

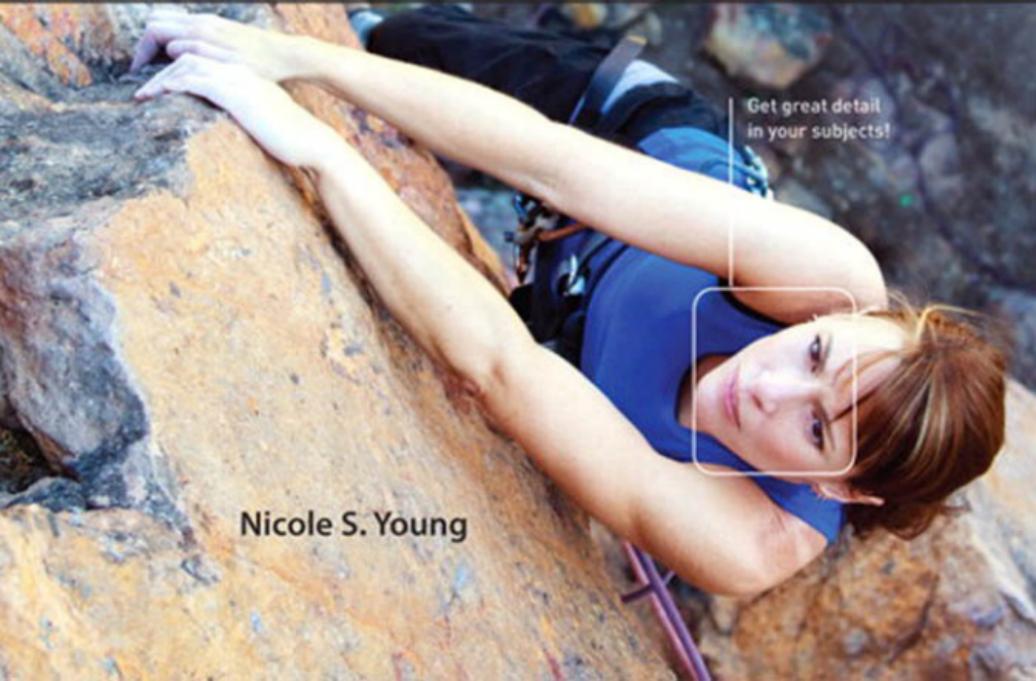


Learn the best
ways to compose
your pictures!



Canon EOS 60D

From Snapshots to Great Shots



Get great detail
in your subjects!

Nicole S. Young

Canon EOS 60D: From Snapshots to Great Shots

Nicole S. Young

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DEDICATION

To my mom and dad, for your love and support.

I love you guys!

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

When it comes to writing a book, there's really no way to do it alone. This is my second book and another addition to the "Snapshots to Great Shots" family, and I really had a lot of fun in the process. I love everything about photography, and writing about it is no exception.

I want to first thank my parents. Even though many miles of roads, mountains, and cornfields separate us, you two are always my inspiration and motivation.

I'd also like to thank the beautiful people portrayed in images throughout this book. I truly enjoy photographing people and couldn't have created many of these photos without your help.

In the few years I've lived in Utah, I've gotten to know some wonderful people, and the photography community here is above and beyond what I've ever experienced. Thanks so much to the photographers I've met through the Photowalking Utah group, many of whom I now call my friends. I'd also like to thank the local camera store, Pictureline, for your great customer service and getting a Canon 60D in my hands so I could start this project.

Last, but not least, I would like to thank the people directly involved in the process of putting this book together. Thanks to my editor, Valerie, along with the rest of the team involved for their wonderful expertise (and for putting up with me, LOL) throughout these ten chapters. I'd also like to thank Scott and Ted at Peachpit, who started me on this roller coaster called book writing. I'd also like to thank my technical editor, Rich, who had the ever-so-lucky job of reading every bit, going through every step, and enduring my sporadic deadlines and procrastination.

To everyone involved in helping with this book, to my friends, mentors, and family... thank you for believing in me.

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Introduction

If you are reading this book, there's a pretty good chance that you have read other "how-to" photography books. Many of those books will be either camera-specific (how to use the settings on your camera) or will be about the methods and techniques used to create specific types of images (landscape, portrait, HDR, etc.). In this book you get the best of both worlds—you learn how to use your 60D and its specific features as well as the different methods and photography techniques to capture those images.

Here's a quick Q&A about the book to help you understand what you'll see in the following pages:

Q: WHAT CAN I EXPECT TO LEARN FROM THIS BOOK?

A: My goal in writing this book is to help owners of the Canon 60D learn more about the specific settings and features of their camera and put that knowledge to use to make great images. You'll also find a ton of general and advanced photography tips and tricks in each of the chapters to push your photography to the next level.

Q: IS EVERY CAMERA FEATURE GOING TO BE COVERED?

A: No. I wrote about what I feel are some of the most important features on your 60D, but don't worry! There's a lot of information in here. This is more than just a book on simple steps to get you started...I really dig into some of the advanced features to make sure that you get as much as possible out of your 60D.

Q: SO, IF I ALREADY OWN THE MANUAL, WHY DO I NEED THIS BOOK?

A: Your manual does a great job of explaining how to use the features in your camera, but it doesn't necessarily tell you why or when to use them. I tried my best to do both so that you not only know about the knobs, buttons, and settings in your 60D but also what the best situations are to make use of the features and settings on your camera.

Q: WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES ALL ABOUT?

A: At the end of each chapter, I list a few exercises you can do to practice and solidify some of the techniques and settings you learned about in that chapter. Feel free to try them out if you like, and if you do, be sure to check out the Flickr group and share what you've learned!

Q: SHOULD I READ THE BOOK STRAIGHT THROUGH OR CAN I SKIP AROUND FROM CHAPTER TO CHAPTER?

A: Well, both! The first few chapters are going to give you a lot of basics behind your 60D and digital photography in general, so if you don't quite have a grasp of either of those yet, it's a good idea to read through them before heading on to the rest of the book.

A close-up portrait of a young girl's face, showing her eyes, nose, and mouth. Her skin is wet, with several water droplets visible on her forehead and cheeks. She has a slight smile. The background is out of focus.

4

ISO 100
1/500 sec.
f/2.8
50mm lens



Say Cheese!

SETTINGS AND FEATURES TO MAKE GREAT PORTRAITS

Photographing people is challenging, rewarding, and fun all at the same time. When you photograph a person, you are capturing a memory, a moment in time. Images of friends and family often become our most cherished possessions. The people you photograph are depending on you to make them look good, and while you can't always change how a person looks, you can control the way you photograph that individual. In this chapter we will explore some camera features and techniques that can help you create great portraits.

PORING OVER THE PICTURE

I used a long lens and a wide aperture to blur out the details in the background.

I love to photograph people, and children are definitely the most fun (and challenging) to work with. For this image, I let the little girl play with the arts and crafts items and captured her just enjoying the moment. Sometimes simply letting kids play and be themselves can make for an amazing portrait.

This image was photographed at an angle to portray a sense of movement and give it a different look.





● Catching children in candid moments can be priceless. This little girl was very focused on her painting, and it made for the perfect shot.

ISO 100
1/60 sec.
f/4
70-200mm lens

PORING OVER THE PICTURE

Newborn babies are so much fun to photograph. This little girl was one week old when I took her photo, and she was just an angel throughout the entire photo shoot. For this image, I used diffused sunlight coming through a big window to light the baby with a very soft light.

I used a wide aperture to compress the background, giving it shallow depth of field.

I got down to the baby's level for a more pleasing perspective.

ISO 200
1/250 sec.
f/2.8
50mm lens



● A reflector was used to bring light back into the shaded areas of the little girl's face.

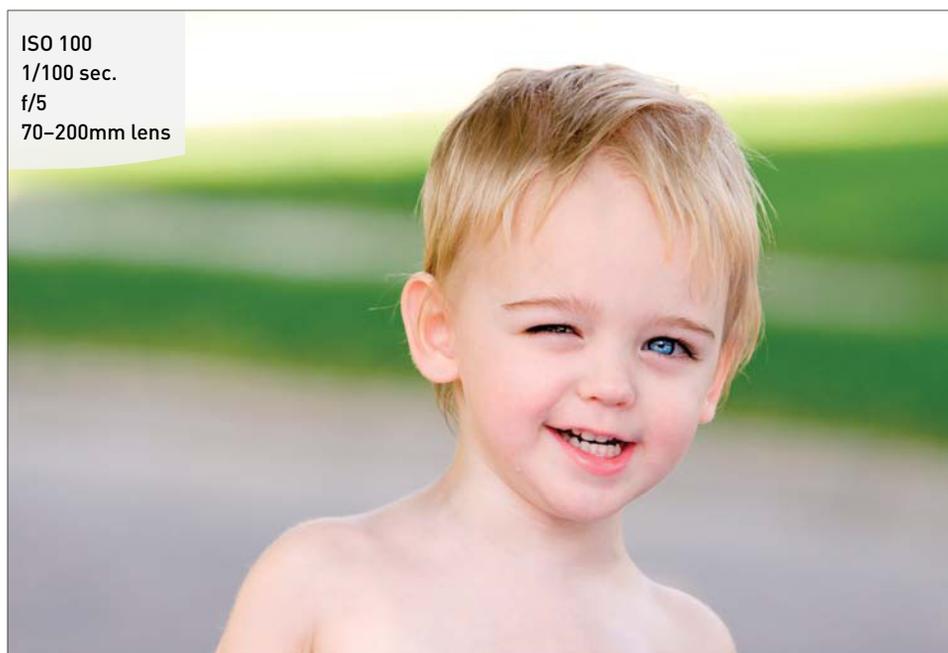
USING APERTURE PRIORITY MODE

In the previous chapter you learned about the different shooting modes, and when photographing people, you're likely to be most successful using the Aperture Priority (Av) mode. With portraits, we usually like to see a nice, soft, out-of-focus background, and you can only guarantee that you'll achieve those results if you have control of the aperture setting (**Figure 4.1**). You'll also be letting more light into your camera, which means that your ISO can be set lower, giving your image less noise and more detail.

Now, don't think that you have to use a crazy-fast lens (such as $f/1.2$ or $f/2.8$) to achieve great results and get a blurry background. Often an f-stop of 4.0 or 5.6 will be sufficient, and you might even find that having an extremely wide-open aperture gives you too little depth of field for a portrait, since you want most of the face to be in focus. I shoot the majority of my portrait photographs with a lens that has a maximum aperture of $f/4$, and I always achieve the results I'm looking for.

FIGURE 4.1

For this image, I used a large aperture combined with a long lens to decrease the depth of field and make the background blurry.



GO WIDE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PORTRAITS

Sometimes you'll find that a person's environment is important to the story you want to tell. When photographing people this way, you will want to use a smaller aperture for greater depth of field so that you can include details of the scene surrounding the subject.

Also keep in mind that in order to capture the person and their surroundings, you'll need to adjust your view and use a wider than normal lens. Wide-angle lenses require less stopping down of the aperture to achieve greater depth of field. This is because wide-angle lenses cover a greater area, so the depth of field appears to cover a greater percentage of the scene.

A wider lens might also be necessary to relay more information about the scenery (**Figure 4.2**). Select a lens length that is wide enough to tell the story but not so wide that you distort the subject. There's nothing quite as unflattering as giving someone a big, distorted nose (unless you are going for that sort of look). When shooting a portrait with a wide-angle lens, keep the subject away from the edge of the frame. This will reduce the distortion, especially in very wide focal lengths.



FIGURE 4.2
A wide-angle lens and a small aperture allowed me to show as much detail as possible in the room.

LIGHTING IS EVERYTHING

Photography is all about capturing light, so the most important thing in all of your images is the quality of the light on your subject. When you photograph people, you typically have a lot of control over when and where the image is taken, so you can manipulate your environment and find the best-possible light for your subject.

Before I get into what you should do, let me first talk about what *not* to do. It's a common misconception that bright sunlight is great for portrait photographs. Of course, this is not entirely untrue, since there are some creative and amazing ways to use harsh natural sunlight and make great portraits. The problem is that when the sun is at its highest point, in the middle of the day, it's going to cast some very harsh shadows on your subject and probably make them squinty-eyed as well.

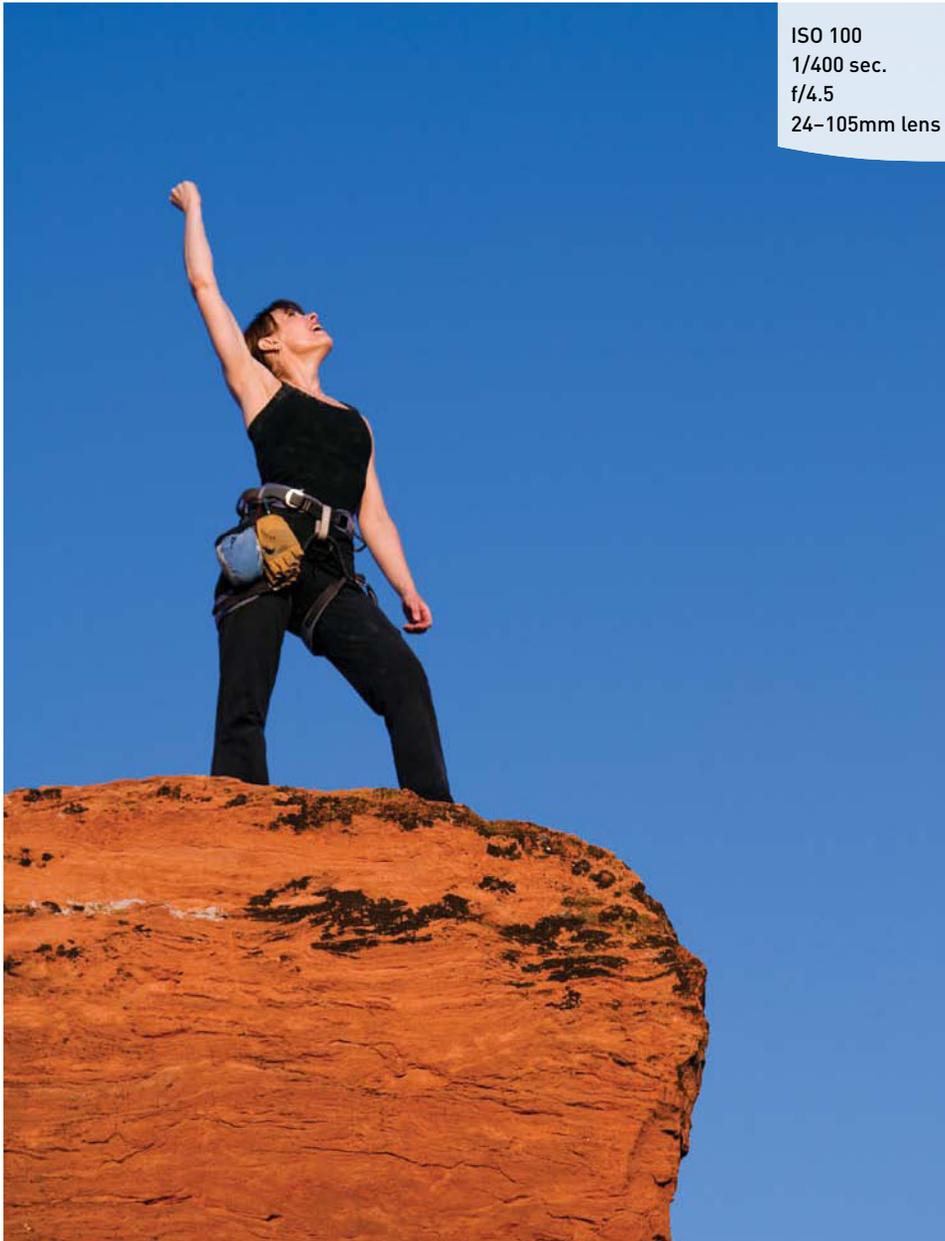
There are several easy ways to achieve beautifully lit portraits in an outdoor setting, and here are my two favorites. The first is to find shade. It might not seem like it at first, but on a sunny day an extraordinary amount of light fills shaded areas, for example, on the side of a building or underneath a covered patio. This light is diffused sunlight and will give a very soft, even light on your subject's face (**Figure 4.3**).

FIGURE 4.3

The light was diffused evenly across the little boy's face in this image, taken in a shady area on the side of a house.



The second way to light your images outdoors is to use the light that occurs during the “golden hour” of the day. This is the time period that occurs one hour after sunrise and one hour before sunset (many photographers are more likely to use the evening light since it’s more convenient). The quality of this light is soft, warm-toned, and very pleasing for portraits (**Figure 4.4**).



ISO 100
1/400 sec.
f/4.5
24–105mm lens

FIGURE 4.4
This image was photographed in the evening, just before the sun had set, lighting the woman with very warm tones.

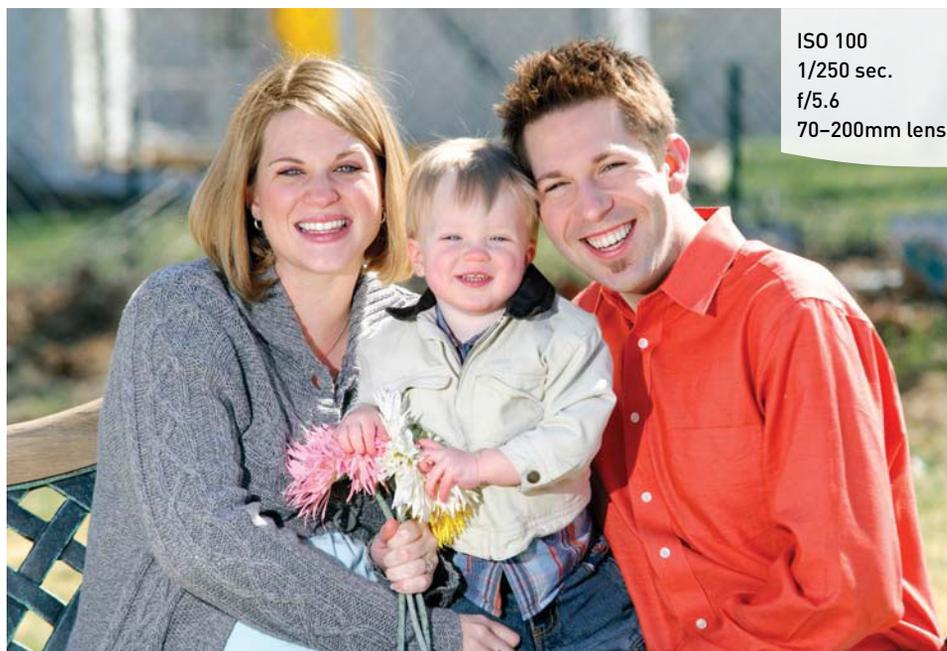
WHEN TO USE THE POP-UP FLASH

I'm not usually a big fan of using the pop-up flash or any type of on-axis flash, which is a light source that comes from the same direction as the camera. It usually results in lighting that is very flat, and often adds harsh shadows behind the subject. But you won't always have the perfect lighting situation for each photograph, so keeping an on-camera, ready-to-go flash on hand can be very practical. It's also good for those moments when you just have to get the shot and there's not a lot of light available, for example, if your baby takes his or her first steps in a darkened room. You wouldn't want to miss that, and the pop-up flash is a handy tool to help capture those moments.

The flash can also be useful if you are in a situation where the afternoon sunlight is the only light available and you need to use a fill light. A fill light will "fill in" the areas in your subject that are not already lit by the main light, in this case the sun. When photographing people outdoors in the direct sunlight, you don't want them to face directly into the light. Try to position your subject so the sun is off to their side or behind them. This is a good situation in which to use a fill light, such as the pop-up flash on your 60D, to properly expose their face (**Figure 4.5**).

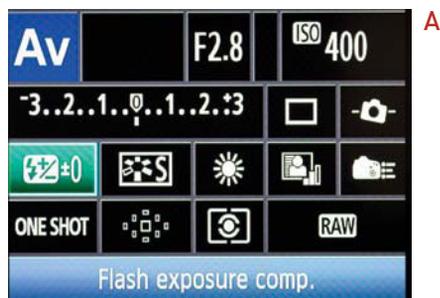
FIGURE 4.5

I positioned this family with the sun out of their faces and filled in the shadows with a flash.



SETTING UP AND SHOOTING WITH FILL FLASH

1. Press the Flash button on the front of the camera to raise your pop-up flash into the ready position.
2. Press the Q button on the back of the camera to bring up the Quick Control screen, and then use the Multi-Controller to select Flash Exposure Compensation (A). Then press the Set button.
3. Use any dial to increase or decrease the flash exposure (this is similar to exposure compensation, but you are only affecting the amount of light that your flash will generate for each shot) (B).
4. Take a photograph and check your LCD Monitor to see if it looks good. If not, try increasing or reducing the flash meter in one-third-stop increments until you get the correct amount of fill flash for your shot.



There are other options for filling in areas of your image that need additional light. A reflector is a very common and inexpensive accessory that you can use to bounce light back onto your subject. You can buy these at any camera store, but you could even use a large piece of white foam core or anything that is reflective (like a sun shade for the windshield of your car) to get similar results.

METERING MODE FOR PORTRAITS

Your camera gives you four different metering modes that tell it where and how to meter the light. Each mode has a unique way of reading the scene, and which mode you use will depend on the environment you are shooting in.

I use the Evaluative metering mode for the majority of my work, and this mode is ideal for portraits. However, sometimes you'll run into situations where the background is much darker or lighter than the person you are photographing, which could give you an incorrect exposure. In these cases you'll want to use Partial metering, which will meter a smaller portion of the center of the frame (**Figure 4.6**). The great thing about digital SLRs is that with instant feedback on the LCD, you are able to make adjustments as needed if the metering mode didn't measure the light properly.

SELECTING A METERING MODE

1. Press the Q button on the back of the camera to bring up the Quick Control screen, and then use the Multi-Controller to select the Metering mode at the bottom of the screen (**A**).
2. Press the Set button and then choose the metering mode that you would like to use (I recommend starting with Evaluative) (**B**).
3. You can also change this setting on the LCD Panel on the top of the camera. Just press the Metering Mode selection button, and use Main dial to scroll through the different settings (**C**).



ISO 100
1/60 sec.
f/2.8
24–70mm lens

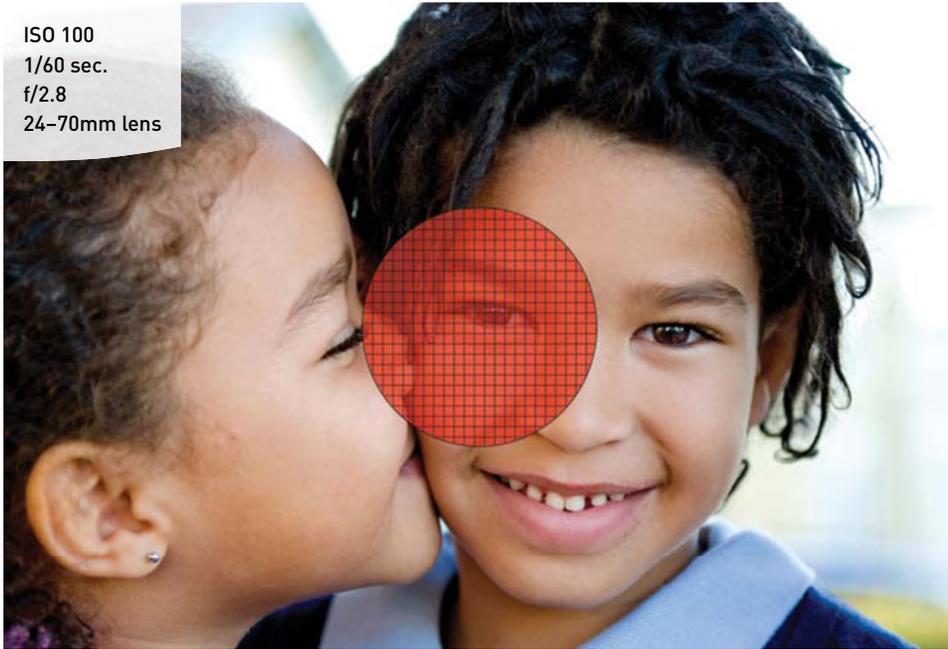


FIGURE 4.6
The shaded circle in the center represents the area in your image that the Partial metering mode will meter from while you are looking through the viewfinder.

SHOOTING WITH THE AE LOCK FEATURE

Once you select your metering, you can lock that setting in your camera temporarily if you want to recompose your image—for example, if you are in an environment where there is sufficient light on your subject but the background is significantly brighter or darker. The metering in your camera is continuous, meaning it will change depending on where the center of the viewfinder is pointed. If you have composed the image so that the person is off-center, the camera will meter the wrong part of the scene.

To correct this, you can meter for one part of the image (your subject), lock those settings down so they don't change, and then recompose the scene and take your photo. Here's how to use the AE Lock feature on the 60D:

1. While looking through the viewfinder, place the center focus point on your subject.
2. Press and hold the AE Lock button to get a meter reading (**Figure 4.7**).
3. Recompose your shot, and then take the photo.
4. To take more than one photo without having to take another meter reading, just hold down the AE Lock button until you are done using the meter setting.



FIGURE 4.7
The AE Lock button will lock the aperture and shutter speed settings so you can recompose and get a proper exposure on your subject.

FOCUSING: THE EYES HAVE IT

When you look at a person, probably the very first thing you notice is their eyes—it's just natural to make eye contact with other people, and we even do this with pets and other animals. This is extremely important when creating photographs, because you want to be sure that your focus is on your subject's eyes (**Figure 4.8**). Also keep in mind that if the person is positioned at an angle, it's best to focus on the eye that is nearest the camera, since that's where we naturally tend to look first (**Figure 4.9**).

FIGURE 4.8

It's important to set your focus on a person's eyes when photographing portraits.



ISO 100
1/125 sec.
f/2.8
Lensbaby lens



FIGURE 4.9
I focused on this little boy's left eye since it was closest to my camera.

In Chapter 1, “The 60D Top Ten List,” I discussed autofocus on the 60D. In my experience, the best option for portrait work is to pick one of the nine focus points and stay away from automatic selection. You can move the focus around within your viewfinder to find the eye, ensuring that you are focusing on the proper part of the image before taking your photo. Leaving the focusing decision up to the camera means you could end up with an in-focus nose and blurry eyes, or, even worse, it might try to focus on the background instead of the person.

FOCUSING TIP FOR PORTRAIT WORK

When focusing on your subject's eyes, do your best to focus on the iris—the colored part of the eyeball. This is especially important if you are doing a very close-up portrait where the person's face fills most of the frame, since the focus area will be much more noticeable. Sometimes, if you're shooting with a large aperture and have shallow depth of field, it's easy to miss focus and instead have the eyelash in focus and the eyeball a bit blurry.

SELECTING AND SETTING THE AF POINT

1. Press the AF Point Selection button (A) and look in your viewfinder.
2. Use the Multi-Controller to move the red focus point to the area you want to focus on in the viewfinder. To set it directly in the middle, press the Set button.
3. You can also make these changes by using the Quick Control screen—just press the Q button and use the Multi-Controller to scroll to the AF point selection at the bottom. Then use either the Quick Control dial or the Main dial to select your AF point (B).



A



B

I typically set the focus-point location in the middle, find my subject's eye, and press the Shutter button halfway to set focus. With my finger still holding the Shutter button halfway down, I recompose and take my photo. I find that the “focus and recompose” method is a much quicker way to photograph people. Speed is important because people tend to move around during the shooting process, and keeping the focus point in the middle simplifies my shooting.

CATCHLIGHT

A *catchlight* is that little sparkle that adds life to the eyes (**Figure 4.10**). When you are photographing a person with a light source in front of them, you will usually get a reflection of that light in the eye, be it your flash, the sun, or something else brightly reflecting in the eye. The light reflects off the surface of the eyes as bright highlights and serves to bring attention to the eyes. Larger catchlights from a reflector or studio softbox tend to be more attractive than tiny catchlights from a flash.



FIGURE 4.10
The catchlights in this image add even more of a sparkle to the little girl's happy expression.

COMPOSING PEOPLE AND PORTRAITS

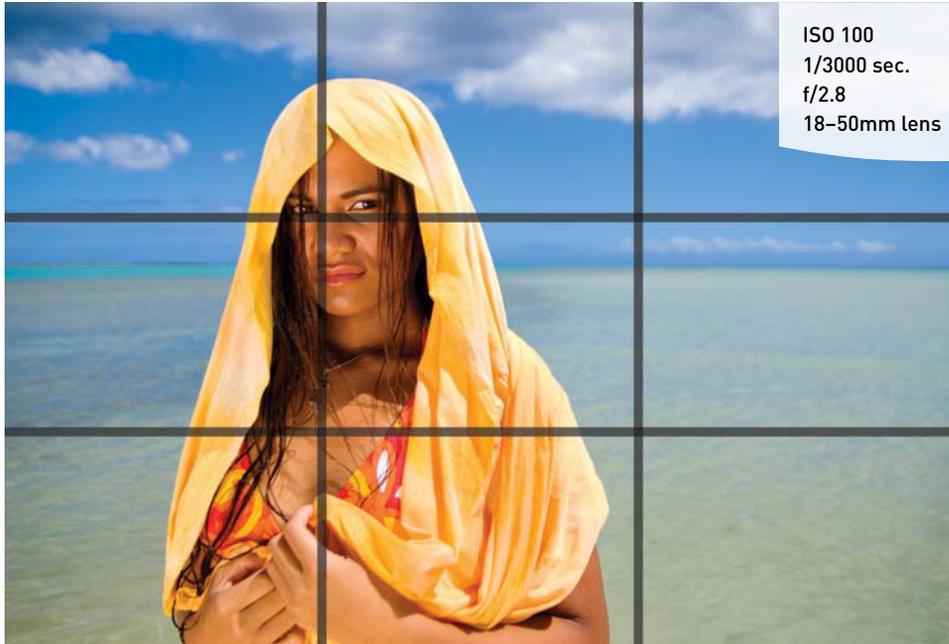
When photographing people it can be easy to get carried away with focusing on their expressions and checking your exposure, but it's always crucial to consider how the photo is composed. The placement of the person, as well as the perspective and angle you are using, can make or break the shot. Here are a few simple tips to help you create some amazing portrait compositions.

RULE OF THIRDS

One of the most basic rules of composition, the "rule of thirds," is a very good principle to stick with when photographing people. It states that you should place the subject of your photograph on a "third-line" within the frame of your viewfinder. Imagine a tic-tac-toe board, with two lines spaced evenly down the center of the frame both horizontally and vertically (**Figure 4.11**). Your goal is to place the subject on one of the intersecting lines—you're basically trying to keep the person off-center without pushing them too close to the edge of the frame.

FIGURE 4.11

The woman's face in this photo was positioned on one of the intersecting third-lines for a pleasing composition.



Another thing to keep in mind is that you want to fill the frame as much as possible with your subject. This doesn't mean that you should get in so close that you have nothing in the shot but their face, but rather that you should be close enough so that you aren't adding anything to the image that you don't want to see. This is usually done by sticking to the third-line principle of framing the head near the top third of the frame. When I hand my camera to someone else to take my photo, I always chuckle to myself when I look at the image afterwards and my head is completely centered in the frame. I usually just go into editing software and crop out the excess headroom, making it look like it was properly composed. However, it's much easier and more efficient to do as much of the work in-camera as possible.

The great thing about the 60D is that you can add a grid overlay to your LCD Monitor when shooting in Live View to help you with the composition.

SETTING UP THE GRID DISPLAY FOR LIVE VIEW SHOOTING

1. Press the Menu button and go to the fourth shooting menu tab (fourth tab from the left).
2. Use the Quick Control dial and scroll down to the menu item labeled Grid Display (A).
3. Press the Set button and select Grid 1 (B). I prefer this grid because it clearly shows the third-lines on the frame. Press the Set button to lock in this change.
4. Next, press the Live View shooting button, located on the back of your camera, and you'll see a grid overlay on your LCD Monitor.



PERSPECTIVE

When shooting with your 60D, it's very easy to take all of your images from a standing position. This of course will vary in height from person to person, but so will the people you are photographing. I usually carry a small stepladder with me when I go on location so I can vary my height with the people I'm photographing, especially since I'm shorter than most other people. The basic rule to follow is to try to stay eye level with your subject, which could mean flopping down on your belly to photograph a child or baby (Figure 4.12).

Another technique I like to use is to shoot my photos three different ways—vertical, horizontal, and slanted. I will often do one of each with the subject I'm photographing, and these are all very good ways to angle your camera for portraits. Sometimes you don't realize what will make a pleasing image until you try it out, so it's good to experiment a little bit to see what works best. My favorite angle to shoot at is a slanted angle, also referred to as "Dutch angle" (Figure 4.13). I find that doing this gives my images a sense of motion and uniqueness, since our eyes want to see things straight up and down.

FIGURE 4.12

It's often a good idea to get down to a child's level when taking their picture—I got down low to photograph this adorable baby girl.

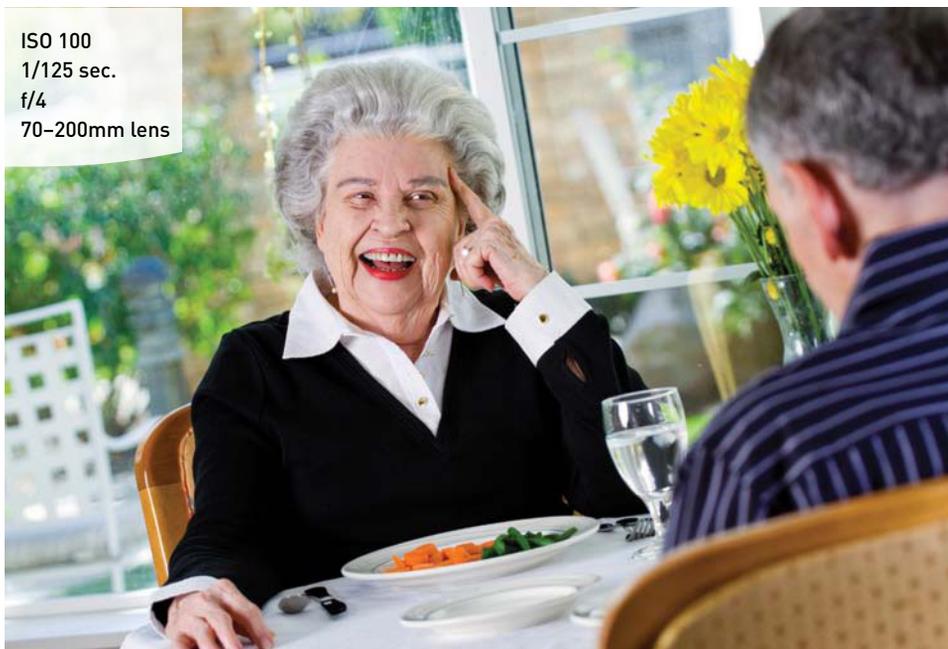
ISO 200
1/50 sec.
f/2.8
50mm lens



FIGURE 4.13

This image was photographed from a position sometimes referred to as "Dutch angle."

ISO 100
1/125 sec.
f/4
70–200mm lens



BREAK THE RULES!

So now that I've given you all of these great rules to follow when composing your image, the last rule I'm going to tell you is to break all of them! Don't think that you always need to keep an image off-center or that you have to photograph children at their level all the time (**Figure 4.14**). Experiment and find new ways to capture your images—you just might find that breaking the rules was the best thing you could have done for your image.

ISO 100
1/320 sec.
f/2.8
50mm lens



FIGURE 4.14

Breaking rules can sometimes yield great results—this image was photographed from high up, a perspective that you usually would not photograph children from.

BEAUTIFUL BLACK AND WHITE PORTRAITS

Sometimes a portrait just looks better in black and white—we see more of the person and their expression rather than their surroundings or the color of their clothing (**Figure 4.15**). You can change the picture style to Monochrome in your camera so that you are photographing the image in black and white, but when you do this, you are only giving yourself one option. If you decide you liked it better in color, you have no way to change it back.

I prefer to do all of my black and white conversions while editing the photo on my computer, and I encourage you to do the same. You can make black and white conversions, along with many other types of adjustments to your images, by using the Canon Digital Photo Professional software on the disc included with your camera. Another option is to play with the 60D's "Grainy Black and White" Creative filter—more info on this feature is presented in Chapter 10, "Advanced Techniques."



FIGURE 4.15

A black and white portrait eliminates the distraction of color and puts all the emphasis on the subject.

ISO 100
1/80 sec.
f/2.8
24–70mm lens

QUICK TIPS FOR SHOOTING BETTER PORTRAITS

Before we get to the challenges for this chapter, I thought it might be a good idea to discuss some tips that don't necessarily have anything specific to do with your camera. There are entire books that cover things like portrait lighting, posing, and so on. But here are a few pointers that will make your people photos look a lot better.

AVOID THE CENTER OF THE FRAME

This falls under the category of composition. Place your subject to the side of the frame (**Figure 4.16**)—it just looks more interesting than plunking them smack dab in the middle.



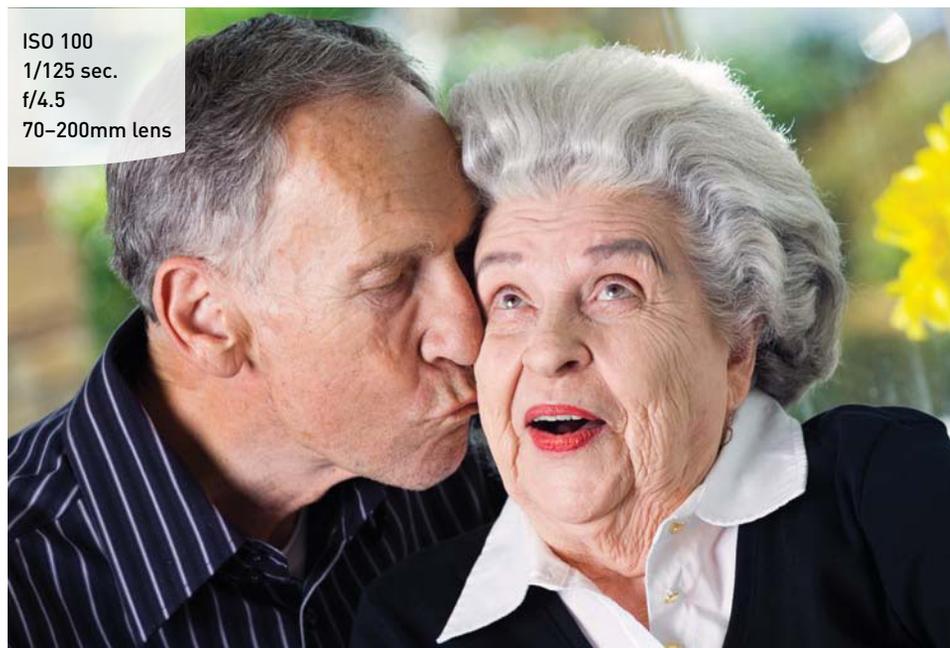
FIGURE 4.16
An off-center image creates a pleasing composition.

CHOOSE THE RIGHT LENS

Choosing the correct lens can make a huge impact on your portraits. A wide-angle lens can distort the features of your subject, which can lead to an unflattering portrait. Select a longer focal length if you will be close to your subject (**Figure 4.17**).

FIGURE 4.17

I used a long focal length to keep my distance from this couple while taking their picture.



USE THE FRAME

Have you ever noticed that most people are taller than they are wide? Turn your camera vertically for a more pleasing composition (**Figure 4.18**).

SUNBLOCK FOR PORTRAITS

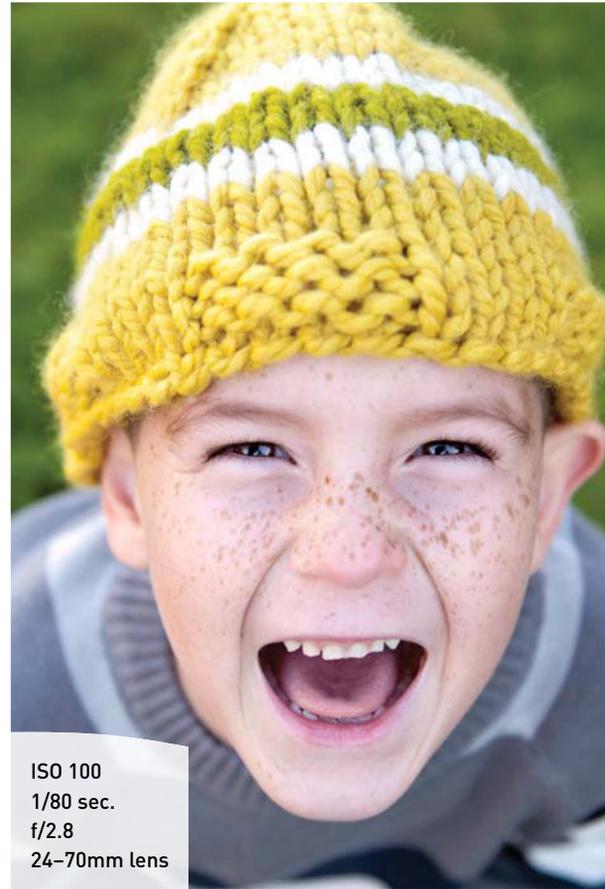
The midday sun can be harsh and can do unflattering things to people's faces. If you can, find a shady spot out of the direct sunlight (**Figure 4.19**). You will get softer shadows, smoother skin tones, and better detail. This holds true for overcast skies as well. Just be sure to adjust your white balance accordingly.



ISO 400
1/60 sec.
f/2.8
24–70mm lens

FIGURE 4.18

A vertically composed image is a good choice for many portraits.



ISO 100
1/80 sec.
f/2.8
24–70mm lens

FIGURE 4.19

A shady area will give you beautiful, diffused lighting for portraits.

KEEP AN EYE ON YOUR BACKGROUND

Sometimes it's so easy to get caught up in taking a great shot that you forget about the smaller details. Try to keep an eye on what is going on behind your subject so they don't end up with things popping out of their heads (**Figure 4.20**).

MORE THAN JUST A PRETTY FACE

Most people think of a portrait as a photo of someone's face. Don't ignore other aspects of your subject that reflect their personality—hands, especially, can go a long way toward describing someone (**Figure 4.21**).

FIGURE 4.20

I positioned this model so that there were no distracting elements directly behind her.



ISO 800
1/100 sec.
f/4
24–70mm lens

FIGURE 4.21

Find other ways to photograph people—this image of children holding hands tells a story without having to show their faces.



ISO 100
1/1250 sec.
f/2.8
24–70mm lens

GET DOWN ON THEIR LEVEL

If you want better pictures of children, don't shoot from an adult's eye level. Getting the camera down to the child's level will make your images look more personal (Figure 4.22).



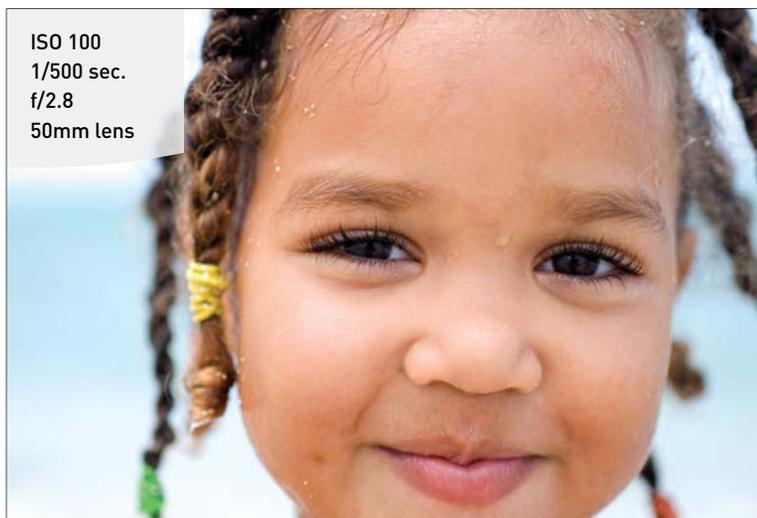
ISO 100
1/125 sec.
f/2.8
24–70mm lens

FIGURE 4.22

Children look their best when photographed from their level.

DON'T BE AFRAID TO GET CLOSE

When you are taking someone's picture, don't be afraid of getting close and filling the frame (Figure 4.23). This doesn't mean you have to shoot from a foot away; try zooming in and capturing the details.



ISO 100
1/500 sec.
f/2.8
50mm lens

FIGURE 4.23

Fill the frame to focus the attention on the person rather than their surroundings.

FIND CANDID MOMENTS

Sometimes the best images are the ones that aren't posed. Find moments when people are just being themselves (**Figure 4.24**) and use a faster shutter speed to capture expressions that happen quickly (**Figure 4.25**).

FIGURE 4.24

Sometimes the best photos are the ones that weren't planned—find these moments in your models and you can capture their true selves.



FIGURE 4.25

A fast shutter speed will help to capture moments that pass quickly.



SHOOT HIGH AND LOW

Portraits don't always need to be photographed at eye level. Try moving up, down, and all around. Shooting from a high angle is a flattering way to photograph most people (**Figure 4.26**), and sometimes it can be fun to get down on the ground and shoot up at your subject (**Figure 4.27**).



FIGURE 4.26

Try photographing portraits from different angles and perspectives.



FIGURE 4.27

I shot this from a lower perspective to include the kite in the image without introducing any distracting background elements.

Chapter 4 Challenges

Depth of field in portraits

Let's start with something simple. Grab your favorite person and start experimenting with using different aperture settings. Shoot wide open (the widest your lens goes, such as $f/2.8$ or $f/4$) and then really stopped down (like $f/22$). Look at the difference in the depth of field and the important role it plays in placing the attention on your subject. (Make sure your subject isn't standing directly against the background. Give some distance so that there is a good blurring effect of the background at the wide f-stop setting.)

Discovering the qualities of natural light

Pick a nice sunny day and try shooting some portraits in the midday sun. If your subject is willing, have them turn so the sun is in their face. If they are still speaking to you after blinding them, ask them to turn their back to the sun. Try this with and without the fill flash so you can see the difference. Finally, move them into a completely shaded spot and take a few more.

Picking the right metering method

Find a very dark or light background and place your subject in front of it. Now take a couple of shots, giving a lot of space around your subject for the background to show. Now switch metering modes and use the A \in Lock feature to get a more accurate reading of your subject. Notice the differences in exposure between the metering methods.

Share your results with the book's Flickr group!

Join the group here: [flickr.com/groups/canon60dfromsnapshotstogreatshots](https://www.flickr.com/groups/canon60dfromsnapshotstogreatshots)

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