Overview

This assignment teaches how to effectively control depth of field through the manipulation of aperture settings while using aperture priority mode. Students will learn to isolate subjects and create desired backgrounds by understanding the relationship between aperture, subject distance, and focal length.

Learning Objectives

- Understand the concept of depth of field and how it influences composition.
- Gain proficiency in using aperture priority mode to control depth of field.
- Experiment with different apertures to achieve various visual effects in photography.

Related Reading

Before you start, read these related blog posts to deepen your understanding:

What Is Depth Of Field	What Is Aperture In Photography	

Before You Shoot

- Familiarize yourself with your camera's aperture priority mode settings.
- Set your camera to a fixed ISO of 200 for consistent exposure.
- Select a variety of subjects that allow for depth of field experimentation (e.g., portraits, landscapes, close-ups).
- Ensure your lenses are clean and free from obstructions.
- Bring a tripod to stabilize your shots, especially at lower apertures.

Assignment Tasks

1. Use aperture priority mode at f/2.8 with ISO 200 fixed, letting the camera set shutter speed, and photograph a portrait focusing on the subject's eyes while blurring the background.
2. Set your camera to aperture priority mode at f/11 with ISO 200 fixed, letting the camera adjust the shutter speed, and take a landscape shot that captures both foreground and background details sharply.
3. Experiment with focal lengths by shooting the same subject at 24mm, 50mm, and 85mm, using aperture priority mode at f/4, and observe how depth of field changes with each focal length.
4. Take a series of photos of a single flower at f/2.8, f/5.6, and f/8 in aperture priority mode with ISO 200 fixed, allowing the camera to adjust shutter speed, to analyze how the background blur varies.
5. Capture a street scene using aperture priority mode at f/4 with ISO 200 fixed, letting the camera determine the shutter speed, to create a balance between sharpness and subject isolation.
6. Utilize hyperfocal focusing techniques by shooting a landscape scene at f/16 with ISO 200 fixed, allowing the camera to set the shutter speed, ensuring maximum depth of field.

Stretch Tasks

- Experiment with a wide aperture (e.g., f/1.8) to create an ethereal effect in a still life composition, using aperture priority mode with ISO 200 fixed.
- Create a series of photos using different apertures in a busy urban environment, focusing on isolating subjects in motion while managing depth of field.

DO / DON'T

DO

✓ Do experiment with different apertures to see their effects on depth of field.

✓ Do focus on the nearest eye in portraits to create more engaging images.

✓ Do use a tripod when shooting at smaller apertures to avoid camera shake.

✓ Do analyze your images post-shoot to understand how depth of field affects composition.

✓ Do practice changing your distance from subjects to see its impact on depth of field.

DON'T

✗ Don't leave your camera on auto mode if you want to control depth of field effectively.

✗ Don't shoot all your portraits at f/1.8; experiment with various apertures.

✗ Don't forget to check your focus point, especially in shallow depth of field situations.

✗ Don't ignore the background; it can be just as important as your subject when considering depth of field.

✗ Don't rush your shots; take time to compose and consider your depth of field choices.

Reflection Questions

- How did changing the aperture affect the mood and clarity of your images?
- What challenges did you face when trying to control depth of field in your shots?
- In what scenarios do you think a shallow depth of field is most effective?
- How can understanding depth of field enhance storytelling in your photography?

Technical & Creative Focus

Technical:

- Use aperture priority mode to set your desired f-stop for depth of field control.
- Experiment with different focal lengths to see how they affect depth of field.
- Adjust your distance from the subject to observe changes in the depth of field.
- Consider the size of your print/viewing distance when determining depth of field.
- Use a depth of field calculator or app to predict your results before shooting.

Creative:

- Isolate your subject with a shallow depth of field for portraits to create background blur.
- In landscape photography, use a deeper depth of field to keep foreground and background elements sharp.
- Play with foreground elements in your composition to enhance depth perception.
- Experiment with unusual angles or perspectives to challenge traditional depth of field applications.
- Incorporate leading lines to guide the viewer's eye through the depth of field.