

Lesson Two

Sport

Big lenses, fast shutter speeds and rapid reactions - welcome to sport photography.



Fast shutter speeds

A fast shutter speed is vital, it allows you to freeze action. Imagine if you photographed Basingstoke Town winning the FA Cup against Manchester United - only to discover your photographs were all blurred. Unless you are a Man U fan - you wouldn't want blurred photographs of such a great (if not unlikely) day!

1/15 - 1/30 - 1/60 - 1/100 - 1/250 - 1/500 - 1/800 - 1/1000 - 1/2000 - 1/8000

Slow shutter speeds ←————→ Fast shutter speeds

When photographing football, it's a good idea to shoot at 1/500 and upwards. You may be able to go slower - experience and judge for yourself

Aperture

It's a good idea to have a large aperture - 2.8 is idea. This allows a lot of light into your camera, which in return allows you to shoot at faster shutter speeds.



Focus

Once you have set your large aperture and faster shutter speed, you're ready to start taking photographs. However focusing is always going to be a challenging aspect. If possible take your photographs from a position where people are running towards you - this makes it easier to focus.

Camera Specifics (more technical)

You'll need to do some further research after reading this section - I will only cover Nikon cameras, but the principle is the same for all brands.

Many digital SLRs are set-up to focus and shoot with the same button, which is fine for many situations. However you can change most cameras to focus with one button and shoot with another. This makes sport photography far easier. Most Nikon cameras have either a "AF-on" or "AE-L/AF-L" button on the rear, which will allow you to do this.

Once you've changed this setting, use "single focus point" and set your camera to "AF-C" This will help you get more photographs in focus. For example -



With normal camera settings your camera has to guess on where to focus (left), but by changing the settings specified above, you can tell you camera where you want to focus (right). In the example above (right) you can see I have told the camera to focus on the footballer, so he is in focus and the background isn't.