

Shutter speed: Fast & Slow

The goal of this exercise is to experiment with the different shutter speed options on your camera and to turn an ordinary 'record' shot into a great shot!

Many photographs, particularly those that involve action such as flowing water, vehicles, people etc., are frequently taken on a shutter speed setting which aims to 'fix' image and freeze (or at least semi-freeze) the action. This will be particularly true for cameras used predominantly in automatic mode: the camera assumes you want to capture just one moment in time and will try to give you the best balance between speed and aperture in order to give you an acceptable exposure. Whilst great for some subjects, a fast shutter speed may not do justice to subject matter where you really want to capture the essence of movement e.g. a waterfall, the thrill of rally driving or your kids enjoying the excitement of the funfair. Unlike other aspects of your image such as exposure or 'noise' (grain) it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to add the perception of movement using basic image editing software so it is a good idea to become familiar with the creative potential of shutter speed.

Objectives:

- You will become comfortable selecting and working with different shutter speeds and leaving the camera to 'do' the rest.
- You will appreciate the relationship between shutter speed and exposure
- You will recognise the 'issue' of camera 'shake' and know when it is best to use a tripod

Exercise:

- Find a source of flowing water: the rainwater outlet at Felpham Beach or your kitchen tap!
- Select the shutter speed option – this might be TV or S – all other settings remain automated.
- Rest your camera on a solid object or tripod to keep shots consistent and compose your picture.
- Select the fastest shutter speed you can and take a shot: use the TV or S setting and the camera will manage the aperture for you. Reduce the shutter speed incrementally so that you take one image covering the range of your camera.
- SLR with changeable lenses
 - Swap lenses and repeat the process
- Keep notes of all the shots you take using the form overleaf; it helps to start with an empty memory card.
- Download your images and you should be able to clearly define, and appreciate the creative potential of, both slow and fast shutter speed.
- With a compact or automated camera you might find that it will not allow you to select shutter speeds that either over or under expose the image. We suggest that you check the output as you go and if the images become overly light or dark you have reached your realistic limit.



Find your most pleasing 'slow shutter speed' creation and mail it to mccimages@btinternet.com: we will post a Gallery related to this project

