



Underwater Photo-Tech

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Digital SLR set-up Wide-Angle

1. Install dome, extension ring if needed and diopter.
2. Set camera to (M) manual exposure with shutter speed at 1/125 second and f-stop at f-8 or f-11.
 - a. This is only a starting place. The f-stop is set at f-8 because my strobe's guide number is f-8 at three feet with ISO 100. If my camera's lowest ISO were 200 I would start at f-11.
 - b. The shutter speed controls the ambient light that I like to underexpose by one to two stops. Pick a spot in the water column that you want the background color to be and adjust the shutter speed to zero out your meter. You can underexpose by simply changing the shutter speed.
 - c. When shooting a scene with a subject closer than three feet you will need to either power down the strobe or change the f-stop to a smaller stop. Remember if you change the f-stop you will need to meter ambient light and change shutter speed to balance. This is when strobes with several power settings are nice.
3. Set camera meter to spot metering to aid in meter ambient light.
4. Focus can be set on (C) continuous focus which lets you track an animal with the release button pushed ½ way. Be careful because the camera will fire in this mode even if the subject is not in focus. I usually have the camera focus set on (S) single servo so the camera will not fire if the subject is not in focus.
5. I sometimes set the camera in an (A) aperture priority mode when shooting subjects that are moving and the ambient light is changing constantly. In this mode you set the aperture and the camera shutter speeds will change depending on the ambient light. When using this mode set the exposure compensation to underexpose by one to two stops depending on your preference. One thing to watch for is not letting the camera pick a faster shutter speed than the sync speed of the camera.
6. Do a strobe fire test or TTL test if applicable to make sure camera and strobe are working correctly.
7. Test all functions controls like f-stops, shutter speeds and zoom gear to make sure everything is working correctly before entering water.
8. Do a fresh water dunk test after every system set-up and look for any bubbles that might be signs of a leaking problem.