



December 2018 Newsletter

APC 2012–2018

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DECEMBER 2018

In Memory of APC Member Elmon Coe



More of
Elmon Coe's Pics
Page 5

Photo by Elmon Coe

APC ACTIVITIES

Next Meeting

December 17, 2018 7:00 PM

PhotoShows

To Be Announced for 2019

Board Meeting

December 3, 2018 7:00 PM

Programs

Dec. 17, 2018

Christmas Social/Slide Show

President's Comments—December 2018

Behind the Lens with Mike King

“It’s the most wonderful time of the year”

The Christmas Season brings time for many gatherings and meetings and merry making. It’s time for cooler weather and longer nights. The Holidays bring an opportunity to explore the lesser used elements in photography – timed exposures. With the less amount of daylight and the festival of lights that are all around, we have the challenges to do timed exposures with our cameras.

How to correctly expose for the bright lights and darkened areas were a lifelong trial and error especially when I used film. With the digital camera we have the advantage of shooting and reviewing before we leave the scene. To help master time exposure with your camera, study the exposure settings in your owner’s manual and search for tips in books and online. You will want to be proficient with your camera so that when you are out at night, your settings will be easier to find and use in the dark. I always use a tripod to steady the camera which allows me to set the camera up and have hands free to manually set the exposure and or any other equipment that I may use in the process of capture. On the tripod, I normally set the mode to a manual shutter speed of B (bulb) or in some cameras you can set the T setting for time with seconds and minutes. The process that I prefer is to allow time (shutter) to “Paint” the image and control the gathering of light with the Aperture (F Stop) to a closed down amount to allow darkened backgrounds to stay dark and only reveal the illuminated areas in the scene. My preferred “Timed Exposures” are normally of Christmas Lights, Displays, and Scenes without action or people moving. If you are capturing people or moving objects, using long slow shutter speeds will not normally result in favorable photos. When capturing people or objects with movement in standard photographic terms, a flash or an area

with abundant light is necessary. My ideas for timed exposure are mostly for the artistic illustrating of light and the way light is seen in darkened areas and not to document a place, person, or event in the standard photographic sense. In capturing timed exposures, we have the ability to see and document subjects with a different view and possibly create images that can only be thoughts in our dreams. Keep in mind when leaving the shutter open for a lengthened amount of time, any object with movement will be blurred and lights on moving subjects will produce streaks of lights. This procedure can be creative if executed correctly. Any unwanted shake or blur may result in a less than desired effect. Try different ISO settings to improve the darkness of background and improve the color of light saturation. Helpful tools can be a small flashlight for looking at settings, remote for controlling the camera exposure, tripod or other camera support.

A good start to begin with in your timed exposure adventure can be as simple as your Christmas tree with the room lights turned off to give an effect of the colored lights and ornaments. Some cameras may have a difficult time in low light, so you may need to use the manual focus override or focus assist. Many years I have captured macro photos of special ornaments and made those into my Christmas Cards. Good luck in your adventure. There are many articles and tips online that will guide you to success. Merry Christmas and keep those shutters moving! (See photos on page 3.)

Mike King
APC President
Mking0379@gmail.com
336-260-0379

Timed Exposures by Mike King





Christmas Party

December 17, 2018
Time - 7:00 pm

It's Party time—Start planning. December is around the corner! We will start about 7:00 pm. The Club will provide coffee, punch and all paper products. Members are requested to bring the appetizers of their choice and arrive around 6:30 pm, giving the host time to arrange the food table. If you desire a drink other than those mentioned above, you will need to bring it.

APC BOARD

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Remembering Elmon Coe

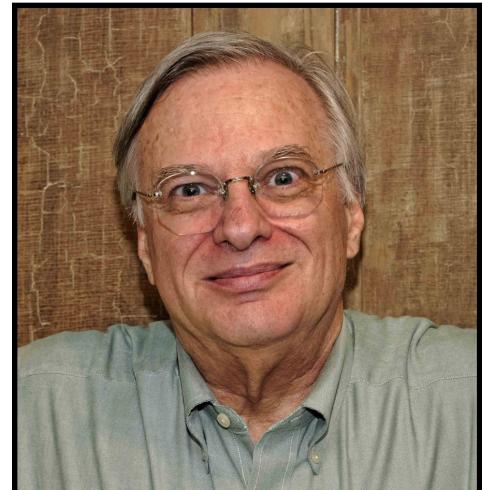
Elmon Coe joined the Alamance Photography Club seeking fellowship with other like-minded photographers and an outlet to share his thoughts and images. He looked forward to our meetings and photo show competitions as well the exhibit at the Paramount. We have included these photos that were recently submitted by Elmon for the competitions in memory of him and his love of photography.



CLUB MEMBERS GALLERY

By Dave Kaplan

Hello all. My name is Dave, and I first became seriously interested in photography in 1980, although as a teenager I had a rather fleeting interest in taking pictures. Aside from photographing family get-togethers, my primary interest has always been landscape photography (although when I first started taking pictures, I didn't know that the photos I like taking was landscape photography— I just liked to take pictures of nice vistas I saw from the trails I was hiking – the Catskills in New York), and from the beginning, after doing some reading on what was at that time considered the desirable technical aspects of landscape photography, I have tried to employ methods which insured the greatest amount of sharpness and detail, which at that time meant a good lens and Kodachrome 25. Although beginning in 1980 I had great jobs which gave me the opportunity to afford good photographic equipment, my work responsibilities prevented me from going on frequent photographic trips (perhaps half a day every month), and consequently, most of my photographic endeavors were either family gatherings or were taken from the vantage point of our terrace on the 26st floor, whenever I was able to get home while there was still enough light to take pictures (though I did do some experimenting with night photography – especially Fourth of July fireworks – we had a great vantage point to photograph the fireworks in lower Manhattan). After several years I purchased a Nikon F3 with both a 24 mm lens and a 70 to 180 macro lens, but I still couldn't devote much time to shooting landscapes with anymore frequency. Over the intervening years, job responsibilities left me less and less time for photography until the 2000, at which time I both became involved with digital photography (job-related at first) and several years later we moved to a more remote and picturesque location, though I still commuted to the city 1.5 to 2 hours each way depending on traffic. But, at that time, the major change was that I did not have to take in-house call on weekends and was free to go out Saturday and Sunday mornings for several hours (my wife was a late sleeper on weekends) photographing in and around the several picturesque reservoirs in our area. I got to know the characteristics of the light very well in the various nearby locations during the several seasons, and took advantage of learning as much as I could about both my equipment and photographic techniques to produce photographs emphasizing sharpness, detail, and dynamic range. Although I started with a digital point and shoot zoom, I eventually graduated to a Nikon D3, several wide-angle lenses, and graduated neutral density filters, which I used on a routine basis. Because of the small apertures required to keep both foreground and background in focus (my foregrounds were often very close, and backgrounds approaching of infinity), optimal ISOs and shutter speeds were frequently impossible, requiring various compromises.



CLUB MEMBERS GALLERY . . . CONTINUED

In order to be able to take advantage of more optimal ISOs and shutter speeds, I got a tilt shift lens (Nikon 24 mm PC), using the Scheimpflug principle to maintain lower ISOs and higher shutter speeds while assuring good focus in both foreground and background. When the Nikon D810 came out I purchased that model because it's greater pixel density (36 megapixels versus 12 megapixels) would result in increased sharpness and resolution – characteristics I have always try to optimize. However, I soon found that the Nikor 24 mm PC had neither the sharpness nor resolving power to take advantage of the D 810's sensor. That's when I sold that Nikor lens, purchased a much sharper wide-angle prime lens, and used focus stacking as a means to maintain sharp focus in both foreground and background elements.

Since retiring, I've been able to spend much more time devoted to photography – both taking photos and processing them, and continue learning in both areas. I like taking focus stacked stitched panoramas, especially where the final photograph is capable of being enlarged up to 30 feet on its longest edge without any degradation in sharpness and detail. I'm glad to be able to devote more time to hiking with my camera and equipment, though as I was getting older, the weight of the equipment I carried became a more and more important consideration. Consequently, I traded my DSLR equipment for a mirrorless camera, which incidentally, among other things, besides being lighter, has in body image stabilization and focus peaking – two features I take advantage of extensively. As I have more time to take pictures I've also begun to expand my repertoire, photographing buildings – especially older structures in juxtaposition with more modern ones, street photography (though neither Greensboro, Burlington, Durham, nor Raleigh seem to have a plethora of people on the street at any one time – at least not when I've been there), and abandoned and dilapidated structures. I also enjoy putting these pictures on a website.

Hope you all get to do things you enjoy as much as I enjoy photography,

Dave (www.dpkapphoto.com)



CLUB MEMBERS GALLERY . . . CONTINUED

Reception for Sandra Whitesell
featured artist at the Burlington Artist League



How to Photograph Christmas Lights

It's Christmas time!! You know what that means—Christmas lights! Here are a few simple steps to help you take better photos of Christmas lights. Whether you have a point and shoot or a DSLR, you can use these steps to improve your photos.

Use a tripod! You will need to be able to take photos in low lighting and with longer shutter speeds. Get a tripod! If you want crisp sharp pictures of Christmas lights you need to use a tripod. Did I mention, use a tripod???



I wish my house looked like this! No, this isn't from a Pottery Barn catalog. My friend, Megan, has the most amazing house and she actually did wrap all her presents in wrapping paper that matched her ornaments. I love it!

How to Photograph Christmas Lights . . . Continued

Turn off your flash. Your camera, whether it is a point and shoot or a DSLR, will want to put the flash on in low lighting, unless you are shooting in manual mode. Make sure you turn it off so the flash does not wash out your photo. Let the lights illuminate your subject.



Open up your aperture. Who doesn't love Christmas light bokeh?? In order to achieve this you need to have your aperture pretty wide open.



How to Photograph Christmas Lights . . . Continued

Close up/narrow your aperture. Okay, I know you are scratching your head and saying “But you just said open up your aperture.” This is true if you want some bokeh, have your aperture wide open. However, if you would like the starburst effect in your photos, then you need to close it up to at least f/18.



Wait until 30 minutes after sunset to take outdoor shots. I think most people typically think they need to wait until it is completely dark outside to take photos of their house or a light display. If you go out shortly after sunset, it is still dark enough to see the lights but you are able to capture a lot of the surrounding details.



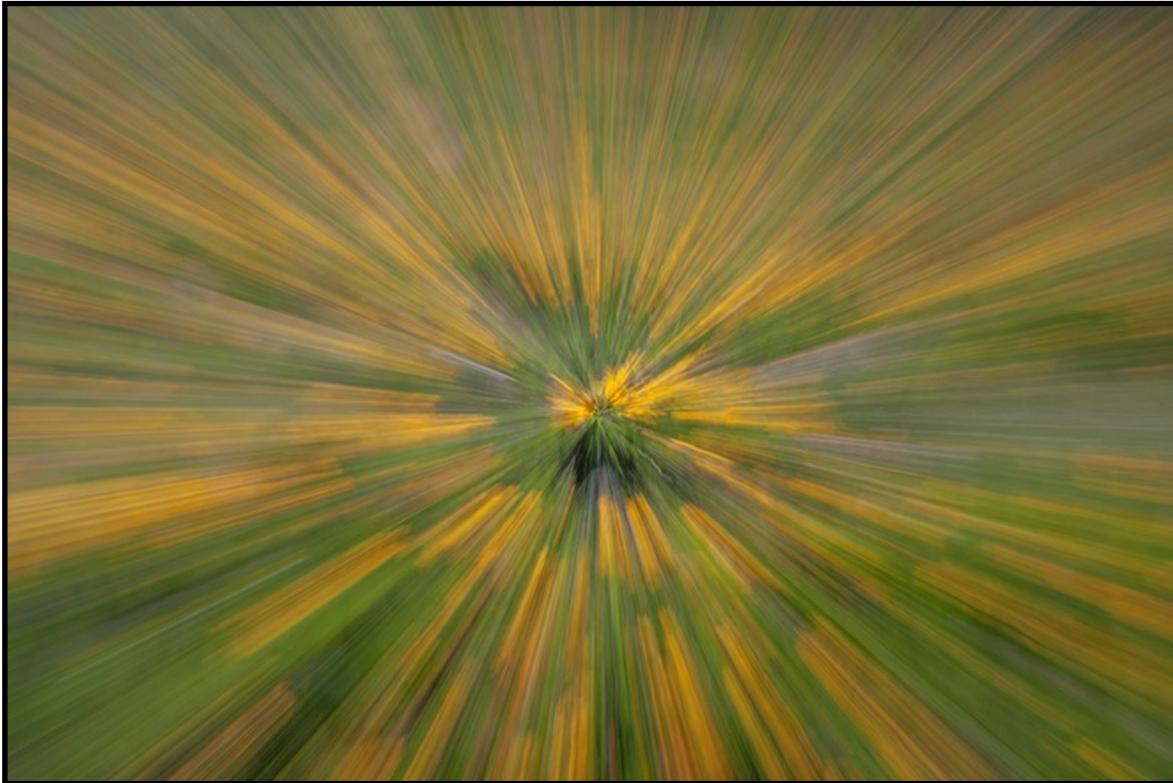
Photos used with permission by Megan Cieloha

CLICK IT UP A NOTCH

Give It Some Time

By Russ Burden

I've often heard people say that life passes by in the blink of an eye and the years go by so quickly, all is a blur. It's with this in mind that we, as photographers, have one up on the rest of the crowd. Life is good and that's why it passes so speedily. As we journey through life and experience our adventures, we have the power to stop time in a 1/250th of a second. Heck, we can now freeze events at 1/8000th of a second! But if life is so good that it goes by in a blur, why do most photographers make it their goal to bring the action to a standstill and capture every moment in a frozen state? Life's blur is positive, so apply the blur concept to your image to exaggerate movement in artistic ways to literally make life a blur!



Give It Some Time . . . Continued

Learn to Enjoy Your Lack of Focus: Some time ago, one of the tips of the week I wrote was called, "Use Your Eyes To Listen." Here's another quip that's analogous: "Close Your Eyes In Order To See." When we encounter the same subjects again and again, we tend to repeat what we've done successfully in the past. Even if we have great images of that subject, human nature has us mirror what we've already shot. It's safe, and we know it works, so we replicate it. Think about the above quote—if we take a moment to close our eyes when we see a familiar subject, it engages our brain and we delve deeper into thought. We see things we may not have noticed if we kept our eyes open.

Take a look at the two seascape images. The composition is balanced and the light is acceptable but the image made at 1/25th of a second is boring—been there, done that tens of thousands of times. Close your eyes to see what you could do to make it different and possibly unique. Break out your 6-stop ND filter, lower the ISO, close the aperture all the way and make a long exposure to exaggerate the movement of the surf. Let time pass you by, and when you do open your eyes to study the LCD, you'll be glad you closed your eyes to see new pathways.



Give It Some Time . . . Continued

Life's a Blur, So Run with It: You plan an excursion to the California redwoods because you love trees and have seen wonderful images of them in print. You arrive in California, make the drive to the best grove, begin to walk the trail, set up your tripod and start to scratch your head: "It's a bunch of tree trunks and they're big." Click goes the shutter, you look at the LCD and what you dreamed of isn't appearing on the back of your camera. Where's the good light? Where's the fog? The flowers aren't blooming at the base of the trunks. Your photographic bubble is burst. Rather than look at a static scene and reconcile mediocrity, think about what you can do to turn what's stationary into something dramatic. In the two images of the redwoods, the first is a generic recording of a messy forest floor with redwood trunks and a busy background. Not being one who throws in the towel, I set my camera to make a 15-shot multiple exposure. After each frame, I moved the vertical axis of my pan and tilt head ever so slightly. The end result is photo 2 of the trunks below.



Give It Some Time . . . Continued

Blur the Line between Sharp and Zoomed: Technology allows us to accomplish things more efficiently, faster and with greater precision. This is contrary to blurring reality, but there's a keyword in the title of this section that provides an avenue of creativity and brings the photographer full circle back to blur. By now you realize the word is "zoomed." A field of flowers is a field of flowers recorded again and again and again. What can be done to change it up a bit? Close your eyes to see! Attach your wide-angle zoom and during a slow exposure, zoom the lens to create radial and telescopic lines of the scene before you. Slow down the exposure and let the wind paint the sensor with color. Close your eyes to see! Try the multiple exposure technique and move the camera not just vertically but horizontally to add another variable. The bottom line is let life be a blur and take advantage of some photographic techniques to exaggerate the world in motion before your eyes.



Alamance Photography Club

Annual dues for 2019

Individual = \$40.00 Family = \$60.00

Student = \$15.00

Payable by check or Cash at future meetings.*

**Members who wish to pay their dues by mail with a check may pick up from the Treasurer a self-addressed envelope at the meetings. Note: If dues are paid by a bank automatic check, be sure to pick up information regarding the recent change of address for the Treasurer.*

Member's Name will be removed from membership

Roster for Non-payment of dues after

February 19, 2019

Top 12 Image Editing Skills Every Photographer Should Know

By John Huegel

Before you start editing, make sure that you have a good image work flow. This means saving originals in a separate place to prevent you from damaging or destroying the original image. And get familiar with your program's UNDO capability—usually the Ctrl-Z key is a shortcut to undo the most recent image change. Don't forget Save As, which allows you to save a copy of the image with another name so you don't disturb the original.



Photo by Shawn Clover; ISO 100, f/8, 1/60-second exposure

Top 12 Image Editing Skills Every Photographer Should Know . . . Continued

Crop - This tool allows you to remove some of the image. Generally, you shape a rectangle around the area you want to keep and the rest is removed. The area inside the rectangle becomes your new image. Related to this tool are the rotate and straighten tools. Rotate allows you to rotate the image, and Straighten does a similar task, allowing you to specify a horizon line or reference point. I recommend to rotate first and then crop after you have the proper orientation.

Brightness and Contrast - This tool lets you increase or decrease the relationship between brights and darks (contrast), and increase or decrease the overall brightness of the image. Combinations of brightness and contrast settings can have very dramatic impact to your image, adding extra “punch” or softening the visual impact. It can also add emphasis to sunsets and other scenic shots. If your image appears flat or dull, this is a good tool to try.

Saturation - This tool is used to increase the color of an image. Used to excess, the result can be artificial, and skin tones can be made to look unnatural. But for floral and outdoor images, this tool can be used to sweeten the color impact of an image.

Resize - This tool is used to change the size and number of pixels, or image dots, in an image file. When sending something to a website for instance, you may want to reduce the image size so that it does not take too long to load. When sending an image to be printed on a large size, you may want to size it larger. Many programs will try to fill in the missing spaces if you attempt to resize an image beyond its original pixel dimensions. Called interpolation, this program can deliver mixed results if you are trying to increase the images size too far beyond its original dimensions. Combined with Crop, this is a good way to preview and prepare an image to be printed in a specific paper size.

Color Temperature/Color Adjust - This tool lets you adjust the image's color temperature. If your camera's white balance was not matched up to the color temperature of the predominant light source, the resulting image can have a color cast that is undesirable. Using this tool, either choose a color neutral selection (white or grey) in the photo and let the tool shift the color balance to match, or tweak some settings or sliders to make the image “warmer” or “cooler”. It's better to get it right in the camera, but this tool can help rescue photos that otherwise have improper color casts.

Top 12 Image Editing Skills Every Photographer Should Know . . . Continued

Curves and Levels - These tools are a more sophisticated version of the Brightness and Contrast tools. Levels allows you to change the white, mid and black points of an image and it will shift the image accordingly. It is useful in pushing darks darker, whites whiter, and adding some lightness to midtones. It is useful to bring up skin tones on faces while keeping very bright elements unchanged. Curves is even more flexible, where you can describe a very sophisticated transformation of the original image's characteristics. Both of these tools can also be used to excess, and the result is often surreal or abnormal in appearance.

Clone/Rubber Stamp - This tool lets you remove items from the image or otherwise re-touch the image. For example, if you have a telephone pole in an otherwise perfect rural image, you can use this tool to duplicate the part of the picture next to the pole and paint over the pole with that section. With some practice, you can edit out glare on glasses, braces, background objects and much more. Related tools include Scratch Remover and Object Remover in some programs.

Eraser - This tool lets you remove sections of an image. This leaves behind a blank spot or hole. It's useful to isolate an object to place on another image, for example to cut out a person so you can drop them into a location that was not in the original image. A variant of this tool is the Background Eraser.

Layers - Learning to use layers opens up an entirely new world in editing. Basically you create two or more overlays that can have varying amounts of transparency so that you create a new image combining parts of these layers. You can specify how the layers interact with each other, so that one may enhance the color of another. That feature is called the "blend mode". You can also use layers to superimpose items on each other, for example to put your subject in a new location.

Sharpen - This tool lets you increase the edge contrast of the image, which makes small features stand out more. You will generally sharpen only as a last step after resizing, because sharpening emphasis will change with the image size. You can selectively sharpen parts of the images, such as eyes, to draw attention to them. You can also apply a sharpening to the overall image. The Unsharp Mask will let you specify just how small and how much to apply the sharpening effect.

Top 12 Image Editing Skills Every Photographer Should Know . . . Continued

Channel Mixer - This is a tool that allows you to change the amount of red, green and blue in the image. But its real value is in being able to tailor a black and white conversion to include specific amounts of red, green and blue. If you choose “monochrome” as the output, you can mix the red, green and blue channels to bring out features that a straight black and white conversion will not be able to do. The defaults include 33% each of red, green and blue. Experiment with 80%/10%/10% of various modes and see how elements like bricks or blue sky or green leaves will change from dark to light in relation to other objects in the image.

One Step Fix/Smart Fix - This tool often combines much of the above tools into an easy to use dialog that will let you play with many things at once to improve an image. Even if you use this tool most of the time, remember that the individual elements above can be utilized individually to create image enhancements that the simpler tools cannot provide.

Want to learn more? Take a handful of images that you are not totally pleased with, and spend some time using each tool to see how you can expand your creative and editing skills to produce truly great works of photographic art!

PICTURECORRECT.com

Outdoor Photographer

- ◆ A polarizing filter does more than just darken a blue sky. A polarizer removes glare from shiny surfaces to reveal the underlying color. It also helps remove shine from reflective surfaces. There's no Photoshop filter that can replicate these effects, so be sure to use a polarizer in the field at the time of capture.
- ◆ Don't leave your subject without making verticals, horizontals, wide angle and telephoto images. Once you've covered these bases, move to your left and repeat the vertical, horizontal wide and tele shots. Then move to your right and repeat again. Then go behind your subject and repeat again. Too often, photographers get concrete feet and never move around. They get comfortable in their staked-out area and neglect what may be to their side. They also fail to look up or down. So while you're at it, don't neglect to photograph what may be at your feet or higher above.

How to Capture and Stitch Panoramas

By Joaquin Duenas

Capturing and creating panoramas can be as easy as following three simple steps or can become a nightmare if done wrong. Great panoramas will be created if you decide to spend the extra time and follow some recommendations. Photoshop will stitch your images together, without your intervention, simply by using the function ‘Photomerge’.

So let's start. Shooting panoramas is not that difficult, just follow these rules and Photoshop will do the rest:

- Always use your tripod. (I guess you're getting the idea; they're not fun to carry, but they're handy, useful, and sometimes necessary.)
- Do not use automatic white balance. If you do, your panorama is going to look patched. The best option is to set your camera's white balance to 'Cloudy', or if shooting in a different environment use the matching white balance.
- Shoot using portrait format, rather than landscape. You'll have to shoot more images to cover the same space, but it will pay off with less edge distortion and a better looking panorama.

How to Shoot for a Panorama

Okay, so we covered three fundamental steps, now let's capture the images.

1. The first thing that you have to do is set the exposure. Select the area that you believe has the correct exposure, press your shutter button halfway down, and make note of the f-stop and shutter speed.
2. Set your camera to Manual Mode and use the settings recorded in the last step, by doing this, it should mean that all the exposures will match during the stitching process. If you shoot in Automatic Mode, you run the risk of having different exposure settings in each segment—a nightmare trying to correct using Photoshop.
3. The next step is to set your focus. Focus on your main element using auto-focus, then turn it off so that your camera doesn't refocus on each shot. You are now all set; start shooting your panorama.

How to Capture and Stitch Panoramas . . . Continued

4. Shoot the first image, using either a cable release or at least your camera's timer. Continue shooting, making sure you overlap each image at least 25 percent. This is very important for Photoshop to work properly. All the images have to overlap at least 25 percent—better if it is close to 50 percent.
5. Continue shooting, and shoot as fast as you can—you don't want conditions to change (light, movement, clouds, etc.).
6. The final step is the easy part. If you followed all the necessary steps, Photoshop will do the job for you. Go to Photoshop's File menu, choose Automate, and then Photomerge. Select the images and click on Attempt to Automatically Arrange Source Images, and finally click OK. A couple of minutes will go by, and you will end up with a seamless panorama.



Photo by See-ming Lee; ISO 640, f/8.0, 1/30-second exposure

Tips for Better Panoramas

Take note of the following tips if you want to even create better looking panoramas:

- Even though Photoshop can accommodate a wide range of focal lengths, it works at its best if you **stay away from the wide angle end** of your camera's zoom range. Play it safe and use a range between 35 and 80mm. Photoshop will have difficulties matching up edges if you shoot, for example, at 20mm.

How to Capture and Stitch Panoramas . . . Continued

- **Shoot left to right or right to left**—just be consistent. The easy part is that if you shoot left to right, when you check your photo organizer you can easily tell that you have a set of photos to be used for your Panorama. Here is a simple trick, before starting to shoot, **take a shot of your finger** and when you are finished take another shot of your finger.
- **Close-ups don't work** for panoramas. The closer you capture images for your panorama, the curvier the straight lines will look—long straight roads tend to curve as if you were using a fish-eye lens. So try to keep your distance from your scene with a constant uniform distance.
- Photoshop creates a wide angle image while stitching shots together, which in some cases will make cropping a difficult task. When shooting, remember to **shoot more of the scene than you are trying to create**. The more the better, since your final image will always tend to curve.
- The best panoramas are taken outdoors. This doesn't mean you can't shoot great looking indoor panoramas, just that you have to be more careful when doing so, since you are shooting closer when you are indoors and objects and furniture will appear to shift and move. There are two solutions to this challenge. The first one is using a **specialized tripod head**, which can be expensive. The cheap option, which takes patience and practice, involves **adjusting the position of your tripod**. After the first shot, pick a near object on the side of your viewfinder and note its position relative to the background. When you turn to take the next shot, adjust the tripod so that the object keeps the same position—tricky but effective.



Photo by Tim Donnelly

Shooting panoramas can be fun, and the end result spectacular. Try it—you'll be amazed!