FREE PRINTABLE · WORKS ON ANY CAMERA

Camera settings *cheat sheet*

Starting points. Take a test shot, check it, then adjust.

Aperture

low number: more light

f/1.8	One face, low light
f/2.8	Portraits, indoor sport
f/4	One or two people
f/5.6	Small groups, wildlife
f/8	Groups, landscapes
f/11	Landscapes, city lights
f/16	Sun stars, close-ups

Shutter speed

slowest that works

1/2000	Birds in flight
1/1000	Sport, running
1/500	Kids and pets moving
1/250	People walking
1/125	People posing or talking
1/60	Still subject, 50mm lens
1/30	Panning with a bike or car
1/4–1 s	Waterfalls, on a tripod
20–30 s	City at night, on a tripod

ISO

sensitivity; grain is the cost

100	Full sun, or any on a tripod
200	Light cloud, open shade
400	Overcast
800	Indoors beside a window
1600	Rooms in the evening
3200	Dim rooms, night streets
6400	Indoor sport, night sky
12,800	Last resort. Grain beats blur

12 scenes

where to start. In A / Av, raise ISO until the shutter reaches the speed shown

SCENE	MODE	APERTURE	SHUTTER	ISO	FOCUS	WHITE BAL.
Portrait outdoors	A / Av	**f/2 to f/2.8**	**1/250 or faster**	**100 to 400**	Single, eye AF	Daylight
Group photo	A / Av	**f/5.6 to f/8**	**1/125 or faster**	**100 to 800**	Single	Auto
People indoors	A / Av	**f/1.8 to f/2.8**	**1/125 or faster**	**800 to 3200**	Single, eye AF	Auto
Kids and pets indoors	M	**Widest**	**1/250 to 1/500**	**Auto, to 6400**	Continuous	Auto
Kids and pets outdoors	S / Tv	**Camera picks**	**1/500 to 1/1000**	**Auto, to 3200**	Continuous	Auto
Sport in daylight	S / Tv	**Camera picks**	**1/1000 or faster**	**Auto, to 3200**	Continuous	Daylight
Indoor sport	M	**Widest**	**1/500 to 1/1000**	**Auto, to 12,800**	Continuous	Auto
Birds in flight	M	**f/5.6 to f/8**	**1/2000**	**Auto, to 6400**	Continuous	Daylight
Close-ups and flowers	A / Av	**f/8 to f/11**	**1/250 or faster**	**200 to 1600**	Manual or single	Auto
Landscape	A / Av	**f/8 to f/11**	**Any, on a tripod**	**100**	Single, then MF	Daylight
Sunset	A / Av, −1 stop	**f/8**	**Any, on a tripod**	**100 to 400**	Single	Cloudy
City at night	M, on a tripod	**f/11**	**20 to 30 seconds**	**100 to 200**	Single, then MF	Auto

Mode dial by brand

MODE	CANON	SONY	NIKON	FUJIFILM
Program	P	P	P	Ring and dial both on A
Aperture priority	Av	A	A	Aperture ring set, dial on A
Shutter priority	Tv	S	S	Shutter dial set, ring on A
Manual	M	M	M	Ring and dial both set

Fujifilm cameras that have a mode dial use P, A, S, M.

Focus mode by brand

	CANON	SONY, NIKON, FUJIFILM
Still	One-Shot AF	AF-S
Moving	Servo AF*	AF-C
By hand	MF	MF

Single is the still mode, **continuous** the moving mode.

*AI Servo AF on Canon DSLRs.

White balance

Tungsten	3,000 to 3,200 K
Fluorescent	about 4,000 K
Daylight	5,200 to 5,500 K
Flash	5,400 to 6,000 K
Cloudy	about 6,000 K
Shade	7,000 to 8,000 K

Set them in this order

1. **Subject moving?** Shutter first.
2. **Soft background?** Aperture first.
3. **ISO last,** as low as the light allows.
4. **Too dark or too bright?** Exposure compensation, in P, A and S.
5. **Metering:** leave it on Evaluative, Multi or Matrix.

Handheld floor

Shutter at least **1 over the focal length** (full-frame equivalent). 50mm: 1/60. 200mm: 1/250. Double it without stabilization.

Crop sensor? Multiply the focal length first: 1.5x (Canon 1.6x, Micro Four Thirds 2x). Stabilization can't freeze a moving subject.

Free to print, copy and share for teaching with this line on it. Not for resale.