A scenic landscape photograph of a lake with mountains in the background and clouds rising from the water. The sky is a deep blue, and the water is a dark, calm blue. The mountains are dark and silhouetted against the sky. A layer of white clouds or mist rises from the water, partially obscuring the base of the mountains. The overall mood is serene and majestic.

# Sony Alpha **Problem-Solving Guide**

*by* **Gary Friedman & Mark Galer**

I would like to pay thanks to Gary Friedman for helping me prepare this Problem-Solving guide.

*You can catch up with Gary at*  
[www.FriedmanArchives.com](http://www.FriedmanArchives.com)

# Sony Alpha Problem-Solving Guide

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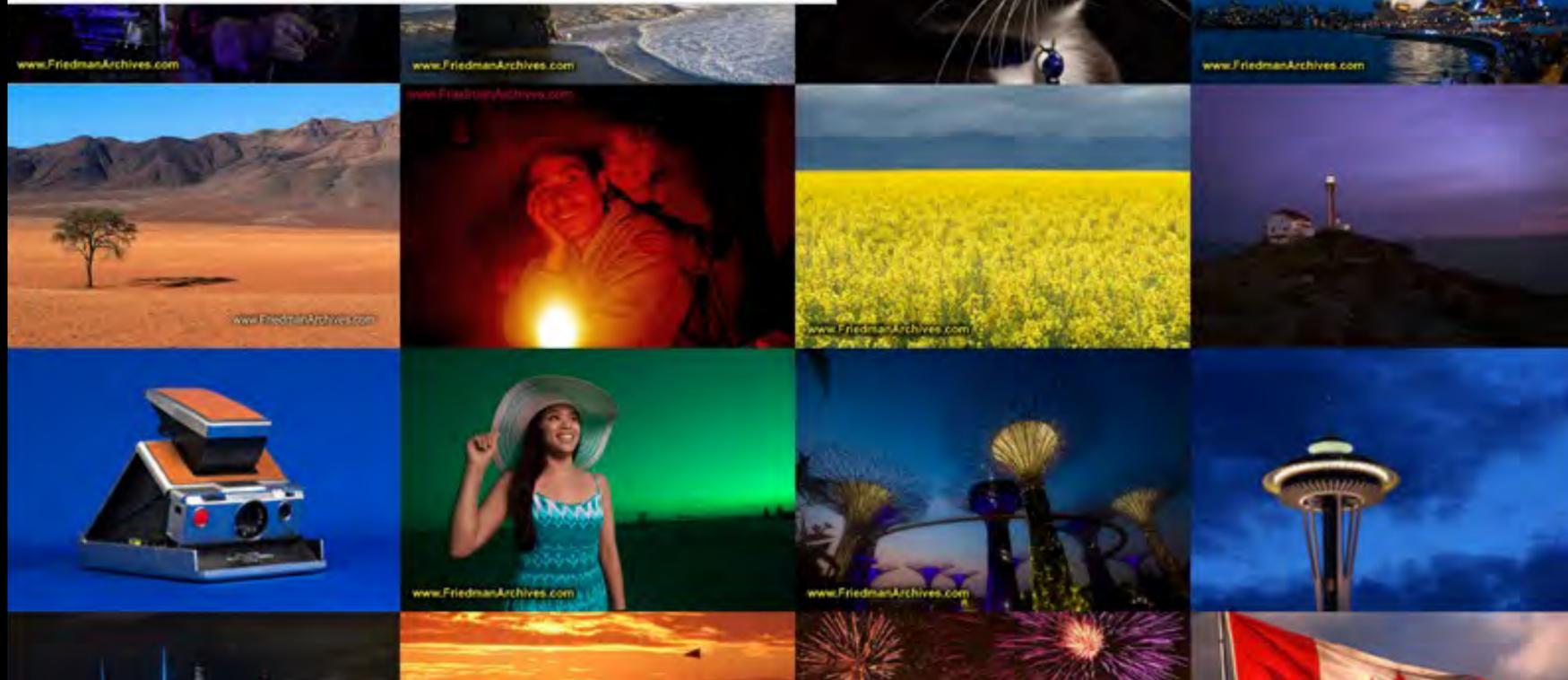
[USB-Cables](#)

[Zoom](#)

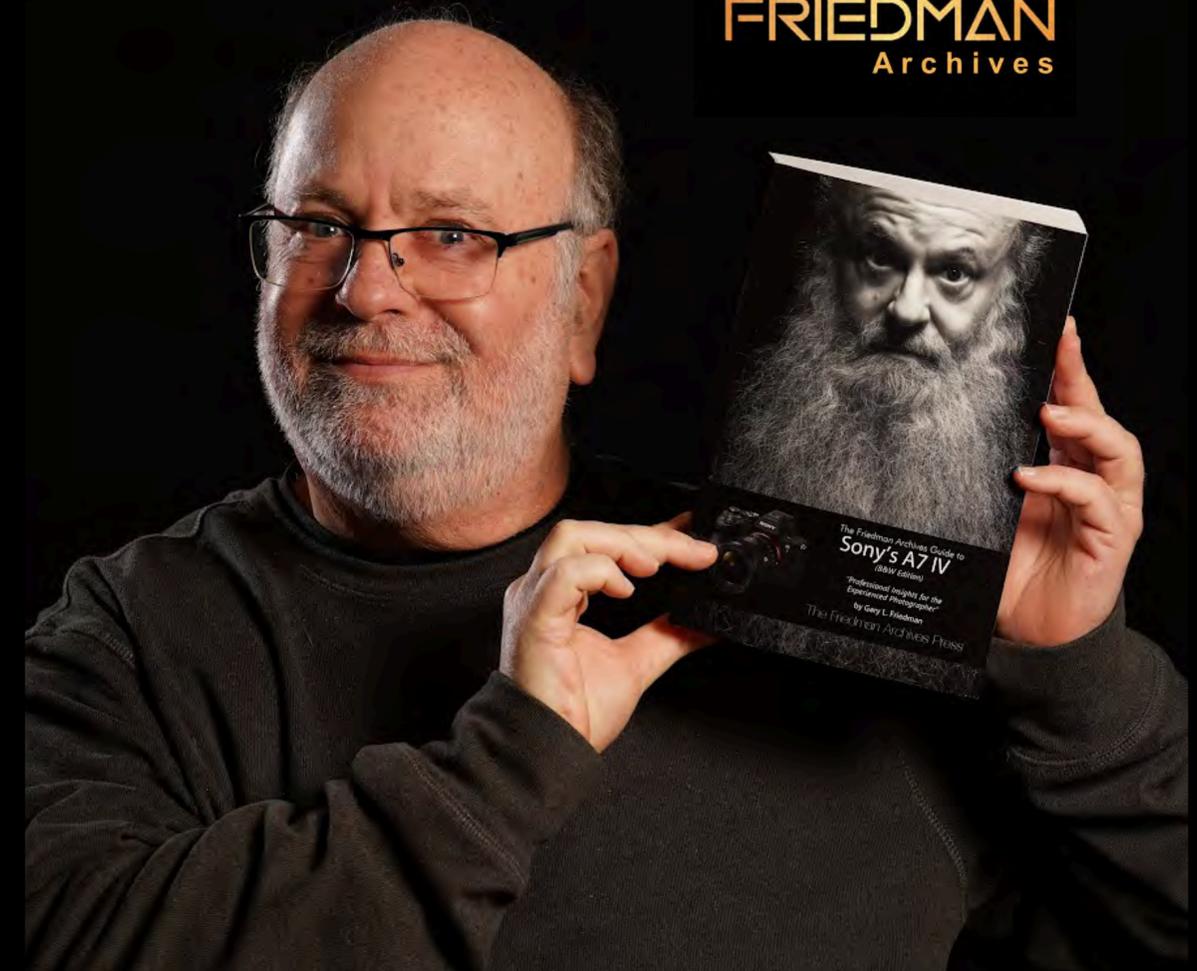
*IMPORTANT: Please remember to use the [Index](#) or the **Search** feature in your PDF Reader if you cannot find the solution to the problem you are looking for.*

# THE FRIEDMAN ARCHIVES BLOG

Wisdom and Tidbits from the land of [www.FriedmanArchives.com](http://www.FriedmanArchives.com)



The  FRIEDMAN Archives



# THE FRIEDMAN ARCHIVES BLOG

Wisdom and Tidbits from the land of [www.FriedmanArchives.com](http://www.FriedmanArchives.com)

**MARK GALER** is a photographer, educator and published author (30 books for Focal Press). He has a commercial background in editorial photography and was also a Digital Imaging Ambassador for Adobe for a period of 14 years. He was a Program Director and Senior Lecturer in Photography at RMIT University in Melbourne and has circumnavigated the globe on a motorcycle.

Mark is using his wealth of experience as both a photographer and educator to support the Sony Alpha Community and was appointed a **Sony Digital imaging Ambassador** in 2012.

Mark owned the original Alpha 100 and currently uses an extensive range of Sony mirrorless cameras.



*4-Minute Profile Movie*

### Photographer, educator and Sony Imaging Ambassador Mark Galer

A chat with Australia based Sony Imaging Ambassador Mark Galer. We chat about how he got started, the educational resources for

*18-Minute Interview (podcast)*



**α Mark Galer**  
*Sony Digital Imaging Ambassador*



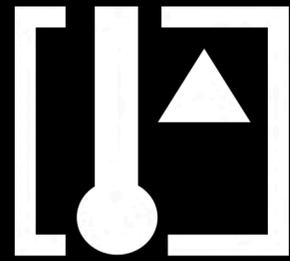
Premium Plus Patrons have access to a monthly Q&A forum where they can ask questions and get answers to help resolve technical issues they may be facing with their camera. They can also receive advice about choosing the most appropriate gear to meet their needs and seek advice about capture and post-production workflows.



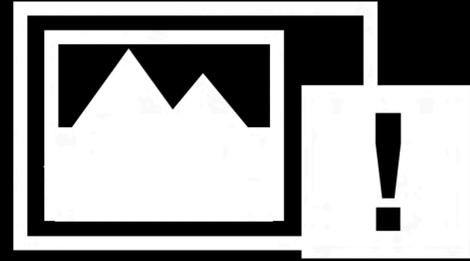
# Premium Plus Patrons

# Q&A Forum





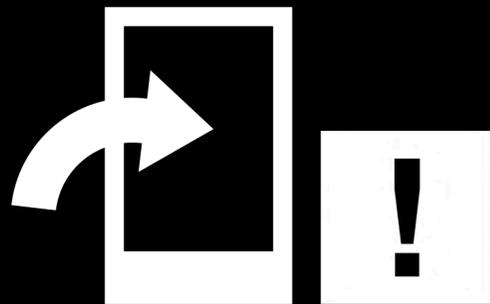
**Overheating Warning**



**Remote Shooting Connection Error**



**Cloud Connection Error**



**Transfer Error**



**Warning**

These are four of the common warning icons that may appear on the screen when you are shooting. For a full list of the shooting and playback icons, click on the link at the bottom of this page.

**Link to ‘Sony’s List of icons on the playback screen’**

## What do these menu items do or where are these menu items?

- **AF Micro Adjustment:** For A-mount Adapted Lenses on the LA-EA2 and LA-EA4 adapters only.
- **Aperture Preview** does not have a menu listing and has to be assigned to a Custom Key.
- **Bright Monitoring** does not have a menu listing and has to be assigned to a Custom Key.
- **Creative Look** or **Creative Style** Settings are not greyed out when shooting Raw, but they do NOT get applied to the Raw file (they are however useful for adjusting/fine-tuning the Monitor and Finder view).
- **D-Range Optimizer** settings will not have any impact on the Raw files but the menu is not greyed out. The DRO setting is useful for adjusting the Monitor and Finder view when shooting in the Raw file format so that the shadows in the scene show some detail. The shadows will need to be lightened in the post production software to match the DRO setting.
- **IPTC Information** has to be added from a Memory Card. You can't type it in using the camera.
- **Lock Operation Parts** - Requires a long press of the **Fn** button to activate the setting.
- There is no AF option in **Interval Timer** menu.
- **Pre-AF** is usually best left **OFF** unless doing selfies.
- The **MR Recall** menu is grayed out when the Shoot Mode dial function is not set to a Memory Shoot Mode.
- **Reg. Custom Shoot Settings** is used to register **Recall Custom Hold Settings**.
- **Shot Result Preview** does not have a menu listing and has to be assigned to a Custom Key.

# Bulb

**Why can't I select Bulb Mode** (the longest Shutter duration is listed as 30 Seconds)?

Bulb Mode is available in Manual Exposure Mode only, and is disabled in the Continuous Shooting Drive Mode and Silent Shooting Modes (Electronic Shutter). Select Manual Exposure Mode and Single Shooting or 'Self-timer' in the Drive Mode settings.

**Why is the file size smaller and image quality lower in Bulb Mode?** The 'Bit depth' of Raw files can drop from 14 to 12 Bits in Bulb Mode on some of the older Alpha cameras.

# CAMSET *(camera setup file)*

## **Why can't I load a CAMSET file?**

You do not necessarily need to install a new CAMSET from Mark Galer's Patreon site every time you install new firmware. Only in rare instances when the camera is 'Initialized' with the firmware update (returning the camera to factory settings) will you need to use a new CAMSET version.

NOTE > I may not be able to create new CAMSET versions for older cameras, as I may not have access to every older model camera. I do, however, strive to support a new camera with CAMSET files for at least 2 years from when the camera was first announced. If you update the firmware of an older camera the CAMSET may still be OK - but only if the camera did not Initialize after the firmware update. If the CAMSET cannot be successfully loaded for your camera, please use the tables of settings in the eBook and on the CAMSET page to configure your camera.

Save/Load (CAMSET) Video Tutorial: <https://youtu.be/iL3FvEbwE3w>

Possible CAMSET loading errors that have helped Patrons include:

- 1) Downloading the incorrect CAMSET for the model owned, e.g., A1 instead of the A1 II
- 2) Having a SONY folder already in the computer's downloads folder when the SONY folder gets downloaded to the user's computer. This can lead the computer having to rename the folder to SONY 2 - which the camera will then not find. *Continued on next page...*

# CAMSET *(camera setup file)*

- 3) The user mistaking SLOT 1 for SLOT 2 (Slot 1 is now the uppermost camera card slot but in older models used to be the Lower slot). My CAMSET must be copied to a Memory card and inserted into Slot 1 for the camera to find the CAMSET.
- 4) Not replacing the SONY folder but taking the CAMSETMG file out of the SONY folder that was downloaded or going into the SONY folder on the Cloud sharing site to retrieve the CAMSET data file.
- 5) Skipping the step which required the user to save the current settings of the camera before ejecting the card from SLOT 1 and putting the card in their card reader.
- 6) Failing to turn the Shoot Mode Dial to P, A, S or M will result in the Save/Load settings being 'greyed out' in the camera menus.

Some users reported success when leaving the cards in the camera and connecting the camera to the computer rather than using a card reader. This is not a common workaround but has worked for one or two users. Some Patrons reported success when they used a different card.

NOTE > Most Patrons are able to load my CAMSETs without issue, but a few Patrons will struggle for one reason or another. If the loading of a CAMSET proves frustrating then I recommend setting up the camera manually as outlined in the eBook.

# Color/Image Quality

## **What is causing the horizontal 'banding' in tone?**

Tonal banding is common when using 'Silent Shooting' under Fluorescent or Tungsten lights, especially when using cameras that do not have stacked or global sensors. If you encounter this issue, try enabling '**anti-flicker shoot**' (if your camera has it) or a slower shutter speed if it does not. A single dark band at the top or bottom of the frame might also be caused by a cheap 3<sup>rd</sup> party flash when in High Speed Sync mode.

## **Why does the 'Bit Depth' drop from 14 to 12 when shooting in the Raw file type?**

Resolution is limited to 12 bits in the following shooting modes for some older cameras:

- Long Exposure Noise Reduction
- BULB
- Cont. Shooting when the RAW File Type is set to Compressed

**Note >** Many of the latest Alpha cameras (released after 2021) capture 14 Bit Raw files for all of the above.

# Color/Image Quality

**My Colors look a bit flat and just weird?** You might have the Color Space set to Adobe RGB. Or you might have Picture Profile set to something other than 'Off'.

Note > You can enable 'Gamma Disp. Assist' for a normal display view when you have selected '**Log Shooting**'.

**Colored Dots: Why can I see brightly colored dots when I zoom in on my image?** With long exposures (usually longer than 10 seconds), you will start to see brightly colored 'warm pixels'. Choosing 'Long Exposure Noise Reduction' in the camera menu will resolve the problem. It can, however, lower the Bit depth of the Raw file from 14 to 12 (on older Alpha cameras) so shadow detail may suffer with aggressive post-production editing.

# DISPLAY (Finder & Monitor)

**Blackout: Why is my viewfinder or Monitor looking black?** This may happen when you're shooting with studio strobes using 'dumb' radio triggers. Make sure '**Live View Display**' is set to '**Setting Effect OFF**'.

Note > With the Setting Effect switched to OFF you will not see an accurate preview of your ambient exposure or depth of field. You can assign 'Aperture preview' and 'Shot result preview' to Custom Keys to preview these quickly when the Setting Effect is switched to OFF.

**Display as Group: Photos won't Display as Group?** Display as Group may not work if the Playback View Mode is set to anything other than Date View.

**Where have the Touch icons on the left and right sides of the monitor gone?**

Make sure you have Touch Operation turned on and swipe left or right to access the touch icons.

## **My Finder or 'EVF' is not working: Why does the Camera not automatically switch to EVF when I bring it close to my eye?**

1. Make sure **FINDER / MONITOR** is set to AUTO and make sure there's no debris or dust on top of the IR LED (to the right or underneath the EVF).
2. If the LCD display is pulled away from the camera body by any amount, the IR emitter / detector near the EVF is disabled, and so the camera will not automatically switch to the EVF when something gets close to the Finder.

**How do I stop the camera switching from the Monitor to the EVF when I bring it close to my body?** You can set the FINDER / MONITOR function to MONITOR or pull the monitor out from the camera body by a small amount.

**Finder view weird: Why does it look like I am looking through a telescope when I look through the finder?** You might have an APS-C E-Mount lens attached and the APS-C/Super 35mm setting might be set to Off. On the Flagship cameras there is also an option to Zoom Out in the 'Finder/Monitor > Viewfinder Magnification' settings.

**Why does the Finder view appear low quality?** ‘Anti-flicker Shoot.’ (if available) and having the ‘Finder Frame Rate’ set to high (if available) may lower the resolution of the Finder when switched to On.

**Setting Effect: Why can’t I switch the Setting Effect to OFF?** It cannot be switched to OFF if the camera is set to the Intelligent Auto, Superior Auto (if available), Movie, S&Q, HFR, or Scene Modes.

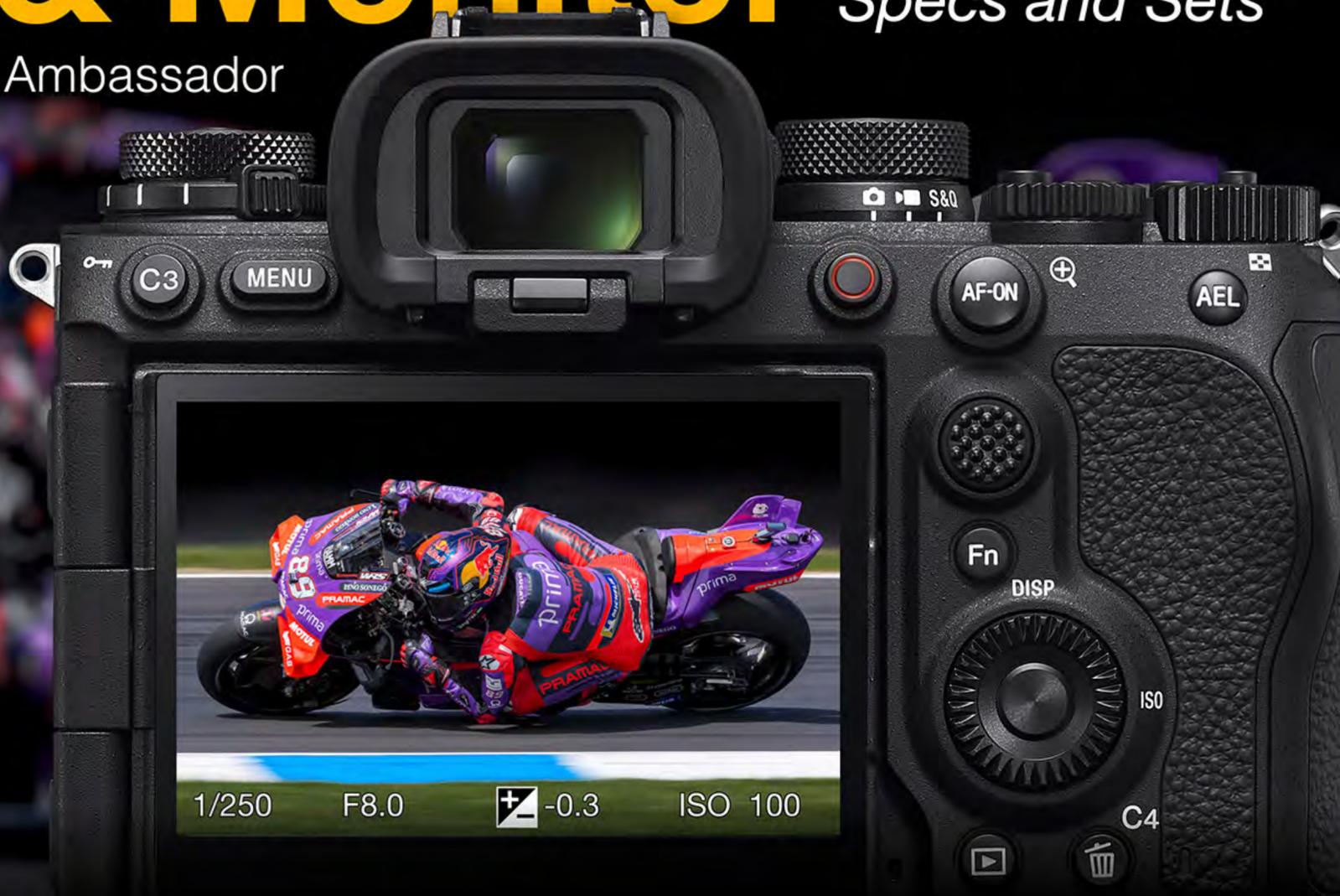
**What are there so many icons appearing on my Display?** Make sure that the DISP Button function has ‘No Disp. Info.’ Checked. Then keep pressing the DISP (up-arrow) button on the back of the camera until the icons go away.

**Why is there a lag between the subject moving and what I am seeing in the Finder?** The subject is not displayed in real-time on the monitor or viewfinder when shooting in Continuous Shooting: Hi+ mode on the cameras that do not have stacked or global shutter sensors. Change the ‘Drive Mode’ setting to Hi for a ‘real-time’ view.

# Finder & Monitor

*Specs and Sets*

by Mark Galer Sony Ambassador



**Play Now**

[www.youtube.com/c/AlphaCreativeSkills](http://www.youtube.com/c/AlphaCreativeSkills)



# Exposure

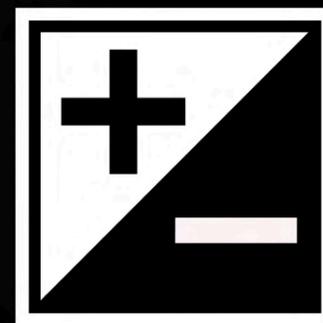
**Why do my RAW files always look darker on the computer than they did on the camera?** This is due to the Exposure/Color > Color/Tone > D-Range Optimizer being set to On. The D-Range Optimizer lightens overly dark shadows for JPEG and HEIF files but not RAW files. Turn D-Range Optimizer OFF or create a new Develop Default which set the Shadows slider to +60. RAW files could also look darker on the computer if you have the finder / Monitor brightness set to high or 'Sunny Weather'.

**Why does the Exposure Compensation menu not compensate the exposure?**

For those cameras with an exposure compensation dial, the physical Exposure Compensation dial will always override the menu-based Exposure Compensation setting when it's set to anything but zero.

**Why is my exposure uneven across the image area?** When using some non-Sony adapted lenses, or when using very fast shutter speeds in some environments (non-daylight), you may need to turn the e-Front curtain shutter to OFF (not available of some Alpha cameras). Turn it on when you have finished using a non-Sony lens.

**Why can't I see any changes in the Finder or on the Monitor when I use exposure compensation?** Check to make sure the **Live View Display** is set to 'Setting Effect ON'. Exposure compensation will also have no effect in Manual Exposure mode when the ISO is not set to AUTO.



# Exposure Comp.

*by* Mark Galer  
Sony Ambassador

This video tutorial goes into more depth about the subject of exposure compensation. Eventually it becomes second nature and as intuitive as changing gears in a manual shift car.



[www.youtube.com/c/AlphaCreativeSkills](http://www.youtube.com/c/AlphaCreativeSkills)

**Play Now**

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SONY



# ZEBRA 109+

*for Raw Shooters*

by Mark Galer Sony Ambassador

Watch the  
Video Tutorial

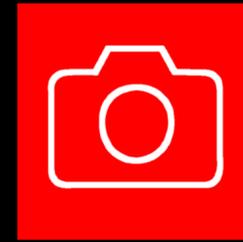


**Play Now**

[www.youtube.com/c/AlphaCreativeSkills](http://www.youtube.com/c/AlphaCreativeSkills)

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# JPEG *or* HEIF ?



# 1

HEIF (High Efficiency Image Format) is technically better than JPEG due to superior compression for smaller files with higher quality, supporting more colors, transparency, and storing multiple images/data, but JPEG wins on universal compatibility, making it the safe bet for sharing; choose HEIF for devices and Imaging Editing software that support this format (Apple computers and Lightroom), but use JPEG for broad sharing and legacy systems.

## HEIF Advantages

- Better Compression: Smaller file sizes (often half) for the same or better visual quality than JPEG.
- Higher Quality: Supports 10-bit color (vs. 8-bit in JPEG), providing richer tones and less banding, plus transparency.
- Efficiency: Faster encoding/decoding without overloading devices.

## JPEG Advantages

- Universal Compatibility: Works everywhere (web, older devices, software) without needing extra apps or conversions.
- Simplicity: A decades-old standard that just works.

## When to Use Which

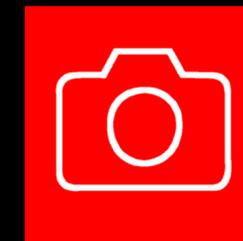
- Use HEIF: If you're on an Apple device, need maximum quality and space savings, or work with advanced editing/workflows that support it (Lightroom, Photoshop).
- Use JPEG: If you need to share photos easily across different platforms, devices, or websites, or if you encounter compatibility issues with HEIF.

In Summary: HEIF is the modern, technically superior format for quality and efficiency, while JPEG remains the reliable, universally accepted standard for compatibility.

# 1

## Image Quality/Rec > JPEG/HEIF Switch

# Choice or RAW File Type



1

## RAW File Type

- RAW** Lossless Comp
- RAW<sub>HQ</sub> Compressed (HQ)
- RAW** Compressed

I use Compressed Raw when shooting everything except Landscape. Most Alpha photographers would not be able to find a compression artefact if I told them how to find one and what to look out for. The advantage of shooting compressed Raw is larger buffer sizes, faster image transfers, more files per card and less storage issues. Compressed Raw used to be the only choice Sony offered, but introduced Lossless Compression when articles about the advantage of ISO invariance appeared on [dpreview.com](http://dpreview.com)

Shooting Lossless Comp is useful where you intend to edit underexposed shadows very aggressively (that result from protecting highlights in scenes with an extreme brightness range). I use this for my default Landscape setting as I like the freedom to edit shots where I have been shooting directly into the sun and want the option to completely recover the shadow detail. The larger size of the files is not a worry as I am not shooting with the Drive Mode set to Continuous Shooting (so I am recording far fewer images).

**1** Image Quality/Rec > Image Quality Settings

# Why do the JPEG images look different to the RAW images?

The captured image that appears when reviewing images on the camera is the embedded JPEG and is a poor representation of an unprocessed Raw file. The embedded JPEG image is a processed image. The JPEG image is processed using the Creative Look, D-Range Optimizer and Color Space settings. The preview can be modified by changing these settings before you continue to capture images. This embedded JPEG preview the camera created is usually dumped when the Raw file is imported into Lightroom and replaced with a new preview that uses the Profile settings that can be found at the top of the Basic panel in Lightroom, e.g., Adobe Standard, Adobe Color or a Custom Color Profile.

The preview I see when importing images into Lightroom takes on the appearance of my Custom ICC profile and my modified Develop settings, which forms part of my modified Develop Default. I cover this in my Color Management eBook and in my Lightroom Classic Post-Production Seminar 2 (found in the Post-Production Editing Collection)

The usual reason a Raw images appears darker than the camera-processed embedded JPEG is because of the cameras's D-Range Optimizer settings. The D-range Optimizer lightens the dark shadows to lower the contrast but the overall effect is to lighten the entire image (except for the brightest highlights). I don't see this difference because my custom Camera Profile and modified develop default settings (which has the shadow slider raised) means the JPEG preview and imported Raw file appear much closer in appearance.

If you do these three steps you can bring the appearance of the images viewed on the camera to be very close to the default appearance of the imported Raw mages viewed on the computer.

Some Raw shooters will choose to turn the D-Range Optimise off but I prefer to match the Raw file closer to the Camera preview with the D-Range Optimizer switched ON (I don't like looking at overly dark shadows when capturing my images as it can impact on composition and exposure). My choice of exposure is not, however, guided by the brightness of the shadows and midtones. I base my exposure on the brightest highlights - which is why I advocate using the Zebras 109+ Lower Limit to help guide exposure compensation.

I recommend the following course of action:

1. Calibrate and profile your computer monitor (I recommend using a high quality desktop monitor rather than a laptop monitor). I use a BenQ Accurate Color (AQCOLOR) monitor designed for photographers (link in eBooks).
2. Setup the viewing area of the monitor so that the highlights that appear on the monitor are the brightest highlights in the room, i.e., there are no sunlit windows. The room should be dim but not dark.
3. Create a new Develop Default for Lightroom and choose one of the Camera Matching profiles or create a Custom Camera Profile using a Calibrite ColorCheckr Passport (links in Accessories eBook and your camera eBook)
4. Fine-tune the image you see in the cameras's viewfinder using the Creative Look settings (you can modify either the camera standard (ST) or Neutral (NT) Creative Looks) so that the contrast and color you now see in the camera accurately reflects the colours you see on your calibrated monitor.

If you do these three steps you can bring the appearance of the images viewed on the camera to be very close to the default appearance of the imported Raw images viewed on the computer.

# FILTERS

## **Do you recommend using UV Filters for protecting lenses?**

I think the Sony lenses have sufficient UV protection, without the need for an additional UV filter. I think the Sony lens hoods (when attached to the lens) provide sufficient protection from scratching.

In order to avoid accidental damage to the front lens element, I would recommend NOT keeping loose metal objects in your camera bag and remember to re-attach the lens caps whenever possible.

The glass of a UV filter is more vulnerable to breaking or scratching when compared to the front element of a Sony lens. If you see someone posting a photo of a scratched filter, to justify the purchase price, there is no reason that the front element of the Sony lens would also have suffered the same damage, if exposed to the same foreign object striking the lens.

If you were to use protection filters, you would have to ensure you are purchasing one of sufficient quality so as to not lower the optical performance, increase the risk of flare and, in some rare cases, reduce the reliability of the AF systems.

If you are the sort of photographer who throws their lenses into their camera bag when they are working under pressure, then maybe protection filters makes more sense, but it is just as important, if not more important, to protect the rear element of the lens (marks on the front element rarely impact image quality, but marks on the rear element quickly result in degradation of image quality).

# How do you Photograph Fireworks?

These are starting recommendations only:

## Gear & Setup

- Tripod: Essential for stability during long exposures.
- Wide-angle lens: Captures the whole scene, including foreground.
- Remote/Cable Release or Self-timer
- RAW format: Saves more detail for post-processing.

## Camera Settings

- Exposure Mode: Manual
- Drive Mode: Single Shooting with Remote Release or Self-timer
- Focus Mode: Manual (Pre-Focus on distant object)
- Shutter Type: Mechanical (Menu > Shooting > Shutter/Silent > Shutter Type)
- Shutter Speed: 2 to 5 Seconds (adjust shorter and longer as required)
- Aperture: F8
- ISO: 100
- Monitor Brightness: +/- 0 (Zero) - Menu > Setup > Finder/Monitor > Monitor Brightness)
- Long Exposure Noise Reduction: Off (Menu > Shooting > Image Quality/Rec)
- SteadyShot: OFF (Menu > Shooting > Image Stabilization > SteadyShot > Off)

There is no hard and fast rule when photographing fireworks. Your decisions regarding exposure (Aperture and ISO) can be determined by how bright you want the surrounding buildings, hills or trees to appear in the final exposure. If you are including just the sky (fireworks), you will have a greater choice, as there will not be the same issue of over or underexposing the buildings/trees etc. Start with an exposure time of 2 to 5 seconds. Shorter duration for sharper bursts and longer durations for longer trails.

I recommend putting the camera on a tripod and turning SteadyShot off, especially if the lens you are using has Optical SteadyShot (OSS). Turn Long Exposure Noise Reduction to Off and use a Remote Release or the Self-timer. If you leave Long Exposure Noise Reduction on, the camera will spend half its time processing images and you may miss lengthy periods of the display being locked out of taking another image. You also don't really need Long Exposure NR if your exposure times are shorter than 5 seconds. If you don't have a remote release you can use the Self-timer so you don't have to touch the camera to start the exposure.

If you are using a Remote you will also have the option to use BULB to choose when to start and stop the exposure. Use the mechanical shutter instead of the electronic shutter (silent shooting) to access the BULB setting.

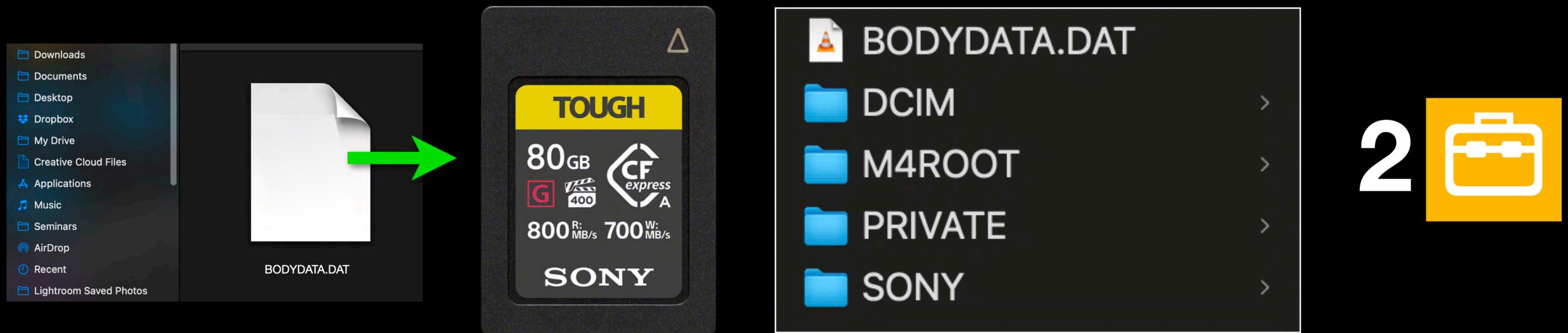
Set the focus on the lens to MF and pre-focus on something in the far distance. Check periodically to make sure you have not inadvertently adjusted the focus ring.

I would set the Exposure Mode dial to M (Manual), the aperture to F8, the ISO to 100 and the shutter speed to 2 to 5-seconds or BULB. BULB will allow you to start the exposure when the rockets start rising and end a few seconds after the fireworks are past their best. You will need to review the first one or two images and adjust the aperture or ISO if the images are too light or too dark.

Make sure your Monitor or Finder is not set to a bright level of illumination, otherwise the images will appear much darker on your computer.

# Why can't I update my Camera Firmware?

## Firmware Update via Memory Card



Download the Firmware Update from the Sony Support Page and then copy it to the memory card and put the memory card into **Slot 1** of the camera (the upper slot).

Then load the CAMSET from Reset/Save Settings > Save/Load Settings (Setup 2 page).

**IMPORTANT:** Make sure you do not have previous firmware update files in your Downloads folder on your computer, otherwise the file will be renamed and cannot then be found by the camera. Before running the update make sure the battery has plenty of charge.

# Flash

**Why is the monitor dark when I am working in a studio?** Go to 'Shooting > Shooting Display > Live View Display Set > Live View Display > Setting Effect OFF'.

**Why does my AF Illuminator function NOT work?** The AF Illuminator function is disabled if the camera is set to 'AF-C' (Continuous AF) mode.

**Why are my flash photos so noisy?** Set the ISO to something other than 'Auto' (where the camera will try to use the highest ISO it can to prevent the background from being black).

**Why is my flash not working?** Make sure either 'Silent Shooting' is set to 'OFF' or 'Shutter Type' is not set to Electronic (A7V, A9 and A9 II).

**Why is my wireless flash controller not triggering off-camera flashes on my A9 III?**

To use wireless flash on the A9 III in all of its possible modes (including TTL at 1/80,000th of a second), only two flashes in Sony's lineup support this: The HVL-F46RM and the HVL-F60RM2. Both flashes must have firmware v2.0 installed.

**Why are my flash pictures brighter / darker than the Flash Exposure Compensation I have set?** Keep in mind there may be two controls for flash exposure compensation – one on the back of the flash unit, and one in the system menus. The two are added together, even though the value set on the back of the flash does not show up in the image's EXIF information.

**Why can't I select High Speed Sync (HSS)?** High Speed Sync is only enabled when an accessory flash is sitting on top of the hot shoe and the flash head is pointing forward. HSS is disabled if you try to bounce the flash or point it in any other direction.

**Why does my White Balance look wrong when I use the flash?** Make sure your White Balance is set to something fixed like 'Daylight' or 'Flash'. Also, the 'Shutter AWB Lock' feature will produce the wrong white balance when using studio flashes.

**Wireless Flash not going off?** Switch Wireless Flash to 'On' in the Camera's menu. Test the optical communication path by pressing the **AEL** button while in Wireless mode. Note > When using wireless flash on cameras with stacked sensors, you can test the optical path by assigning 'Wireless Test Flash' to a button, and then press that button. If the off-camera flash can see the master control signals, the flash will fire a small pulse 1/2 second later.



**α** *to* **Z** *menus*

# Flash Settings



by **Mark Galer** Sony Ambassador



**100-page eBook**

introducing *Flash*

by **Mark Galer** Sony Ambassador

**Download this Patreon-Only eBook**

# Focus

**Why does my spot focus area always appear in the bottom right-hand corner of the frame?** It's likely your nose is touching the monitor and moving the focus point. Either turn off the 'Touch Operation', 'Touch Pad' or restrict the touch to the upper right-hand corner when you are using the Finder.

**Tracking: AF or Lock-on AF grayed out?** AF-A & AF-S disables 'Tracking: AF'. Animal Eye-AF may disable AF Tracking on older model Alpha cameras, e.g., A7III.

**AF-S not working?** Focus mode may get set to AF-C when you enter S&Q (Slow and Quick) Movie mode and also some SCENE modes (like sports mode).

**AF Illuminator not working?** The AF Illuminator function will NOT work if the camera is set to AF-C (continuous AF) mode. In a dark room, the focus area you have set may be ignored when using the AF Illuminator.

**Why is the AF Track Sensitivity or AF Lvl for crossing grayed out?** 'AF Track Sensitivity' or 'AF Lvl for Crossing' will be grayed out when an older E-mount lens is attached (those that don't know how to deal with Phase Detect AF).

# Should I be using Back-Button AF?

## Back-Button AF



*by* **Mark Galer** Sony Ambassador

# Focus Area

## What's the best Focus Area for sports photography?

Tracking: Zone is my default AF Area for sport, but I often need to switch to Expand Spot when my target subject is in amongst other targets that are all inside the zone. I can usually pick up a subject reliably when that subject is in the middle of the zone. There is, however, no one single best AF area that is appropriate for all changing circumstances. I only choose Zone as my default AF Area (starting point setting) because that is the AF area that delivers the best hit rate most of the time.

I can switch AF areas in just a second with the Finder at my eye if my target is mostly obscured inside the zone. With practice this can become an operation that requires very little thought in response to changing circumstances.

AI Subject Recognition in AF has changed some sports photographers workflows in recent years, as the Target Recognition no longer needs to see the subject's eye to understand there is a human target in the frame. This has led some sports photographers to use a Tracking Spot AF area more often or just switch off the Subject Recognition in AF when the AF is picking up closer targets who have their backs to the camera.

# Full Time DMF

## What is the difference between DMF and Full Time DMF?

DMF (Direct Manual Focus) is a camera focus mode that enables photographers to make precise, manual fine-tuning adjustments immediately after the camera's autofocus (AF-S) has locked onto a subject. It combines the speed of autofocus with the accuracy of manual focus, making it ideal for macro, portrait, or low-depth-of-field photography where the subject is static.

Full Time DMF is used in Continuous Autofocus Mode (AF-C) and can be enabled on some telephoto lenses and in the Focus > AF/MF menu on late model Alpha cameras. It allows the photographer to manually change the focus distance, by turning the focus ring on the lens, before the photographer lets the Continuous Autofocus fine-tune the focus and follow the moving subject.

It is most useful on long telephoto lenses where a lens can sometimes struggle to find focus, especially when the previous focus was much closer or much further away. The sudden change in distance can render everything in the frame completely blurred, which is why the lens can then struggle to recognize the new subject to focus on. When this happens the Continuous Autofocus (AF-C) will either 'freeze' or 'hunt' to find the distance of the new subject, wasting valuable time that could result in missing a decisive moment. Full Time DMF requires a little practice before it can be used quickly and efficiently, as the photographer needs to remember which way to turn the focus ring when the subject is either nearer or further away.

Note > When using Full-Time DMF you do not need to focus precisely when turning the focus ring, you just need to get closer so the AF-C can take over.

by **Mark Galer** Sony Ambassador



**DMIF**

[www.youtube.com/c/AlphaCreativeSkills](http://www.youtube.com/c/AlphaCreativeSkills)

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**Auto Exposure locked when framing image?** For many cameras, when you're in AF-S mode and in continuous drive mode, AND in multi-segment metering mode, the exposure is locked along with the focusing when you press the shutter release button halfway.

**How do I prevent the camera from choosing the wrong subject to focus on when using the Wide Focus Area?** You can quickly override the wide focus area and AF-C by pressing a custom key assigned to 'Focus Standard' (only assignable to a button). In some instances you may need to either change the 'Recognition Target' or disable the Subject Recognition in AF if the focus is jumping to a subject that is not intended to be the point of focus.

**Why are my images are coming out blurry, even though I swore I did everything right?** Touch Operation might be to blame – you can accidentally hit the screen and not notice the dim 'Touch to remove Focus Lock' icon in the upper-right corner of the screen. If this happens to you a lot, we recommend disabling touch focusing.

**Why has my Center Focus AF Area disappeared?** If you have the focusing area set to 'Center', it will be overridden when using the touch screen.

**Why are my self/group portraits using Self-timer not sharp?** Use the 'Pre-AF' focus feature (Focus > AF/MF > Pre-AF).

## **Eye AF not working as expected when shooting Movies?**

1. Only available on some, but not all, cameras released in 2019 or later.
2. Disabled when the Subject is set to something other than Human on older model Alpha cameras.
3. Disabled when the frame rate is set to 100 or 120fps on older model Alpha cameras.
4. Disabled when the output is set to Memory Card + HDMI
5. Disabled when Proxy recording is enabled on older model Alpha cameras.

**Focus Magnifier not working?** **Focus Magnifier** is not available in AF-S, AF-A and AF-C Focus Modes. Switch to Manual Focus (MF) or DMF.

**MF Assist not working?** **MF Assist** may not be available in Movie mode. However, the nearly identical **Focus Magnifier** function does. '**AF Assist**' is available on newer model Alpha cameras.

**Peaking Level / Peaking Color not showing?** **Peaking Level / Peaking Color** won't show on an external monitor when going through the camera's HDMI port. It is also not available when DMF is used as part of a Recall Custom Hold setting on later model Alpha cameras.

**SWITCH V/H AF AREA not working?** The **SWITCH V/H AF AREA** function (available on later model cameras) is disabled when shooting movies, **S&Q** movies, while the shutter is pressed halfway down, and when **digital zoom** is invoked.

**Why is Touch Tracking not working?** Touch Tracking has to be selected in the '**Function of Touch Operation**' menu on some Alpha cameras (a separate menu to Touch Operation On/Off). Also check that the '**Subject Recognition**' is not set to '**Animal**' on the A7III/A7RIII cameras.

**Why is my AF Tracking unreliable?** Check '**AF Drive Speed**', '**AF Tracking Sens.**' or '**AF Lvl for Crossing**' and '**AF Trk for Spd Change**' (if available). Phase Detect AF (PDAF) is disabled after first image in Continuous Drive 'Med' and 'Hi' when aperture is smaller than F8 or F11 on older Alpha cameras.

Cameras 'older than the A7III have focus tracking issues when using apertures smaller than F11, e.g, F16 and F22. Avoid using apertures smaller than F8 when using an A7RII or A7RIII.

# Switch V/H.AF Area



by Mark Galer Sony Ambassador

[www.youtube.com/c/AlphaCreativeSkills](https://www.youtube.com/c/AlphaCreativeSkills)

# AF Area Registration



*by* **Mark Galer** Sony Ambassador



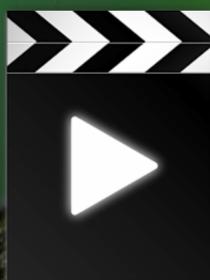
[www.youtube.com/c/AlphaCreativeSkills](http://www.youtube.com/c/AlphaCreativeSkills)

α

You Tube

# Subject Recognition

You Tube



by Mark Galer Sony Ambassador



**Alpha Focus Master Class**  
*by Mark Galer*

2024 Edition



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# Image Quality

**Back Button Focus: Can I Use Back Button AF when using the Pixel Shift Multi Shooting function?** If your camera has **Pixel shift** feature, when it is enabled then the **AF w/ Shutter Function** will always be set to **On**, regardless of what you set it to (you can still focus with the rear button – but focusing with the shutter release button will be imposed on you as well).

**Bit Depth: Am I recording Raw files in 14 or 12 Bits?** Certain modes drop 14-bit RAW down to 12-bit for older Alpha cameras. Compressed Raw, Continuous Shooting using Compressed Raw, BULB Shooting and when using Long Exposure Noise Reduction all lower the bit depth to 12 bits on older Alpha cameras. Continuous Shooting (Uncompressed Raw) is available in 14 bits on the A7III, A7RIII, A7R IV, A9 and A9 II cameras. 14 bits Continuous Shooting is available in Compressed Raw on later model cameras.

## Bokeh: Why is the out of focus 'Bokeh' not as smooth as I would like?

- 1) Choose lenses with a wider maximum aperture, e.g. F1.8 instead of F4 and move closer to your subject.
- 2) Keep the rear lens element spotlessly clean.
- 3) Turn off e-Front curtain shutter when shooting images with the aperture wide open and very fast shutter speeds.

*Note > This phenomenon, often called **bokeh slicing** or **clipping**, occurs primarily at fast shutter speeds (typically 1/1000s or faster) and with wide aperture lenses (f/1.2–f/2.8). At high shutter speeds, the mechanical rear curtain travels closely behind the electronic "curtain" to create a narrow exposure slit. This rear curtain physically cuts into the cone of light passing through the lens for out-of-focus background elements.*

- 4) Choose lenses with more curved aperture blades, e.g., eleven curved aperture blades rather than seven straight aperture blades.
- 5) Check the lens reviews for any lens you are considering purchasing to see if the bokeh is evaluated as being smooth (no 'onion rings' etc.).

**Why is the large JPEG Image Size smaller than sensor size?** Aspect Ratio is set to anything other than 3:2 will reduce the maximum size of the **JPEG/HEIF Image Size**.

**Long Exposure Noise Reduction not available?** Switch to JPEG mode or Raw + JPEG. The **Long Exposure Noise Reduction** function will not work when the camera is set to **Continuous Shooting** or any sort of **Bracketing** mode.

**Can I shoot using flash with Pixel Shift Multi Shooting?** If your camera has **pixel-shift** mode, you CAN shoot with flash as long as your shutter speed is 1/8<sup>th</sup> or slower (but you can't use wireless flash).

**Raw file format mode has grayed out settings?** Picture Effects, Clear Image Zoom/Digital Zoom, Long Exposure Noise Reduction, Multi-Frame Noise Reduction, and High ISO Noise Reduction cannot be invoked while shooting RAW (RAW+JPG is allowed).

**Scene mode: Why has Scene Mode overridden my settings?** SCENE modes override Image Quality, Drive Mode, Flash mode and Focus mode settings on older model Alpha cameras. It also overrides ISO on newer model cameras.

# ISO

**Why can't I select low ISO values lower than 100?** The **ISO** may get set to a minimum ISO higher than 100 when using Picture Profiles and/or Log Shooting.

**High ISO: I can't select the highest ISO values on my A9/A9II camera?** On the A9, A9 II, the highest values of ISO setting (32000 – 204,800) are not available when the shutter type is set to 'Auto' or 'Electronic' and the drive mode is set to 'Continuous' (any speed).

**ISO Auto Min. SS: Why can't I select ISO Auto Minimum Shutter Speed?** ISO Auto Min. SS is Not available in Auto, Manual and Shutter Priority Modes.

# ISO AUTO Minimum Shutter Speed

## **What are the advantages of using Aperture Priority & ISO AUTO Min. SS over Manual Exposure & ISO AUTO?**

The advantage of Aperture Priority with ISO AUTO Min SS, compared to Manual Exposure mode with ISO AUTO, is that Aperture Priority and ISO AUTO Min SS always prioritizes exposure if the minimum shutter speed selected would otherwise lead to over or underexposure.

Although you can only choose shutter speeds in whole 'stop' values, the actual shutter speed selected by the camera is rarely the shutter speed chosen, e.g., in bright ambient conditions you may have selected 1/250 second as your minimum shutter speed, but the camera may choose values in 1/3 stop increments faster than 1/250 second to balance the exposure, e.g., 1/320, 1/400 or faster.

The downside of a Manual Exposure workflow is that it is much easier to encounter under or overexposure, e.g., if you select 1/250 second with an aperture of F1.8 in bright sunny conditions the camera will overexpose the scene. When using Aperture priority with ISO AUTO Min. SS the camera can use any shutter speed up to the maximum shutter speed of the camera (in 1/3 stop increments) to prevent over exposure.

When using ISO AUTO Min. SS. the camera will also use shutter speeds slower than the minimum shutter speed selected in order to protect from underexposure when the maximum ISO value has been reached in the ISO AUTO range. There is no protection from over or underexposure when using Manual Exposure with ISO AUTO. The photographer would need to monitor highlight and shadow exposure values and adjust either the aperture or shutter speed to protect exposure when working in Manual Exposure Mode with ISO AUTO.



# $\alpha$ *to* $Z$ *menus* **ISO** **Settings**



by **Mark Galer** Sony Ambassador

# Lens Issues

**My lens makes a noise and I can feel something moving inside when I tilt the lens up and down?** With the power off the AF linear motors will make noise as they slide freely on their rails. This noise should stop when the camera is switched on.

**I have the letter A on the aperture ring of my lens. What is this for?** Turning the aperture ring to **A** allows you to control the aperture from the front or rear dial of the camera rather than have to use the aperture ring on the lens.

**I can't move the Iris Lock on my lens?** You need to turn the Aperture ring to **A** before you can lock the iris.

**Should I leave the Full Time DMF setting on the lens set to On?** If you need to move focus quickly between subjects being photographed at close proximity and subjects in the distance, and you are not in danger of accidentally turning the focus ring, then I would leave the Full Time DMF switch set to on. Do not confuse '**Full-Time DMF**' with the '**DMF Drive Mode**'.

# Media Settings (writing files)

**Record Folder: Why can't I specify a different recording folder?** If you choose 'Simultaneous recording' of stills, and then you use **Select REC Folder**, the camera will only allow you to select a new recording folder if that folder name already exists on both cards. The problem will occur if you have replaced only one of the cards.



# V60 or V90 U3 SDXC-II Memory Cards?

File Format	Max bit rate when recording	Supported memory card
XAVC HS 4K	200Mbps	CFexpress Type A memory card (VPG200 or higher) SDXC <b>V60</b> or higher
XAVC S 4K	200Mbps	CFexpress Type A memory card (VPG200 or higher) SDXC <b>V60</b> or higher
XAVC S HD	50Mbps	CFexpress Type A memory card SDXC <b>V60</b> or higher
XAVC S-I 4K	600Mbps	<b>CFexpress Type A</b> memory card (VPG200 or higher) SDXC <b>V90</b> or higher
XAVC S-I HD	222Mbps	<b>CFexpress Type A</b> memory card (VPG200 or higher) SDXC <b>V90</b> or higher

# How do I create a Memory Recall (MR)?

## *α* to *Z* menus Memory Recall

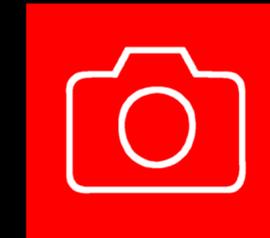


by Mark Galer Sony Ambassador



# How do I Modify a Memory?

If you would like to modify one or two of the settings that have been registered to 1, 2 or 3, you must first dial in the Memory Recall on the Shoot Mode dial, then modify the settings or settings and then re-register the setting in the menus (Page 4 of the Shoot Menu).



4

Shooting > Shooting Mode

- 1 MR Recall Camera Setting
- 2 MR Camera Set. Memory **1**
- 3 Shoot Mode MR Cam.Set1
- 4 MR Memory/Recall Media Slot 1
- 5 Reg. Custom Shoot Set

Page [ ] MENU Close

MR Recall

**2**

**1**

M1 M2 M3 M4

LO A ISO AUTO

1 RAW 3:2

2 J-X.FINE 33M

AF-C AWB

A-B: 0 G-M: 0 DRO AUTO

MECH ±0 ±0 ±0 0 ±0 4 3 1 ST

AF ON -5 4 3 2 1 0 1 2 3 4 5+ PP OFF



**3**

# MODIFYING A MEMORY



by Mark Galer *SONY Ambassador*

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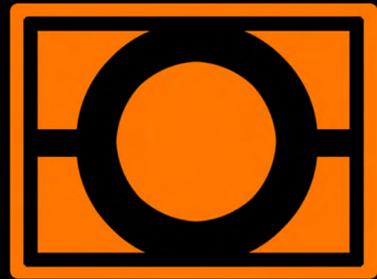
# Menus

**Bright Monitoring: I can't find the Menu for Bright Monitoring?** This is only available when assigning a Custom key.

**Grayed Out: Why are some of the menu options grayed out?** The Camera's buffer is clearing (images are being written to the memory card) or you have selected the Raw file format. The camera's SteadyShot menu is grayed out on the camera if there is a SteadyShot switch on the lens.

**Power Save / Standby: Camera does not go into Power Save (Sleep) mode?** If Bluetooth Remote is switched to On the camera will not go into Power Save Mode. If Bluetooth is On, the camera can also maintain a connection with a smartphone/tablet while the Power is OFF on later model cameras.

# What is the best Metering Mode?



## Metering Modes

by **Mark Galer** Sony Ambassador



If you understand how the Light meter works in your camera, you will also learn when to use Exposure Compensation. You need a very good reason to change the default Metering mode from Multi to one of the other options. Some users make the mistake of thinking 'spot' metering will be more accurate than Multi Metering Mode. Spot metering is, however, only accurate if you point the spot at a tone that has exactly 18% reflectance. Highlight Metering mode is possibly the only other metering mode that many photographers will ever consider using. Find out why in this video tutorial.

# Movie

**AF-S in Movie Mode not available?** Use Touch Focus rather than Touch Tracking. On some cameras, you can have the equivalent of **AF-S** in movie mode by pressing the shutter release button halfway. But not if **Movie w/ Shutter** is set to On.

**AF Drive Speed (Movies) grayed out?** Older E-mount lenses (those that don't know how to deal with Phase Detect AF) may disable AF Drive Speed options.

**Audio Quality: Why is the audio quality very poor when I shoot movies?** Make sure Wind Noise Reduction is switched to Off and/or use an external microphone rather than the camera's in-built microphone.

**Auto Slow Shutter not working?** When you're in **S&Q** (Slow and Quick) Movie mode, the **Auto Slow Shutter** function has no effect.

**Can't shoot video in 4K?** A slow memory card might be to blame. Swap it out for a faster V60 or V90 card.

**Can't select a Custom White Balance?** You cannot set a **Custom White Balance** when the exposure mode dial is set to **Movie** (you have to set it while in P/A/S/M mode first).

**Why can't I grab a still image when recording movies?** Some models of Alpha cameras allow you to press the shutter release button while shooting video to capture a still, but sometimes not when you're shooting 4K. Don't forget you can always do a high-res screen capture in post production editing.

### **Face / Human recognition not working when shooting 4K?**

1. On some older cameras that have **Proxy recording** for video, enabling it will disable **Face Detection** when shooting in 4K.
2. When recording 4K footage to an external recorder via **4K Output Select, Face / Human Recognition** and **Eye AF** may no longer work.

**Gamma Disp. Assist not working?** The **Gamma Disp. Assist** function may not apply to external monitors.

**HDMI Info not available?** When '4K Output Select – HDMI Only' is selected, then 'HDMI Settings – HDMI Info Display' is temporarily set to Off.

**Peaking Level/Color not showing?** **Peaking Level / Peaking Color** will not show on an external monitor when going through the camera's HDMI port.

**Processing: Camera saying 'Processing' for what seems like a long time after I take a long exposure?** Disable the Long Exposure NR feature.

**Monitor brightness is low?** When shooting either 4K or any form of High Frame Rate (S&Q 100 / 120 fps) video, the settings for **Monitor Brightness** and **Viewfinder Brightness** may be ignored on older model cameras, resulting in a dim-looking display.

**Keep hitting that Movie button accidentally on older Alpha cameras:?** Use the **MOVIE Button – Movie Mode Only** so it will only be enabled when the exposure mode dial is set to 'Movie'.

**Record Setting: Why can't I select 24, 60 and 120 frames per second to capture movies?** Switch from PAL to NTSC (Menu > NTSC/PAL Selector).

*Note > Switching from PAL to NTSC will provide different frame-rate options, but the card will need to reboot and you will get 'this camera is running on NTSC' warnings if you are living in a PAL region.*

**Wind Noise: How can I avoid wind noise on the audio of my movie?** Turn Wind Noise Reduct. Function On.



# $\alpha$ *to* $\mathbf{Z}$ *menus* **Movie Settings**



by Mark Galer Sony Ambassador

[www.youtube.com/c/AlphaCreativeSkills](http://www.youtube.com/c/AlphaCreativeSkills)

# Network (Bluetooth/WiFi)

*Note > If you are experiencing problems connecting your camera to your mobile device make sure you have the current version of the Creator's Cloud App and are using the latest firmware version for your camera.*

## **Devices won't talk to each other?**

1. The **PC Remote / Remote Shooting** function may not be available if the **Ctrl w/ Smartphone** function is on.
2. The **USB Connection** function may be grayed out if either **Ctrl w/ Smartphone** or **PC Remote Function – PC Remote** are set to On.

The **USB Power Supply** (Setup > USB) setting has no effect if **USB Connection** is set to **PC Remote**.

**Network (Bluetooth/Wifi) connection problems?** Make sure both the camera and the device you're trying to connect to are both on the same Wi-Fi frequency band (2.4 GHz / 5 GHz).

# Playback / Image Review

**Can't playback / review an image on the memory card, or movies not recording smoothly?** Sometimes invoking the Recover Image Database option can help (Shooting > Media > Recover Image DB).

**Why do I see just a small image and colored histograms when I review my photos?** Press the DISP button at the top of the 'Control Wheel' to cycle through different levels of information.

**I cannot see my images displayed in Group view (Display as Group)?** You may need to select 'Date View' instead of 'Folder View' on some older Alpha cameras.

**Group View: Why does the camera show me images as a group when I specifically disabled the Display as Group function?** 'Continuous Playback for Interval' function ignores the value of the 'Display as Group' setting.

# Sensor Cleaning

## **What do you recommend if I want to clean my sensor?**

After a shoot I remove the rear lens cap of every lens and use a rocket blower to remove any loose dust. I remove all lens caps and wipe them with a microfibre cloth and then blow away any residual dust. I remove the lens on the camera and use the sensor cleaning function from the camera and a rocket blower. I hold the sensor up to the light and tilt the camera slowly looking for any dust that may be adhered to the sensor. I use a magnifying loupe if I suspect dust may be stuck to the surface. If I don't have my loupe I will stop the aperture down to F22, hold the camera up to the sky and look through the finder to see if I can see any problematic 'dust bunnies'. My pet theory is that 99.9% of dust always comes away if it is removed after every shoot (I think dust has a habit of adhering to the surface if left for an extended amount of time).

In the rare instance that something is stuck to the sensor I use the Eyelead gel stick, which I take on location with me. In the very rare instance that one piece of dust remains stuck, I use the SensorKlear2 pen and throw away the pen if and when the tip is no longer spotlessly clean..

**Warning > Sony recommends professional cleaning when the sensor needs to be physically touched.**

# Shutter

**Why is my Camera not letting me take a picture?** Make sure there's a memory card inserted (and/or make sure **Release w/o Card** is set to Disable). Also make sure the lens is attached, or make sure the Release w/o Lens feature is set to 'On'.)

**Why is my Camera taking multiple pictures when it ought to be taking just one?** Make sure both **High Dynamic Range** and/or **Multi-Frame Noise Reduction** are disabled on older Alpha model cameras. Also ensure you're not in Superior Auto mode (if your camera has it).

**Why am I not getting the number of frames per second I thought the camera was capable of?** Switch on the e-Front Curtain shutter and select '**Release**' from the '**Priority Set in AF-C**' menu. The A9 and A1 cameras are limited to 15fps when shooting with some of the older Sony and non-Sony lenses.

**Missing Shutter Speeds: Why can't I find a specific shutter speed I am looking for?** Changing the 'Exposure Step' setting to the 0.5EV setting removes increments that you may be looking for, e.g. 1/50, 1/80 and 1/160 second. Also check you are not using 'Variable Shutter Mode'.

# Shutter

**Why is my shutter speed listed with decimal points after the number, e.g., 261.6 instead of 1/250?** Switch 'Variable Shutter' to Off (Anti-flicker Set. > Var. Shutter > Off)

**Why is my camera not taking the picture at the exact moment I press the shutter release button (shutter lag)?**

Check the Drive Mode is not set to self-timer.

Set the Priority Set in AF-S and AF-C to 'Release'.

Check Anti-flicker Set. is NOT set to ON.

Some photographers experience 'shutter-lag' when using non-Sony flash units.

**Why is my cameras taking multiple photos?** Make sure the **Bracketing Modes** have been disabled

# Silent Shooting

**Silent Shooting has changed or disabled a setting?** The following functions are not available when in **Silent Shooting** mode or **Shutter Type – Electronic** (A7V, A9, A9 II, A1, A1 II):

- Anti-Flicker Shooting mode (if available)
- Flash (A7V, A9, A9 II)
- Multi-shot modes such as High Dynamic Range (HDR) and Long Exposure Noise Reduction
- ISO Speeds lower than 100
- ‘Bulb’ shutter speed
- E-Front Curtain Shutter
- Auto HDR
- Picture Profiles
- Picture Effects

*Note: Silent Shooting can also drop the bit depth from 14 Bits to 12 Bits on the older Sony cameras. Silent shooting may also lead to shutter distortion (not recommended for quickly moving subjects) or uneven exposure in some lighting situations, e.g. fluorescent lights.*

# SteadyShot

**My SteadyShot menu is grayed out?** Adjust the SteadyShot setting on the lens.

**I can hear the OSS / SteadyShot making noises in my lens?** This is normal.

**SteadyShot is only effective when I am focusing?** This is standard behavior.

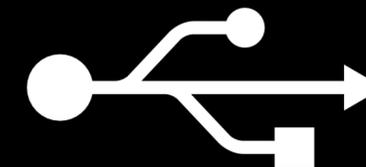
**The sensor appears to be misaligned when the camera is switched off?** This is normal.

**Do I need to switch off SteadyShot when my camera is on a tripod?** This is often not necessary when using Sony lenses but if you are using long exposures when using telephoto lenses with Optical SteadyShot I would recommend turning SteadyShot to Off.

**I am panning the camera. What SteadyShot setting should I use?** Use Mode 2 if your lens has this option, and if it does not, switch off SteadyShot on either the lens or in the camera menu. Use Mode 3 when the movement is erratic.

**I am shooting action/sports using fast shutter speeds and don't have a SteadyShot mode 3 on my lens. What should I do?** Switch off SteadyShot on your lens.

# What USB Cable do I need



## USB 3.2, USB 4.0 and Thunderbolt

The SuperSpeed USB-C port on most of the late model Alpha cameras is a USB 3.2 port that supports data transfer rates of 5 Gbps (five gigabytes per second) and can also draw up to 15 Watts of power to charge the battery while it is in the camera (no battery charger required).

With a view to avoiding information overload, the cable that I recommend you purchase (if you don't already have a cable that is clearly identifiable), that can support both fast data transfer and power delivery, is a USB 4 or Thunderbolt 4 cable.

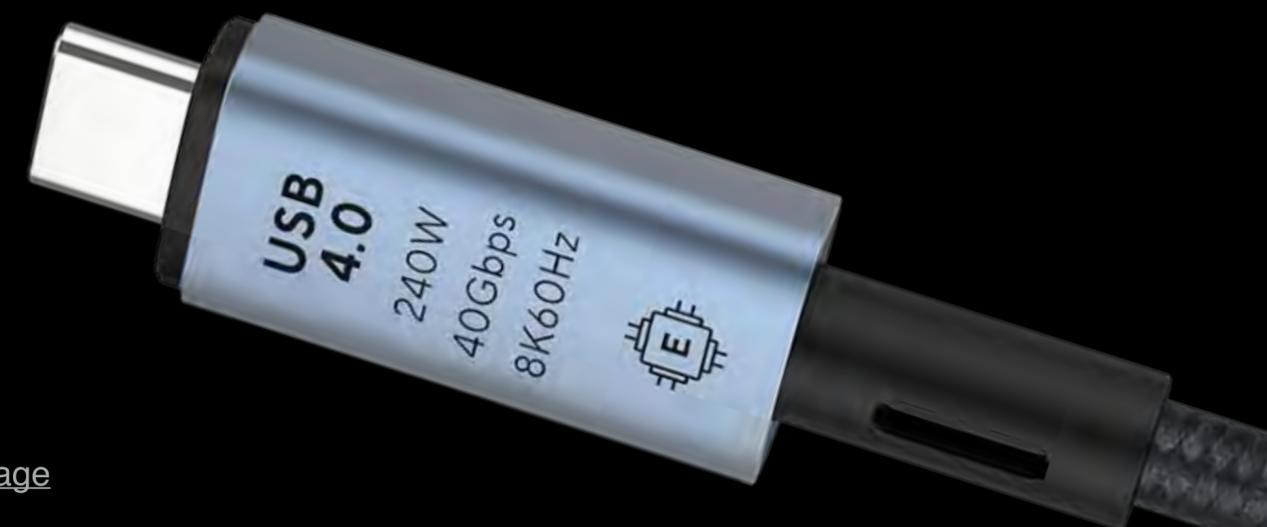
A USB 3.2 SuperSpeed cable, that also supports 20 Watts power delivery (PD), would also be suitable for the speed of current Alpha cameras. Unfortunately, many USB-C cables (including Sony's own cables) do not list their performance specifications. It is therefore hard to identify if a USB-C cable is appropriate for either fast data transfer or for charging the camera quickly. A USB 4 cable, however, can often be clearly identified and is suitable for both data transfer and power delivery. The manufacturers of USB 4 cables often don't require you to understand any of the icons or colours used by some manufacturers to denote speed or power delivery).

## Thunderbolt 4 vs USB 4.0

Thunderbolt 4 and USB4, while both utilizing the USB-C connector and capable of 40Gbps data transfer speeds, have key differences in their minimum performance requirements, display capabilities, and certification processes. Thunderbolt 4 guarantees a minimum of 40Gbps data transfer speed, 15W power delivery, and support for two 4K displays or one 8K display, while USB4 offers more flexibility with optional 20Gbps and 40Gbps versions, and less stringent display and power delivery requirements.

B & H Photo: USB 4.0

240 Watt 40 Gbps Cable: <https://bhpho.to/3lg1lBw>



# Zoom

**Why can't I select Clear Image Zoom?** Clear Image Zoom is not compatible with RAW or RAW+JPEG, RAW+HEIF file formats.

**Settings changed: Why have some of my settings changed or been disabled?** This can occur when 'Clear Image Zoom' or 'Digital Zoom' is selected. The following functions change when the **Zoom** function is set to either 'Clear Image Zoom' or 'Digital Zoom':

- The metering mode automatically switches to 'Multi'.
- Face Detection / Eye AF are disabled on older Alpha cameras.
- Focus area is ignored, and the camera focuses on the closest thing it can find in older Alpha cameras.

**The Zoom function on my custom button is unavailable?** It becomes inactive when a power zoom lens (EPZ) is attached on older Alpha cameras.

*This Guide was prepared by Gary Friedman and Mark Galer*

*For additional learning resources for your Sony Alpha camera  
click on one of the following links.*

[www.Patreon.com/MarkGaler](http://www.Patreon.com/MarkGaler)

[www.FriedmanArchives.com](http://www.FriedmanArchives.com)



Premium Plus Patrons

Q&A Forum

Premium Plus Patrons have access to a monthly Q&A forum where they can ask questions and get answers to help resolve technical issues they may be facing with their camera. They can also receive advice about choosing the most appropriate gear to meet their needs and seek advice about capture and post-production workflows.



# *α to Z menus*



by **Mark Galer** Sony Ambassador



A collection of 35 video tutorials that demystify the menu systems of the A7V camera. Each video in the collection looks at one menu item and suggests how to choose the optimum settings to meet your own needs when photographing a particular subject.

[www.youtube.com/c/AlphaCreativeSkills](http://www.youtube.com/c/AlphaCreativeSkills)

# Alpha Creative Skills

**α to Z menus**  
**AF/ MF**  
**Settings**



by Mark Galer Sony Ambassador

**α to Z menus**  
**Anti-dust**  
**Function**



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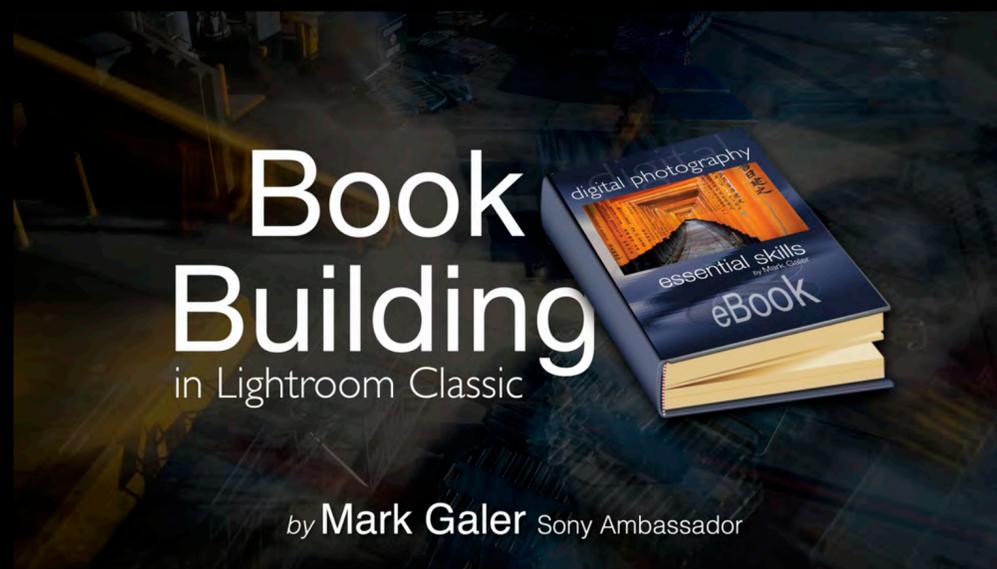
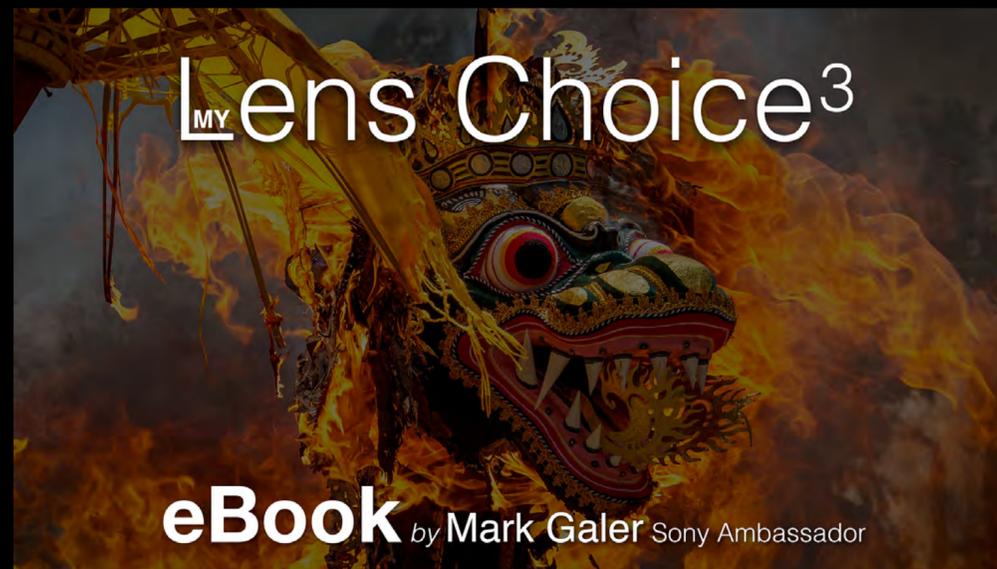
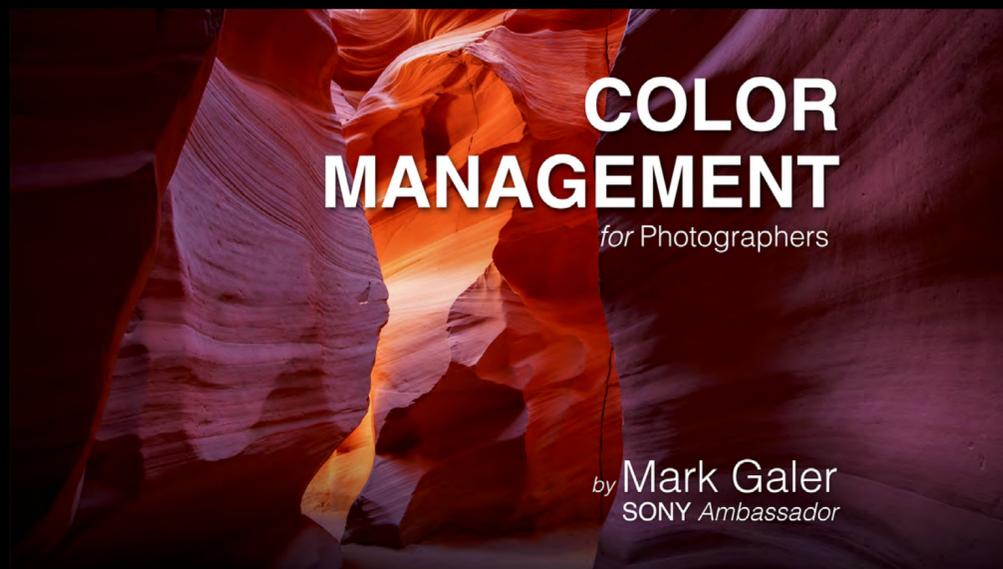
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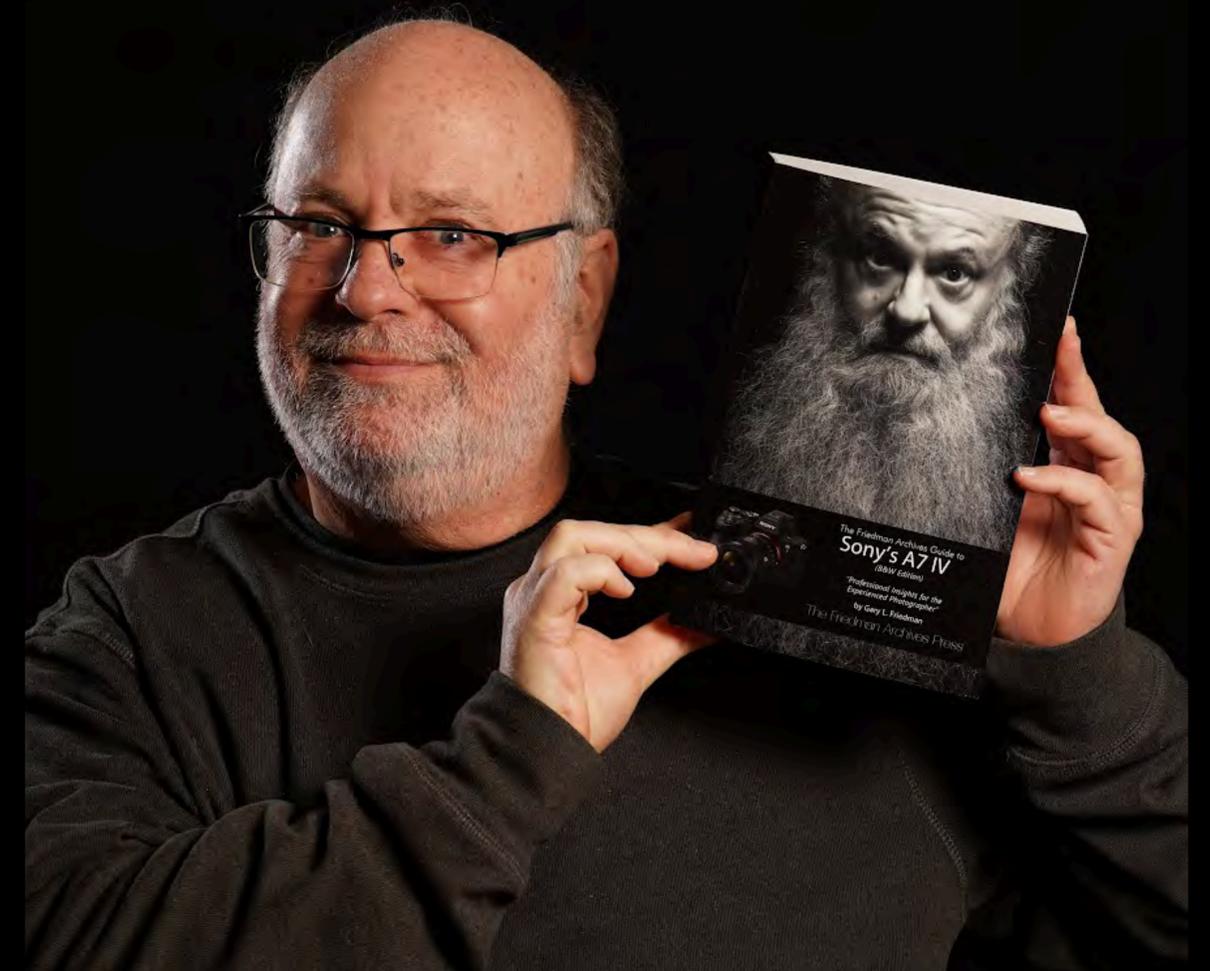
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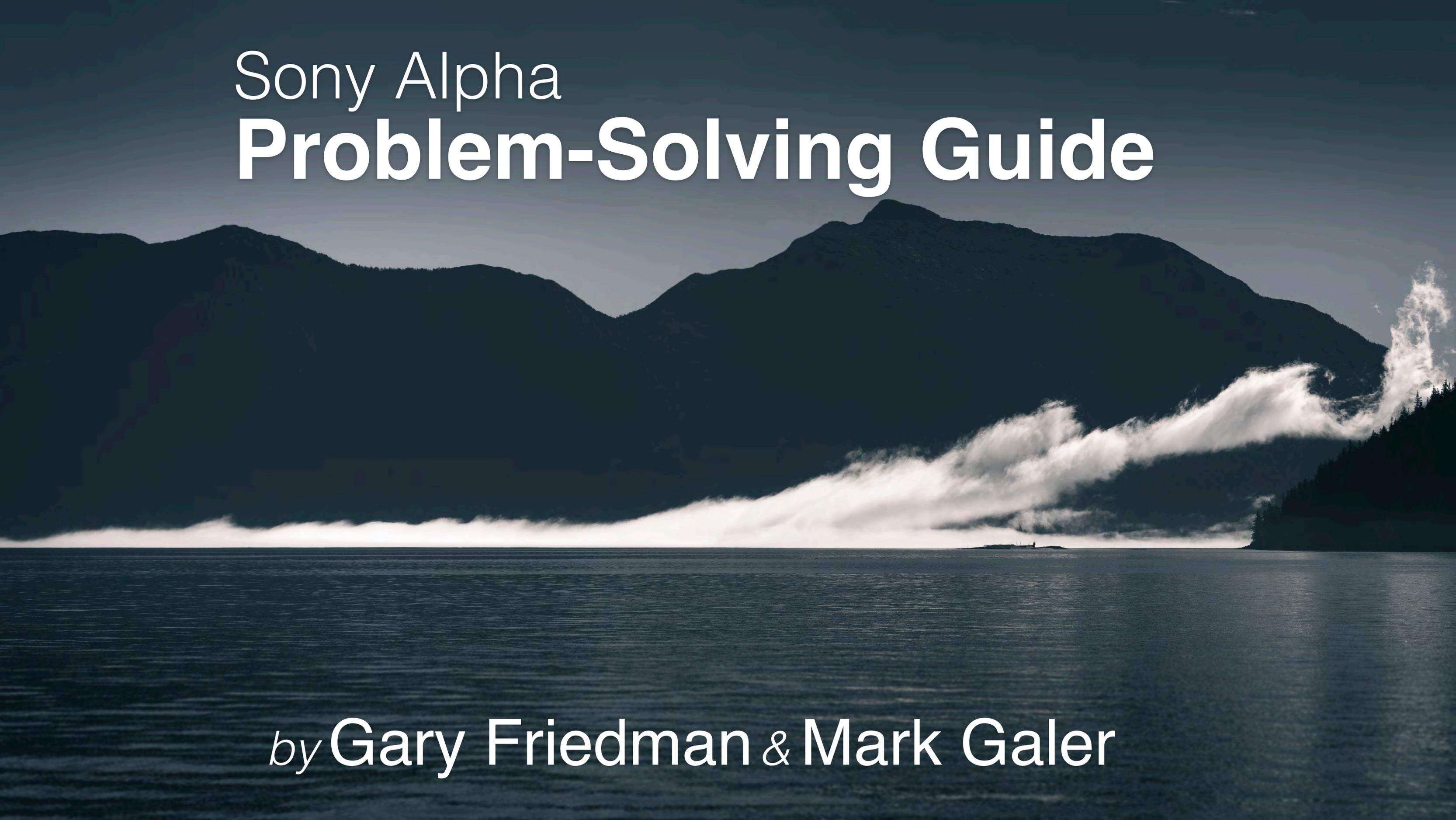
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A scenic landscape photograph of a lake with mountains in the background and clouds rising from the water. The sky is a deep blue, and the water is a dark, calm blue. The mountains are dark and silhouetted against the sky. A layer of white clouds or mist is rising from the water, partially obscuring the base of the mountains. The overall mood is serene and majestic.

# Sony Alpha **Problem-Solving Guide**

*by* **Gary Friedman & Mark Galer**