
Improving Your Landscape Images... Part 2

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Make your images more dramatic with a polarizing filter.

We use filters in photography to bring back an image to the way our eyes have perceived the original scene. Some times it's not possible for our cameras to record an exact scene - so we have to rely on the manufacturers of camera products.

If you are only going to buy one filter for your landscape photography a polarizing filter is the one you'll use most. A polarizing filter can be used with colour or black and white and is probably the most important filter on the market today.

Lets take a quick look at the science behind it. A polarizing filter is made up of two pieces of glass which when rotated cut out all glare on non-metallic surfaces. Light travels in waves - these waves travel in all directions and at different rates and speeds. The polarizing filter works by limiting the amount of waves that enter your lens. You decide how many waves pass through your lens by rotating the filter.

The polarizing filter is most effective with side lighting.

For example: if you are taking a picture of a scenic lake area and there is a messy reflection of the clouds in the lake; it will be too much of a distraction in the final picture. This can be simply removed by rotating the polarizing filter 'til the clouds disappear. You can view the filter working in the viewfinder of your camera.

The polarizing filter will also darken the blue sky to give it a strong rich colour. It will make mist stand out and can be also used to give fast flowing water a misty effect.

You don't have to rotate the filter the full amount to get the maximum affect you need, sometimes you will only have to rotate it a small amount. You can decide best for yourself by viewing through your viewfinder while you rotate the polarizing filter.

This filter is not just for a landscape photographer.

There are many different uses for a polarizing filter, which make it so important for all photographers. Property photographers would find this filter extremely handy - when taking an image of a shop front, the polarizing filter will remove glare that reflects off the glass.

Take extreme care when calculating exposure. Remember that you will have to add two stops of light when using the polarizing.

TJ Tierney. Award winning Irish Landscape photographer. If you are looking for more photo tips visit <http://www.goldenirishlight.com/photographytips.html> To view some of his images visit his on line gallery @ <http://www.goldenirishlight.com>.