



Panning

The reason this composition works so well is that the red of Imogen's coat is framed by the white of the building behind her, and also because there's a large amount of space in front, in her direction of travel. This space helps because the viewer's eye is always drawn in the direction an object is "traveling" in a photograph. If the front of the bike was at the edge of the frame, the viewer's eyes would be led out of the photo, which is just what you don't want. Another thing that makes this image work so well is that the bike and Imogen are sharp, but the background is blurred. This is called motion blur, and it occurred because we were both cycling; relative to Imogen and me, only the buildings were moving. This effect works best with shutter speeds of 1/60 sec and slower.

➤ *You don't have to be moving with the subject to get motion blur. You can set your camera to a slow shutter speed and pan with the subject as it passes you. Frame your subject and move your camera to keep it in the same position within the frame while you keep still.*

Camera: Lomo LC-A [ZF]
Lens: 32mm
Focal length: 32mm
Film: Agfa Precisa 100, transparency,
cross-processed
Shutter speed: N/A
Aperture: auto
Accessories: none
Light: overcast





Narrow depth of field

I have used selective focus in this shot, choosing to focus on Mary's camera. With the Lomo LC-A you don't get much control over aperture, and therefore over depth of field. As the conditions were dull, and I was using a slow film (100 ISO), I knew the aperture would be wide open, giving a narrow depth of field, which meant that what I specifically focused on would be in focus, but not much else. As my camera had no autofocus, I set its focus distance to 80cm (c. 2ft 8in), then measured the distance to Mary's camera by pointing at it with my outstretched arm and touching her camera with the tip of my finger. (I know my arm is roughly 80cm long).

➤ *Photographs aren't always all about composition; sometimes they're about the story behind the image. Having all the figures on the left out of focus makes viewers curious; it engages viewers, prompting them to think about what is going on in the shot.*

Camera: Lomo LC-A [ZF]
Lens: 32mm
Focal length: 32mm
Film: Agfa Precisa 100, transparency,
cross-processed
Shutter speed: N/A
Aperture: auto
Accessories: none
Light: afternoon, overcast





Off-center focus

If you are using a camera with autofocus you need to be mindful of what you are focusing on because many autofocus cameras try to focus on the center of the frame. For this image that would have resulted in the grass in the background being in focus and the legs in the foreground being blurry. Most autofocus cameras have a two-stage shutter button. This means you can press and hold the shutter button halfway down to focus on what you have in the center of the frame, then recompose the shot before depressing it fully. I used this facility to keep the legs in focus. A bonus is that it cuts down on shutter lag—the delay between when you press the shutter button and when the picture is taken. This is simply the time it takes the camera to focus and set exposure levels.

➤ *When choosing a new digital camera, one of the most important things to look at is shutter lag. With older models this can range from 0.1 to 1.5 seconds. This may not sound like a lot, but it can make all the difference to your shot.*

Camera: Contax T2 [CAF]
Lens: 38mm
Focal length: 38mm
Film: Agfa Ultra 100, negative
Shutter speed: N/A
Aperture: N/A
Accessories: none
Light: early morning, bright sunlight





Cross-processing

This type of shot is particularly well suited to cross-processing because what would typically appear boring is made much bolder. If it is bright and sunny, it is always best to have the sun behind you for such a shot, or you risk it turning into a silhouette. I took these while traveling; the signs interested me because they are not what I am used to seeing at home. As a photographer, always try to keep interested in the everyday and mundane because what might not be immediately striking to you in its everyday context might be interesting to people viewing your work, and can be made intriguing by the way you frame and photograph it. That said, I can't remember the last time I took a shot of a road sign at home; to be honest, I don't always practice what I preach.

➤ *If you are shooting with digital, you can always up the contrast and saturation in Photoshop. I explain how to do this in Photoshop Essentials on page 202.*

Camera: Lomo LC-A [ZF]
Lens: 32mm
Focal length: 32mm
Film: Agfa Precisa 100, transparency,
cross-processed
Shutter speed: N/A
Aperture: auto
Accessories: none
Light: bright sun







Colorsplash Flash

These seagulls were flocking around fishermen who were throwing away entrails after gutting their catch. All I had to do was wait by the fish guts for the birds to start flocking around me and their free dinner. If you aren't lucky enough to be surrounded by fish guts you can use birdseed or leftover food scraps to entice birds. The sun had gone down so there wasn't a lot of light around, and the birds would have come out as silhouettes if I hadn't used a flash. In this case I decided to mix it up a little and use the Colorsplash Flash set to yellow. You can get some surreal effects with the Colorsplash when you use it outside because it will only color objects that are close to you; in this case the seagulls are yellow, but the sky has remained blue.

➤ You can also achieve this effect by placing a colored gel over your regular flash. You can see other shots for which I used a colored flash on pages 009 and 133.

Camera: Lomo LC-A [ZF]
Lens: 32mm
Focal length: 32mm
Film: Agfa Ultra 100, negative
Shutter speed: N/A
Aperture: auto
Accessories: Colorsplash Flash
Light: dusk, clear day





“Waterproofing” a lens

This shot was taken as the sun was coming up. I noticed that sometimes when Henry raised his arm out of the water it blocked out the sun, and I knew this would make a great image. With this kind of shot you just have to take it over and over again to get it right. I took seven shots to get this one; ironically, this was the second of the set.

Camera: Nikonos-V [NiV]
Lens: 35mm
Focal length: 35mm
Film: Kodak PORTRA 400VC, negative
Shutter speed: N/A
Aperture: N/A
Accessories: none
Light: sunrise

➤ A common problem when shooting on the surface of water is that you can get water drops on the lens and these cause blurry areas on the photo. This can be avoided simply by licking the lens because the water drops can't adhere to saliva.





Selective crop

Photography is not all about a single image. When I shot this set I was shooting to get one image, but when I saw the contact sheet, it became obvious I had a set that would work well together. What I was trying to do with these shots was get just the horse and the blue sky. Shooting the horses so I never got their entire heads gives them more character. It makes them seem more cheeky than a “normal” horse. The sky is a lovely deep blue because of the increased contrast created by cross-processing. Shooting with the sun behind me also helped make it deep blue. All of these images were cropped in camera. When you look through the viewfinder, try to imagine what you would crop out, and simply move closer to achieve that.

➤ *I could have taken a shot of the horse's head in full, then cropped it in Photoshop, but it isn't a good idea to get into the habit of shooting and cropping later because the pixels, or film grain, will be enlarged in the final print, reducing the quality of the image.*

Camera: Lomo LC-A [ZF]
Lens: 32mm
Focal length: 32mm
Film: Agfa Precisa 100, transparency,
cross-processed
Shutter speed: N/A
Aperture: auto
Accessories: none
Light: afternoon

