



PRESENTS

# PHOTOGRAPHY GLOSSARY

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## VOCABULARY

- **AF-L / AE-L** - Auto Exposure-Lock and Auto Focus-Lock and its primary function are to lock camera exposure and/or focus.
- **Angle** - the specific location at which the camera is placed to take a shot. The most common angles in food photography are 90-, 30- & 45-degree angles and overhead shots.
- **Aperture** - the size of the opening in the lens that is measured in f-stops. When the f-stop is f/1.8, then it's wide open and when it's f/22, then it's very narrow. Aperture also affects how much blur and focus you get. The aperture in food photography depends on the image. If you want everything to be in focus, use f/11. When you want to get that blurry background, then the aperture should be between f/1.8 and f/3.
- **Aperture priority (A or Av)** - a camera mode dial that is a setting on some cameras that allows the user to set a specific aperture value (f-number) while the camera selects a shutter speed to match it that will result in proper exposure based on the lighting conditions as measured by the camera's light meter.
- **Back button autofocus** - camera focus system that makes sure the shutter button doesn't control the focus activation at all but instead assigns another button on the back of the camera (hence the name) to activate focusing on the camera. The camera usually focuses when the shutter button is pressed halfway down, and then the photographer takes the picture when the button is pressed in fully.

## VOCABULARY

- **Blur** - Defocus aberration (blurring of an image due to incorrect focus) or motion blur (blurring of an image due to movement of the subject or imaging system).
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- **Clipping** (photography) - the result of capturing or processing an image where the intensity in a certain area falls outside the minimum and maximum intensity which can be represented. Clipping the highlights means that your photo has blown-out regions. Clipping the shadows means that your photo has blown-down regions.
- **Depth of field** - shows how much of the image is in focus. It refers to the distance in front and behind that sharply focused area. 45-degree, 90-degree and 30-degree angles in food photography quite often have soft unfocused backgrounds which means a shallow depth of field. However, many editorial and product images still prefer everything to be sharp and focus even with these angles. Flat lays (over headshots) usually have a large depth of field which means that the image is more in focus and almost all the elements stay sharp.
- **Diffuser** (light) - any material that diffuses or scatters light in some manner to transmit soft light. Flash diffuser spreads the light from the flash of a camera. In effect, the light will not come from one concentrated source (like a spotlight), but rather will spread out, bounce from reflective ceilings and walls, thus getting rid of harsh light, and hard shadows.



## VOCABULARY

- **F-stop** - the f-number of a camera lens is the ratio of the system's focal length to the diameter of the entrance pupil. It measures the lens speed and is an important concept in photography (also known as the focal ratio, f-ratio, or f-stop).
- **File format (RAW vs JPG)** - shows how the camera records the image file. The most common formats here are JPEG and RAW. I always use RAW file format, since it gives me high-quality images and more freedom in editing. However, for RAW files you usually need editing software such as Adobe Lightroom. The RAW file is a digital negative but the JPEG file on the other hand has already been processed.
- **Focal Length** - it refers to the basic description (usually in millimetres) of a photographic lens that calculates the optical distance on the image. It shows the angle view and how much scene will be captured. In food photography, I always use prime lenses such as 50 mm and 90 mm lens that has fixed focal length. • **Focus** - when the object is in focus, then it's sharp and in the opposite way. When it's out-of-focus, then it isn't sharp. Therefore, you can also choose multiple focusing points and one user-selected point.
- **Framing** - what one decides to select in a particular scene.
- **Glare** - discomfort felt by an observer due to the presence of a very bright light source in the visual field. Mostly appears in the presence of bright light such as direct or reflected sunlight or artificial light.



## VOCABULARY

- **Highlight** - a bright spot in a photograph. Normally it is assumed to be one of the brightest points in the image. Highlights are created by any bright light source. However, small point sources of light or hard lights (with small size and intense power) will create highlights more often than diffused soft light with a relatively large light source.
- **Histogram** (for images) - a graphical representation of the tonal distribution in a digital image. It plots the number of pixels for each tonal value. By looking at the histogram for a specific image a viewer will be able to judge the entire tonal distribution at a glance.
- **Image sensor** - a sensor that detects and conveys information used to make an image. It does so by converting the variable attenuation of light waves (as they pass through or reflect off objects) into signals, small bursts of current that convey the information.
- **ISO** - shows how sensitive the camera is to light. When you are shooting in that daylight, then the ISO 100 is usually a great choice. However, when the light conditions are not good (such as nighttime), then higher ISO helps to shoot in low light. For food photography, my ISO is almost always 100 or even lower. The problem with higher ISO is that the images get noisy, grainy and less detailed. However, for my action shots, I use a higher ISO than 100 since I need a high shutter speed.



## VOCABULARY

- **Light** (photography) - the type of energy called electromagnetic radiation. Also known as the natural agent that stimulates sight and makes things visible. However, in photography, we are concerned with the brightness, colour, and contrast of light.
- **Lighting** (photography) - the relationship between the light, the subject, and the viewer (quite often refers to the absence of light or shadows).
- **Long Exposure** - image is exposed longer time and the shutter speed is long. Quite often it's used for night photography to get artistic blur. However, in food photography, it's also good to use a longer exposure since you will get
- **Manual Mode (M)** - gives freedom for a photographer to set the aperture, shutter speed, ISO and exposure by themselves. For my food photography, I always use manual mode. However, when I started, then I used aperture priority where I had the freedom to play around with aperture.
- **Negative space** (white space) - the area between and around objects in a photo (the main subject is known as the "positive space"). Use it to see shapes and sizes more effectively, and produce better-composed images. It provides "breathing room", giving your eyes somewhere to rest and preventing your image from appearing too crowded with elements.



## VOCABULARY

- **Noise** - refers to the fact that the image is grainy (also known as little flecks). Usually, the problem is high ISO and low light conditions. For that reason, use the lowest ISO possible.
- **Overexposed** (photo) - a white-looking or washed-out image that generally happens when a digital photo was shot with too much light on the subject.
- **Point of interest** - the part of the image that makes an artwork unique. The most important part of the image is where you focus your attention.
- **Reflection** (photography) - mirror photography, is when you use reflective surfaces to create an artistic echo of a scene. In food photography it appears on shiny tableware, water drops, metal, glass, and anything with a shiny surface can also be easily incorporated into this type of photography. On the other hand, you can get unwanted reflections in your photography which can easily minimize or eliminate with white cards or polarizing filters.
- **Reflector** - an improvised or specialised reflective surface used to redirect light towards a given subject or scene.
- **Rule of thirds** - well-known composition technique that breaks an image down into thirds (both horizontally and vertically) so that you have 9 parts. The idea is to place points of interest in the intersections or along the lines for a well-balanced photo.



## VOCABULARY

- **Shadow** - part of the scene that the majority of the light in the scene does not strike.
- **Sharp** - image's overall clarity in terms of both focus and contrast. The subject of an image is sharp when the image is clear and has many details, contrast and texture.
- **Shutter speed** - shows how long the shutter stays open. It's usually written in seconds or for example 1/30. For food photography, I always use a tripod to use the lowest shutter speed that is possible for my still images. On the other hand, for moving objects I use the high shutter speed.
- **Tethered shooting** - a photography technique that allows you to connect your camera to a computer or tablet and almost instantly view your digital images on the device within seconds after it is captured.
- **Underexposed** (photo) - a little bit dark-looking image that generally happens when a digital photo was shot with too little light on the subject.
- **Viewfinder** - the hole where you look to take a picture in a DSLR and most mirrorless cameras.
- **Viewpoint** - one way of looking at or thinking about something. Not all photographs are taken from our eye level (or from the top of a fully extended tripod. Changing your viewpoint is a great way to make a strong composition that can stand out from all of the other eye-level views made of a similar subject.





## VOCABULARY

- **White balance** - the camera doesn't adjust the colour balance like human eyes. For that reason, we can adjust the white balance so it's true to what our eyes see (warmer vs colder tones). In practice, I usually shoot only raw files and because of that my white balance is on auto mode. I might fix the white balance in Adobe Lightroom to get my preferred tones. Otherwise, I should always use white balance cards that are not very practical in my opinion.



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