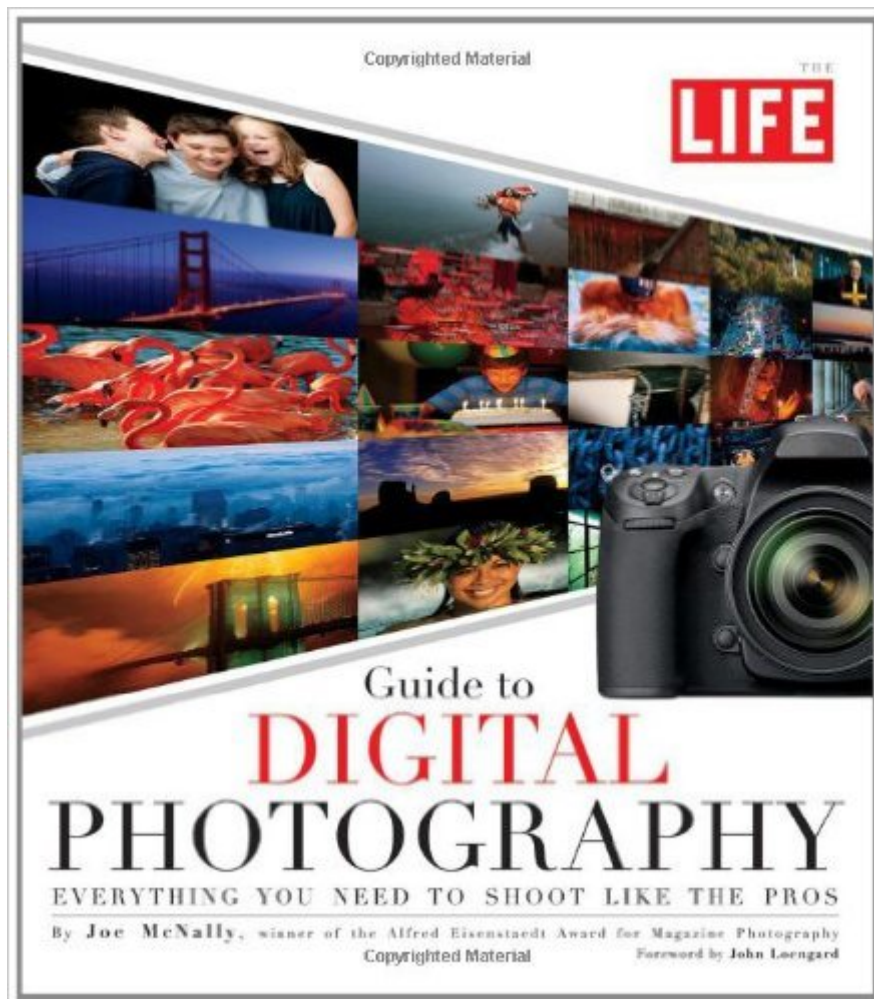


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# LIFE Guide To Digital Photography: Everything You Need To Shoot Like The Pros



## Synopsis

Photography has been the business and the passion of LIFE since the original weekly magazine's inception in 1936, and it continues to be the business and passion of LIFE Books and LIFE.com in the new millennium. But photography has surely changed during these many decades. The rigs and gear of old have given way-first slowly, then all at once-to sleek miracle machines that process pixels and have made the darkroom obsolete. The casual photog puts eye to lens, sets everything on auto and captures a photograph that is . . . perfectly fine. One of LIFE's master shooters-in fact, the final in the long line of distinguished LIFE staff photographers-was Joe McNally, and he has always believed that with a little preparation and care, with a dash of enthusiasm and daring added to the equation, anyone can make a better photo-anyone can turn a "keeper" into a treasure. This was true in days of yore, and it's true in the digital age. Your marvelous new camera, fresh from its box, can indeed perform splendid feats. Joe explains in this book how to take best advantage of what it was designed to do, and also when it is wise to outthink your camera or push your camera-to go for the gold, to create that indelible family memory that you will have blown up as large as the technology will allow, and that will hang on the wall forevermore. As the storied LIFE photographer and photo editor John Loengard points out in his eloquent foreword to this volume, there are cameras and there are cameras, and they've always been able to do tricks. And then there is photography. Other guides may give you the one, two, three of producing a reasonably well exposed shot, but Joe McNally and the editors of LIFE can give you that, and then can show you how to make a picture. In a detailed, friendly, conversational, anecdotal, sometimes rollicking way, that's what they do in these pages. Prepare to click.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Photographers are easy marks for "how-to" books on photography. We're never happy with our work. We always wish we had brought a different camera, a different lens, the heavy tripod instead of the light one and so on. In short, serious photographers are never happy with their own work and are always eager to learn more, to learn the secrets of getting that just right combination to create the perfect photo - each and every time we press the shutter. It will never happen, of course. Which means photo book publishers will never go out of business. With more than fifty years of serious photography experience, I still get the occasional book even though I know better. The "LIFE Guide to Digital Photography: Everything You Need to Shoot Like the Pros" is, frankly, just another how-to book. It covers the basics of photography, with a focus on Digital Single Lens Reflex (DSLR) cameras. The basics of haven't really changed since the dominance of film. Joe McNally, who is an excellent photographer, explains (in general terms) the nature of light, the lens, design elements (fuzzy), color, composition and a collection entitled "Joe's Tips". I found this last section to be the most interesting because of its exposition on techniques for hand held slow-speed shots. Joe McNally tends to be a "it's all about me" writer, recounting his experience at this and that shoot. It isn't annoying, but it does get boring. Profusely illustrated with McNally's work, the photos are great to look at, but for the most of no value as teaching aids. How many of us will be flying in helicopters we direct in order to capture aerial shots of Manhattan or a field of wind turbines? Who among us will be flying in a U.S..

Joe McNally (the author) creates captivating images, photos that make you think "How did he do that?" Reading this book is like spending time with him. While yes, he gives you basic instruction such as an introduction to the exposure triangle of ISO, f-stop and shutter speed, he is sharing his fabulous art with you at the same time discussing some technical aspects such as lens, focus, color, timing or aperture that contributed to the final product. While he recommends always shooting in Raw so you can correct a photo, he is definitely a "Get it right in camera" guy. Below are summaries of a few of my favorite sections. Which is hard, because I loved them all. The Almost Silhouettes in this example he has a photo of a young girl in a dark room looking out a lighted window. Which is a tough exposure situation. Expose for the highlights on her face. If you expose for the window other areas go totally black, if you expose for the dark shadows, others go nuclear. Look for a middle

ground. (The photo example helps quite a bit.)FireworksShooting fireworks with a wide open lens will drain the color, it is quite easy to over expose them. An aperture of f/8 is a good start. Use a cable release, because the shutter will be open 4 to 15 seconds. The foreground object (the anchor) can determine the shutter speed. Don't shoot all night long with the same exposure (This goes for any situation).FlashThis author is a Master at flash and makes the point that if you intend to take a lot of pictures, you will eventually have to shoot some with a flash, probably more with than without. Light, no matter where it comes from has quality, color and direction.

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