

Getting started with the EOS 6D Mark II

Especially written for **Canon EOS** users

A simple, modern and non technical approach to learn how to use your Canon EOS 6D Mark II camera to take great images



Written by Nina Bailey

About this book

The 6D Mark II is one of the more advanced models within the Canon EOS range. Aimed at intermediate and advanced photographers this fantastic model can be a leap to those who have only used very basic models and have only a limited understanding of photography. This book has been written for those that are still struggling with some of the more basic functions on the camera and will fill in the gaps in your photographic knowledge to allow you to use the EOS 6D Mark II to the fullest extent.

This book is split into two distinct sections, the first part, getting started, looks at the key features you need to use to shoot with the camera, but sticks to the easier to use basic zone modes, where little photographic understanding is needed. Even within these modes there are some limited overrides available on this model.

The second part, moving on, looks at the creative modes, which on this model need to be used where you have more control over how the camera is taking the image, but where a more in-depth understanding of the photographic settings is needed. Additionally I will look at the settings in depth in this section and explain what the various settings do to the images that you take.

I will take a look at a few of the basic overrides that the camera offers and how they can be used to produce better images. I will also take a look at some of the standard settings that can be left on their defaults whilst you get to grips with the other settings that you need to understand.

Throughout the book I have included a few practical assignments that will allow you to go out and put into practice what the book is explaining.

I am confident this book will enable you to get some great images with your EOS 6D Mark II.

Written, designed and images by

Nina Bailey

www.ninabailey.co.uk

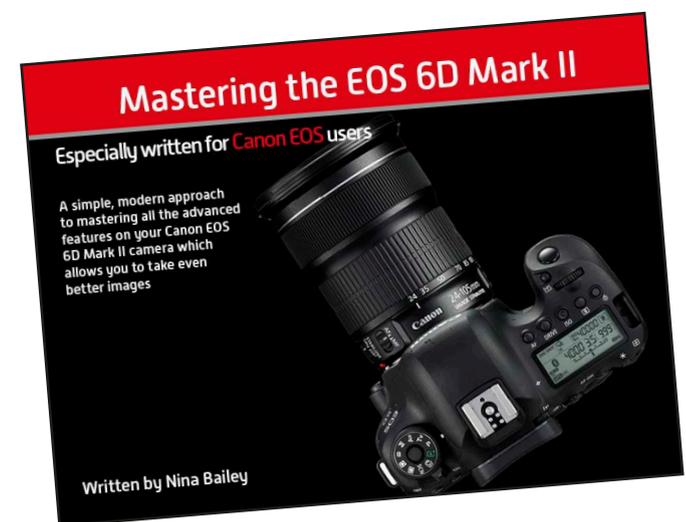
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The Mastering the EOS 6D Mark II ebook has been designed for those with a good photographic knowledge or those who have read this book and follows on and looks at the more advanced features that the camera has.





Some of the test images shot on the EOS 6D Mark II whilst producing the books on the EOS 6D Mark II showing the great images that can be achieved. These images are straight out of the camera, shot as JPEG files and have had no postproduction done to them.



Nina started her career in the retail photography industry, then moved to a role where she had a successful nine years looking after training, exhibitions and

marketing both in the UK and also within Europe. This gave Nina an unrivalled knowledge of not only the Canon EOS system but also how to develop and enhance the skills of photographers of all ability levels.

Nina started her own business in 1999, concentrating on training for amateur photographers. She is also at the forefront in developing and producing the new Online EOS Training Academy. As well as developing the online training academy and direct training of photographers, Nina is a prolific professional photographer producing images not only for the EOS Training Academy but for a variety of outside organisations. In 2014 Nina started producing her own range of ebooks to bring photography training to an ever wider audience.

Nina started taking images when she was very young and is still a very keen photographer both professionally and personally. Nina loves travel, landscape and wildlife photography and still shoots commercially within the travel photography market. Nina also leads photographic trips, the latest one being to Madagascar in conjunction with Exodus tours.

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Part 1 - Getting started

Getting started with the EOS 6D Mark II

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The EOS 6D Mark II is a great EOS model to use to learn photography. It has a range of modes that will allow you to shoot some subjects with the settings remaining under the camera's control. This gives you chance to become familiar with your lenses and what they do and understanding the lighting that will give you the best images, before you need to start understanding some of the settings used within photography.

The EOS 6D Mark II is one of the more advanced models within the Canon EOS range. It has a lot more features and customisation than the models below it and therefore requires the user to understand the camera a lot more once you have moved onto the creative modes.

Photography has always had a steep learning curve, and in this modern digital age this has become steeper as there are now far more controls on the camera. On this model it is going to be necessary to take more control early on, as with 45 focusing points the camera is not always going to focus on the subject that you want. I have tried to break the book into sections that allow you to get some great results and build your confidence using the Auto+ and SCN modes, before tackling the areas that are by nature more technically challenging.

I always try and teach photography in a very modern way, starting off by taking images using the basic modes and building confidence that you can get great images without needing to take control of everything on the camera. Then as time progresses and you start to shoot more challenging areas, it becomes the time to start to use the camera on modes with more



controls, where more understanding is needed.

Far too often I come across photographers who are the verge of giving up photography as they have been told to shoot manually because a photographer, whose techniques are well out of date, has told them that its the only way to shoot.

It's far from the truth as most of the images you will see in this book are shot on one of the camera's automatic or semi automatic modes. A handful will be shot manually as in those situations it may be the only way to get consistent results, but those

occasions are few and far between.

I originally learnt on a fully manual camera, but today choose not to shoot that way, as most of the time the camera makes the same decisions as I would and usually a lot quicker.

The automation on the camera works incredibly well, providing you understand what it is doing. The art being using the right mode at the right time, the art of using the camera to understand it fully, and simply pick the right setting at the right time.

Understanding the terms used in photography

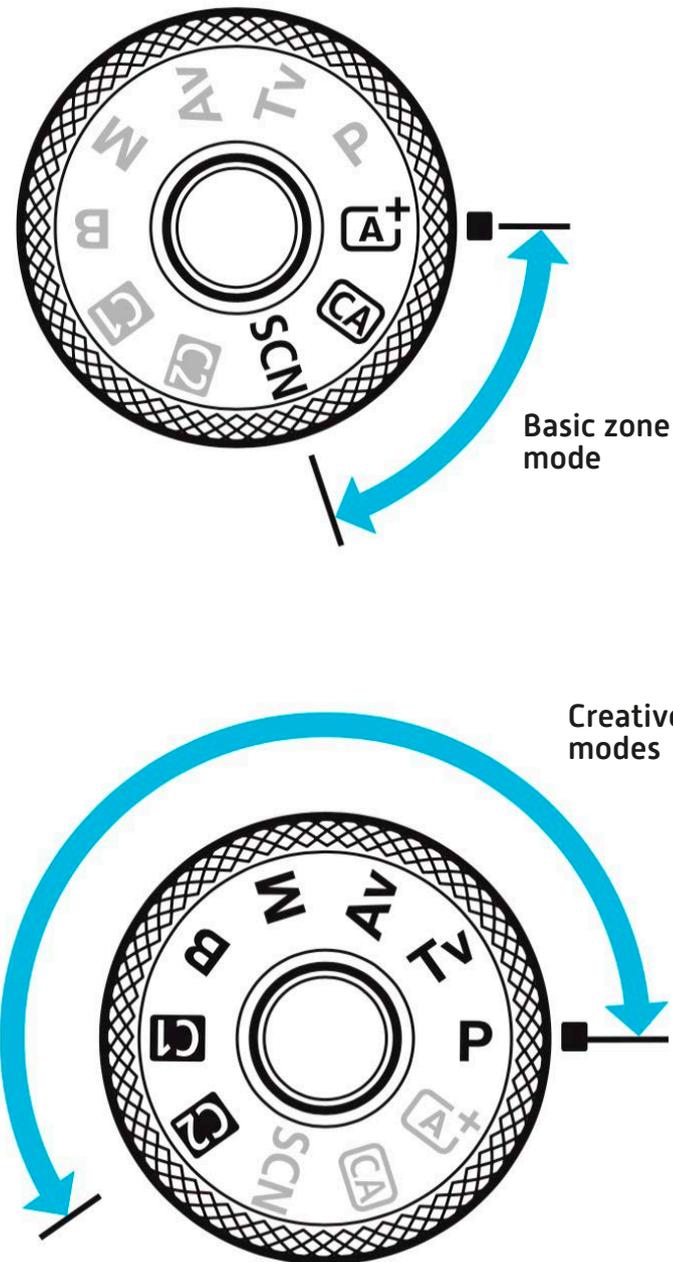
It is impossible in photography to discuss any part of modes on the camera without using a few terms, which many might consider to be technical jargon.

So I am going to explain in a simple way what the key terms mean and basically how they are affecting the images we shoot. I will look in more depth at these later in the book in the section Moving on, as once you start to utilise the creative modes you need a more in-depth understanding of how to use them.

In this first part of the book it is only necessary to have a basic grasp of what they are controlling and accept the fact that the camera will be setting all of them for you. Be assured that the camera actually does a very good job of choosing the settings, but what is interesting in the more basic modes is to actually look at what the camera is choosing and learn from it, the settings that are needed in various conditions.

The camera's exposure mode dial is actually split into two halves as well. The dial top right shows the Basic zone modes. These modes are designed to make the camera as simple to operate as possible, yet still allow a good range of subjects to be tackled. There are lots of safety features present when these modes are in use to prevent you making errors that will affect the images that you are taking.

The bottom right hand dial shows the more advanced Creative zone modes, which I will be looking at in the second part of the book.



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What ISO means and controls

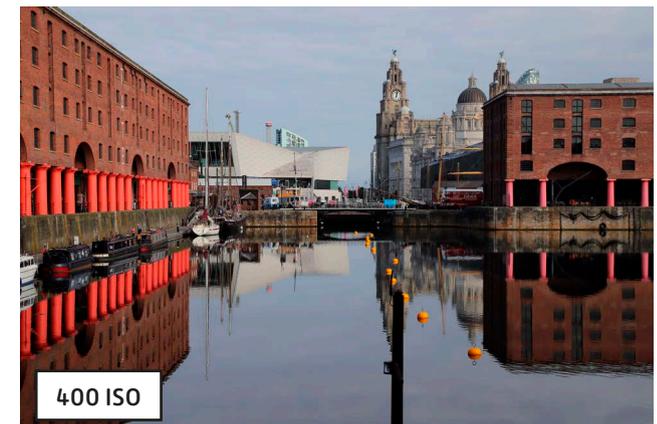
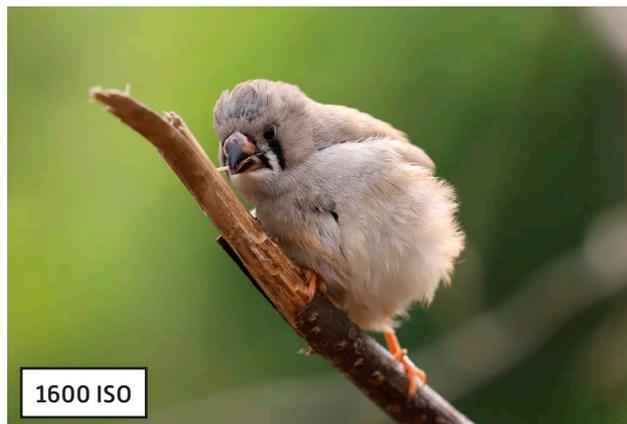
ISO - Changes the sensitivity of the imaging sensor to light

ISO stands for international standards organisation, a meaningless term. If you were born before the 1970s then you may have come across this setting under a different name. In the UK it was commonly called ASA (American standards association) and in Germany and many of the eastern block countries it was called DIN (Deutsche Industrial Norms).

The only standard used today is ISO, the difference is that today it is produced on the imaging sensor electronically, and therefore can be varied frame by frame whereas on film it was set by how the film was manufactured and so the film had a specific ISO speed.

The ISO allows you to shoot in a very wide range of lighting conditions. The range on the 6D Mark II in the Auto ISO settings goes from 100 ISO up to 12800 ISO as a default in the basic zone modes. In bright light you will find the camera choosing the lower settings 100-400 ISO and the light levels get lower then the camera will choose higher settings.

As the ISO goes higher there is a small drop on quality for each increment that it goes up. From 100-800 there is no really visible effect on the image. Above this the image can start to look slightly grainy if you zoom into it, but the printed quality will still be very good. However, the quality at the high ISO settings far exceeds anything that was possible with film and so even the very highest settings can be used to give great images. The images to the right were taken with the camera choosing the ISO to use for the light levels they were taken in.



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What Shutter speeds mean and control

Shutter speed - changes how long the light enters the camera for

The shutter speed is one of two key controls that affect the brightness of the image that you take, better known as the exposure.

The shutter speed has settings from 30 whole seconds up to 1/8000th, though on the fully automatic modes these extremes are seldom used.

The shutter speed has two things that it is used for within photography, the key one is for preventing blurring the image. The camera will always try and achieve a shutter speed that will prevent camera shake occurring in the Basic zone mode.

The shutter speed becomes important in action photography where taking the shutter speed up to its higher settings will freeze action, but this has to be done using the creative modes on the camera as the Auto+ mode will seldom set a shutter speed high enough to freeze action subjects successfully.

On the basic zone mode, the camera will think about handholding for you automatically which will prevent most camera shake occurring. Most of the time it does this by increasing the ISO setting it is using, but it can also turn on the built in flash to provide light in the very lowest of lighting conditions.



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What the aperture does and controls

Aperture - The opening in the lens that controls how much light enters

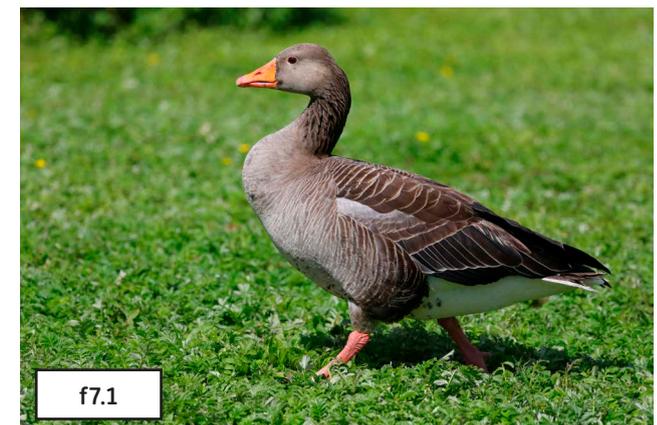
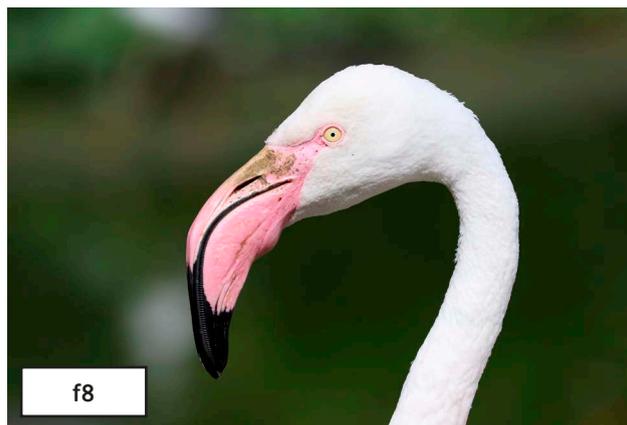
The aperture is the second of the key controls for how bright the image is, or exposure as it is correctly known.

The aperture is basically the opening in the lens. It's the hardest of the controls to understand due to the numbers that are used to describe it. The larger the opening the nearer to 0 the number will be. The aperture range you have available depends on the lenses you have. Most zoom lenses have a range of apertures from f4 which lets in the most light with settings including f5.6, f8, f11, f16 down to f22 which lets in the least light.

The camera tends to keep the aperture towards the wider settings of f5.6 or f8. If you shoot a lot of landscapes in the landscape mode in bright light you may see it go to the narrower settings than this.

The aperture also has a modifying effect on something called depth of field. I will look at this in more detail later, but this is how much is sharp in the images that you take. That said the thing that will have the biggest effect on things such as getting good background blur, will be the lens you choose to shoot with and not the aperture which is being used.

Out of the three main controls, ISO, shutter speed and aperture, the aperture is the least important setting to worry about, especially when starting out in photography. There is a relationship between the three settings that I will look at later, for the time being the camera will look after that for you.



What the lenses you use controls

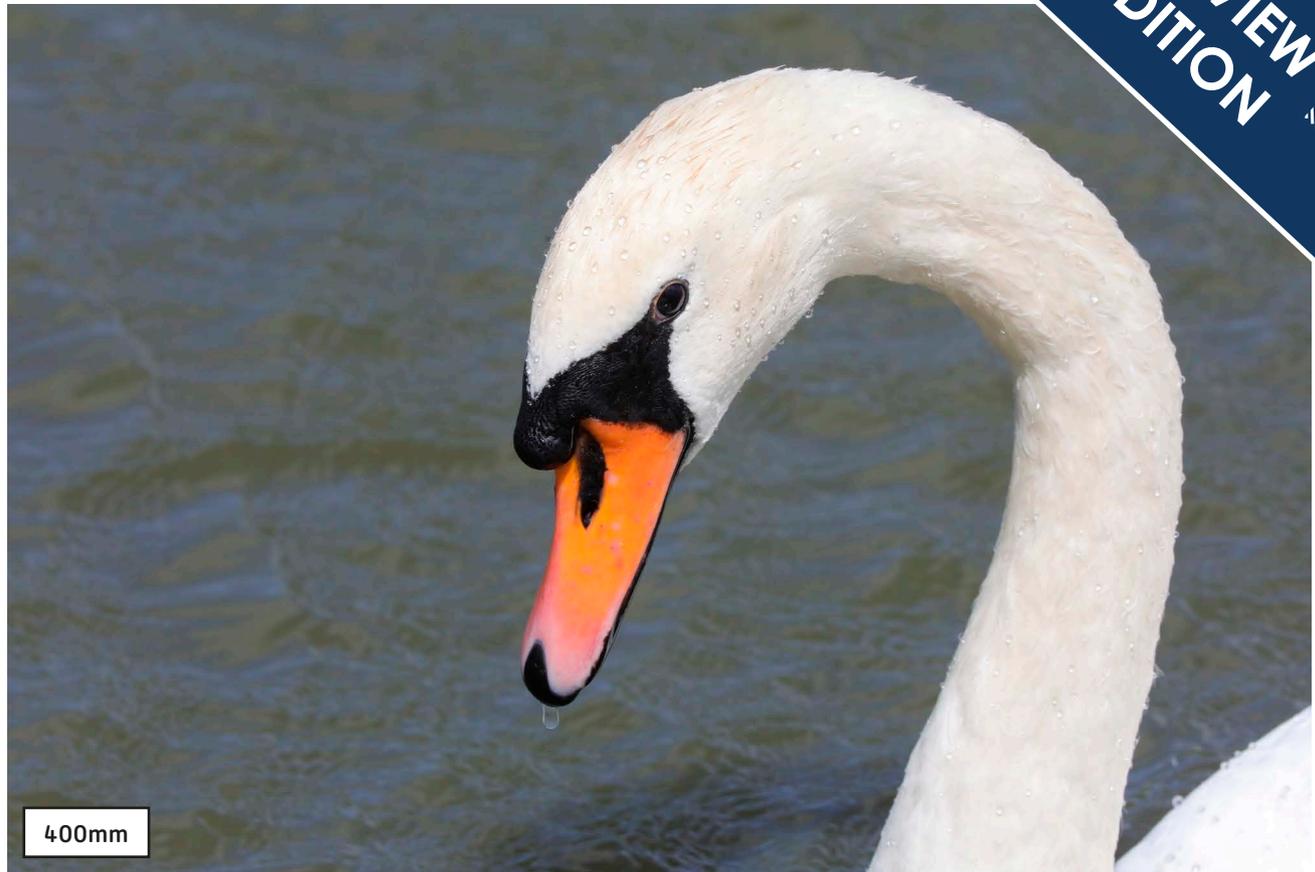
It's commonly said that the D-SLR or Digital Single Lens Reflex camera, of which the EOS 6D Mark II is a great example, will take much better images than the compact models in the market. Although this is true, what is often not explained is why this is the case. The thing that sets cameras such as the EOS 6D Mark II apart is the range of lenses that they can be used with it.

The camera is most commonly supplied as a body only, though a number of options with lenses are available. There is a EF24-105mm f3.5-5.6 IS STM lens available and this is often offered as an option with this model.

This camera is also often seen fitted with the L series lenses, which do offer stunning optical quality, but the ranges offered by the lenses are often designed to couple with the full frame models, and so a three lens outfit rather than just the two lenses are often needed, which makes the outfit bulkier and heavier as a result.

There is a reality that needs to be faced with this type of camera, which is the outfit will not fit in a pocket like a compact. The outfit will be bulkier and heavier to carry. However, the quality of the images achievable will be better and a much wider range of images can be taken due to the greater lens choice that you have.

A good second lens to start off with is the EF 70-300mm f4-5.6L IS USM lens or the camera is often seen used with the new EF 100-400mm f4.5-5.6L IS USM II which works very well with this particular model., Both of these give a better range to shoot with and will allow a much wider range of subjects to be successfully tackled.



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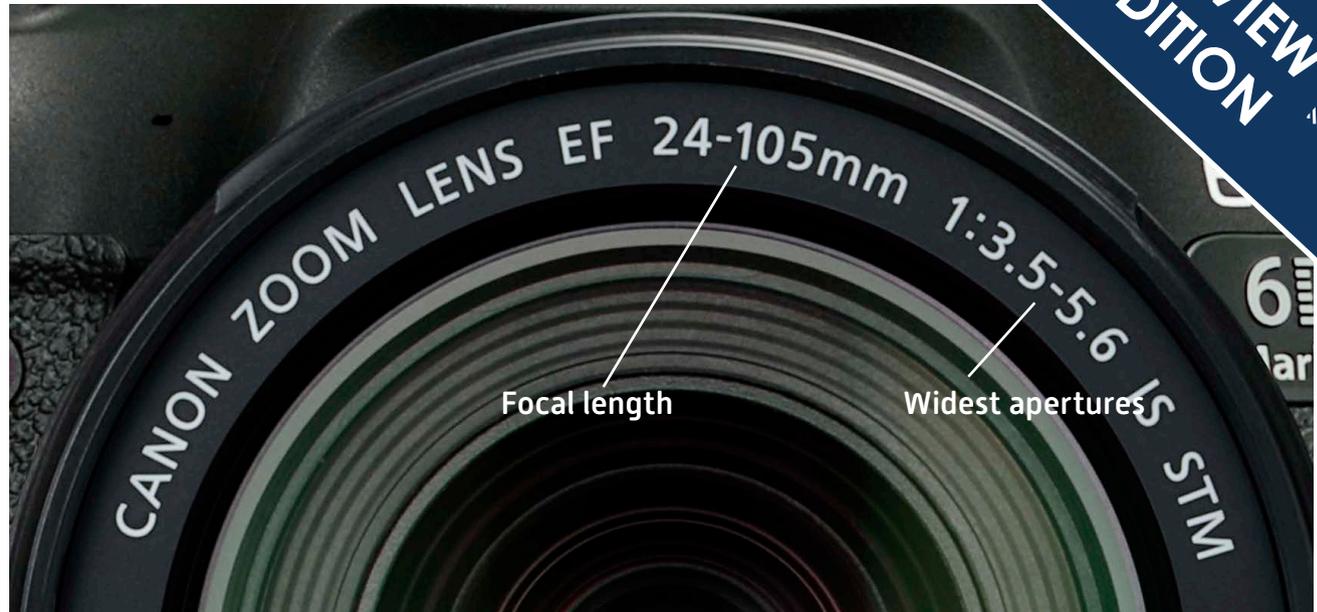
Lens jargon and terminology

I am trying to avoid as much jargon as possible in this book, however, lenses are described in a very specific way and so I am going to look at what all the description on the lens actually means in simple terms.

The most important thing that describes a lens is its focal length. This is a number that is shown on the lens and it has mm after it. If there are two numbers, then the lens is a zoom lens and in the example shown on the right has a range starting at 24mm and going up to 105mm.

Zoom lenses are the most commonly seen in use today as they are very convenient to use and prevent having to change lens too frequently.

If there is only one number shown then it is a fixed focal length or prime lens, which does not zoom, as in the example below. In this case the lens is a 50mm lens. There are advantages to the fixed focal length lenses.



They generally let in more light, are smaller and often lighter than the equivalent zoom lens and offer higher quality. However, the down side of them is you need more of them, which makes the outfit larger and heavier to carry around.

For most amateur photographers starting out, the lenses of choice will be a zoom lens for the greater convenience of use and also to allow you to change the framing of the shot.

The lenses I mention on the last page an 24-105mm and a 70-300mm lens will work well for most newcomers to photography and allow you to gain experience without spending a fortune on lenses.

As you understand more about photography, many photographers start to specialise and this can lead to wanting more specialist lenses and in some

instances more specialised cameras. It is wise not to spend too much on your lens outfit until you start to understand the lenses in more depth and can make a more informed choice as a result of that understanding in what you need for the subjects that you shoot.

I have a very wide range of lenses, but never take all of the lenses with me at one time, I tend to chose the equipment that I am using for the subjects that I am going to shoot.

The EOS 6D Mark II is a full frame model and so the lenses that it uses will be very different to the models below it in the range. The EOS 6D Mark II is only compatible with the EF range of lenses, it cannot take the EF-S range as they are only designed for the models that feature the smaller sensors.

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Lens jargon and terminology

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The focal length of the lens tells us the type of lens that it is and the effect that it will have on the image. Lenses can be broken down into three basic groups

Wide angle: These get more into the picture than we naturally see with the eye but they also make things look further away and smaller and so we would not use these for wildlife or most action photography. Focal lengths from 35mm down to 24mm would be considered to be a wide angle focal length, below this they are classed as ultra wide.

Standard: These are lenses that give the same width and appearance as we see naturally with the human eye. However, as they do not make the subject look closer they are good for travel and landscape photography. Lenses from 36mm up to 55mm are generally considered to be a standard focal length.

Telephoto: These are the lenses that are used for wildlife, action and sports photography as well as many other things. They capture a narrower area than we naturally see with the eye and make the subject appear to be a lot closer to us. Telephoto lenses technically start at 56mm but it is not until 200mm and longer that they start to make a big difference to your images. **Telephoto lenses** can be split into two groups. The normal telephoto lenses have focal lengths from 56mm and go up to 300mm.

You then have the **Ultra telephoto lenses**, these range from 400mm up to 800mm in the current range. The word ultra also seems to mean expensive as there are none of these lenses that will be found under a thousand pounds and many will be much more than that.



The images above are taken from the same spot but with the lens focal length being changed between each shot. As the focal length gets higher you can see a smaller part being captured. The 50mm image shows the scene as it looked to the eye.

Lens jargon and terminology

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This shows you if the lens is an EF or EF-S type. This will tell you what the compatibility of the lens is. Only EF lenses are compatible with the EOS 6D Mark II

EF actually stands for Electronic Focus.

EF-S stands for Electronic Focus - Short back focus which is the way that they are making the lenses smaller.

This tells you the focal length of the lens. This lens goes from 24mm which is wide angle up to 105mm which is telephoto and in between those two extremes covers the standard focal lengths as well. These days it is quite common for a lens to cover a range of focal length types in the one lens to make it more versatile.

This is the aperture range, however, with the widest aperture that the lens features. The widest aperture and so will be f3.5 on the 24mm end of the lens and will vary down to f5.6 when the lens is at its 105mm position. This is a common feature on the more affordable lenses. Most affordable telephoto lenses will have f5.6 when zoomed in. I will explain more about the aperture range shortly.

The IS indicates that the lens features Image Stabilisation which helps you to hold the lens steady making it easier to track subjects and can prevent camera shake occurring when shooting in lower light levels. This is an important feature to have as it can significantly increase the number of good images that you get.

STM is the type of motor that is fitted into the lens. STM stand for Stepping Motor which is a fast and very quiet motor. USM is even faster and totally silent in use. If there is no motor type then the lens uses the standard micro motor type which does produce a noise when working.

This indicates the filter size that the lens takes.



77mm

Explanation of sensor size

Within the EOS range there are now two types of sensor that can be found in the cameras. The sensor is effectively doing the same job, capturing the image as the film used to. The EOS 6D Mark II using the larger of the two sizes, the 1.0x crop or Full frame sensor as it is sometimes called.

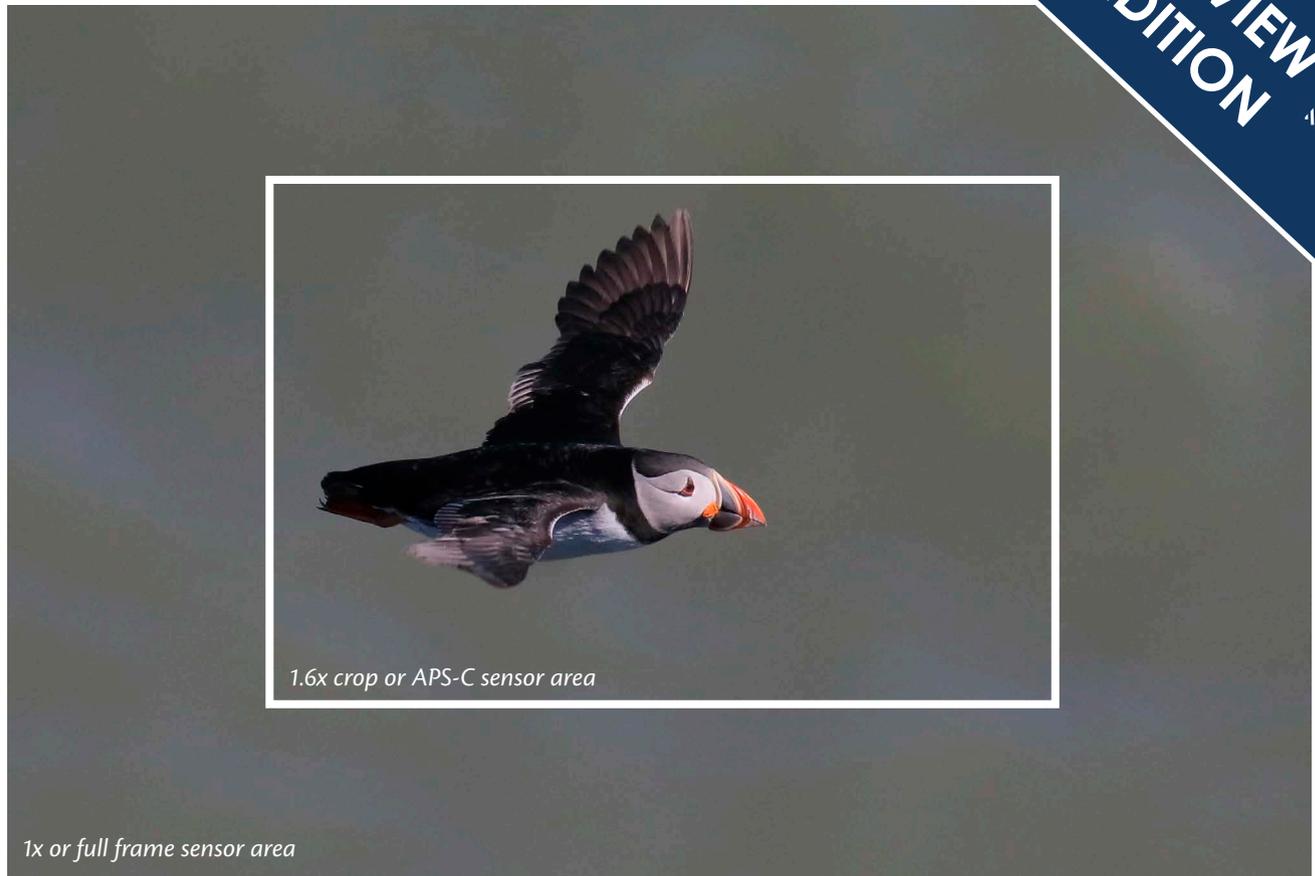
When digital cameras first appeared they initially only used the smaller sensor. This is approximately 22mm x 15mm in size. The 1.6x is often referred to as a magnification factor, which is incorrect, rather the image is cropped by a factor of 1.6x when compared to the image given by the full frame sensor.

The other size of imaging sensor is the full frame or 1.0x sensor, as they are generally referred to, are the same size as a frame of film. This is 24mm x 36mm. The models that have these are more expensive and are generally preferred by more serious amateurs and professional photographers. They are also larger and heavier as a result of having the larger sensor. The full frame models have a wider ISO range and perform much better at the high ISO settings.

The image to the top right shows the difference that is made by simply changing the camera body on the same lens on the area that is being captured. The area captured is smaller, effectively “cropping” the area that is being captured by the camera.

Full frame models have the advantage that the bigger sensor allows lenses to give a wider angle of view and so they are better for subjects such as portraits and landscapes.

The easiest way to tell which model is which is to



look at the camera's lens mount. If there is a white square and a red dot marked for alignment of the lenses it is a APS-C or 1.6x crop model. If there is only a red dot, then it is a full frame or 1x model.

The image to the right shows the mount of a camera featuring a APS-C or 1.6x crop sensor, the fact that there is a red dot and a white square shows it takes the EF-S lenses and therefore is a 1.6x crop sensor model. The EOS 6D Mark II will only have the red dot.



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Basic camera layout

Top plate

It is important to understand the controls on the EOS 6D Mark II camera, however in this first part of the book, there are a lot of controls that will not do anything as you do not have access to those overrides in the modes that we are looking at.

OFF/ON switch - this is where the camera is turned on and off.

Shutter button - This has a two stage pressure to it. The first half pressure activates the focusing and exposure systems on the camera. When photographing a static subject the Auto+ mode allows the focusing to be locked and then the image can be re-framed whilst still holding the shutter button half down and then the shutter button is fully depressed to take the image.

Main dial - This is used to select items in some menus, and for general navigation in some of the options. Within the Auto+ mode it is not used as much as when working in the creative models.

Mode Dial - The EOS 6D Mark II has a wide range of basic zone modes. These range from the Auto plus that takes care of everything to the SCN modes that are for specific types of photography. These allow you some control over the options being set. There is also a new creative filter mode allowing images to be taken with special effects applied. The normal main exposure modes of P, TV, AV and M are joined by a specific B mode and custom mode options that can be programmed by more advanced photographers.

To prevent the mode dial getting moved by accident, there is now a lock button in the centre of it that



Top plate

needs to be depressed before the dial can be turned.

LCD top display - This is used when setting things using the function buttons, which do not do anything in the Auto+ mode. However, the display does not give as much information as the Q screen and is much more difficult to read. There is a light button that can be pushed by the side of this that makes the panel light up to see it in dark conditions.

Lens release button - this button needs to be pushed to take the lens off the camera. When fitting a lens always make sure that it has clicked firmly into place, or it could drop off when the camera is being used.

Dioptric adjustment dial - this can be rotated to adjust the eyepiece to be correct for different eyesight. This has an adjustment range from -3 up to +1. The camera comes out of the box set to -1 as standard. The easiest way to set it up is to get the camera to focus on something and then look through the viewfinder and turn the dial till the image looks at its sharpest. It can also be set by looking at the display at the bottom of the viewfinder that appears when the shutter button is part depressed.



Rear of camera

The rear of the camera has a lot of buttons on it but a large amount of them are not used a lot of the time when in the Auto+ mode.

Menu button - this is one of the most important buttons on the rear of the camera as it enters the menu system. It is also pressed to go back at any time in the menu to the former screen. The menu system has less functions when you are in the Auto+ mode than when using the creative modes.

Info button - each time this is pressed this changes what the display on the rear of the camera is showing both in the normal shooting mode, when using live view and when playing back images. If the screen is not displaying as you want, simply keep pressing this button until it comes round to your preferred display.

Magnify button - this works when playing back images and when the button is pressed it zooms into a fixed magnification. The magnification can be set in the play menu. To zoom in or out more turn the main dial.

Playback button - this is used to playback images that you have taken.

Erase button - this allows you to erase the image that is currently being displayed.



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