



Overview

This assignment teaches photographers how to manipulate aperture and depth of field to achieve desired focus effects in their images. By experimenting with different f-numbers and compositions, students will learn to control what appears sharp and what remains blurred, enhancing storytelling through their photographs.

Learning Objectives

- Understand the relationship between aperture settings and depth of field.
- Learn to isolate subjects using shallow depth of field.
- Master techniques for achieving deep depth of field in landscape 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

- Choose a subject that can benefit from either shallow or deep depth of field.
- Select a location with varied backgrounds to test depth of field effects.
- Ensure your camera is set to Aperture Priority mode (A/Av) or Shutter Priority mode (S/Tv).
- Set your ISO to a fixed value of 200.
- Bring a tripod for stable shots when using slower shutter speeds.

Assignment Tasks

1. Use aperture priority mode at f/2.8 with ISO 200 fixed to photograph a portrait, focusing on the subject's eyes while blurring the background.
2. Set your camera to aperture priority mode at f/16 with ISO 200 fixed and capture a landscape scene to achieve sharpness from foreground to background.
3. Experiment with different focal lengths by taking the same portrait at f/2.8 and f/4 while changing your distance from the subject.
4. Use shutter priority mode at 1/500s with ISO 200 fixed to capture a moving subject, allowing the camera to set the aperture for optimal depth of field.
5. Shoot a close-up of a flower using aperture priority mode at f/4 with ISO 200 fixed, ensuring the background is softly blurred.
6. Capture an image of a street scene at f/8 with ISO 200 fixed, allowing the camera to adjust shutter speed for a balanced exposure.

Stretch Tasks

- Create a diptych showcasing the same scene with both shallow and deep depth of field effects, using aperture priority mode for both.
- Challenge yourself to use hyperfocal distance principles in a landscape shot by setting your aperture to f/11 with ISO 200 fixed.



DO / DON'T

DO

- ✓ Do experiment with different aperture settings to see their effects on depth of field.
- ✓ Do focus on the most important element in your composition to ensure it remains sharp.
- ✓ Do use a tripod for landscape shots to avoid camera shake at slower shutter speeds.
- ✓ Do review your images to analyze how different depths of field affect your storytelling.
- ✓ Do practice switching between aperture and shutter priority modes to see how they influence your creative choices.

DON'T

- ✗ Don't use manual mode with all settings specified; focus on priority modes instead.
- ✗ Don't forget to check your background for distractions that may affect your depth of field.
- ✗ Don't assume that shallow depth of field is always better; consider the context of your subject.
- ✗ Don't rush your shots; take time to compose and adjust settings for optimal results.
- ✗ Don't limit yourself to one type of subject; explore various scenes to understand depth of field.

Reflection Questions

- How does manipulating aperture change the story you can tell with your images?
- In what situations do you find shallow depth of field most effective?
- What challenges did you encounter when trying to achieve deep depth of field?
- How does the choice of focal length influence your depth of field outcomes?

Technical & Creative Focus

Technical:

- Use a wide aperture (e.g., f/2.8) to create shallow depth of field for portraits.
- Utilize a narrow aperture (e.g., f/16) for landscapes to achieve maximum sharpness.
- Experiment with different focal lengths to see how they affect depth of field.
- Focus on the nearest eye when capturing portraits to ensure sharpness.
- For landscapes, focus slightly beyond the nearest detail for optimal depth.

Creative:

- Try to tell a story through selective focus by isolating key elements in your composition.
- Incorporate foreground elements to enhance depth when using shallow depth of field.
- Vary your angles and perspectives to see how they influence depth of field.
- Create a series of images with varying depth of field for a cohesive narrative.
- Use depth of field to guide the viewer's eye towards the main subject.