Erik Valind is a freelance photographer, born and raised on the Florida beaches, now living in New York City. Specializing in commercial lifestyle photography and environmental portraiture—airy and energetic imagery defines the style and vision of this top pro photographer. Inspired by the form, activity, and diversity of people, Erik has lent his expertise to shape the public image of numerous personas and national brands. Erik also shares his visual approach, techniques, and passion for photography internationally as a speaker at major photo conferences, as an author, and online as a Kelby Training instructor.

In Portrait Photography: From Snapshots to Great Shots, author and photographer Erik Valind shows you how to get the best shots of your subjects—whether you’re in a studio or outdoors, at a family get-together, or at a formal event. Starting with the fundamentals of portrait photography, including how to select the right camera settings and lenses and how to compose your shots, Erik covers building a rapport with your subject, and offers suggestions for poses that flatter your subject. He then addresses the problems and opportunities of both natural and indoor light, offering ways to resolve specific lighting challenges, showing when to use a flash and how to add light to improve the quality of your images. Finally, he walks through several portrait scenarios, including creating single-person shots such as headshots and environmental shots, and group shots such as family and wedding photos.

Follow along with Erik and you will:
• Learn the basics of capturing great portraits, such as focusing on the eyes, stepping back and zooming in, and turning your subject into the light
• Evaluate focal length, compression, and working distance to select the best lens for any given shot
• Establish trust with your subjects and provide helpful direction and feedback so they feel at ease and look their best
• Improve the light with modifiers and other helpful tools such as strobes, umbrellas, and reflectors
• Go “behind the scenes” and walk through the process of creating great portraits with two chapters of start-to-finish examples

And once you’ve got the shot, show it off! Join the book’s Flickr group and discuss how you use your camera to get great shots at flickr.com/groups/portraitsfromsnapshotstogreatshots.
Portrait Photography: From Snapshots to Great Shots
This page intentionally left blank
Portrait Photography: From Snapshots to Great Shots

Erik Valind
Dedication

To the muse; for when she resides in a person, we cannot help but to take up our cameras.
Acknowledgements

I would like to sincerely thank all of my friends, family, and clients who have sat in front of my lens over the years. A real portrait is more about communication and trust than any combination of camera settings. Thank you for trusting me.

I want to thank the people who inspired me to pursue portrait photography in the beginning and who still inspire me to pick up the camera every day. Thank you, Danielle, for being my first muse, for drawing my gaze from action sports and the ocean to the people who actively pursue life instead. Thank you, Keely, for being my canvas and my mirror as I strove to learn how to shape light. You and so many others radiate beauty inside and out, and I hope that over the years I’ve managed to catch but a glimmer of that on film.

I definitely want to thank the entire team over at Peachpit. Especially Ted Waitt for bringing me into the family, and Valerie Witte for cracking the whip and making sure my first solo book turned out great. I also need to thank Anne Marie Walker, Katerina Malone, and Patricia Pane for assisting me in taking tons of content and crafting it into something pretty to look at and pleasant to read. Without the aid of a small army, my words and photos would be nothing more than a bloated blog post. The quality of their contributions will be obvious in the pages of this book, but their professionalism and patience throughout the entire process is what I appreciated the most.

Also a special thank-you to Olivier from Sylights.com, and to all companies that put an emphasis on education with their products and services.

Finally, I want to thank everyone who has read my books or attended one of my workshops or seminars. Learning one’s craft is key to creating better work and realizing the images in your mind’s eye. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to share what I’m passionate about with you, and for helping me become a better photographer and teacher in the process.

Erik Valind
New York, NY
February, 2014
INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1: TOP 10 TIPS TO BETTER PORTRAITS
How to Start Taking Better Portraits Right Out of the Box!

Poring Over the Picture
1. Shoot in Aperture Priority Mode
2. Set Your Metering Mode
3. Choose Your Picture Style
4. Turn Off Your Pop-up Flash
5. Step Back and Zoom In
6. Focus on the Eyes
7. Offset Your Subject in the Frame
8. Shoot Down on Your Subject
9. Look Out for Clean Headspace
10. Turn Your Subject Into the Light
Chapter 1 Assignments

CHAPTER 2: CAMERA SETTINGS AND LENS SELECTION
Use the right settings, composition, and lenses for capturing your photos

Poring Over the Picture
Camera Settings
Lens Selection
Composition
Cropping
Chapter 2 Assignments
CHAPTER 3: POSING, RAPPORT, AND PROBLEM SOLVING
How To Successfully Communicate, Plan, and Pose
While Working with Your Subject
Poring Over the Picture
People First; All Else Second
Inspiration, Prep, and Props
Giving Direction
Getting Feedback
Chapter 3 Assignments

CHAPTER 4: WORKING WITH NATURAL LIGHT
Identify the Quality and Direction of Natural Light
to Capture Great Shots
Poring Over the Picture
Understanding Light
Overcoming Difficult Lighting Scenarios
Chapter 4 Assignments

CHAPTER 5: WORKING WITH EXISTING INDOOR LIGHT
Conquer the Obstacles of Using Existing Light to
Produce Great Shots
Poring Over the Picture
Color Temperature
Combating Camera Shake
Chapter 5 Assignments

CHAPTER 6: ON-CAMERA FLASH
An On-Camera Flash Can Light an Entire Scene or Just Add
That Extra Sparkle to Your Subject’s Eye
Poring Over the Picture
Flash Power
Pop-up Flash
Speedlights
On-Camera Flash Modifiers
Chapter 6 Assignments
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER 7: ADDING ARTIFICIAL LIGHT AND LIGHTING MODIFIERS</th>
<th>153</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deciding What Type of Lighting to Use And When to Use It</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poring Over the Picture</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light Direction, Placement, and Quality</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light Modifiers</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light Sources</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lighting Scenarios</td>
<td>182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 7 Assignments</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER 8: SINGLE-PERSON PORTRAIT SCENARIOS</th>
<th>191</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bringing It All Together</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poring Over the Picture</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studio Portraits</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headshots You Can Bank On</td>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Portraits</td>
<td>214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 8 Assignments</td>
<td>217</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER 9: GROUP PORTRAIT SCENARIOS</th>
<th>219</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Establishing Depth of Field, Perspective, and Lighting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poring Over the Picture</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camera Settings to Consider</td>
<td>222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shooting Couples</td>
<td>224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Photos</td>
<td>228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large Groups and Sportraits</td>
<td>233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 9 Assignments</td>
<td>239</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| INDEX                                                     | 240 |
Introduction

Many photo books that you’ll see on the shelf do a great job of delving into specific aspects of photography. Some books cover narrow subjects, like studio portrait lighting, or using only natural daylight. I wrote this book with a goal of combining all of the different pieces that work together to make a great portrait, with any subject, regardless of the lighting conditions. Yes, it was a lofty goal, but I guarantee after reading this book you’ll approach your subject, your gear, and your locations differently. With this newfound awareness, you’ll be creating incredible portraits in no time.
Q: What can I expect to learn from this book?
A: In this book, you’ll get a well-rounded guide to taking better portraits—from the technical camera settings and lens selection, to the intangible communication and direction with your subjects, and finally, to specific tools and techniques for conquering a wide range of lighting environments to make people look their best.

Q: What are the assignments all about?
A: Don’t worry, the assignments aren’t meant to feel like high school math homework. Personally, I learn best by doing, so each assignment covers techniques that were discussed in the chapter, and they encourage you to go out and put them into practice as soon as possible. This way you can focus on your subject at the next photoshoot, and not on trying a new tip or technique for the first time. Practice makes perfect. Then make sure to share your results with other readers on the book’s Flickr page.

Q: Should I read the book straight through or can I skip around from chapter to chapter?
A: Definitely begin with Chapter 1. It is designed to improve your portrait photography skills in a matter of minutes, helping you dial in key camera settings and important tips on composition. After that most of the book is broken up in such a way that each chapter covers a specific scenario or lighting environment. You can skip ahead to a problem that’s vexing you at the moment, or more importantly, you can use these chapters as references to reread before future portrait shoots.
Identify the quality and direction of natural light to capture great shots

In this chapter, you’ll be taking your portraiture outdoors. By understanding the quality and direction of natural light, you can then work to tame or redirect that natural light for better portraits.

Natural light, or more specifically sunlight, is the most plentiful and affordable light source photographers have. That doesn’t mean it’s always pretty light, though. Before you begin to blindly fight an uphill battle with a very bright opponent, you first need to learn to see light and the different characteristics of light you’ll be dealing with. When you’re looking at light, there are two specific characteristics you need to see, namely the quality of light and the direction of that light. Once you understand what you’re looking at, it becomes very easy to compose your portraits to put your subjects in their best light.
The existing sunlight is very harsh and direct, coming in from the side, which causes the quick transition to shadow on the hat.

Using the diffusion fabric on a reflector to filter the direct sunlight creates a much softer light with subtle shadows for the female subject.
By taking a behind-the-scenes look at the cover photo, you can see what a difference a simple reflector makes in the final photo. Compare the quality of light on the exposed assistant to the final light on the model's face.

The silver material of a 5-in-1 Reflector can be used to bounce light back into the face for fill and an extra spark in the eyes.
Understanding Light

Light is something that you most likely take for granted in your day-to-day lives. But once you pick up a camera, you are literally painting with light, and much like there are many different kinds of paint, light is equally as dynamic. To really understand what’s on your palette as a photographer, you need to understand light. To do so, let’s look at the different properties of light: its intensity, its quality, and its direction.

Quality of Light

The quality of light can be described as hard light or soft light. This is a very important differentiation that you need to make as portrait photographers, because soft light is often the most flattering light for peoples’ faces. If you look closely at Figure 4.1 and then at Figure 4.2, it’s very easy to see a big difference in the quality of light. But do you know what you’re looking at specifically in each image that defines the light as hard or soft? Seeing light is equally about seeing the highlights as it is seeing the shadows. To identify quality of light, you need only look at the transition between the two. In Figure 4.1, you see that the light instantaneously falls to shadow, whereas in Figure 4.2 the transition is more gradual, so much so that you can barely see where the highlight ends and the shadow begins. This is extremely soft light and is perfect for flattering a person’s face. Hard light on the other hand is not so flattering because that quick transition to shadow will call attention to any wrinkles or blemishes on your subject’s face.

Fortunately, there aren’t many rules that you need to follow as photographers, but there are two that you really should take to heart: To get that beautiful soft light, you need to make sure that the light source is as large and as close to your subject as possible. A large light source spreads light evenly everywhere, washing the subject in illumination. Also, by moving the light source closer to the subject, you increase its relative size to the subject. This combination is what produces the great portrait light you saw in Figure 4.2.

When you step outside and assess your light, the sun becomes your light source. You’d think that such a massive ball of fire would produce soft light, right? Well, not exactly, because it only adheres to the first rule, size. The fact that it is 92,960,000 miles away means that in relation to your subject it is actually quite small. This “small” and faraway light source creates very harsh shadows, which is why no one likes to photograph at high noon, because the direct light by itself is horribly hard and unforgiving. But have you noticed on cloudy days that the light is infinitely softer? This is because the clouds become the new light source, with the sun shining through them. Clouds are large and much closer than the bare sun.
Rules for Soft Light

Keep these two lighting rules in mind when you want to create soft light:

- The larger the light source, the softer the light.
- The closer the light source, the softer the light.

Soft light = bigger source + closer to the subject.
Direction of Light

The second characteristic of light that you need to keep in mind is the direction of light. Depending on where the light is coming from, the amount of shadow on your subject’s face can change dramatically. Shadow is necessary to create depth in a portrait, making a person look more three dimensional, but deep shadows don’t look good at every angle. In direct sunlight you now know you’ll be dealing with very hard light, but even on overcast days with soft light there is still a direction to the light if you look closely.

Two common directions of light that you’ll run into when shooting portraits outdoors are direct overhead sunlight and side lighting in direct sun.

Overhead light

On days when the sun is shining brightly and directly overhead, you have plenty of light to work with. However, the sun in that position usually produces those dreaded raccoon eye shadows, and under those deep shadows your poor subjects are usually squinting pretty hard. Shooting in direct overhead sunlight is uncomfortable for them and uncomfortable for anyone who has to look at a bad portrait, like the one in Figure 4.3. Images like this have scared photographers away from shooting in midday light for ages.

Side light

Conventional wisdom tells you not to shoot at noon and to just wait until the sun starts its descent. Figure 4.4 was taken later in the afternoon when the sun was lower in the sky, so I was able to avoid that nasty direct overhead light. But because of the harsh side lighting, now half of the model’s face is covered in shadow. On their own, neither direction scenario—direct overhead nor side lighting—will yield a great portrait. For this reason, as portrait photographers, you need to have a few tricks up your sleeve to produce flattering photos no matter which direction the light is coming from, which I’ll talk about next.
Figure 4.3
Harsh direct overhead sunlight produces unflattering light and deep eye shadows.
Nikon D800 • ISO 100 • 1/2500 sec. • f/2.8 • 85mm lens

Figure 4.4
Direct sunlight coming in from the side produces unflattering light and deep shadows on half of the model’s face.
Nikon D800 • ISO 100 • 1/1000 sec. • f/2.8 • 85mm lens
Overcoming Difficult Lighting Scenarios

Now that you know how to identify and analyze the characteristics of light—its quality and direction—let’s explore some common scenarios that you’ll run into when you’re wandering outdoors to take some portraits. Most often you’ll get stuck taking shots in broad daylight, but if you’re lucky, you may have access to some shade. Or, you might be shooting on an overcast day with softer light, which has its own host of challenges.

General Quick Fixes—No Kit Required

Whether the sun is high in the sky or on its way to sunset, there is a definite direction to the light, and now that you know to look for it you can begin working to overcome it. In either case there are two simple solutions that require no extra equipment at all.

Turn your subject into the sun

One simple solution is rather than fighting with the sun, embrace it. When the sun lights only part of your subject’s face, harsh shadows immediately crop up on the opposite side. To get rid of shadows, you simply put your back to the sun, which will cause your subject to turn into the light, producing an even wash of light across her face. When the subject is side lit, reducing shadows is simply a matter of turning your subject into the light. When the light is directly overhead, you can eliminate shadows by getting slightly higher than your subject and having the person look up into the light. For elevation, look for existing structures like park benches or low walls. If those aren’t available, bring a lightweight step stool on location with you. Figure 4.5 shows that by turning the subject’s face slightly upward and completely into the sun there are no shadows.

Figure 4.5 A portrait shot with the subject facing into the direction of the sun for even lighting on the face and minimal shadows.

Nikon D800 • ISO 100 • 1/2500 sec. • f/2.8 • 85mm lens
Turn your subject’s back to the sun

The second solution for overcoming direct harsh light is equally simple; just turn your subject’s back to the sun! This will throw the subject’s entire face into the shadow. When you readjust your exposure for this type of shot, the result will be even lighting on the face and nice, bright backlighting, which works nicely as both hair light and rim lighting (I’ll cover the various types of lighting—key light, hair light, and rim lighting—in Chapters 7 and 8). Notice the difference between the direct side-lighting scenario in Figure 4.6 and the completely backlit scenario in Figure 4.7. Now, there is that heavenly glow and nice lighting on the face that you want!

Figure 4.6
The subject is side lit by direct sunlight, causing half of the face to plunge into shadows.
Nikon D800 • ISO 100 • 1/2500 sec. • f/2.8 • 85mm lens

Figure 4.7
By turning the subject’s back to the sun and exposing for her face, you get even lighting and a beautiful glow around her.
Nikon D800 • ISO 100 • 1/2500 sec. • f/2.8 • 85mm lens
Aside from the nice lighting that a backlit scenario offers, your subjects are not looking directly into the sun anymore, which makes this approach preferable to directing your subjects into the light, because it is much easier on your subjects’ eyes. The easiest solutions are usually the best ones, and by just keeping these strategies in mind on your next shoot you’ll have nice even lighting on your subject’s face. And your subject will thank you too! It’s tough to force a smile through squinting watery eyes as you’re grimacing into the sun.

**Use Spot Metering**

Remember to use spot metering in high-contrast lighting situations where there’s a large exposure difference between your subject and the background. This is to ensure that your camera properly exposes for the subjects and doesn’t turn them into silhouettes against the bright backlighting. Refer to Chapter 2 for a refresher on metering modes.

**Direct Sunlight—No Shade**

All summer long you hope for bright sunny days. The only problem is you can’t really adjust the direction of the sun at will. This is the reason you should direct your subject to change the position of her face instead. With direction taken care of, you’re still left with a poor quality of light, as you saw in Figures 4.3 and 4.4. One option is to avoid the direct sunlight altogether by finding shade, which I’ll discuss shortly. If shade is not available, you can use some affordable tools to tame that direct sunlight by creating your own shade or reflecting light back into the shadows. A versatile tool that allows you to do both is a 5-in-1 Reflector. It has multiple reflective surfaces to bounce light, and it also breaks down to a frame with diffusion material that you can use to filter light.

**5-in-1 Reflector Surfaces**

These five surfaces allow you to diffuse or reflect light quickly, easily, and affordably:

- **White.** Reflective surface for soft fill light
- **Silver.** Reflective surface with higher output and more direct light
- **Gold.** Reflective surface similar to silver but also warms the light temperature
- **Black.** Used to completely block light or build contrast through subtractive lighting
- **Translucent.** Used to diffuse light, much like the front of a softbox does
Filling in backlight with a reflector

Starting with the nasty light in Figure 4.3 you can easily establish the foundations of a well-lit portrait by again simply turning the subject's back to the sun, like I did in Figures 4.8 and 4.9. This approach works for headshots and full body shots too! Simply turning your subject away from the sun not only removes the bad shadows, it removes all of the defining shadows on her face.

**Figure 4.8 (above)** By turning the subject's back to the sun and exposing for her face, you get beautiful even lighting and a nice rim of light around her head.

Nikon D800 • ISO 100 • 1/640 sec. • f/2.0 • 85mm lens

**Figure 4.9 (right)** By turning the subject's back to the sun and exposing for the shadowed side, you get beautiful even lighting from head to toe.

Nikon D800 • ISO 100 • 1/1600 sec. • f/1.4 • 85mm lens
Here's why I recommend taking it a step further and where a reflector with a high-output silver surface comes in handy: Figure 4.10 shows my assistant holding a reflector up high to catch that direct sunlight to bounce it back into the subject’s face. The result is the final shot in Figure 4.11 with great backlighting, an evenly lit and exposed subject, and a kiss of light on the model’s face to illuminate it and lend some sculpting shadow that I can now control.

**Figure 4.10 (above)** My assistant uses a high-output silver reflector to bounce light into the model’s face.

**Figure 4.11 (right)** The bounce light from the silver reflector adds controlled highlights and shadow to the model’s face, while the direct sunlight backlights her hair and body.

Nikon D800 • ISO 100 • 1/1600 sec. • f/1.4 • 85mm lens

ISO 100 • 1/1600 sec. • f/1.4 • 85mm lens
**Using a Bounce Reflector**

When you’re using a bounce reflector, keep in mind the direction of the light that you cast, just as you would when analyzing the sun’s light. By reflecting the light from above the subject’s eye line, the light appears natural. If you hold the reflector below the subject’s eye line and bounce light up, you’ll create odd and unflattering shadows. The sun shines down, so your reflected sunlight should too.

**Diffusing side light with a reflector**

To change the hard light in Figure 4.4 into a soft pleasing light, you would need to enlarge the light source and bring it closer to the subject. Obviously, you still can’t move the sun, but if you put something between the sun and your subject, you can get the same effect, which is a lot like a cloud softening the sun on an overcast day. Instead of a cloud, you simply need some sort of diffusion material. In Figure 4.12, the reflector is placed between the sun and the subject, and is brought in as close as possible. The results are easy to see in Figure 4.13. The highlight-to-shadow transition is very smooth, producing a much softer quality of light, and the model is squinting less too.
Working with Shade

Shade is your friend. It protects you from the heat and unsightly camera strap tan lines. It also offers a variety of photographic opportunities without needing to hold a big diffusion panel or reflector overhead. However, not all shade is created equal, and some shaded areas offer up natural reflectors to really make your images sing. Let’s run through a few opportunities you’ll have when you have shade on hand.

Covered shade

One flavor of shade is covered shade. This is the kind of shade that you should first look for because it’s the most obvious. Covered shade is created by something overhead, like an overhang or thick tree branches. Not only is covered shade easy to identify, it’s also easier to anticipate what the light underneath will look like. Because the overhead covering blocks all the light from that direction, you know that the only place left for it to sneak in is from the side. Figure 4.14 is a great example of thick overhead tree branches creating covered shade. If you look at the direction of the highlights to shadows on the subject’s face, you’ll see the soft side lighting.

Figure 4.14
Example of covered shade. The trees overhead block the harsh direct light, so now light is bouncing in from the side with a much softer quality and pleasing direction.

Fuji X100s • ISO 400 • 1/600 sec. • f/2.0 • 35mm lens
If you wanted less shadow, all you have to do is turn your subject’s face out toward where the overhang ends. In Figure 4.15, I did just that. The model was standing under a small overhang blocking the sun from coming straight down and forcing it to bend and bounce in from the side. Only this time rather than shooting from the side, I stood looking directly at the shaded area with the light washing in from my direction, which created a soft, flat-looking light.

Figure 4.15
Another example of covered shade; this time the model is facing out from under the shade into the sunlight for an even wash of light on her face.

Nikon D800 • ISO 100 • 1/1250 sec. • f/2.8 • 85mm lens
Open shade

Open shade is often overlooked and incredibly plentiful in urban areas. Open shade is cast by something like a tall building but has nothing directly overhead and still casts a long shadow. In Figure 4.16, the subject is standing in the sun right next to a large area of open shade.

Figure 4.16
You can see the model standing just outside of a patch of open shade cast by a nearby building.

Nikon D800 • ISO 500 • 1/250 sec. • f/16 • 35mm lens
In Figure 4.17, you again see how bad direct sunlight is without finessing it a bit. But after asking the model to take a few steps forward into the open shade, the result is a much better quality of light on her face, although it is underexposed in the next shot in Figure 4.18.

Figure 4.17
A close-up portrait of the harsh light and shadow cast by direct light without using the nearby shade.
Nikon D800 • ISO 100 • 1/4000 sec. • f/2.8 • 85mm lens

Figure 4.18
By having the model step forward into the open shade the quality of light greatly improves, although the intensity or brightness has decreased and left the photo underexposed.
Nikon D800 • ISO 100 • 1/6400 sec. • f/2.8 • 85mm lens
If you’re using Manual mode on your camera, all you need to do is slow down your shutter speed to allow more light into the exposure. If you’re more comfortable in Aperture Priority mode, just make sure you spot meter on the subject’s face and your very next shot will look like Figure 4.19. It’s pretty incredible how a little open shade makes such a big difference on your portraits.

Figure 4.19 Here is a properly exposed, beautiful portrait using just open shade. You can achieve the right exposure by slowing down the shutter speed in Manual mode or by using Aperture Priority mode and spot metering for the model’s face.

Nikon D800 • ISO 100 • 1/1000 sec. • f/2.8 • 85mm lens
Open shade + natural reflectors

Look at the background of the photo in Figure 4.19 again. It’s pretty bright, right? This should set off some MacGyver-style bells in a photographer’s mind. If the background is that bright, then that wall back there must be bouncing a serious amount of light, which makes it one massive natural reflector! Rather than shooting into the bright light source, for my next shot, I walked around and placed the bright wall at my back, capturing Figure 4.20. With the wall directly at my back, all of the bounced light was coming from the same direction as my camera was aiming. This on-camera axis direction is what creates such shadowless beauty lighting.

Figure 4.20  The subject is still standing in open shade, but now I used the bright wall behind me as a natural reflector to bounce the direct sunlight back onto the model.

Nikon D800 • ISO 100 • 1/250 sec. • f/2.8 • 85mm lens
The combination of open shade and a *huge* natural reflector, the bright wall, can be easily seen in Figure 4.21. With the big wall now effectively becoming my main light source, I was working with a light source bigger than anything I’ve ever seen available in a commercial photo studio, and it was free, just waiting for me on the street. With such a massive size (it was bouncing back two stories’ worth of light) it’s easy to get full-length portraits, like the one in Figure 4.22, as well as full group photos if everyone faces the wall.

**Figure 4.21 (above)** A behind-the-scenes view of the model standing in open shade while being illuminated by the light bouncing off the bright wall being used as a natural reflector.

*Fuji X100s • ISO 400 • 1/250 sec. • f/4.5 • 35mm lens*

**Figure 4.22 (right)** Using a giant natural reflector like a wall is a great way to evenly light full-body portraits like this, or even whole groups of people.

* Nikon D800 • ISO 200 • 1/2500 sec. • f/2.2 • 85mm lens*
To add a little more depth and shadow to the next photo, I walked away from the wall and shot parallel to it. This produced the same effect as moving a studio softbox from behind me and over about 45 degrees to the side of the model. The result shown in Figure 4.23 is a beautiful portrait with classical lighting patterns and extremely soft light.

Figure 4.23  A portrait with classical, soft portrait lighting and shadow on the model’s face was created by turning her so that the wall bounced light in from the side like a giant studio softbox.

Nikon D800 • ISO 200 • 1/2500 sec. • f/2.2 • 85mm lens
If you really want to get fancy, you can just place half of the model’s body in the open shade, lighting her face with the natural wall bounce and letting the sun act as a hair light, as in Figure 4.24.

Figure 4.24  A model standing partially in open shade to allow the direct sunlight to accent her hair, while leaving the rest of her face in even shadow to then be filled by light from the wall being bounced back as a natural reflector.

Nikon D800 • ISO 100 • 1/2500 sec. • f/1.4 • 85mm lens
Diffused Sunlight—Overcast Days

Overcast days are great for portrait photographers! The low cloud cover diffuses that hard sunlight like a giant overhead softbox. This cuts down the contrast on everything underneath the cloud cover, landscape and portrait subject alike. Some photographers run outdoors on a cloudy day and just start firing away, thinking the light is just right no matter which way they point their cameras. Although the quality of light is much softer on cloudy days, the direction of light still needs to be taken into account.

Side light

Side lighting on an overcast day is much less severe than you saw in the sunny examples. Because the clouds soften the light for you, you usually don’t need to break out the diffusion panels or reflectors. However, you do have to take notice of the more subtle, but still present, direction of the light.

In Figure 4.25, the model was freely posing on an overcast day in the afternoon with the sun setting to the side. Not knowing what to look for in the light, she turned her face into the shadow. I noticed this and directed her to face the other way.
In the very next shot (Figure 4.26), it looked like someone had aimed a big, beautiful soft-box at her face. To add a final bit of icing to the image, I held a silver reflector below her face. With no direct light hitting the reflector, it didn’t bounce much light back, but it did create that catchlight in the bottom of the eye. That catchlight sparks the eyes and brings them to life (Figure 4.27).
Figure 4.27 On overcast days there isn’t much spark to the subject’s eyes. By adding a silver reflector slightly below her face, the reflection creates a catchlight and brings the eyes to life.

Nikon D800 • ISO 80 • 1/1250 sec. • f/1.4 • 35mm lens
Overhead light

As mentioned earlier, most photographers are hesitant to shoot at high noon on a clear day, but when the clouds come out, everyone grabs their camera to go play! Whether the light is diffused or not, when it’s directly overhead, the shadows cast by the subject’s eyebrows still go straight down and create that unflattering raccoon-eyed look. To avoid this problem, your subjects just need to turn up their faces into the light. While it may occasionally be too bright to have them do this on a sunny day, it’s no trouble at all under overcast conditions. As the photographer, find a way to elevate yourself to shoot down on them, so every photo isn’t looking directly up their upturned noses. In Figure 4.28 (on the following page), I simply had the model sit down and then look up at the camera with the cloudy skies behind me, evenly illuminating her face. To get that elevated position, find something safe to stand on or bring a small step stool to the shoot.

Once you understand the quality and direction of light, you’ll be able to assess any outdoor lighting condition. Then, with the techniques I covered in this chapter and some simple tools, you and your subject can conquer natural light to produce amazing portraits in all kinds of weather and at any time of day.
By standing above the model, I was able to shoot down on her while she raised her face up into the overhead cloudy light. This negated any shadows while softly and evenly illuminating her face.

Nikon D800 • ISO 400 • 1/160 sec. • f/2.8 • 120mm lens
Chapter 4 Assignments

Analyzing hard versus soft light
Make a game of analyzing the light you see on an everyday basis. Determine if it is hard light or soft light. Then take note of the light source’s size and distance from the people it’s illuminating. With a little practice you’ll be able to identify different qualities of light automatically.

Exposing for high-contrast lighting
Work with your different camera modes to properly expose a person who is heavily backlit. Turning your subject’s back to the sun is an easy way to get even lighting but is difficult for your camera to calculate. Set your camera to Spot Meter, and then place the spot sensor on your subject’s face to get a proper meter reading.

Working with a silver reflector
Practice working with a silver reflector on your own. On a sunny day use a silver reflector to paint light onto a wall. Hold the reflector up high and use the bottom edge of the reflector to aim the light. Now practice doing this at different distances from the wall. Bouncing light is just like practicing your bank shot on a pool table.

*Share your results with the book’s Flickr group!*  
*Join the group here: flickr.com/groups/portraitsfromsnapshottogreatshots*
Index

3 Point Lighting
  fill light, using, 204
  main light, 202
  rim light, 203
50mm lens, using, 38

A
A (Aperture Priority Auto) mode
  explained, 28–29
  shooting in, 4
  using with natural light, 7
  using without flash, 7
AE-L/AF-L button, 33
AF Lock and focus points, 32–33
aperture
  adjusting, 24
  and depth of field, 24
  explained, 24
  small versus large, 25–26
Aperture Priority (Av) mode
  explained, 28–29
  shooting in, 4
  using with natural light, 7
  using without flash, 7
artificial lights. See light sources
Auto Focus Lock button, 33
Auto mode, 4
Auto White Balance, using, 112, 117

B
background, falling out of focus, 4
background exposure, checking outdoors, 185
backlight, filling with reflector, 87–88
“baked in” settings, explained, 5
Beauty lighting, 199–200
black reflector, using, 172
blue hour temperature, 110
body cropping, 49–50
body directions, three planes of, 68
bounce
  ceiling, 142–143
  wall, 140–141
bounce cards, using, 146–147
bounce reflector, using, 89
bounce umbrella, using, 166–168
brightness
  adding, 31
  subtracting, 31
broad vs. short lighting, 160–161
Butterfly lighting, 198

C
calmness, maintaining, 19
camera, setting up, 19
camera modes
  A (Aperture Priority Auto), 28–29
  Av (Aperture Priority Auto), 28–29
  M (Manual mode), 28–29
  P (Program Auto), 28–29
  S (Shutter Priority Auto), 28–29
  Tv (Shutter Priority Auto), 28–29
camera settings
  aperture, 24–26
  depth of field, 24–26
  Exposure Triangle, 28
  freezing motion, 26–28
  monopod, 126
  shutter speed, 26–28
camera shake
  high ISO, 119–121
  image stabilization lenses, 121–123
camera support
  handholding techniques, 123–125
  tripods, 126
camera-top Tupperware, 144–145
candlelight temperature, 110
Canon
  Evaluative Metering, 5
  exposure metering modes, 30
focusing modes, 31–33
IS (Image Stabilization), 121
Picture Style (Canon) setting, 5
catchlight, effect of, 100–101, 143, 165, 167
ceiling light, using, 142–143
character portraits, 215–216
“chicken wing” handhold, 124
Clamshell lighting, 199
clean headspace, looking out for, 15
color balance, getting with ExpoDisc, 118
color temperature. See also indoor light
balancing, 151
Daylight preset, 112–114
Fluorescent preset, 115
Kelvin scale, 110
Tungsten preset, 114
white balance presets, 110–112
composition
depth, 47–49
explained, 41
leading lines, 44
level horizons, 42
Rule of Thirds, 43
space, 45–46
use of lines, 44
compression in group portraits, 224–225
continuous lights
benefits, 180
considering, 176
fluorescent photo, 180–181
hot lights, 180–181
LED, 181
vs. strobe lights, 180
contrast and shadow, 158
couples
focal plane, 227
shallow depth of field, 226
wide depth of field, 224–227
covered shade, 90–91
cropping
bodies, 49–51
headshots, 52–54
horizontal, 54
rules, 49–50
CTO correction gel, using, 149
Custom white balance
menu, 116
mixed light source, 117–119
single light source, 116–117
D
D200 (Nikon)
character portraits, 215–216
softbox, 195
D700 (Nikon)
body planes, 68
Butterfly lighting, 198
fluorescent bulb, 115
focal plane for couple, 227
focusing on eyes, 10
glare in glasses, 71
group portrait, 26
headshot with high contrast, 212
with high contrast, 212
High Key headshot, 210
High Key image, 201
horizontal cropping, 54
leading line, 44
level horizons, 42
Loop lighting, 196
Low Key headshot, 211
Low Key image, 200
negative space, 45
offsetting subjects in frames, 12
props, 63–65
Rembrandt lighting pattern, 197
rim lights, 209
shallow depth of field, 226
skateboarders, 67
softbox, 195
stepping back, 41
telephoto for compression, 223
telephoto lens, 39, 48
wide depth of field, 225
wide-angle distortion, 223
wide-angle lens, 37, 40, 47
zooming in, 41
D800 (Nikon)
5-in-1 Reflector, 183
50mm lens, 38
aperture and depth of field, 25
Auto White Balance, 111, 117
Beauty lighting, 199–200
black reflector, 175
body cropping, 51
bounce umbrella, 167–168
broad lighting, 160
on-camera flash, 140, 145
on-camera lighting, 156
camera shake, 119
ceiling bounce, 142–143
checking background exposure, 185
clean headspace, 15–16
covered shade, 91
cropped horizontal headshot, 53
cropping guidelines, 50
Daylight preset, 113
Daylight white balance, 111
diffused light, 183
diffused sunlight, 99–101
direct sunlight, 83
distortion, 35
environmental portrait, 214
eye-size variation, 70
family portrait, 232
fine-tuning face, 69
flash gels, 148
flash with reflector dish, 165
flat lighting, 158
gold reflector, 175
hard light, 81, 162–163
headshot cropping, 52–53
Large Rogue Flashbender modifier, 147
main key light, 202–204
mixed light source, 117
natural light for family photo, 228–229
natural reflectors, 96
natural-light headshot, 213
negative space, 46
off-camera lighting, 157
offsetting subjects in frames, 13
open shade, 95, 98
overexposed subject, 134
overhead light, 103
overhead sunlight, 83
parabolic bounce umbrella, 231
properly exposed subject, 134
pullback shot, 185
raising ISO, 120
Rule of Thirds, 43
shadow and contrast, 158
shooting down on subjects, 14
shoot-through umbrella, 169–170
shutter speed, 27
side lighting, 85, 159
silver reflector, 174
Skylux LED light, 184
soccer team, 235
soccer team formal, 236–237
soccer team with speedlights, 236–237
soccer team with strobe, 233
soccer team with wide-angle lens, 234
soft light, 81, 97, 164
soft light on face, 184
softbox and reflector, 173
softboxes, 171
speedlights, 139, 145, 182
strobe light for family photo, 230
subject turned into light, 17–18
Tungsten WB Preset, 149–150
turning subject into sun, 83
turning subject’s back to sun, 85, 87
underexposed subject, 134
using reflector, 89
Vibration Compensation, 122
wall bounce, 141
white reflector, 173
wide aperture, 120

D3200 (Nikon)
Aperture Priority mode, 7
kit camera lens, 8
outdoor portraits, 137
pop-up flash, 6
Red-eye Reduction mode, 135
studio strobe outdoors, 187
zooming kit lens, 8

Daylight preset, using, 112–114
depth, using in compositions, 47–49
depth of field
adjusting, 24
and aperture, 24
deciding on, 25–26
distance, 226
explained, 24
in group portraits, 224
shallow, 226
wide, 224–225
diffused sunlight
- overhead light, 103–104
- side light, 99–101
diffusion panel, using indoors, 183
direct sunlight, filling in backlight, 87–88
directing
- planes of body directions, 68
- showing versus telling, 66
distance. See depth
distortion, seeing, 36

E
environmental portraits
- character type, 215–216
- considerations, 217
- in rooms, 214
Evaluative Metering (Canon), 5
ExpoDisc, using for color balance, 118
Exposure Compensation, 31
exposure metering modes. See also metering mode
- Canon cameras, 30
- Center-weighted, 29
- Matrix, 29
- Nikon cameras, 30
- Partial, 30–31
- Spot, 29–31
Exposure Triangle, 28
eyes, focusing on, 10
eye-size variation, problem-solving, 70

F
faces
- expanding, 160
- fine-tuning, 68–69
- thinning, 160–161
family portraits
- natural light, 228–229
- parabolic bounce umbrella, 231
- strobe light, 230–232
feedback, getting, 72–73
fill light
- using, 136–137
- using in 3 Point Lighting, 204
flash. See also on-camera flash; pop-up flash
- fill light, 136–137
- main light, 136
- using with reflector dish, 165
Flash Compensation, 133–134
flash gels, using, 148–150
flash light temperature, 110
flash modes
- Automatic, 132
- Manual, 132
- TTL (Through The Lens), 132
flat lighting, 158–159
fluorescent light temperature, 110
fluorescent photo lights, using, 181
Fluorescent preset, using, 115
Fluorescent white balance, 112
focus points and AF Lock, 32–33
focusing modes
- AF-A (Auto-servo AF), 31–33
- AF-C (Continuous-servo AF), 31–33
- AF-S (Single-servo AF), 31–33
- AI Focus AF, 31–33
- Canon, 31–33
- M (Manual focus), 31–33
- Manual focus, 31–33
- Nikon, 31–33
- One Shot AF, 31–33
- Predictive AI Servo AF, 31–33
framing subjects, 12–13
freezing motion, 26–28
f-stops, small versus large, 24
Fuji X100s
- ceiling bounce, 142–143
- covered shade, 90–91
- getting feedback on, 73
- Large Rogue Flashbender modifier, 146–147
- open shade, 96
- wall bounce, 141

G
glasses, minimizing glare in, 71
gold reflector, using, 172, 175
"good side," finding, 72, 74
gray card, using, 116, 118
group portraits
- camera settings, 222–224
- compression, 222–223
- couples, 224–227
depth of field, 222, 239
families, 228–232
large groups, 233–238
natural light, 239
perspective, 224, 239
wide depth of field, 26

H
handholding techniques
“chicken wing,” 124
“the lean,” 124
shoulder brace, 125
hard light
changing to soft light, 89
explained, 80–81
vs. soft light, 104
source of, 162–163
headshot cropping, 52–54
headshots
High Key, 210
indoors, 208–209
Low Key, 211
natural light, 209–215
outdoors, 205–207
High Key lighting, 201, 210
horizons, keeping level, 42
hot lights, using, 181

I
image stabilization lenses
Active vs. Normal mode, 123
using, 121–123
Incandescent/Tungsten white balance, 112
indoor light. See also color temperature; light
diffusion panel, 183
LED light + softbox, 184
speedlight + reflector, 182–183
ISO settings
low-light indoor conditions, 120
for shooting outdoors, 119

J
JPEG format, shooting in, 5

K
Kelvin scale
blue hour, 110
candlelight, 110
daylight at noon, 110
flash, 110
hazy sun, 110
open shade, 110
partly cloudy, 110
sunrise, 110
sunset, 110
Tungsten, 110
warm fluorescent, 110
kit lens, zooming in with, 8–9

L
Large Rogue Flashbender modifier, 146–147
leading lines, using in compositions, 44
“the lean” camera hold, 124–125
LED light + softbox, using indoors, 184
LED lighting, using, 181
lenses
50mm, 38
distortion, 35–36
focal lengths, 33
image stabilization, 121–123
normal, 33
selecting, 33
selection and compression, 37
stepping back, 41
telephoto, 33, 39, 48
wide-angle, 33, 37, 47
zoom, 40
zooming in, 41
light. See also indoor light; natural light; shade;
sunlight
bouncing, 142–143
color temperature, 110
direction of, 82–83
fill, 136
hard, 80–81, 104, 162–163
main light, 136
moving subjects toward, 17–18
overhead, 82–83
quality, 80–81
side, 82–83, 159
soft, 80–81, 104, 162–164, 184
light direction
flat lighting, 158
increasing contrast, 158–159
on- vs. off-camera, 156–157
light modifiers
flash and reflector dish, 165
photographic umbrellas, 166–170
reflectors, 172–175
softboxes, 170–172
light placement, broad vs. short, 160–161
light quality, point source, 162
light sources
choosing, 176
continuous lights, 180–181
placing, 189
strobe lights, 176–179
lighting, high-contrast, 104
lighting scenarios
indoors, 182–184
one-light classics, 194–199
outdoors, 185–188
turning subject into sun, 83
turning subject’s back to sun, 85–86
lines, using in compositions, 44
locations, considering, 62
Loop lighting, using, 194–197
Low Key lighting, 200

M
M (Manual mode), 28–29
main light in 3 Point Lighting, 202
main light, using, 136
Matrix Metering (Nikon), 5
metering mode, setting, 5. See also exposure
metering modes
monopod, using, 126
mood boards, using, 61, 74
motion, freezing, 26–28
motion blur, creating, 27

N
natural light. See also light
family portrait, 228–229
High Key lighting, 210
using, 209–213
natural reflectors, using, 96. See also reflectors
negative space, using, 45–46
neutral gray card, using, 116, 118
Nikon
focusing modes, 31–33
Matrix Metering, 5
Picture Control setting, 5
Nikon D200
character portraits, 215–216
softbox, 195
Nikon D700
body planes, 68
Butterfly lighting, 198
fluorescent bulb, 115
focal plane for couple, 227
focusing on eyes, 10
glare in glasses, 71
group portrait, 26
headshot with high contrast, 212
with high contrast, 212
High Key headshot, 210
High Key image, 201
horizontal cropping, 54
leading line, 44
level horizons, 42
Loop lighting, 196
Low Key headshot, 211
Low Key image, 200
negative space, 45
offsetting subjects in frames, 12
props, 63–65
Rembrandt lighting pattern, 197
rim lights, 209
shallow depth of field, 226
skateboarders, 67
softbox, 195
stepping back, 41
telephoto for compression, 223
telephoto lens, 39, 48
wide depth of field, 225
wide-angle distortion, 223
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Camera Details</th>
<th>Relevant Terms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nikon D800</strong></td>
<td>5-in-1 Reflector, 183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>50mm lens, 38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>aperture and depth of field, 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Auto White Balance, 111, 117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Beauty lighting, 199–200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>black reflector, 175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>body cropping, 51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>bounce umbrella, 167–168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>broad lighting, 160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>on-camera flash, 140, 145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>on-camera lighting, 156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>camera shake, 119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ceiling bounce, 142–143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>checking background exposure, 185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>clean headspace, 15–16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>covered shade, 91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>cropped horizontal headshot, 53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>cropping guidelines, 50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Daylight preset, 113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Daylight white balance, 111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>diffused light, 183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>diffused sunlight, 99–101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>direct sunlight, 83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>distortion, 35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>environmental portrait, 214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>eye-size variation, 70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>family portrait, 232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>fine-tuning face, 69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>flash gels, 148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>flash with reflector dish, 165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>flat lighting, 158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>gold reflector, 175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>hard light, 81, 162–163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>headshot cropping, 52–53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Large Rogue Flashbender modifier, 147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>main key light, 202–204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mixed light source, 117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>natural light for family photo, 228–229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>natural reflectors, 96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>natural-light headshot, 213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>negative space, 46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>off-camera lighting, 157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>offsetting subjects in frames, 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>open shade, 95, 98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>overexposed subject, 134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nikon D3200</strong></td>
<td>Aperture Priority mode, 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>kit camera lens, 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>outdoor portraits, 137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pop-up flash, 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Red-eye Reduction mode, 135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>studio strobe outdoors, 187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>zooming kit lens, 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nikon VR</strong> (VR)</td>
<td>noise reduction, 127. <em>See also</em> problem solving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>noon light temperature, 110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>normal lenses, 33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
octobox, using outdoors, 187
off-camera lighting, 156–157
on-camera flash. See also flash; speedlights
modes, 132
modifiers, 144–145
on-camera flash modifiers
bounce cards, 146–147
camera-top Tupperware, 144–145
flash gels, 148–150
Large Rogue Flashbender modifier, 146–147
Stofen Omni-Bounce, 144
on-camera lighting, 156–157
one-light setups
Beauty lighting, 199–200
Butterfly lighting, 198
Clamshell lighting, 199
flat lighting, 194
Loop lighting, 194–197
Rembrandt lighting, 197
softboxes, 195
open shade
+ natural reflectors, 95–98
temperature, 110
using, 92–94
outdoor light
background exposure, 185
speedlight + umbrella, 185–186
studio strobe + softbox, 187–188
overcast days, shooting on, 99–101
overexposed subject, 134
overhead light, 82, 103–104

P (Program Auto) mode, 28–29
perspective, considering in group portraits, 224
photographic umbrellas
bounce, 166–168
family portrait, 231
shoot-throough, 168–170, 185–186
using, 189
Picture Control (Nikon), 5
Picture Style (Canon) setting, 5
PocketWizard PlusX radio transceiver, 177
pop-up flash. See also flash
red-eye reduction, 135–136
vs. speedlights, 138–139
turning off, 6–7
using, 151
portraits. See group portraits; studio portraits
poses, problem-solving, 70–72
posing, practicing, 74
positive space, using, 45
prepro
checklist, 61
explained, 60
locations, 61–62
mood boards, 61, 74
props, 61–65
scheduling, 61
styling, 61
times, 61
problem solving. See also noise reduction; Red-eye Reduction mode
glare in glasses, 71
uneven eye sizes, 70
props
considering, 62
using, 63–65

RAW data, interpretation of, 5
RAW file format, shooting in, 121
Red-eye Reduction mode, 135–136. See also
problem solving
reflector dish, using with bare flash, 165
reflectors. See also natural reflectors
5-in-1 surfaces, 172
black, 172
bounce type, 89
diffusing side light, 89
filling in backlight, 87
gold, 172, 175
silver, 172, 174
translucent, 172
using, 104, 172–175, 189
white, 172–173
Rembrandt lighting pattern, 197
rim light
subject and background, 209
using in 3 Point Lighting, 202
Rule of Thirds, 43
S

S (Shutter Priority Auto) mode, 28–29
settings, “baked in,” 5

shade. See also light; sunlight
covered, 90–91
open, 92–94, 98
open + natural reflectors, 95–98

shadow
and contrast, 158
decreasing, 91
increasing, 97

shoot-through umbrella, using, 168–170, 185–186
short vs. broad lighting, 160–161
shoulder brace technique, using, 125

showing versus telling, 66

side light
diffused sunlight, 99–101
diffusing with reflector, 89
explained, 82
using, 159

Sigma OS (Optical Stabilization), 121
silver reflector, using, 172, 174

single-person portraits. See studio portraits

skin tones, improving, 5

Skylux LED light, using, 184

soccer team
formal photos, 238
multiple lights, 236–238
one light, 233–235
shooting up at, 235
shot from above, 235
speedlights, 236–237
umbrella and strobe, 237
wide-angle lens, 234

soft light
changing hard light to, 89
classical, 97
explained, 80–81
on face, 184
vs. hard light, 104
rules, 162–163

softboxes
octabox, 187
using, 170–172
using in one-light setups, 195
using LED light with, 184
using with studio strobes, 187–188

space
negative, 45
positive, 45

speedlight + reflector, using indoors, 182–183
speedlights. See also on-camera flash
+ shoot-through umbrella, 185–186
benefits, 178
with CTO correction gel, 149
disadvantages, 178
vs. pop-up flash, 138–139
using, 133, 178

sportraits
multiple lights, 236–238
one light, 233–235

Stofen Omni-Bounce, 144

strobe lights
considering, 176
vs. continuous lights, 180
family portrait, 230–232
manual flash power output, 177–178
speedlights, 178
studio strobes, 179
wireless triggering, 176–177

studio portraits
3 Point Lighting, 202–204
High Key lighting, 201
Low Key lighting, 200
one-light classics, 194–199

studio strobes
benefits, 179
modeling light, 179
+ softbox, used outdoors, 187–188
using, 179

subject
finding “good side” of, 72, 74
offsetting in frame, 12–13
overexposed, 134
shooting down on, 14
standing out from background, 4
turning back to sun, 85–86
turning into light, 17–18
turning into sun, 84
underexposed, 134

sunlight. See also light; shade
diffused, 99–101
direct, 86
qualities of, 80
temperature, 110
sunrise light temperature, 110
sunset light temperature, 110

T

taking shots, practicing, 19
Tamron VC (Vibration Compensation), 121
telephoto lenses, 33, 39, 48
translucent reflector, using, 172
tripod, using, 126
Tungsten
  light temperature, 110
  preset, 114
  WB Preset, 149–150
Tv (Shutter Priority Auto) mode, 28–29

U

umbrellas
  bounce, 166–168
  family portrait, 231
  shoot-through, 168–170, 185–186
  using, 189
underexposed subject, 134

W

wall light, using, 140–141
Westcott products
  Skylux LED light, 181
  Spiderlite TD, 181
  Strobelite, 179
white balance presets
  Auto, 112, 117
  auto, 111–112
  on-camera, 112
  Cloudy, 112
  Custom, 116–119
  Direct sunlight/Daylight, 112
  Fluorescent, 112
  Incandescent/Tungsten, 112
  Preset manual, 112
  Shade, 112
white reflector, using, 172–173
wide-angle lenses
  explained, 33
  using, 37, 40, 47

Z

zoom lens, using, 40
zooming in with kit lens, 8–9