

Avoiding Digital Camera Shakes

If ever you have seen a picture that is blurred, it is most probably because the camera was shaken while the picture was taken. With traditional photographic film cameras, it was evident only after the negatives and positives were made. However, with digital camera, the captured image can be seen immediately on the LCD screen, and if the image has shaken, then it can be discarded for a new shot.

Digital camera shakes are common with new users. This is primarily because, new users have not fully understood that the shutter-release button must not be pressed twice, but pressed two steps down. The first step locks the focus and exposure while the second step takes the photo. This pressing of the button has to be smooth, otherwise the digital camera shakes and a blurred picture is the result.

The shutter speed also plays an important role in blurring the picture. The shutter speed is the amount of time the shutter remains open to allow light to reach the digital camera sensor. It is measured in seconds or fractions of a second. An image is exposed by the combination of the lens aperture and the shutter speed. A slow shutter speed needs a small aperture (large F-stop number) to avoid over exposure. With a slow shutter speed below 1/60th of a second, over exposure is adequately controlled, but the digital camera is likely to vibrate more, giving a shaky picture.

A tripod is extremely useful to eliminate digital camera shakes. It is generally used by sports photographers who use long telephoto lens, as it helps in close-ups, landscape and panning shots, for timed exposures, for shooting at slow shutter speeds, and for taking photographs in low or dim light conditions. Shooting a fast moving subject, like athletes, or wildlife, tests the photographer's skill and the equipment. In such cases, camera shakes are most likely to happen, and thus a monopod or a tripod is always used. Digital cameras mounted on tripods always tend to eliminate camera shakes and give sharp results.

A great feature in most high-end digital cameras available nowadays is image stabilization (IS). IS is an anti-shake and vibration reduction technology and is common in digital cameras with long telephoto zooms of 10X and 12X. With IS, sharp images can be obtained even if the camera shakes a little, a slow shutter speed is used, shooting is done in low light conditions, or a tripod is not used. IS was originally developed for video cameras. It is now available in interchangeable lens, consumer and professional digital cameras, which use optical image stabilization. Sports and wildlife photographers use a tripod and IS technology together to get the maximum sharpness of their photographs; however, many other photographers turn the IS feature off while using a tripod.

Digital camera shakes can be eliminated or minimized by the utilization of the above techniques. However, the fundamentals of taking a good shot prove to be most effective in avoiding camera shakes, in the absence of tripods, or IS technology.

The basics of good photography should be followed. You should hold the digital camera with both your hands. You should keep the legs apart with the knees slightly bent forward. Your elbows should be braced with your body and your body braced with some support, if possible. You should generally frame and compose the picture with the viewfinder and not the LCD screen. You should not jab but lightly press the shutter release button two steps down, and during that time, it would be beneficial to hold your breath to prevent any movement of the chest and hands. With this basic technique of good photography, you can be sure that your digital camera will not shake and no picture will be blurred.

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