



Overview

Metering modes are essential tools in photography that help determine the correct exposure by measuring the light in a scene. Understanding the differences between Matrix, Centre-weighted, and Spot metering allows photographers to make informed decisions about their camera settings and achieve desired results in various lighting conditions.

Learning Objectives

- Identify the three primary metering modes and their appropriate applications.
- Understand how to adjust exposure compensation based on scene conditions.
- Utilize histograms and highlight warnings to verify exposure accuracy.

Related Reading

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

[What Is Metering In Photography](#)

[Exposure Bracketing A Guide For Photographers](#)

[What Is Dynamic Range In Photography](#)

Before You Shoot

- Familiarize yourself with your camera's metering mode options.
- Assess the lighting conditions of your shooting environment.
- Decide on the primary subject and its contrast relative to the background.
- Check and set your camera's white balance according to the light source.
- Ensure your camera's battery is charged and memory card has sufficient space.

Assignment Tasks

1. Shoot a landscape using Matrix metering at f/8, 1/250s, ISO 100 to capture balanced exposure across the scene.
2. Take a portrait in natural light using Centre-weighted metering at f/2.8, 1/200s, ISO 400 to ensure your subject is well-exposed.
3. Photograph a subject in front of a bright window using Spot metering at f/4, 1/60s, ISO 800 to prevent the background from overpowering the subject.
4. Capture a snowy scene using Matrix metering at f/11, 1/125s, ISO 200 and apply +1.5 EV compensation to maintain brightness.
5. Document a dark alley using Spot metering at f/2, 1/30s, ISO 1600 to highlight the subject while keeping the background dark.
6. Create a high-contrast image of a sunset using Centre-weighted metering at f/5.6, 1/500s, ISO 100, and adjust exposure to avoid blown highlights.

Stretch Tasks

- Challenge yourself to photograph a high-contrast scene using all three metering modes and compare results.
- Create a series of images that demonstrate the effects of exposure compensation in different lighting conditions.



DO / DON'T

DO

- ✓ Do test each metering mode in various lighting conditions to understand their strengths and weaknesses.
- ✓ Do use exposure compensation to fine-tune your exposure based on the scene.
- ✓ Do check your histogram after each shot to ensure proper exposure.
- ✓ Do practice switching between metering modes quickly to adapt to changing scenes.
- ✓ Do take notes on how different metering modes affect your images for future reference.

DON'T

- ✗ Don't rely solely on automatic settings; learn how to use metering modes effectively.
- ✗ Don't forget to adjust exposure compensation when shooting in challenging lighting conditions.
- ✗ Don't ignore the importance of white balance in relation to metering modes.
- ✗ Don't hesitate to experiment with manual settings when metering fails to achieve the desired exposure.
- ✗ Don't overlook the histogram; it's a valuable tool for checking exposure accuracy.

Reflection Questions

- How did different metering modes affect the exposure of your photographs?
- What challenges did you face when using Spot metering in high-contrast situations?
- In what scenarios did you find exposure compensation most beneficial?
- How can understanding metering modes improve your overall photography skills?

Technical & Creative Focus

Technical:

- In Matrix mode, set your camera to f/5.6, 1/250s, ISO 200 to achieve a balanced exposure in standard lighting conditions.
- Use Centre-weighted metering at f/4, 1/125s, ISO 400 for portrait photography where the subject is more important than the background.
- For Spot metering, set your camera to f/2.8, 1/500s, ISO 100 to accurately expose a subject against a bright background.
- In challenging lighting, use Manual mode with f/8, 1/60s, ISO 800 and adjust exposure compensation by +1 EV to avoid underexposure.
- Verify exposure using the histogram after shooting at f/11, 1/1000s, ISO 200 in bright sunlight to ensure no highlights are clipped.

Creative:

- Experiment with different metering modes to see how they affect the mood of your images.
- Use Spot metering creatively to isolate subjects in high-contrast scenes.
- Incorporate exposure compensation to create dramatic effects in backlit situations.
- Adjust your metering mode based on the narrative you want to convey in your photographs.
- Combine different metering modes with varying aperture settings to explore depth of field effects.