

# GOLDEN HOUR PHOTOGRAPHY

## BLUEPRINT

In very informal terms, the golden hour is simply the first hour of light after sunrise and the last hour of light before sunset. Of course, when exactly this occurs and how long the golden hour lasts, will depend on where you live and will vary with the seasons.



There's a reason — several reasons, actually — why the golden hour is also known as the magic hour.

1. The light is soft
2. The light is warm
3. The light is directional
4. The light creates long shadows

You're not afforded any of these benefits when shooting under an oppressive mid-day sun.



Examples of golden hour photography

## 1 TIMING

Don't be in so much of a rush that you fail to use good technique, but remember that you've got a relatively small window in which to take advantage of this gorgeous light.



Depending on where you live, the golden hour window can vary – for example, it can be longer as you move away from the equator. You can help maximize your golden hour efficiency by planning ahead. Know your destination, have an idea of what subjects you want to shoot, and calculate precisely when the golden hour occurs where you live.

### TIP:

Find a golden hour calculator online - it will help you with timing! You can also download an app such as The Photographer's Ephemeris.

## 2 APERTURE

If you don't typically shoot wide open, the golden hour presents a great opportunity to do so. You will be awed by the beautiful "points-of-light" bokeh created during these times of the day.



Also, be mindful of white balance! Set your white balance to "Shade" or "Cloudy," otherwise you risk neutralizing the wonderful golden glow. AWB may make the colours cold in your image, so if you are going to be setting up your white balance manually, choose between 3000 and 4000K.

### TIP:

If you are shooting architecture and landscape, you may need to narrow down the aperture to get all the parts of the scene in focus.

## THE 3 ESSENTIALS

### 3 SILHOUETTES

Golden hour is the best time to create silhouettes when you can have your subject really dark against an illuminated golden hued background.



Since there is a huge contrast in light between the subject and the background, the golden hour is a time when you can create dramatic silhouettes, but make sure you set your exposure so that the brightest part of the scene you are photographing has the right exposure.

### TIP:

Golden hour also is the best time to capture sunbursts as these can add to the already creative golden hour images you are capturing.