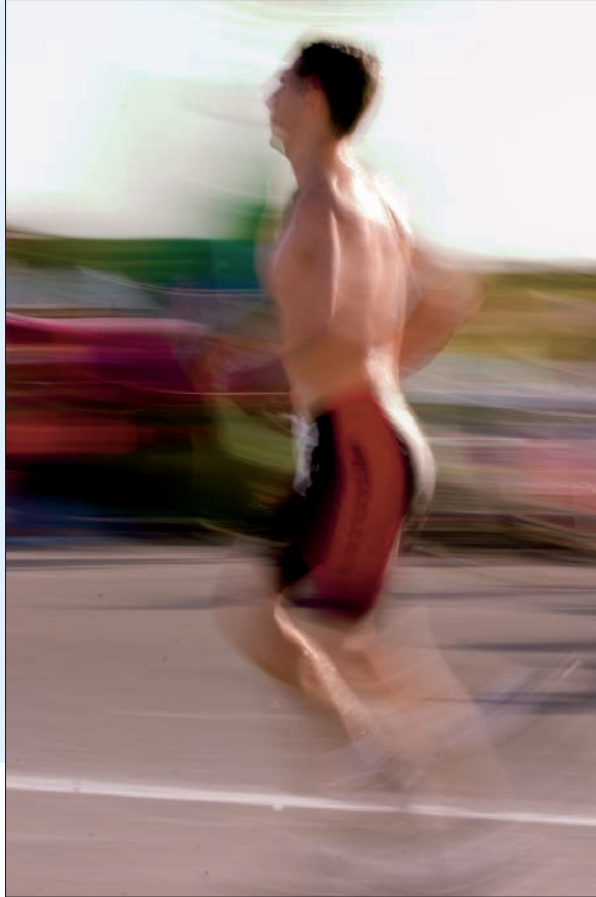
Tag along when your husband teaches your son how to bowl or play pool and then find an interesting vantage point. If your son is learning how to play pool, take a shot from overhead as your husband positions your son's hand over the pool cue. If your son is learning how to bowl, walk down the lane (when it is almost empty), and photograph your husband showing your son how to hold the ball. Just make sure your son doesn't send the ball down the alley while you're still there.

## Troubleshooting

- ✓ **My child is not in focus.** Make sure the auto-focus point is your son when you press the shutter button halfway, and make sure the auto-focus point illuminates to signify that the camera has focused on your child.
- ✓ **The depth of field is too shallow.** You may have this problem when you photograph a sporting event in low-light conditions. To compensate for the low light, the camera chooses a larger aperture, which results in a shallow depth of field. In some instances, such as when you're photographing action (for example, your child running for a touchdown), you want to use a shallow depth of field. When you're photographing several children in action, you need a larger depth of field. To increase the depth of field, increase the ISO rating.



# 2 Runners



**A**thletes in motion personify beauty, grace under pressure, and power. If you've ever watched any type of a track and field event, or a marathon, you know that running isn't for wimps. You also know that capturing an artistic image of a runner involves more than just freezing the action of the runner.

When you photograph a solitary runner, you want to capture the beauty of the runner's fluid motion, which you can do by using the settings in this chapter.

## Camera Settings



- ✓ **Metering Mode:** Evaluative
- ✓ **Drive Mode:** Single Shot
- ✓ **Shooting Mode:** Shutter Priority
- ✓ **Shutter Speed:** 1/15 of a second
- ✓ **ISO Setting:** 100
- ✓ **Focus Mode:** Continuous Auto-Focus
- ✓ **Auto-Focus Point:** Single auto-focus point
- ✓ **Focal Length:** Varies (see "Understanding focal lengths" in the appendix)
- ✓ **Image Stabilization:** On



## Setting the Camera

For this type of photography, you shoot in Shutter Priority mode with a slow shutter speed. The low ISO setting gives you a noise-free image — as well as a small aperture, but depth of field is really not important with this type of photography. You're rendering an abstract image that shows the beauty of an athlete in motion. The runner's torso and head are recognizable, but his legs and arms are an artistic blur of motion. You use continuous auto-focus so that the camera updates focus continuously while you pan the camera with the runner. Your proximity to the runner determines your focal length. Image stabilization can help you correct for any up-and-down movement while you pan the camera with the runner.

## Taking the Picture

When you photograph an athletic event, such as a track meet or a marathon, your vantage point is extremely important. If you photograph a track meet from the sideline, you need an unobstructed view of the runners. Photographing runners at a marathon also requires an unobstructed view, but you face different challenges at a marathon. You have to contend with city streets, buildings, and a lot of spectators. In either case, you need to arrive early to get a good spot from which to view and photograph the event. If you're photographing a marathon, you can move around a bit, first photographing all runners when they leave the starting line, and then positioning yourself where you can more easily photograph individual runners during the race.

1. **Choose a vantage point where the runners will be passing an innocuous background, such as a group of trees.**  
If you don't, the background may detract from the image.
2. **Enable the camera settings discussed earlier in this chapter.**
3. **When a runner you want to photograph comes into view, frame her in the viewfinder, zoom in, and compose the picture.**

Leave some room in front of the runner to give the viewer the impression that the runner is going somewhere.



If you're photographing a marathon, capture a close-up picture of the runner's head and shoulders by using the settings in Chapter 68 when the runner nears the finish line. The runner's face will be etched in pain, and his hair will be matted with sweat, even on a cold day. You'll end up with a great shot that shows the pain and agony the runner goes through to complete a marathon.

4. Press the shutter button half-way to achieve focus.
5. Pivot smoothly from the waist to pan the camera with the runner.
6. Press the shutter button fully to take the picture and follow through.

## TRY THIS



Create a story surrounding the event. Photograph the group when they leave the starting line, and then take several shots of your favorite runners by using the technique and settings in this chapter. Make sure you get a stop-action photo of your favorite runner crossing the finish line with her finishing time as part of the picture (see Figure 2-1). This of course requires a faster shutter speed to freeze the action of the runners as they cross the line. Use a shutter speed of 1/250 of a second or faster.



**Figure 2-1:** Tell the story of the event.

## Troubleshooting

- ✓ **The runner's head appears to be bobbing up and down.** You don't hold the camera perfectly level while you pan. If you move the camera up or down while panning, the runner appears to be bouncing up and down. Image stabilization can also cure this problem if your camera or lens has this feature.
- ✓ **The runner is tilted.** You tilt your body while panning. Make sure you're perfectly upright while you pan with the runner.

# 3

## Bikers



### Camera Settings

- ✓ **Metering Mode:** Evaluative
- ✓ **Drive Mode:** Single Shot
- ✓ **Shooting Mode:** Shutter Priority
- ✓ **Shutter Speed:** 1/15 to 1/30 of a second
- ✓ **ISO Setting:** 100
- ✓ **Focus Mode:** Continuous Auto-Focus
- ✓ **Auto-Focus Point:** Single auto-focus point
- ✓ **Focal Length:** Varies (see “Understanding focal lengths” in the appendix)
- ✓ **Image Stabilization:** On



**I**f you enjoy events such as the Tour de France and have bike races or triathlons in your area, you can capture the thrills of a bike race digitally with your camera. Professional bike riders can attain tremendous speeds on their ultra-lite bikes. You can use the same techniques the pros use to capture compelling photos of bike racers, whatever the bikers' speed. When a biker is traveling perpendicular to you, pan the camera with the subject to capture the essence of motion. With amateur bikers, you use a fairly slow shutter speed, which creates a dreamy look that makes the rider look like he's going much faster than he is. You use the same technique with professional bike riders — albeit with a faster shutter speed.

## Setting the Camera

For this type of photography, you shoot in Shutter Priority mode with a slow shutter speed, which gives you a slightly blurry picture that captures the essence of speed. The low ISO setting gives you a noise-free image, as well as a small aperture, but depth of field is really not important with this type of photography. The bike will be readily identifiable, but the wheels will be blurred and the detail will be soft because of the slow shutter speed. You use continuous auto-focus so that the camera updates focus continuously while you pan the camera. Image stabilization is helpful to correct for any up-and-down movement of the camera while you pan the camera to track the biker.



If you're photographing fast bike riders, use a shutter speed of 1/30 of a second. You'll still have a nice blurry background, but the bike rider will be in relatively sharp focus.

## Taking the Picture

When you photograph an athletic event, your vantage point is extremely important. You need an unobstructed view of your subject. If you're photographing a triathlon, the bikers won't leave in a group, but you can get shots of them while they change from their swimming gear to biking gear. Then it's a matter of following these steps to get a great picture:

1. **Choose a vantage point where the bikers pass a non-descript background, such as a solid colored wall or dense shrubbery.**

A busy background distracts the viewer's attention from your subject.

2. **Enable the camera settings discussed earlier in this chapter.**

If you choose a focal length longer than 80mm, increase the shutter speed to 1/50 of a second.

3. **When a biker you want to photograph comes into view, frame her in the viewfinder, zoom in, and then compose the picture.**

Leave some room in front of the biker so that your picture gives the viewer the impression that the rider is going somewhere.

4. **Press the shutter button halfway to achieve focus.**

5. **Pivot smoothly from the waist to pan the camera with your subject.**

6. **Press the shutter button fully to take the picture and follow through.**



Every event — such as a triathlon that includes swimming, bicycling, and running portions — has a beginning, middle, and end. To document a whole triathlon, first photograph the athletes going through their pre-race rituals such as stretching and limbering up. Then photograph the start of the triathlon, when

the group races from the start line and splashes into the water to begin the swimming portion of the event. Next take pictures of the bikes queued up for the riders (see Figure 3-1). Photograph the athletes as they don their biking gear and race off into the distance. Then photograph the transition when the athletes begin the running portion of the event. Finally, photograph the athletes as they race to the finish line, and then photograph them recuperating.



**Figure 3-1:** Tell the story of the event.

## Troubleshooting

- ✓ **The biker is not in focus.** This problem happens when the camera doesn't achieve focus on your subject, and unfortunately, it's inevitable when you do a lot of panning. When your subject comes into view, make sure the auto-focus point is over your subject and that the point is illuminated, which indicates that the camera has focused on the right subject.
- ✓ **The picture isn't level.** Make sure the camera is level with the ground before you take the picture, and keep your body upright while you pan. If you tilt your body while panning, the camera is not level, hence the picture is not level.
- ✓ **The resulting image doesn't seem as sharp as it could be.** Make sure you follow through. If you stop panning when you press the shutter button, the image won't be really sharp because your subject is still moving and the camera isn't.



# 4 Sporting Events



Photography is a wonderful pastime. You can use your camera to capture memories of the things that interest you. If you're a sports fan, you can photograph your favorite sport. You can photograph individual athletes (see Chapter 48), but sports have more to them than just the athletes. Whether your favorite sport is football or auto racing, each one has its own rituals. And every sport includes a supporting cast. When you photograph a sporting event, you photograph each chapter of the event, from the pre-games festivities, to the opening kick off, to the winning touchdown. Your creative mind, a knowledge of the sport, and the settings in this chapter give you all the tools you need to tell a story. You begin at the beginning, before the athletes flex their muscles or the drivers start their engines.

## Camera Settings



- ✓ **Metering Mode:** Evaluative
- ✓ **Drive Mode:** Single Shot or Continuous
- ✓ **Shooting Mode:** Shutter Priority or Aperture Priority
- ✓ **Shutter Speed:** 1/250 of a second or faster
- ✓ **Aperture:** Varies
- ✓ **ISO Setting:** The lowest possible ISO setting for the lighting conditions
- ✓ **Focus Mode:** Continuous Auto-Focus
- ✓ **Auto-Focus Point:** Single auto-focus point
- ✓ **Focal Length:** Varies (see "Understanding focal lengths" in the appendix)
- ✓ **Image Stabilization:** On