



Before you begin to start shooting your pictures, there are a few things you should know about cameras in general. First, think of the camera as an extension of your eye. It is remarkably similar. The lens has an aperture, which is the same principle as your pupil. As you open the aperture you let more light in, which means you will use a shorter shutter speed. Another thing that happens as you open the aperture is the depth of field (the area in the photograph that has crisp focus) is shortened. This can be a very desirable effect, it places emphasis very naturally on your focal point. This works best on close up shots.

In *figure 21A* you can see the octagonal aperture is reflected through the glass lens. This reflection is what appears in your lens flares if you shoot into a strong light source such as the sun. They will not appear in the view finder but when you shoot the picture they are exposed.

The inner most ring on a conventional lens is what you use to adjust the aperture, this is known as the *f*stop (*figure 21B*). By simply twisting this ring you open and close the aperture. Different size lenses have varying *f*stop settings, but the basic idea is the same (*figure 21C*).

If you are using a digital camera sometimes they have just one aperture setting and it is typically a button that you push. Also, if you are using a digital camera try to use it the manual mode so you have full control of the camera. Practice shooting one image with varying the aperture and exposure times and see what you get, trial and error here will help you get the feel for the exposures.

Check to see if your camera has a “macro” setting, this will allow you to get some very close up shots, like the yellow jacket. Start by using 200 speed film, or set your digital camera to 200 speed. Make changes only to the aperture, then to the shutter speed. By changing only one thing at a time you will learn exactly what that setting did.



figure 21A



figure 21B



figure 21C

Aperture adjustments: This figure demonstrates how the aperture is changed with each *f*stop setting. As the *f*stop increases the aperture gets smaller. This increases your depth of field, but requires a longer exposure. The yellow jacket was shot with the *f*stop wide open and with a macro setting for close ups. Compare that to the staircase and railing shot which had the *f*stop closed all the way and no macro or zoom setting, and as a result everything is in focus



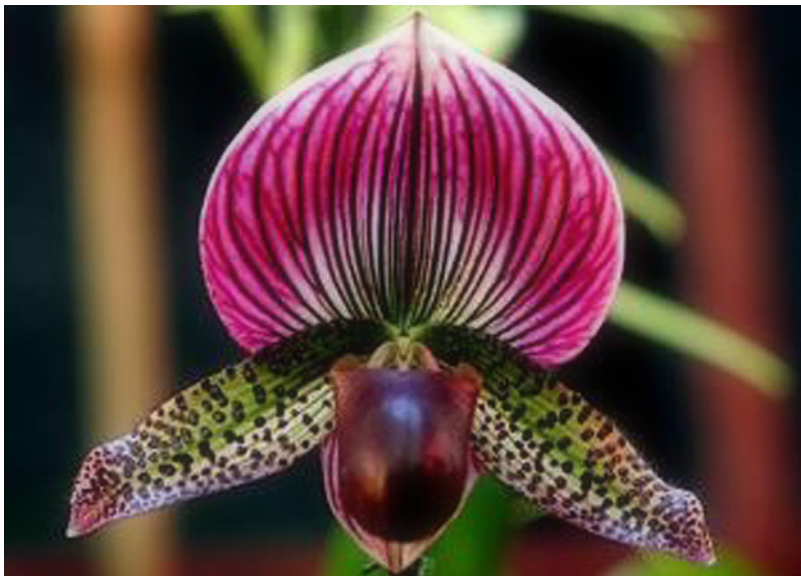
The eye of a designer... *Part Two: Finding the right angle* (continued)

Well, are you getting comfortable with the camera? Great, let's shoot some pictures. A good rule of thumb to start with is to fill the frame with your subject. Get right in there close, pick up some interesting details. Very often a picture is somewhat ordinary because the subject just blends into the rest of the image. Be bold! Move right on in, don't be shy.

When I lived in Stoneham I got a real nice camera for Christmas. One night there was a full moon, I wanted to get some shots. I went up to Spot Pond, right by the zoo, there is a long entrance known as Sheepfold's. Turns out this was the spot for parking, who knew. So I get out with my camera, start shooting like a paparazzi and Bam! the place clears out, too funny.



Getting in close: These photographs will help demonstrate how effective it is to close in on your subject. Notice most of these shots have a short depth of field, meaning the *f*stop was wide open, which really helps emphasize the subject matter. The close up of the rose is the one exception. The photographer wanted to capture all of the fine details and textures of the petals. So in this case closing the *f*stop was the answer. Because the rose completely fills the photograph there is nothing to distract you from the subject. The very soft shadows help this photo a lot. You can almost feel how soft that flower is.





The eye of a designer... *Part Two: Finding the right angle* (continued)

Often times you will be unable to get close to your subject. An effective way of emphasizing on object in the distance is to find something in the foreground that complements it. Sometimes this is referred to as “framing” the subject.

Notice this also adds a lot of depth to the photograph and makes it more interesting. I have included a nice companion photo for the cherry blossoms, yikes don’t get stung...lol. Using different layers in photoshop will allow you to do this also. So, if you end up with a fairly plain shot try adding something to the foreground. Can you pick out the photograph that was shot with the *f*stop wide open? A chain link fence is very effective way to frame a subject. Hey, you gave me that idea. It works awesome!





Okay, it's texture time again. So many times just adding texture to your image will make it more interesting. Water droplets are fun and easy to work with. Very simple to apply and they act like small crystals of reflections. They can take an ordinary weed and give it some pizzazz.

The waterfall to the left is shot with a very slow shutter speed. You will need a tripod to mount the camera on so that you don't get shaking in the photograph. Because the water is moving so fast, only it blurs and creates a beautiful effect. This same principle can be applied at night with car lights. Look back on page 20 with the Zakim bridge shots, this effect was used for the shot at dusk.

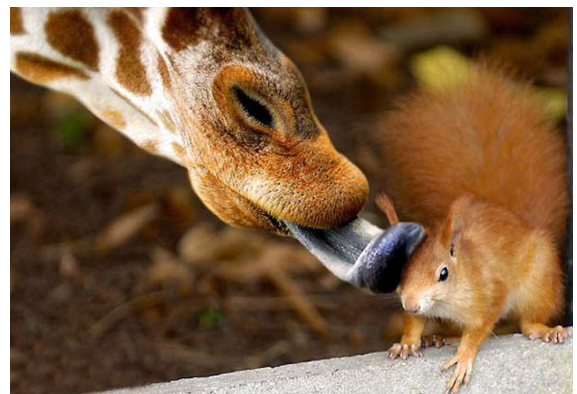
Try slowing the shutter speed way down. Most cameras have what is called a "bulb" setting. When using this setting the shutter will stay open for as long as you hold the button down. Have some fun with that.





Put some preparation into your shoots. Go to the zoo on a misty day, you will get some truly different looking shots, plus there will be a lot less people around to bother the animals.

Have patience...tons. Be willing to study the creature, after a while she will be at ease around you. You will be able to witness some of her natural behaviors that the average person passing by might miss. And if you are really lucky it will be bath day and you will be treated with moments that are priceless.



The eye of a designer... *Part Two: Finding the right angle* (continued)



Once you get very comfortable shooting pictures, try taking some abstract approaches. The close up of the sailing mast is rich with color and texture. There is a nice contrast from the smooth wood and chrome to the course rope. The tranquil boating scene is done in an a-symmetrical fashion, but still has a nice balance to



it. The statue photographs are shot at odd angles that makes them a little more intriguing. And the train tracks, there is always added perspective when you photograph these. The narrow parallel lines can't help but draw your eye in. The nice saturated colors



can be adjusted on the computer. What about the ducklings, way too cute, huh? But if you have your camera ready you might just get an opportunity for a photo like that.

