

The Power of Small Flash Photography



Coastal Photo Club

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What We Will Cover

- ❖ Types of Flash Units
- ❖ Why Use Small Flash
- ❖ Getting Started - Before You Buy
- ❖ Demo the Power of Flash

Types of Flash Units

Small Flash
Shoe-Mount Flash



Large Flash
Studio Strobes



Speciality Flash
Macro Ring Flash



Why Use Small Flash

- ❖ Main source of light
- ❖ Fill light
- ❖ Add some pop to your image
- ❖ Creativity
- ❖ Balance ambient light

Limitations

Power

Flash units have lower power output than larger light sources and will not work well to light subjects very far from the light.

This lower power will also cause some restrictions with the usefulness in lighting large groups of people or being able to use heavy diffusion in low light areas to soften the light.

Before You Buy

Manufacturers

- ❖ OEM - your camera manufacturer
- ❖ Third Party - Godox, Bolt, Polaroid, Sigma, Yongnuo, and more

Considerations when Buying a Flash unit

- ❖ Compatibility with your camera
- ❖ *TTL capability - useful in scenarios where distance between flash and subject changes rapidly
- ❖ Guide number - measurement of how much light the unit can produce
- ❖ Off camera connection capabilities - built in or external cable, optical, radio
- ❖ Exposure Compensation range
- ❖ Manual power setting range
- ❖ Zoom Range
- ❖ Head tilt
- ❖ Head swivel or rotate
- ❖ Recycle time
- ❖ Number of wireless channels or groups (if using built in transmission)
- ❖ High Speed Sync
- ❖ 1st & 2nd Curtain Sync
- ❖ Batteries - battery pack or standard AA

Getting Your Flash Off Camera

- ❖ Need to communicate between Camera and Flash
 - ❖ Cable - limited to length of cable
 - ❖ Optical or Infrared - restricted to line of sight - not always reliable in bright sunlight
 - ❖ Radio transmission - most flexible and useful
- ❖ *TTL or Manual
- ❖ Compatible with your camera and flash

Some Considerations when Buying Wireless Triggers / Receivers

- ❖ Compatibility with your camera and flash units
- ❖ *TTL or Manual Only
- ❖ Device can be a transmitter, receiver, or both
- ❖ Optical, infrared, or radio
- ❖ Number of channels or groups
- ❖ Range (distance from camera)
- ❖ Connectors (cables, hotshoe, etc.)
- ❖ Power source and expected battery life
- ❖ Ability to control light from transmitter unit
- ❖ Ease of operation (buttons, menu driven)
- ❖ Ergonomics

A word about light

To successfully use flash it is very helpful to understand light. Most likely you will be using flash to either supplement, replace, or mimic natural light.

Five Characteristics of Light Every Photographer Should Know

- ❖ **Quantity** - intensity, brightness of the light
- ❖ **Quality** - often referred to as soft or hard. Soft light is non-directional or diffused, results in minimal shadows. Hard light is directional and casts strong shadows and ‘hot spots’
- ❖ **Direction** - will determine location of shadows, if any.
- ❖ **Color Temperature** - often referred to as warm or cool. A photo taken in shade will have a (cool) blueish hue while a photo taken at sunset will have a (warmer) orangish hue.
- ❖ **Inverse-square law** - Light on a subject gets brighter if you move the light closer. The opposite is true if you move the light further away. The inverse-square part of this law is used to calculate how much light is added or subtracted.

Demo

- ❖ Camera in manual mode
- ❖ Flash unit in manual mode
- ❖ Monochrome image output
- ❖ What we do is applicable to any subject
- ❖ We will demonstrate four of the five Characteristics of Light just mentioned:

Quantity - Quality - Direction - Inverse-square law