

My Lighting Gear

During my career, I've used many different brands of lighting gear. When I could afford to upgrade my gear, I bought a Profoto strobe system. Most rental houses all over the world rent Profoto gear, which indicates how reliable it is. Profoto strobes give me the power, consistency, and fast recycle times I need when photographing wild children.

My first studio lights were a used pair of ancient Bowens monolights that only had on/off settings. I purchased them from an established photographer who was getting rid of old equipment, and they served me well for a couple of years until I could save up to buy more powerful and more controllable lights. My current lighting gear consists of:

- **Two Profoto D1 Air 500 Monolights** (used mostly as background lights). The D1 Airs have their own wireless transmitter, which lets me control these lights from my camera, eliminating the need for an assistant (or me) to run around changing power settings.
- **Profoto Acute 1200R Power Pack strobes with two heads** (I use one head as my main light).
- **Manfrotto heavy-duty rolling light stand with boom arm and sandbag as counterweight.** This rolling light stand and boom are heavy enough to help place my 7-foot Octabank up and over my subjects (more details on this in Chapter 6).

My favorite modifiers were always softboxes, until the Octabank was introduced a few years ago.

Octabanks spread the light better because they are shallower than softboxes. The modifiers I use include

- **Seamless Octabank.** I use the 120 cm (approximately 5 feet) Octabank for shooting up to four kids. I use the 250 cm (approximately 7 feet) Seamless Octabank when I need a bigger area of light or when photographing a family or a group of more than four children. Seamless is a relatively new brand of modifier from Ireland. Its modifiers create gorgeous, consistent light and are reasonably priced.
- **Soft honeycomb grids.** Currently, a honeycomb grid is my favorite modifier for my Octabanks, but I also use a honeycomb grid on a Beauty Dish occasionally to concentrate light for dramatic effect. The grid I use the most is the soft honeycomb grid for the front of my 60-inch Seamless Octabank (more on this in Chapter 6).
- **Two Profoto Beauty Dishes.** Both dishes have white interiors and sock diffusers for the background lights, which I use when I'm shooting a high-key setup. I also have a 25-degree honeycomb grid for the Beauty Dish, which I use when I want to concentrate the spill of light.
- **V-flats.** For reflectors and subtractive lighting I prefer V-flats to any commercially manufactured reflectors.