



Overview

Understanding focus modes and tracking is essential for capturing sharp, dynamic images, especially in fast-paced environments. This assignment will guide you through practical exercises to master autofocus settings and tracking techniques, enhancing your photography skills.

Learning Objectives

- Identify different autofocus modes and when to use them effectively.
- Apply tracking techniques to maintain focus on moving subjects.
- Adjust camera settings to optimize focus performance in various shooting conditions.

Related Reading

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

What Is Focus In Photography	Autofocus Modes	Tracking Focus
Continuous Focus		

Before You Shoot

- Familiarize yourself with your camera's autofocus settings and modes.
- Select the appropriate lens for your subject matter.
- Clean your lens to avoid any optical distortions.
- Set your camera to shoot in RAW format for better post-processing flexibility.
- Ensure your battery is fully charged and you have enough memory card space.

Assignment Tasks

1. Photograph a moving subject such as a pet or child using AF-C mode, set to a single point focus area, with settings f/4, 1/500s, ISO 400.
2. Capture a sports event using AF-C mode with a zone focus area, settings f/2.8, 1/1000s, ISO 800, ensuring you track the subject's movement.
3. Shoot a portrait with eye detection enabled, using AF-S mode, settings f/1.8, 1/125s, ISO 200, focusing on the subject's eyes.
4. Take photos of wildlife in motion using AF-C mode, with settings f/5.6, 1/640s, ISO 600, and a wide focus area to keep the subject in focus.
5. Create a cinematic effect by capturing a subject walking towards you with a slow shutter speed of 1/60s, settings f/8, ISO 100, while using a single point focus.
6. Photograph a car in motion at a racetrack using AF-C mode, with settings f/4, 1/1000s, ISO 400, panning to keep the car in focus.

Stretch Tasks

- Experiment with back-button focus to improve your focus timing and accuracy while shooting moving subjects.
- Create a series of images that showcase different depth of field effects by varying your aperture settings while tracking the same subject.



DO / DON'T

DO	DON'T
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Do practice switching between AF-S and AF-C modes based on your subject's movement.✓ Do utilize burst mode to capture multiple frames when tracking fast-moving subjects.✓ Do regularly check and adjust your focus area settings to match your composition.✓ Do experiment with different metering modes to see how they affect exposure while tracking.✓ Do take notes on your settings and results to analyze your progress.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✗ Don't rely solely on autofocus; practice manual focus in challenging conditions.✗ Don't use too low of a shutter speed for fast-moving subjects to avoid blur.✗ Don't forget to adjust your settings based on changing light conditions.✗ Don't use focus-recompose techniques at wide apertures as it may result in missed focus.✗ Don't ignore the importance of stabilizing your camera when shooting at longer focal lengths.

Reflection Questions

- How did different autofocus modes affect your ability to capture sharp images?
- What challenges did you face while tracking moving subjects, and how did you overcome them?
- In what situations did you find manual focus to be more effective than autofocus?
- What settings did you find most effective for various lighting conditions while tracking subjects?

Technical & Creative Focus

Technical:

- Use continuous autofocus (AF-C) for tracking moving subjects, set to a single point focus area for precision.
- Adjust the shutter speed to at least 1/500s for fast-moving subjects to prevent motion blur.
- Set your aperture to f/4 to achieve a balance of depth of field and light exposure.
- Utilize a higher ISO (e.g., ISO 800) in low-light conditions to maintain fast shutter speeds.
- Set white balance to 'Auto' for general use, or adjust to 'Cloudy' for warmer tones in outdoor settings.

Creative:

- Experiment with different focus points to highlight specific areas of your subject.
- Use a shallow depth of field (e.g., f/2.8) to isolate your subject from the background.
- Incorporate leading lines into your composition to draw attention to the focused subject.
- Capture motion blur creatively by using a slower shutter speed while panning with your subject.
- Try shooting from unusual angles to create dynamic and engaging compositions.