

## • studio basics: simple lighting set-ups •

*the follow-along cheatsheet*

### A Quick Guide To Lighting Terms:

- **Single-Point Lighting:** One single light, that's it!
- **2-Point Lighting:** One main light with a second, less intense light to help fill shadows.
- **3-Point Lighting:** One main light, one less intense light to fill shadows, and one light to illuminate details (particularly hair).
- **Broad Lighting:** When a subject is slightly angled away from the camera, this refers to lighting the side of the face you see more of.
- **Short Lighting:** When a subject is slightly angled away from the camera, this refers to lighting the side of the face you see less of.
- **Split Lighting:** Lighting on one side of the face to 'split' it.
- **Butterfly Lighting:** Lighting a subject straight on from above, creating a 'butterfly-like' shadow under the nose.
- **Back Lighting:** The main lighting source is located behind the subject.
- **Beauty Lighting:** Similar to Butterfly Lighting, the subject is lit straight on from above, but also has a light below to remove the 'butterfly' shadow.

### Important Notes About Understanding Lighting Quality

- **The Size Of Your Light Matters:** This is a pretty simple premise - with a larger light source, generally you'll end up with a softer transition from highlights to shadows in an image. A small, pointed light will create crisper shadow edges.
- **Distance Makes A Difference:** Put a medium soft box up close to your subject, you'll get those soft transitions. Pull that soft box further away, your light will become *smaller* in relation to your subject, therefore creating harsher shadows.
- **Object Reflectivity Can Cause "Bright Spots":** Subjects with oily skin can cause reflectivity issues, especially with a smaller, pointed light. You'll want a large, softer light source that can minimize those shadows. (This is great to know when working with subjects other than people! Cars, for example, tend to be pretty shiny. By using 'nature's soft box,' a partly cloudy late evening, will help light the whole car without using a pointed, smaller light!)

- **Don't Be Afraid of Combining Natural & Artificial Light:** Paying attention to the balance in the situation will help you succeed. If your subject is being lit softly from one side, you won't want your flash on full blast pointed to the other side! Lower your flash, diffuse it to match the softer natural light and *balance* the two sources.

### Notes About Reading Light In A Subjects Eyes:

- Look at the shape and size of the light, where it is in relation to your subject and (if possible) where the photographer can be seen.
- Look at the size of the subject's pupils: if they're larger, the photo was most likely taken in a dark room with an extremely quick flash, meaning the pupils didn't have a chance to dilate. If they're smaller, the room was probably much brighter.
- Look at the bottom part of the eye - if you spot a light much softer and blurrier than a window/strobe, that's a reflector, bouncing light back into the subject!
- Strobes are going to big white spots in the eyes - an octagon soft box attached to a strobe looks round and a rectangular soft box looks... well, rectangular.

### Resources:

- **fStoppers:** One of the most useful and well-versed photography blogs out there.
  - [www.fstoppers.com](http://www.fstoppers.com)
  - Search for "Demystifying High-Speed Sync" to learn more about how strobes and cameras interact.
  - By clicking Articles at the top of the page, you can narrow your browsing to specific categories, like Portraits.
- **Books:** Find a subject you love & research it, all while supporting a local bookstore!
  - The Hot Shoe Diaries by Joe McNally: Learn how to use a flash by the kind of flash.
  - The Lighting Notebook by Kevin Kubota: One of the best down-to-earth lighting guides out there with practical applications and easy-to-create formulas.
  - Beyond Snapshots by Rachel Devine & Peta Mazey: Working with kids is a whole different ball game and can be fast-paced, but these two make it easy and fun.
  - Interior Lighting For Designers by Gary Gordon: If you don't want to photograph people, no problem. This book is a gorgeous how-to for lighting indoor scenes.
  - The Dramatic Portrait by Christ Knight (out July 13, 2017): Equipped with over a decade of professional portraiture, Knight is an incredible teacher.

- End Times by *Jill Greenberg*: Find a photographer you love and use the “reading light” section to learn more about their work. Greenberg is a highly accomplished (and occasionally controversial) photographer with a very unique style.
- **Classes**: If you’re an in-person learner, no problem! Take a class and keep up with your education; no matter who you are, we can always keep learning.
  - **Oregon College of Arts and Crafts**: Based in Portland, Oregon, OCAC offers continuing education classes all about photography. They range from Self Portraiture to shooting Wet Plate Collodion!
  - **Joslyn Art Museum**: Many art museums across the country offer classes of all types. Joslyn, based in Omaha, Nebraska, has incredible classes at great prices.
  - **Pittsburgh Photo Class** ([www.pittsburghphotoclass.com](http://www.pittsburghphotoclass.com)): This is just one of hundreds of photo studios that offer classes across the country. If you’re in the Pittsburgh area, look up Missy and her amazing studio!
  - **www.MeetUp.com**: If classes aren't your thing, but you still want to learn, meet up with some awesome photographers who love what you love! Search your area for photography meet ups with fellow lovers of the craft.

**Lastly, don’t forget to practice!** *I cannot emphasize this enough.* This is the best way to learn, the best way to improve and the best way to fail. Accepting failure is truly one of the best lessons I’ve ever had to learn - and sometimes I get incredible results!

[If you’re interested in creating your own lighting diagrams, you can use the website I used: [www.lightingdiagrams.com](http://www.lightingdiagrams.com)]