

10 Steps to Digital Happiness

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Following these basic concepts will help make your digital experience much easier.

1) Accept that the goal of digital photography is the same as film-- to make and share great images. The path you take may be different but the goal is the same. Learn the aesthetics of Photography, not just digital techniques. Then apply the unique qualities of digital photography to create photographs that extend the limitations of film.

2) Understand the abilities and characteristics of your equipment and utilize the best quality your equipment offers that fits your available time and money. When practical always shoot the highest quality files, with the lowest iso and least compression. Custom white balance when possible. Raw when practical.

3) Have enough memory, both in your computer (RAM and hard drive) and in the number of cards you carry so that you don't have to compromise quality.

4) Practice risk management in your workflow, especially with memory cards and batteries. Don't do risky things that may work on a limited basis but are known to eventually create problems.

5) Accept that there are no secrets, only things you have yet to learn. Follow a path of continuing education so that you can keep up with changes in technology and also maximize the potential of your hardware and software.

6) Follow an organized workflow from camera to computer to storage.

7) Backup, backup, backup. Never work on an original file. Always keep an untouched original file somewhere and back up everything.

8) Understand the image size dialog box in your editing program and know what level of resolution is needed for each type of output.

9) Practice imaging editing that creates the least amount of degradation in your image. Pixels are precious, respect them. Don't waste them. Be nice to your pixels.

10) Practice a color managed workflow, that includes a calibrated and profiled monitor and pay close attention to color space as it applies to shooting and editing.