

You are here: [PhotoRadar](#) | [Techniques](#) | [22 night photography tips for beginners](#)

22 night photography tips for beginners



Peter Travers

Quick and easy digital photography tips for better photos in the dark. From night photography settings for your DSLR to ideas for creative low light pictures.

Find out how to take photos at night with these camera and photography tips for beginners. Whether you want to learn how to take photos of the night sky, find out how to paint with light or just want to know the right camera settings for high quality pictures, this guide will shed light on the common questions and popular techniques...

Search for... [Refine my search](#) [Search](#)

[Login](#) [Register](#)

Not yet a member? [Sign up](#) to receive our newsletter, upload photos and write reviews. [Forgot your password?](#)

Related articles



Techniques

[Turn day into night in Photoshop](#)



Techniques

[225 photography tips to inspire you](#)



Techniques

[21 street photography tips from the professionals](#)



Techniques

[10 quick action photography tips](#)



News

[Amazing pictures: long exposure landscape photos](#)

PhotoRadar Selects: Digital Cameras from Nikon

Nikon D3000 Black + 18-55mm VR Lens Kit

£299.99 Park Cameras

[See all prices from retailers](#)



Nikon D3s Black

£3399.95 Simply Electronics

[See all prices from retailers](#)



Nikon D300s Black

£969.00 Pixmania.co.uk

[See all prices from retailers](#)





1 Get high quality night shots

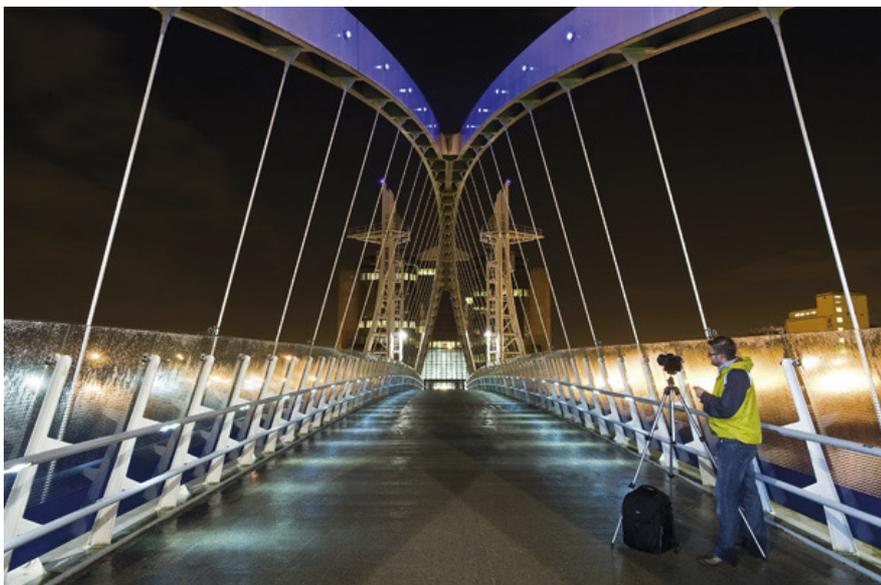
If you want the best night shots you need to shoot in the best image quality, and that means RAW. By shooting in RAW your images will retain the most 'information', which gives you greater scope for enhancing your shots in Adobe Camera Raw and other raw-processing software. RAW is especially beneficial when taking night shots as it gives more flexibility when you want to change things such as colour temperature (or White Balance) or accurately increase (brighten) or decrease (darken) your exposures.

2 Use a tripod for sharp pictures

Shooting at night obviously means there will be less light and therefore slow shutter speeds, anywhere from 1-30 seconds – that's way too slow to shoot hand-held. So you'll need to attach your digital camera securely to a tripod if you want sharp results. Make sure your tripod is set up correctly and rock solid – it's easy to end up with soft images because you haven't double-checked. Hang your camera bag off the hook on the bottom of the centre column if you can. And don't hold onto your tripod as you're shooting with slow shutter speeds because any slight movement can mean blurred photos.

3 Pick your night photography locations in advance

Before you venture out into the night, it will pay dividends and save you valuable time later if you plan ahead. Pick good locations beforehand by scouting out the best spots in your local town to find the most interesting lights and architecture, or if you're looking to shoot traffic light trails, check which roads are busiest, when is the best time for traffic, and which is the best (and safest) position to take photos from. Check out the [photo galleries](#) here on PhotoRadar for inspiration, to see how other photographers have tackled the local city lights at night.



4 Use the lens sweet spot

Use the 'sweet spot' range of apertures for your lenses – this is usually between $f/8$ and $f/16$, but take test shots to find out. Even pro-level lenses don't produce the best results when used at their maximum and minimum apertures. By using apertures in the middle of the available range you'll increase your chances of capturing the sharpest shots with your lens.

5 Night photography settings

To take control of your exposures it's best to shoot in Manual mode so you can choose the best narrow aperture and slow shutter speed for night photography. Begin by composing and focusing your shot, set a narrow aperture around $f/16$, then dial in the right shutter speed until the Exposure Level Mark is in the middle of the Exposure Level Indicator. Take some shots and review them on your LCD. Remember this is what your camera thinks is the best

Xmas Gift Ideas

From Packard Bell



What camera?

Xmas buying guides



POTY 2010

See the new iPad app!



PhotoRadar Highlights



News

[Photographer of the Year 2010: Winners](#)



Reviews

[Best Cameras 2010: Top 5 Compacts £150-£250](#)

[Print this](#)

[Share](#)

1 2 3 Next

Posted by [Peter Travers](#) on Tuesday, Dec 2010 at 04:55pm GMT. First appeared: [PhotoPlus](#) magazine

See more techniques: [Beginner Tips](#) [Night Photography](#) [Photography Tips](#)

Comments (1)

[Add your comment](#)



s0ulsurfing

Most of my work to date has been using natural daylight, so this is a great article for night-time newbie like me, thanks for putting it together!

#1. Posted on Monday, 13 Dec 2010 at 01:41pm GMT. [Report this](#)

User login

Add comment

To add a comment to this page you must [sign in to your PhotoRadar account](#). If you do not have an account you can [create a new account](#) for free and join the best online pro photographers community.

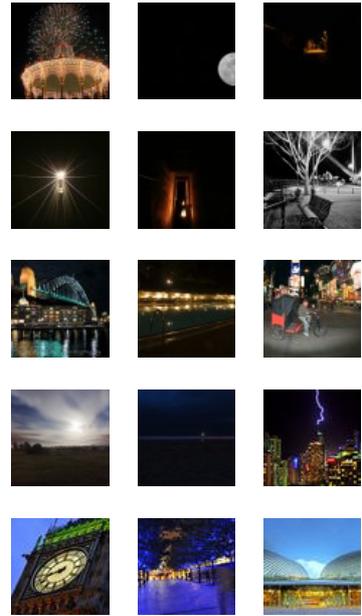
Username

Password

Remember me

Login [Register](#) | [Forgotten password?](#)

Related user images



Watch our featured video



Night photography event at Westonbirt
Book your chance to join Digital Camera magazine, PhotoPlus and PhotoRadar at an exclusive nighttime photography event at Westonbirt Arboretum.

[See all videos](#)



Photography tips & techniques

- [Photoshop tutorials and tips](#)
- [Landscape photography tips](#)
- [Portrait photography tips](#)
- [Nature photography tips](#)
- [Black and white photography](#)
- [Macro photography tips](#)
- [Wildlife photography tips](#)
- [Wedding photography tips](#)
- [Photography basics](#)

Member photos

- [Landscape photos](#)
- [Black and white photos](#)
- [Macro photos](#)
- [Photoshopped photos](#)
- [Urban photos](#)
- [Portrait photos](#)

PhotoRadar

- [About us](#)
- [Contact us](#)
- [FAQ](#)
- [Terms and conditions](#)
- [Privacy Policy](#)
- [Follow us on Twitter](#)
- [Join us on Facebook](#)

Reviews

- [All reviews](#)

Photography magazines

- [Digital Camera magazine](#)
- [PhotoPlus magazine](#)

Forums

- [Photography chat](#)
- [Photoshop technique](#)
- [Photo critique](#)
- [Beginner questions](#)
- [Pro Lounge](#)
- [Forum FAQ](#)



Copyright 2006 - 2010 Future Publishing Limited,
Beauford Court 30 Monmouth Street Bath, UK BA1 2BW
England and Wales company registration number 2008885