

Low Budget Shooting

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Do It Yourself Solutions to Professional Photo Gear

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Introduction

The success of digital cameras has made photography much easier. Almost everything is automatically controlled except for the choice of subject. With digital cameras the results are immediately available, and the sensor saves all relevant image data, such as aperture, ISO, and shutter speed. This information can be used at a later time to recreate the shooting environment. These features are ideal for learning. However, all these automatic and program settings are useless in producing great images if the lighting is not good. This can be an insurmountable hurdle for many beginners. The entry into professional lighting technology is not cheap and can quickly exceed the available budget. Many amateurs simply wish to try new techniques and learn through experimentation without a large financial investment; it is in this pursuit that this book should prove helpful. Assuming you have some basic craftsmanship, you can build gear with affordable materials that rivals professional equipment. Even if you later choose to switch to a studio strobe system, you will still value many of the resources presented in these pages. Furthermore, tabletop photography often requires a talent for improvisation and unconventional solutions.

Is it worth the time and effort to build your own equipment? Definitely yes! Aside from the financial aspects, your study of lighting techniques is significantly more meaningful when using homemade gear than when using ready-made equipment. With personal involvement, you tend to question the results more critically, and thus you tend to move through the learning curve faster.

Please do not view this book as a mere collection of building instructions, but rather as an inspiration to develop your own gear. This is the reason why you will not find specific measurements in the instructions. The size and shape of the equipment should conform to your specific photographic needs.

This book is for anyone who wants to learn how to take better pictures with their camera; whether it is to document special collections, to develop in-house product catalogs, to create perfect layout pictures for graphic design, to work creatively with lighting, or to simply find a way into the depths of photography.

Much success and “good light”.



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