

Digital SLR Camera Checklist

Before a digital SLR camera can be used to record images, the camera needs to be set up for a new photo-session.

For example, previously the camera may have been set up for different lighting conditions, so it is important to check the settings and make any changes prior to taking images. Otherwise, the results may be disappointing and perfectly good images can be ruined simply because the user forgot to press a couple of buttons. It sounds obvious but running through a simple checklist will prevent careless mistakes from occurring and ultimately mean better images being made.

Here are five simple but important points to remember each time the camera is used for a photo-session.

- ✓ Are the batteries charged?
- ✓ Is the memory card formatted?
- ✓ Has the correct ISO setting been selected?
- ✓ Has the appropriate white balance been set?
- ✓ Have you selected the right file type?

Digital camera settings

1. Batteries

A Digital SLR is completely power-reliant, so it is best to charge batteries after each shoot. It is best to have a spare fully charged battery in your camera bag.

2. Formatting memory cards

Formatting the memory card will erase all the images held on it. You need to be certain that any images that are needed have been downloaded and stored. If the card is not formatted you can still shoot, as the card will store your new images into a separate folder, though space on the card may be limited.

To format the card, simply access the Format Card option in the camera's menu. Remember, once the OK button has been pressed and formatting has started all images will be erased. Once formatted there will be plenty of space on the card to store more images.

3. ISO Settings

The ISO setting effectively alters the sensitivity of the camera's sensor, allowing the user to shoot in different light levels. In bright light an ISO of 100 would be used. In low light a higher ISO setting would be used. The ISO can be changed from shot to shot.

4. White Balance

Digital cameras have a series of settings for shooting under a range of different lighting conditions. These range from automatic white balance (AWB) and include, incandescent (tungsten), fluorescent, sunlight, flash, cloudy and shade. It is important to set the correct white balance settings otherwise the image will not faithfully record the colours correctly.

5. File Types

Digital cameras provide the user with a range of formats to save their files in. The most common is JPEG, though RAW files allow more adjustments in post-production. It is worth remembering that you will be able to store more JPEGs on your card than RAW files.