

HOW TO PHOTOGRAPH BIRDS UP CLOSE



PHOTZY.COM

The biggest challenge to new bird photographers is getting close enough to see the details of the bird. No one wants the bird in their photograph to appear as a spot in the distance. A longer focal length lens - either a telephoto prime or a telephoto zoom lens - is your best choice. Outside of that, stealth - along with the use of camouflage or a blind - is your next step toward pro bird photography.

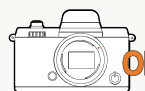
Perfect to print A5 size
14cm x 21cm
5.83" x 8.27"

GEAR UP

CAMERA



DSLR or mirrorless with Full Frame sensor



DSLR or mirrorless with APS-C sensor

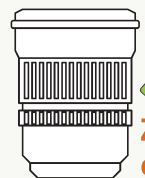


Smartphone camera

Camera considerations:

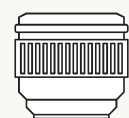
- Interchangeable lenses
- Low noise
- Size & weight

LENS



Zoom lens considerations:

- Focal length range
 - 150 – 600mm ✓
 - 100 – 400mm ✓
 - 70 – 200mm OK
- Maximum aperture f/6.3 +
- Weight and length
- Tripod collar



Prime lens considerations:

- Focal length range
 - 100-600mm DEPENDING UPON DISTANCE
- Maximum aperture f/6.3 +

SET IT UP

File format



ISO setting

ADJUST AS NECESSARY



Metering Mode

Center-weighted ✓

Matrix/Evaluative OK

Spot OK

Drive Mode



Shooting Mode

S/Tv ✓

M OK

A/Av OK

KEEP AN EYE ON THE SHUTTER SPEED FOR CAMERA SHAKE

Focus Mode

Single Shot ✓

Focus Points



SMALL CENTRAL CLUSTER

Shutter Speed: Min. 1/250th | Recommended: 1/500th

Image Stabilization: On UNLESS ON A TRIPOD

White Balance: Auto

Aperture: f/5.6 – f/16

Focus Tracking: On

Back Button Focus: Recommended

Highlight Indicator: On

SHOOT IT

PRO TECHNIQUE 1: Back Button Release

Most modern cameras can separate the autofocus function from the shutter release. This feature allows you to focus on the eyes while composing, before releasing the camera shutter.

PRO TECHNIQUE 2: Proper camera holding

When starting with telephoto lenses, you will experience blurry pictures due to camera shake.

- Use a tripod or a monopod
- Use a lens collar if possible
- Make sure the shutter speed equals the lens focal length (e.g. for 500mm lens, use shutter speed 1/500th or faster).
- Release the camera shutter button with a slow, methodical movement - don't jam the shutter release button.

PRO TECHNIQUE 3: Starter lens, teleconverter, and blind

Long telephoto lenses are expensive. You can start with a zoom lens, such as a 70-200mm, add a teleconverter, and finally a portable blind. Upgrade when you're ready.

Remember: Teleconverters need lots of light, and you should purchase the best one that you can afford (check reviews and ratings).

✓ Recommended

OK Acceptable

✗ Not Recommended

! Not unless experienced