

Tillicum Photography Club

Assignment #4 - Blur the Background

Motivation

One of the first problems you will encounter as a photographer is that the world doesn't stand still and wait for you to take a photo. Many interesting compositions are fleeting, so the photographer has to be somewhat opportunistic. Sometimes you will take a hundred photos and only get a handful of good ones.

This week we'll be capturing moving things. There are tons of interesting moving things around school, home, and parks: cyclists, people playing ultimate frisbee, cars driving past, squirrels dashing from tree to tree. Animals in general are delightfully uncooperative, so if you have a dog or cat, this might be a good week to take a photo of them running or jumping or chasing a toy.

The key difficulty in capturing moving objects is getting enough light. The shutter speed needs to be short enough to prevent motion blur. You usually compensate for this by using a large aperture and increasing ISO. However, you quickly encounter trade-offs. For example, increasing the aperture shortens the depth of field and makes precise focus more important (and challenging). Autofocus takes time and a slow autofocus system may not be able to keep up with the action you are trying to capture with your fast shutter speed, resulting in a missed shot. If you're able to set up the shot, one good trick is to pre-focus at the depth you're expecting, so that the photograph can be captured at the instant the object moves through the point of focus. As you can see, capturing a unique photograph often involves manipulating several of the camera's control systems at once!

Instructions

Take some photos **that meet the requirements listed below**, and email them to the club's gmail address:

- Subject line should be "**Assignment #4 - Blur Background**"
- Add **comments** within the email explaining how you took the photo
- Include any relevant **camera settings** you used and why
- Mention any **image processing** done to the photograph afterwards

This Assignment - Show action by blurring the background

Take at least one photo with a sharp subject and a motion blurred background. Note in your comments how this gives a different sense of movement from the assignment where we blurred the foreground. (One way to do this is to keep a moving object centered in your viewfinder as it passes you by panning the camera to match its speed. This takes some patience and practice, but it's worth the effort once you get it right!)