

Designed and written by

GEOFF CABLE & GARY CROUCH

The creators and
administrators of
the



Aperture Priority Mode

This information sheet is designed as a supplement to the GC2 Photo Club video on the same subject. It is provided to help reinforce learning and as a reference document for you to keep.

The Lens Aperture controls the quantity of light that is passed through the lens as well the amount of Depth of Field that you get in your Image (the area of the image that is acceptably sharp).



Figure 1

The amount of light going through your lens is measured in F numbers or stops. F stops are a way of standardizing the amount of light passed by different sized lenses. This means that both lenses shown in Figure 1 will pass the same amount of light when set at F8.

The smaller the F number the larger the Aperture is and the more light it will pass. See the photos as I change from F22 to F8 and you will see the Aperture increasing in size, to let more light through. The reason that the F numbers get smaller as the Aperture gets bigger is that F numbers are actually fractions (a 1/2 of anything is bigger than a 1/4 of the same) but they are abbreviated to numbers for simplicity.

Each one full stop increment in F numbers lets in half as much light as the previous F number (changing from F4 to F5.6 means that you are only getting half as much light through) You can see the Aperture getting smaller in Figure 2 as I change from F5.6 to f 11.



Figure 2

By balancing the Camera's Shutter speed and Aperture you can control the Exposure. This can be done in full Manual mode, Aperture Priority or Shutter Speed Priority. Remember, the Aperture controls how much light passes through the lens and the Shutter Speed controls the length of time that the light is allowed through the Lens and onto your film or camera sensor.

The Aperture also controls the amount of Depth of Field that you have in your Photo. That is the area that is considered to be in focus or acceptably sharp.

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The smaller the Aperture set on your Camera (larger F number) the more Depth of Field in your image and, consequently, the larger the Aperture that you have set on your camera (smaller F number) the less Depth of Field in your Image. This means that F16 will give you a larger or wider Depth of Field in your Photo than f4 (more of the scene in focus), as in Figure 3.



Figure 3

You can set your D.S.L.R. to Aperture Priority mode (shown on a Canon and a Nikon in the video, you may need to refer to your camera's manual to see how to do this for your model) and then select your desired F number to control how much of your image is sharp and let your camera set the shutter speed for you to get the correct exposure.



Figure 4

This allows you creative control to make your subject 'pop out' of a blurred background, as with the owl in Figure 4. Also if you want to create a Bokeh effect (that is, little blurred circles or hexagonals that are out of focus) you need to set a very wide aperture.

To sum up, by setting the Aperture on your Camera you can control the amount of Depth of Field in your Image for creative control of the amount of your

Image that you want to be sharp. You can do this on Full Manual mode or in Aperture Priority mode.

By setting the Aperture together with the Camera's shutter speed you can control the amount of light passed by a lens for any given time. This will give you control over the exposure with any given I.S.O.

On Aperture Priority if you set your desired Aperture your Camera will set the shutter speed for you, to give a correct exposure with the currently selected I.S.O.

We hope you found this information sheet useful, visit our web site at www.gc2photoclub.com for more tutorials and information.

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Bye for now.

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