

How to Blur Water

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To blur water you need to work with slow shutter speeds which result in longer exposures - this means you need to use a good sturdy tripod. The amount of blur you create with the water depends on two things; the speed the water is moving and your choice of shutter speed. To achieve the blurred water you could use either Aperture or Shutter priority or Manual modes on your camera. A good place to start would be Shutter Priority mode with a shutter speed of 1/10th of a second.



Bracket your exposures

Experiment with the level of blur you can achieve at exposures of 1, 4 or 10 seconds

Use a Neutral Density filter

In bright conditions, to ensure that you can get slow shutter speeds, think about using a Neutral Density (ND) filter to stop light entering your camera. To get very long exposures in bright light, you may need an extreme ND filter, such as a Lee Filter Big Stopper, which blocks 10 stops of light.



Cover the eyepiece

When shooting with very long exposures, best practice would be to cover the viewfinder eyepiece, this reduces the chance of unwanted light entering the camera.

Use a polariser

You can use a polariser to either reduce or enhance the reflections on water. Polarisers also act as a 2-3 stop ND filter, allowing you to have slighter longer exposure times.



Choose a slower shutter speed

If you use a shutter speed close to 30 seconds, the water should blur completely, giving almost mirror-like reflective capabilities. Think about using this in your image, especially if you have lots of light sources which could be reflected.

Keep an eye on the tide

When working near water, particularly if it is tidal, make sure you are aware of the tide times and your route back - tides come in faster than you think and it is easy to get cut off. Fast flowing waterfalls and rivers can also be dangerous, so be aware of your footing as wet rocks pose a slip and trip hazard.



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