

ASTROPHOTOGRAPHY GET STARTED GUIDE

Single Image
Hooker Glacier, Aoraki Mt Cook

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Getting out under the stars is one of the best things in life, capturing them is another, here are some getting started tips.

Waiting for new moon or until moonset is always a good idea for dark skies, or the least amount of light over the night will get you best shot, not full moon preferable

QUICK TIPS

- Wait at least one hour after sunset for dark, after blue hour, test gear/settings at home.
- In daylight try and line up a cool composition before it's too dark eg. river, lake, beach or leading line, trees, mountain etc.
- Always think safety first at night, take a mate
- If possible use a tripod (as much as you can)
- Wear glasses to focus the lens if required.

LENSES - preferably use the widest angle lens you have with a low Fstop eg 16-35mm, 14mm, 24mm for single shooting and 24mm up to 50mm for shooting grid of shots to make up a multirow stitched panorama

ISO	FSTOP	SPEED	WHITE BALANCE
10,000 to 4,000	F2.8-3.5	15-25 sec	K3800-4200
depending on light pollution or moon phase	or F4	see below	Shoot in RAW

SET UP GEAR

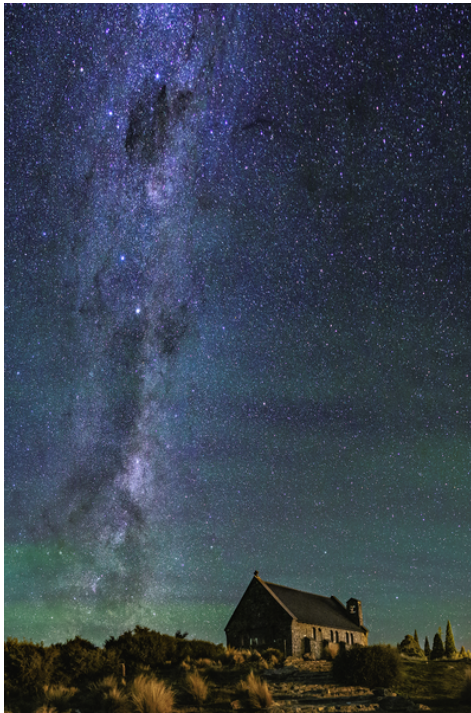
If you don't have tripod, a solid flat rock or fencepost can work for those of you Hikers! Set your camera to 2 second delay or use your remote. Use above settings as a guide, this will differ between gear, use manual focus. A too long shutter speed gives star trails, every lens is different here.

If the lowest your lens goes is F4 try a bit higher ISO, can adjust noise in post, if you shoot too dark it's hard to recover in editing.

Turn off your noise reduction in camera.

Put everything on Manual Mode, camera and lens, turn off image stabilisation.

***KEY - to FOCUS with live view on the brightest star in the sky, zoom in 10X zoom and manually adjust until pin sharp, take a shot and check it.**



These 3 images are single shots

THOUGHTS

Post processing in Lightroom or Photoshop Camera raw or similar is recommended for astro photos, you rarely will get a good single image off your camera that doesn't need an edit, this is something we can help you with if you require some assistance

There are many ways to shoot night shots, and the types of way to shoot, ranging from single images, stacked images of 15 or more and a single foreground composite, to 55 images stitched to make a panorama and all cameras are a little different.

You can shoot star trails, light and steel wool shots, deep space, astro landscapes and much more, and it can become quite addictive once you get into it!

These are just some getting started quick tips, please feel free to get in touch for more info and give us a follow on socials for inspiration and ideas, tag me in to some of your shots, I would love to see what you guys are up to out there

Useful Apps – Photopills and Sky Safari

SOCIAL MEDIA

INSTAGRAM

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We also run landscape and wildlife photography adventures in the South Island



This image features what is called airglow



This image is 22 single shots stitched together

There is a lot more to Astrophotography but this will get you started with some great single images,
for specific tuition I would love you to come along on one of our adventures