



March 2013

# Camera Clips

Bi monthly publication

## From the Editor

James Allan

Welcome to 2013. Another year starts in photo club with the usual plethora of activities. We have had our first competition, "signs" and from the digital set I have included a photo from one of our newer members, Ron Hassan in the newsletter banner.

Late last year I was fortunate enough to acquire a new dSLR camera, a Nikon D7000. I did not realize at the time just how complex the controls had got on these cameras. Lucky for me, several members of the club also had this same model. I was able to swap notes with Les Ludgate, Helen Whitford and Jo Tabbe. Without their advice I would have been lost. In this edition of Camera clips I have been able to persuade Jo and Les to distill their sage advice into a couple of articles. Joe gives her advice on buying lenses, while Les describes how to customize the setup to suit your individual requirements.

There were a lot of changes moving from a compact camera. I think the biggest frustrations were these; 1. It is awful having to predict which lens you are going to use and when you get it wrong, making quick convenient changes in the field when it least suits. 2. You get dust on your sensor. 3. You really have to adjust the f-stop or else you end up with extremely narrow depth of field and loss of image clarity. 4. It is a whole lot heavier. 5. You have to look through the viewfinder (mostly). It just is not practical to take photos from your camera at arms length in "Live View" Mode.

Despite these problems there have also been a lot of advantages. mostly to do with improved handling in low light, less noise and greater overall flexibility.

If you look on the blogs you will find plenty of people advising you to take the flash off the camera in order to get better portraits. I had a word with Eric and he has just provided me with two pages on "off camera flash". I have experimented a little with off camera flash with my old Panasonic (before the flash died). I found that it was important to take test shots to ensure that the exposure was correct. Eric has explained his approach to getting good exposure with the flash.

Chris our beloved president has given us a frank and honest appraisal of his journey in relation to discovering his own sense of photographic style. Lastly David Douglas Martin has written a short piece on using artistic filters and manipulation in photography. I am sure you will enjoy this word from our current and one of our past presidents.

Also take a look at the upcoming events column to the right. It includes the club outings which are not included on the club web page. I hope you enjoy the March edition of Camera Clips.

## 15 most important image manipulation tricks for photographers

How are your image manipulation skills? Do you have a good repertoire of post-production techniques? I will be running articles on the following techniques in Camera clips—depending upon what you want. Contact me and let me know what you are interested in. Also which image software you like to use? (Also if you want to write an article for me)

1. Cropping and resizing
2. Correct Perspective/ skew and warp
3. Correct a colour cast
4. Improves saturation
5. Exposure correction/ contrast enhancement (in Levels or Curves)
6. Sharpening or edge Clarification
7. Blurring—Gaussian blur
8. Clone tool/ patch tool – remove unwanted features / fill gaps
9. Stitching to create panoramas/ Merge two photos to make a collage
10. Layers / Selection tools to selectively apply effects
11. Noise reduction
12. Dodging and burning
13. Borders / vignetting
14. High Dynamic Range—compression algorithms like tone mapping
15. Monochrome conversion

Contacting a member from the club; This month Mark & Jenny Pedlar : [mnpjpedlar@biqpond.com](mailto:mnpjpedlar@biqpond.com)

## Upcoming Events

**February 24 Club Outing—Sunset at Blanche Point**

Sunday 6.00-9.00pm Meet at Maslins Beach Carpark.

**February 28 Workshop: Tabletops**

A workshop facilitated by experienced club members examining how to achieve success in this genre.

**March 14 Peer Review/ Critique Session**

Each member present gets to present at least one of their images, describe and explain it to the club and discuss it with others

**March 22 Club Outing—Rundle Mall / North Terrace - late night shopping**

Friday—6.30-8.30 meet at Scoozi— Rundle Street East

**March 28 Presentation: Photojournalism**

An experienced photojournalist will present their experience and perspective of photojournalism

**March 29/April 1 - 4 Easter Weekend**

**April 11 Competition : Science and Technology**

Look up the definition in the dictionary. Remember, be inventive.

**April 21 Club Outing—Gorge Wildlife Park**

Meet in carpark 1:30pm.

**April 25 Anzac Day**

When I joined BPC a few years ago, my photography was my own. The images I took, be they film or digital, were my own. There was no constraint. I explored ideas, I tried new equipment and methods, and importantly, I was having fun. Not all of it worked, but that's the nature of experimentation. Those images that worked were very pleasing to me – and sometimes for those around me.

However, with the endless rounds of competition and workshop at the club, I found my level of photographic satisfaction dropping. I often left the club feeling frustrated and had little rants to those around me regarding the judging. At the same time, I also felt that my images were lacking something – and it was getting worse. Sure, they were sharp, colourful, and composed well, but were they my images? What was the cause of this frustration and questioning?

It took a while, but I realized that I had started to shoot for the judges and not for me. What a revelation! It dawned on me that the system we were using stifled creativity, and was making me conform to an imposed standard.

That standard, due to the judges we tended to use, was a 30 year old relic of camera clubs. It wasn't Ansel Adams or Manray or Cartier Bresson or David Bailey or Cindy Sherman that I was trying to please, but someone rooted in the 1980s vision of photography – which was fixed on the technical, but had forgotten about the art of those that had gone before or were emerging today.

How could I overcome this? To begin with I started talking to those around me and trying to go out to places I could experiment. Its amazing how after a couple of hours of wandering around with others looking for new ideas you start to appreciate the detail around you. At about this time, we started the 31 day challenge (the holiday shoot) on Flickr. I chose to photograph windows (not the computer kind) and shared my images with the images of others in the club on Flickr. The feedback and the variety of images began to change how I was capturing my images again. I missed that challenge this year, but I spent a lot of time looking at images on Flickr and elsewhere. Importantly, I did play around with some techniques that I showed off last year (like image stacking). Once again, not a success with the judges, but I was happier.



The other thing was a long discussion between a few of us on how we could break the SAPF dinosaur judge culture.

Fortunately, at this time, a new SAPF President – Alberto Guierelli - emerged who had a vision to change things. More importantly, he was impressed by our clubs attitude to judging and started a dialogue with us whilst bringing in new judges. This would take time, but we had an ally.

At the same time, the germ of an idea to have more discussion of our images, and less competition was born in discussions with others like Matt & Ashley in the club. That idea was developed further then put to the club members at the AGM and arose as the Peer Review nights we have begun this year.

Now I was starting to feel better. The artist in me felt he could share images, experiment, go back to having fun, and not agonise over how someone else saw my images. Time will tell if the treatment has worked, but I certainly feel like my photography is alive again.

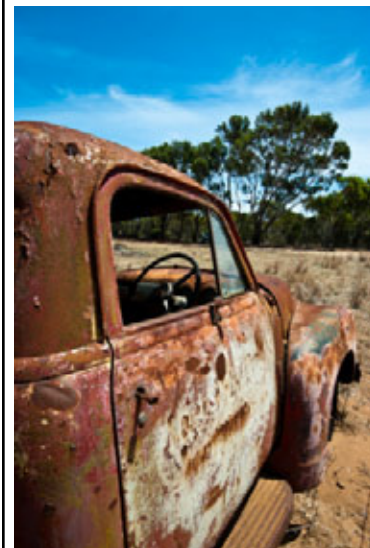
Watch this space!

Chris Schultz

Right—image stacking—finding my photographic style again



Above—An image I enjoyed from the earlier days of photo club



Above—2 images that lack inspiration and feel lifeless.



I am uncertain how to title this piece. I considered calling it “Artistic Expression In Photography” or “Photography As Art” or just plain “Photo Art”. I am aware that “Art photography” seems to have a different connotation, perhaps a bit pretentious, (perhaps a bit risqué).

To me it all starts with the thought—”Why not use a photographic image as the basis for a painting or sketch?” For many years artists have painted from photographs with varying degrees of success &, no doubt, some colossal failures.

It was in 2005 that I had my first experience in an APS (Australian Photographis Society) folio attempting to create what was then known as Altered Reality. No one ever truly got to grips with what constituted altered reality & there was never, to the best of my knowledge, an agreed definition. As time went by we submitted our images & exchanged ideas until finally the folio was given a new name, Photo Art. Still no definition to guide us but all bets were off so long as there was evidence of a photographic component to our images. It was about that time I first considered using image manipulation techniques to alter a photographic image to resemble a painting & explored the possibilities using the various tools & filters in Photoshop.

More recently I have found the shortcuts that are available by using the pre-sets in programs such Corel Paint &, after a suggestion that came from James, Dynamic Auto Painter. These programs are very user friendly & it can be good fun watching the photo that has been opened on the work palette change as the process proceeds with no further input from the human hand once the start button has been pressed.

Of course the programs do allow for a certain degree of manipulation but generally the results achieved are quite random & it is always a surprise to see the final result emerge on the screen. Using these methods does not make one a Monet or a Rembrandt but with a little thought carefully selected images that are subjected to the auto painting process can achieve pleasing results.

If you wish to try this for yourself there are many free downloads available on the web & some interesting clips on YouTube to get you started.

Have fun!

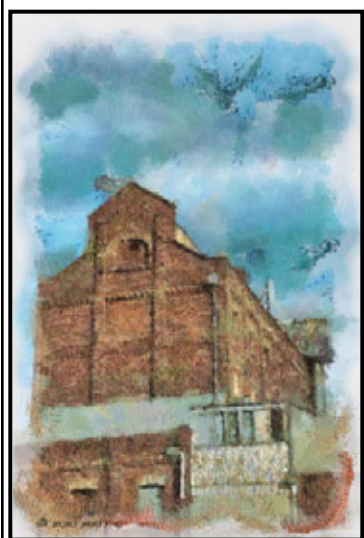
David D-M

<http://www.mediachance.com/dap/index.html>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UJU9RuD-98U>



Artistic filters will often create interesting textures that resemble brush work.



A digital painting of the old Woollen Mills by Matt Carr

### Club Calendar

The Club Calendar is still available. This year features Sturt Desert Pea on the cover and a collage of abstract images on the back cover. It is an excellent product, showcasing the work of over 20 members from the club and makes an achieve of the clubs activity for that period. There have been excellent reviews, and sells for just \$15.00.

We are encouraging club members to support the club by taking 5 calendars on assignment to sell to friends, family or acquaintances. Unsold calendars can be returned.

For those interested in collecting, there are also limited stocks of previous years calendars available at a discount rate..



Yes I'm happy to admit I'm a lens junky. Currently I have 12 in my kit, for just 2 camera bodies. I have 2 more on the 'must have' list and a further 2 on the 'one day would be nice' list (or is it 3 or maybe 4). Buying a lens is an investment and should not be rushed into. When you find yourself constantly saying I wish I had .....(wider, faster, longer, etc) then it's time to start looking. This is the process I take.

Before I start there are a few questions that I ask myself.

1. Do I buy a **full frame (FF) lens** or one designed for a **cropped sensor**. Even though I had a Nikon D7000 (cropped sensor) I had always dreamt that I would one day buy a full frame camera. It might have been a distant dream a year ago, but now I already have my FF camera a Nikon D90. Most of my lenses were FF lenses and so it was no problem to switch. The FF lenses worked just fine with the cropped sensor (not so if you own a cannon). The Cropped sensor lenses however cause serious vignetting and loss of image on the FF camera. I am glad I hadn't kitted up with DX lenses (for the cropped sensor) or now I would be replacing all my lenses.

2. **Prime or Zoom?** A prime lens has only one focal length, say 50mm, whereas a zoom has a range of focal lengths, say 35—100mm. Some say that the prime lens will give a sharper clearer image. If you have never used a prime, try taping a zoom lens to a set focal length like 35 or 50mm and see if you can work to that restriction. I prefer to have the flexibility of the zoom—even if it is just a little bit. It helps with composing the shot. Anyway I have never seen a huge difference in clarity.

3. What **focal length and F stop** am I after? A standard lens is around 50mm, a portrait lens around 100mm, telephoto 200mm, bird lens 300—600mm, wide angle 28-35mm, extra wide 10-18 and fish eye 8-10mm. The larger the aperture (smaller F number) the more light the lens will accept and thus greater the flexibility in low light. A standard zoom lens may vary from F 2.8—5.6. A good low light lens may be F1.6. The good telephoto lenses will be around F2.8, but these may cost several thousand dollars.

Now that you have the basics time to start the research.

4. Which **Brand?** The term "On camera lens" refers to a lens made by the same company as the camera body. These lenses are often superior to the alternatives, but are costly. For example a Nikkor Lens is made by Nikon. There are a plethora of alternative brand lenses ("Off camera lens") that have mounts designed for each of the main camera bodies. For instance a Tamron lens may have a Nikon, Cannon or Pentax mount. It is worth visiting the web site and see what is available. Also read the reviews. You can find reviews on the various camera blogs that will compare one lens to another. Flickr often has groups for a particular lens. On the Flickr group you can see pictures taken with that lens and ask questions in the forums, or of those posting pictures. You can also ask at camera club or visit your local camera store. It is always good to build a bit of rapport as there are some great minds to pick. Unfortunately some will act like salesmen, telling you anything to make a sale. My favourite question to ask these guys is "what would you buy".

5. **Price.** Once you have settled on the lens, now it's time to shop for a price. I look for at least 4 local stores. I look at both new and second hand lenses. I go online or look at ebay stores and ebay second hand. Second hand is always a bit of a risk. The camera stores will offer a short warranty. On ebay look for high ratings and read the description. If it is a camera buff you can usually tell. It is always best to buy local, however with high end lenses you can save anything up to \$500 by buying from overseas online. Again look for high ratings and if at all possible an Australian warranty. Most lenses will come with a worldwide warranty. I have bought from all of the above. Except for one hick up, all of the sales were quite satisfactory.

6. **Waiting.** Now armed with prices I still don't rush out and buy. If you're prepared to wait you can save some money. The lens you have chosen will often come on sale or be offered at discount in a promotion or a good second hand one will appear. If you are ready to buy now you will know the best deal or what is a fair price.

### A Few Tips

Not all lenses retain their resale value. A second hand "on camera" lens will generally hold its price (unless superseded). A second hand "off camera" lens, even in excellent condition, may only bring half of its original purchase price.

Always buy the best you can afford, even if it is step above what you currently think you need. It may save you money in the long run. It is silly to buy low just to have to sell and buy again later as you

A few web addresses for researching Lenses :

Nikon <http://imaging.nikon.com/lineup/lens/list.htm>

Canon <http://www.canon.com.au/For-You/Camera-Lenses>

Tamron <http://www.tamron.com.au/index.html>

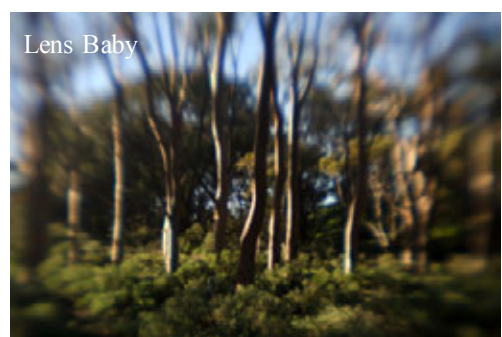
Sigma <http://www.sigmaphoto.com/lenses>

Samyang <http://www.syoct.co.kr/>

50mm + bellows



15mm



Lens Baby



400mm

outgrow that lens.

Don't get disappointed if you don't get the instant results you're after. A better lens may be less forgiving than say a kit lens and can show little flaws in your technique. However give it time, experiment and talk to colleagues. As with everything it often just takes a bit more practice.

Just to make it harder, the various features of the lens that I have described are encoded with acronyms. It can take a while to work out what they all mean. And each lens manufacturer has a different convention. For instance the Nikon cropped sensor lens is designated DX, while the sigma lens is designated DC and Tamron DI 11. I have included a list of the main acronyms which hopefully will make it easier to find what you want.

## General Nikon camera set up

Les Ludgate

With a new camera you will have a "Quick set up" page. This will cover basic battery charging and an "Auto" setting to take your first shots on the new camera.

You will need to set your time zone /time/date/ and any copy right name you may wish to use. While you are in the camera Menu make a note of your camera's software version/s as there may be an update available from Nikon Australia.

Format any /all of your CF or SD memory cards IN THE CAMERA. This will create a file on the card and the camera will recognise the photo files taken and saved on the card. (this may not be necessary on newer cameras but on an older version Nikon some problems occurred if the card was formatted on a computer or not formatted in the camera first up.)

Basic settings: Refer to your camera manual and use the "?" button for setting information. In General run through all your menu settings as you will find lots of options to use and don't forget if you mess up and decide to start again you have a "Two Button" reset function which will return you to "Factory" settings.

Set eye piece dioptre to suit your eye. (Beware—when you hand the camera to someone else to take a shot, they may complain that the picture is blurred)

Set your Histogram /highlights /show focus point & any other setting you may use (3 colour histogram) —The D7000 Nikon may need a copy right name put in to achieve all options. A simple "Fun Photos" will do the trick or put in your name etc. and it will be recorded in your Exif data.

Look at your camera meter menu - /+ or +/- the meter can be reversed if you wish. Also the main and sub command wheels can be reversed if needed.

Choose to change the "continuous file naming" so that every shot you shoot has a different continuous file number (you will never over write a photo file) if you do this.

Choose a focus pattern that suits you BUT learn how to change to single point focusing. Single point can be moved to several different positions in the frame to suit your shot. A press in the middle of the <> button (while meter is active) will return it to the centre.

Look at the "FN" button default setting. It may not suit you and I set it to "spot metering" or disable it so it does nothing. This is your choice.

Learn about "D" lighting/ Noise reduction for long exposures /set your "self timer" to suit you. 2 sec or 5sec for some type of shots and 10 sec's or more if you want to be in the pic!!

Learn about "White Balance" and all the variations that are available other than "Auto" and deep in the white balance menu you can find how to change colour casts (useful for sunsets)

There are settings in your auto focus menu where you can change how the focus works in continuous focus. You may find OFF is good while tracking and shooting flying birds.

Some little hints:

On board flash used with a lens hood WILL create a shadow in the bottom of your shot. Any plus or minus compensation set on the on board flash and left WILL be added to any Nikon flash put on to the hot shoe.

At a party or Bar B Q Set your "self timer" to take two shots as the first will be posed and the second shot will be more relaxed. This may create a fun shot.

Please read the manual and use the Net to get answers to functions that you don't understand. There are many more options that you may be using to suit your type or style of photography. In general I hope there may be one or two points to ponder.

## Deciphering all those lens letters

### Nikon

DX	Crop Sensor
FX	Full Frame
AF	Auto Focus
AF-S	Auto Focus with Silent Wave motor
ED	Extra-low Dispersion glass
VR	Vibration Reduction
IF	Internal Focusing
RF	Rear Focusing
AS	Aspherical lens elements
SWM	Silent Wave Motor
N	Nano Crystal Coat
SIC	Super Integrated Coating
G	The G-type NIKKOR has no aperture ring
D	D-type NIKKOR, (relays distance information to AF bodies) - Has an aperture ring
CRC	Close-Range Correction system
DC	Defocus-image Control
RD	Rounded Diaphragm
ML	Meniscus Protective Lens

### SIGMA

DG	Full Frame
DC	Crop Sensor
HSM	Hyper-Sonic Motor
OS	Optical Stabilizer Function
EX	superior build and optical quality
ASP	Aspherical
IF	Internal Focus
RF	Rear Focus
APO	Apochromatic (low-dispersion (SLD) glass)
CONV	APO Teleconverter EX

### TAMRON

DI	Full Frame
DI II	Crop Sensor
SP	Super Performance series
VC	Vibration Compensation
XR	Extra Refractive Index
LD	Low Dispersion Glass
IF	Internal Focusing
ASL	Aspherical
BBAR	Broad-Band Anti-Reflection multi-layer coatings
ZL	Zoom-lock mechanism

### CANNON

L	L-series lens—"luxury" quality lens
USM	Ultrasonic Motor
IS	Image Stabilisation
FD	Original mount for autofocus lenses
EF	EF (Electro focus) mount found on EOS film and digital cameras (1987)
EF-S	Cropped sensor—for <b>APS-C</b> sensors (2003)
EF-M	for mirror less interchangeable-lens cameras
DO	Diffraction Optics
FTM	Full time manual focussing (allows MF when in autofocus mode)
TS and TS-E	Tilt shift and Tilt shift with electronic focus

Off camera flash is a phrase which is often used in photographic circles and to newer recruits to this pastime may not fully grasp the technicalities of what it entails. The phrase "off camera flash" is very clear to most adults as meaning a flash unit not attached to a camera!! ..... "easy peasy" ..... not quite the case in reality

Over the last number of years camera manufacturers have decided not to fit a "Sync. Socket" to a large number of their cameras except the higher end "pro. spec." models, which are out of reach of most amateurs. Some camera makers do however offer an alternative method to fire a flash off camera, using dedicated cables which fit into the hot shoe and this cable has a duplicate flash shoe at the other end which holds the flash. This type of cable duplicates all of the controls & modes which are available to the on camera flash unit, this makes them extremely versatile. These are available often at grossly inflated prices.

The other work-around is to purchase a "Hot-Shoe to PC" adaptor. This device has a sync socket fitted as well as a hot shoe connection. A cable is connected to this socket and the other end connects to the flash unit which is held off camera. Another alternative to this is known as a "slave unit", this small device has a light sensitive electronic circuit which triggers a flash unit when it receives a flash of light, this flash of light could be from another flash unit.....i.e. the small inbuilt flash which is built into an existing camera.

In the accompanying pictures you can see some types of hot shoe adaptors and slave units as well as cables required to connect to them.

In order to try this method of flash illumination you will require the following:-

1. A Hot Shoe to PC adaptor.
2. A PC cable.....length what ever is available, the longer the cable the further the flash from the camera.
3. A suitable flash unit.

The above is suitable for use with an SLR type camera Digital or Film.

For use with compact cameras you'll require a slave unit as most, but not all compacts don't have a hot shoe fitting. You'll need the following:-

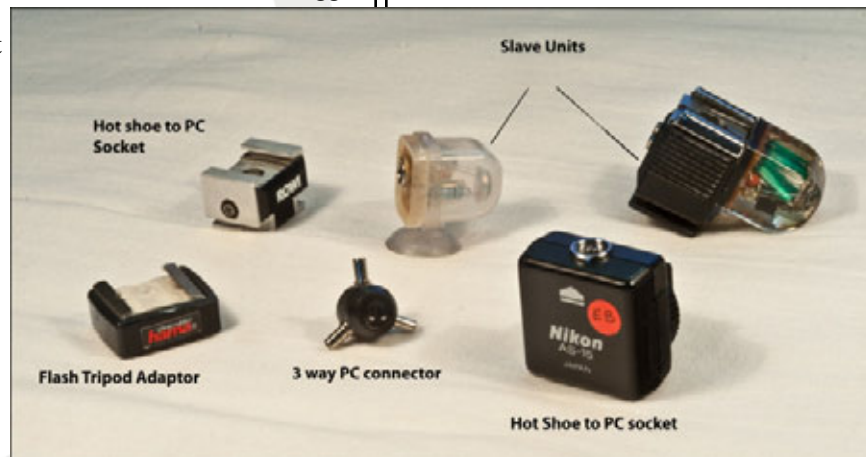
1. A slave unit.....(these are available from good photographic stores & maybe camera markets)
2. A suitable PC cable to connect the flash to the slave unit. There is no physical connection to the camera.

In this scenario one would use the onboard camera flash to trigger the accessory flash connected to the slave. Depending on the subject to be photographed some sort of shielding may be required to prevent the on board camera flash affecting the final result of the image's illumination. A piece of white card is often used in these cases thus preventing the direct light from the camera's flash reaching the subject but still leaving the "overspill" to trigger the slave unit.

I've attached some images showing the set up I used to take some of the shots. The portraits are copied from camera books and are included to show effects of flash position relative to the subject matter.

I do not claim credit for these.

Most modern flash units made by the camera makers are suitable for these types of photography when used on the makers camera .....Canon on Canon, Nikon on Nikon, etc.,



From page 6

### A WORD OF WARNING.

### We are dealing with Direct Current in this instance !!!

Do not use any older style of flash or one which you may have had since "Pontius was a Pilate" as some of the older flash units used very high flash trigger voltages which could fry your modern camera's internals if connected directly to your camera whether it's an SLR or Compact.

Modern cameras have quite low trigger voltages mostly below 20 volts many as low as 6 volts.

Some old flash guns have trigger voltages in the realms of 240 volts I've actually come across some where the voltage is as high as 330 volts !! These high voltages actually melt the camera's internal trigger switch which is usually activated by the shutter operation.

Before using any of these older flash units find out what your camera's flash trigger voltage is ; this can be usually found on the web under specifications relating to your particular camera or from the manufacturer.

Next find out the trigger voltage of the flash you intend to use, this needs to be the same or lower than the camera's flash trigger voltage.

### Exposure

To get the correct exposure one must first set your camera's shutter speed to suit the flash.

As all cameras have a maximum shutter speed at which the film or sensor will successfully record all of the image illuminated by the flash this speed must NOT be exceeded otherwise portions of the image will be blacked out with a camera fitted with a Focal Plane Shutter, this means Digital and Film SLRs as well as some of the newer types of camera which no longer have a reflex mirror fitted. These cameras are the compact type with interchangeable lenses.

In order for the exposure to be right the shutter speed and aperture combination must be set to suit the ISO setting on the camera. This used to be measured with a flash meter (a fairly expensive accessory) but with the advent of digital cameras this item is not really needed.

Set the flash unit ISO to the same as the camera setting and switch the flash to manual setting if available, set the camera shutter speed to the fastest flash sync. setting for your model camera, mostly 1/250th of sec. Next set the camera's aperture to around f5.6., set the camera to manual focus and focus on your subject then fire off a test shot, after which check the exposure on the camera's LCD display. If the image is too bright (over exposed) reset the aperture to f8; if too dull (under exposed) reset aperture to f4. Repeat this until you are satisfied with the result.

I realise that this is a trial and error solution but without going into a lot of calculations regarding aperture/distance and whether the flash is set to Auto or Manual or if the flash has a variable adjustable output I feel this is the easiest way to get the best exposure.

Some people will say that one can move the flash unit closer/further from the subject and this will alter the exposure....quite true ! however if you are holding the flash in one hand it's not that simple as if you move further away the focus will alter. There are other ways of achieving exposure adjustments but I won't go into that. Suffice to say the "Shoot & Review" method is probably the simplest and most novices will soon get the hang of it.

Hope this will suffice James...it's a bit long but you can edit it if you feel inclined.

