

# DEPTH of FIELD

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**D**ePTH of field refers to the area in a photo that is sharp and in focus, and it is affected by **aperture**—a scary-sounding word that you’ll soon understand (page\*).

*The photo on the left has a shallow depth of field, which means that only a narrow zone is in focus and appears sharp. The photo on the right has a deep or large depth of field, which means that more details are in focus and appear sharp.*



The blur around the area that is in focus is known as a **bokeh**, and it can give a beautiful artistic touch to a photo. I love the affect that the blur creates so I use a shallow depth of field often, but it’s just a matter of personal taste. Both photos look great and create a different feel.

# EXPOSURE

**E**xposure refers to the amount of light and brightness in your photo. An **overexposed photo** means that it was exposed to too much light, and as a result it's too bright. Overexposure may result in washed out areas or a loss of detail.

Similar to overexposure, an **underexposed photo** does not have enough light and therefore is too dark.

*A photo with proper or perfect exposure should be not too bright nor too dark, and the lighting should feel just right.*



*Overexposed*



*Perfect exposure*



*Underexposed*

**Now that you understand these two definitions, we can talk about the technical stuff.**

There are three important controls in your DSLR camera that determine the exposure and brightness in a photo: aperture, shutter speed, and ISO. They all relate to light and how it interacts with the camera. Furthermore, all three elements are linked to and impact one another, meaning that if you change one of them, you'll need to change one or both of the others to compensate.

***the 3 MAJOR CONTROLS:***

# APERTURE, SHUTTER SPEED and ISO

## APERTURE

**A**perture refers to the size of the opening of your lens when a picture is taken. This determines the amount of light in your photo. Aperture is measured in f/stops (e.g., f/1.8 or f/8), and the lower your number is, the more light you can capture. Aperture also controls the amount of area that is clear and in focus, which as you've just learned is called depth of field (page\*).

**This means:**

- A low number of aperture results in more light, less area of focus, more blur, and a shallow depth of field.
- A high number of aperture results in less light, more area of focus, less blur, and a deep depth of field.

**Let's look at the examples below to better understand two things:**

- How aperture affects light.
- How aperture affects depth of field.

*Let's start with how it affects light. As you can see, the higher the aperture, the less light there is.*



**Aperture f/4**

Lower number of aperture →  
**More light**



**Aperture f/5.6**

Higher number of aperture →  
**Less light**

*Now let's see how it affects depth of field. Be aware that the aperture settings in these photos are different than the ones above. Also, don't be confused about why the light/exposure is the same rather than why the one with the higher aperture isn't darker. I simply corrected the exposure for this set of photos so that you can better notice the difference in depth of field.*