

What's That?!

Yes we all know about aperture, ISO and white balance, but do you know all the little but sometimes very useful features on your camera? Find out more

words Desiree Koh

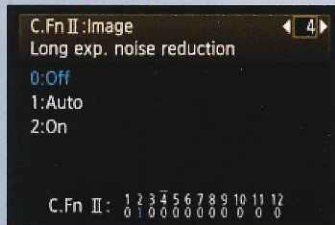
Flash Exposure Compensation

Most photographers run into this head-scratcher: why is the flash under- or over-powering the picture? Shouldn't it automatically calculate the flash needed for a shot? Unfortunately, to err is camera too, so there will be times when you have to prompt your DSLR to get it right. By selecting the negative numbers, the flash power will be reduced and you won't lose highlight details, and the positive numbers will enable you to brighten up subjects a little farther away or when the in-built lightmeter is fooled by a bright object in the frame.



Photo: Raymond Lee

Long Exposure Noise Reduction



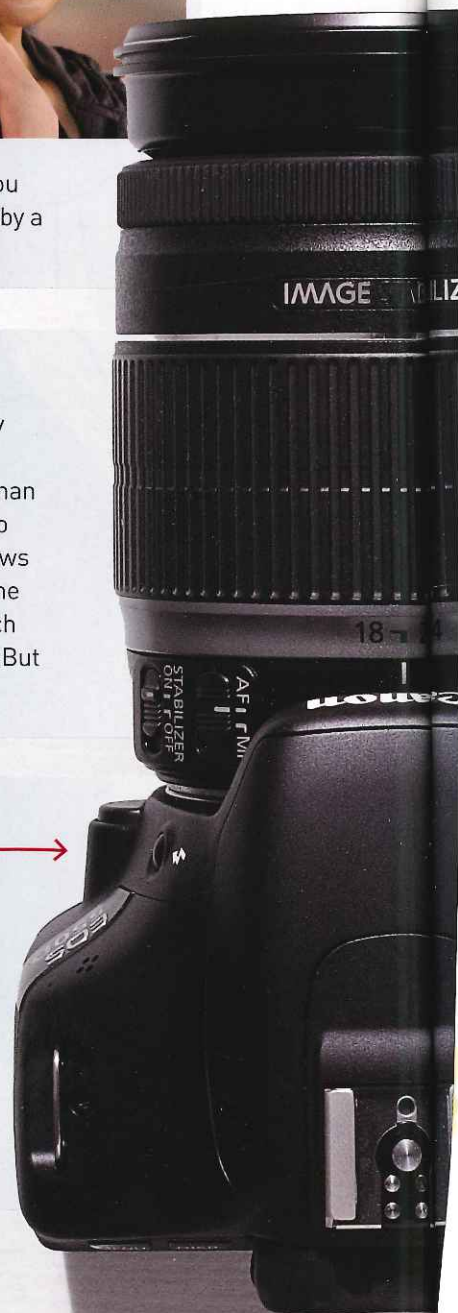
Long exposures can result in digital noise – a grainy effect. When taking lighted objects at night such as fireworks, using this feature for exposures longer than 10 seconds can reduce noise. However, if you plan to take a series of shots in succession, this feature slows your photo taking down as it needs to re-energise the imaging sensor and take a blank exposure after each shot, for the same length of time as your initial one. But

the patience is more than worth the trouble!

Depth of Field Preview Button

Want to know how your shot will turn out beyond just what you see through the viewfinder or LCD screen? By pressing the depth of field preview button, you'll also be able to see how much of the picture will be in sharp focus and how much will be blurred, eliminating preliminary trial and error shot-taking to determine the exact aperture settings needed.

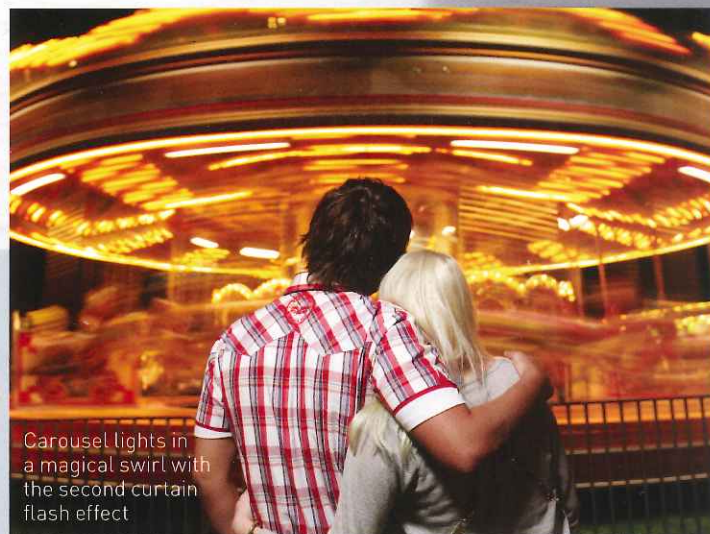
When using it, adjust your aperture to where you get the exact balance of sharp and blurry focus, and click!



Second Curtain Flash

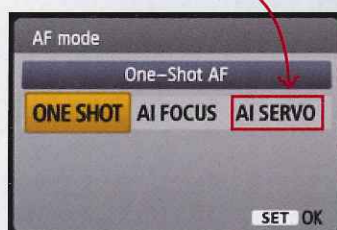
Would you use a flash that fires at the end of your exposure, instead of before?

A curtain refers to a particular phase of the shutter, and a conventional flash is the first curtain. Second curtain flashes are used for artistic effect; to create a pictorial trail that shows movement by a subject before freezing it at the end of its path. This reveals patterns about their motion that we can't otherwise see, thus producing images that seem magical. Ensure the camera is in manual exposure, a setting of one second at f-5.6, set it to second curtain and put the subject in motion before you snap the picture.



Carousel lights in a magical swirl with the second curtain flash effect

AI Servo AF

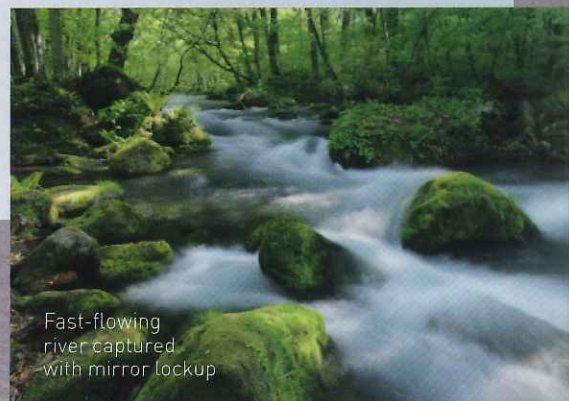


If you've never thought about your Canon DSLR as a robot with a mind of its own – now's the time to start! The best photographers can set up the ideal shot with the perfect combination of exposure, aperture and lighting – but what if the subject doesn't cooperate? Think sports, kids running around and stage performances, where your focusing distances change every second. Exclusive to Canon DSLRs, this intelligent feature determines the speed and direction of moving objects so your lens focuses on a predicted position to increase the

probability of taking a sharp picture. Trigger AI Servo AF by pressing the shutter release just halfway – the viewfinder will show that your subject is being tracked with an in-focus indicator below the picture, which is taken when you release. On some Canon DSLRs, the right directional key on the back of the camera body allows you to quickly toggle to this auto-focus mode.

Mirror Lockup

You may notice that you can't seem to avoid a blurry image even while using a tripod or remote release. This is due to the technical construction of a DSLR – when the shutter button is pressed, an interior mirror flips up to expose the digital image sensor. Heavier lenses can cause a slight vibration. Just enable this setting! But you won't be able to look through the viewfinder, so this is most effective for shots that require long shutter speeds.



Fast-flowing river captured with mirror lockup