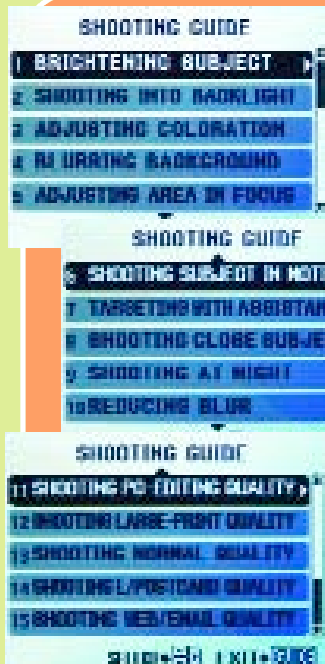




A guide to menus

IN THE THIRD OF OUR SERIES ON MENUS, TECHNICAL EXPERT **PERRY LEWIS** LOOKS AT A CAMERA IDEAL FOR USERS NEW TO DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY, THE μ [MJU:] DIGITAL 800 – THE CAMERA WITH THE BUILT-IN USER GUIDE

ISN'T TECHNOLOGY WONDERFUL! If only we could understand it all. Here at *Olympus User* we often hear from people who find the technology packed into their camera a little difficult to follow. In this issue, we examine a function that has started to appear on many Olympus digital cameras and that should help to make things easier to understand – the Guide function. Even if your camera doesn't have this function, read on, as the information on what settings do and the tips on how to achieve specific effects given in the following pages apply to most cameras.



The Shooting Guide

The Shooting Guide built in to the μ DIGITAL 800 is a cross between an instruction book and a photographic handbook, and is there to help you understand when to use a specific function and how to set it. It lists 15 common photographic scenarios and describes the possibilities for controlling them.

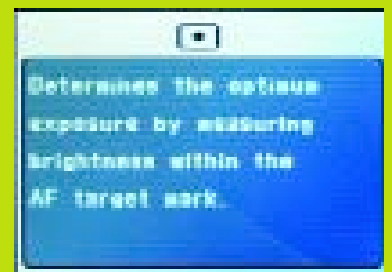
Pressing the GUIDE button in any shooting mode (except Scene mode) activates the Shooting Guide. Navigate through the Shooting Guide by using the four-way shift buttons; an indication at the bottom of the screen shows which direction to move in. To exit the Shooting Guide press GUIDE. On the following pages we will explain what each of the 15 options do...

Menu help

A key function of the GUIDE button is the Menu Help; this gives access to a help page for each function on the camera's menu. To use it is simplicity itself; just highlight the menu item and press and hold down the GUIDE button. The LCD will display a description of that particular function for as long as you hold down the GUIDE button – helpful if you have problems remembering what all those symbols mean and what the functions do.



Select a menu item



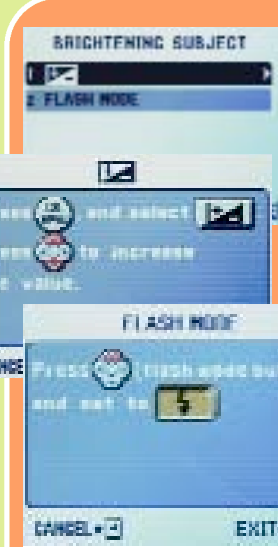
Press and hold GUIDE to get an explanation

1 Brightening subject

The first option on the guide is Brightening subject – select this and press the right-shift button to see the two options for performing this action:

Exposure Compensation Press the right-shift button and the screen shows how to access the Exposure Compensation function to increase or decrease the exposure. Some subjects can fool the exposure system of any camera and occasionally it is necessary to compensate the exposure to make the subject look correct.

Flash mode In some cases fill-in flash is necessary to brighten a subject that is in shadow. The normal auto flash setting may judge that there is plenty of light so no flash is necessary, however if part of the subject is in shadow you must force the flash to fire to fill in the shadow areas. Flash working range: W: Approx. 0.2m to 6.5m (0.7ft. to 21.3ft.), T: Approx. 0.2m to 3.5m (0.7ft. to 11.5ft.)



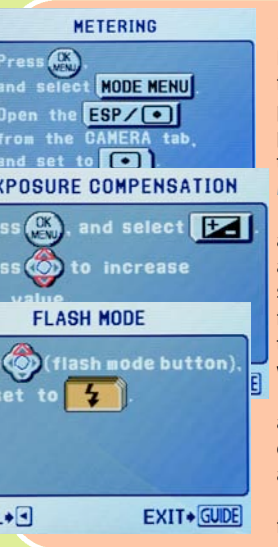
2 Shooting into backlight

Ever taken a picture of someone standing in front of a window and wondered why there is perfectly exposed scene outside, while the person is in darkness? Here's how to correct this and similar situations:

Metering By selecting the Spot Metering mode the camera measures light from a small area of the frame, allowing you to target the area most important in your picture. Take the spot meter reading from a mid-tone, such as a face; do not meter from an area that is meant to be black or white, such as a black jacket or white blouse.

Exposure Compensation As described above, this is useful if there is only a small difference in exposure between foreground and background subjects.

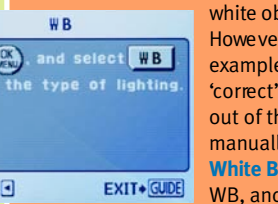
Flash mode As described above, use fill-in flash to brighten the area that is in shadow.



3 Adjusting coloration

The colour of the light illuminating your subject can vary a great deal depending on its source. The Auto White Balance analyses the light to make white objects appear white, rather than orange or blue. However, the White Balance system can be fooled. For example, when taking a sunset, the camera may try to 'correct' the orange glow of the sun, taking the warmth out of the picture. By setting the White Balance manually, you can ensure the correct colour effect.

White Balance The GUIDE tells you to press WB, select WB, and then select the type of lighting. When selecting the different types of lighting, you can watch the effect it will have on your pictures on the left hand side of the screen. When the image looks correct on the screen, press to select that setting.



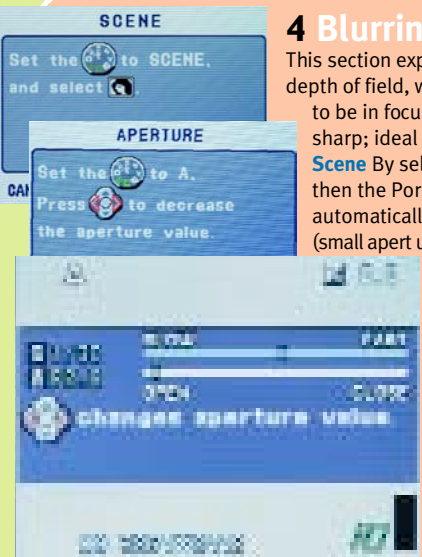
4 Blurring background

This section explains how to achieve a shallow depth of field, which allows the main subject to be in focus while the background is not sharp; ideal for portraits.

Scene By selecting Scene mode and then the Portrait setting, the camera automatically sets a wide aperture (small aperture number) to minimise depth of field.

Aperture Select the Aperture priority exposure (A) mode and then decrease the aperture value (wider aperture) to give a shallow depth of field. When adjusting, the LCD gives an indication of the balance between shutter speed and aperture. The aperture value should be green; if it is red, you are outside the exposure range.

Zoom Zooming to the telephoto (T) end of the zoom range will also reduce the depth of field. A wide aperture and telephoto lens gives minimal depth of field, perfect for portraits.



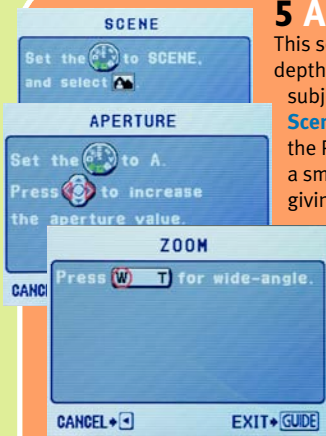
5 Adjusting area in focus

This section explains how to gain maximum depth of field, allowing close and distant subjects to be in focus at the same time.

Scene Select the Scene mode and then the Portrait & Landscape mode. This sets a small aperture (large aperture number), giving maximum focus depth.

Aperture Select A mode and then increase the aperture value to give a smaller aperture opening and therefore more depth of field.

Zoom Setting the zoom to wide (W) will increase depth of field. A wide-angle lens and small aperture gives maximum focus depth, allowing foreground and distant objects to be in focus at the same time.

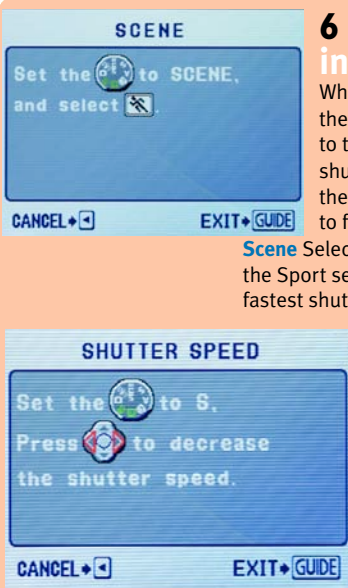


6 Shooting subject in motion

When photographing moving objects, they can often appear blurred due to the subject moving while the shutter is open. To avoid this use the shortest possible shutter speed to freeze the action.

Scene Select the Scene mode and then the Sport setting. The camera will set the fastest shutter speed possible within the exposure range.

Shutter speed Select the Shutter priority exposure (S) mode and select the fastest shutter speed possible, while the display shows the shutter speed in green. If the shutter speed shows in red, it is outside the exposure range available.

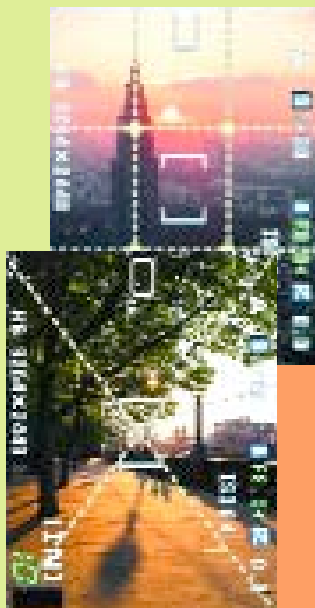


7 Targeting with assistance

There are two visual targeting aid screens built into the μ DIGITAL 800, which are accessed by pressing the DISP button. The GUIDE describes how to use these to compose your pictures more creatively.

Guideline 1 By aligning main subject(s) with the dots on the grid you will create a more balanced picture that is visually pleasing to the eye. Aligning the dotted lines with main vertical and horizontal elements creates a visually pleasing composition (see left).

Guideline 2 Aligning objects such as a line of trees, or a pathway with diagonal lines, creates a sense of depth in the photo, drawing the eye into the picture. Use the zoom to create the right perspective (see left).

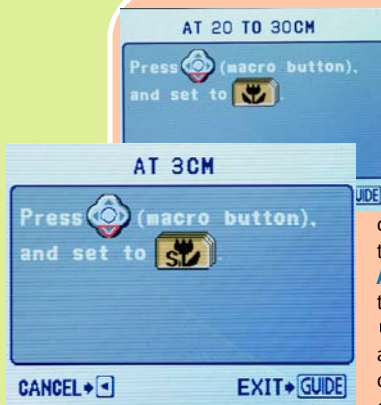


8 Shooting close to subject

This describes when to use and how to set the two Macro modes:

At 20 to 30cm For objects 20-30cm (approx. 8"-12") from the front of the lens, set the normal Macro mode by pressing the direct access macro button. It is still possible to use zoom and flash in this mode.

At 3cm For objects as close as 3cm (1.2") from the front of the lens, set the Super Macro mode using the direct access macro button. Zoom and flash do not function in this mode, so extra care is required to hold the camera steady during exposure; consider manually increasing the ISO value if necessary.



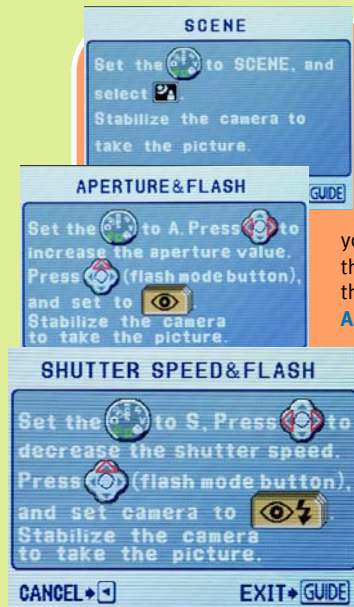
9 Shooting at night

How do you balance those photos of a night-time cityscape with a person in the foreground?

Scene Select Scene mode and then select Night & Portrait. This setting allows long exposure for the dark background and uses the flash to illuminate the foreground. Even though flash is used, your subject (and camera) must remain stationary until the shutter has closed (maybe a few seconds), otherwise the picture may appear blurred.

Aperture & Flash Set the mode to A and increase the aperture value (smaller aperture), set the flash mode to Red Eye Reduction mode. This will give the depth of field necessary to get the foreground and background in focus at the same time. Use a tripod or solid surface to keep the camera steady.

Shutter speed & Flash Set the mode to S and decrease the shutter speed, set the flash to Red-Eye Fill-in Flash (only available in S). Remember that in A and S modes, the exposure is out of range if the figures are red; shift the exposure until the numbers turn green. Again, hold the camera steady.



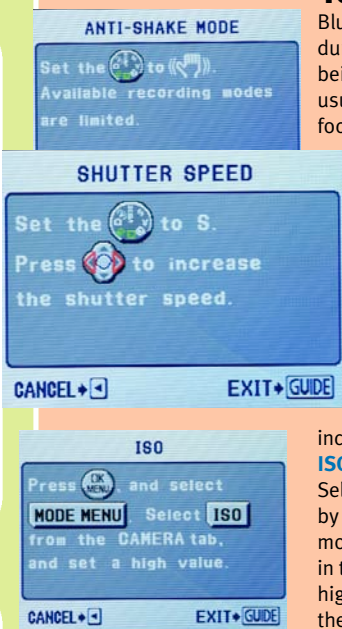
10 Reducing blur

Blur is the result of camera movement during exposure (indicated by nothing being sharp), whereas a focus error is usually the result of the autofocus system focusing on something other than the main subject (some items are sharp).

Anti-shake mode Selecting makes use of the excellent BrightCapture technology that is built in to the μ DIGITAL 800. This gives impressive high ISO performance, allowing faster shutter speeds, so less camera shake. BrightCapture is only available at reduced resolution (SQ1= 2048 x 1536 maximum), perfect for normal prints.

Shutter speed Set the mode to S and increase the shutter speed (fast).

ISO Press and select Mode Menu. Select ISO and increase the ISO value, set by pressing. The higher the ISO, the more noise (grainy appearance) will show in the picture. The Anti-shake mode allows higher ISO settings than manually setting the ISO.



11-15 Picture quality

The next five options of the shooting guide all refer to the picture quality settings and which setting to use for different quality outputs. Each screen shows how to select the appropriate quality setting. The five quality guidelines are:

11 Shooting PC-editing quality Use the SHQ (Super High Quality) setting for the maximum available resolution with minimal image compression. This gives high-quality images suitable for image manipulation using a PC.

12 Shooting large-print quality Use SHQ to gain maximum quality images suitable for big enlargements.

13 Shooting normal quality Use HQ (High Quality) for normal quality images. The resolution will still be the best available from the camera, but the JPEG compression will be slightly higher, allowing more pictures to fit on your memory card.

14 Shooting L/postcard quality For large postcard-sized prints SQ1 (Standard Quality) is sufficient, as it will allow many more photos on your memory card. In the quality setting menu you can set three different resolution levels for the SQ1 mode. For more information on each setting, highlight the quality setting on the menu and then press GUIDE; the display will show information including the resolution, image size in megapixels, JPEG compression ratio and the file size on the memory card. Remember that when using the Anti-shake mode or high ISO values the resolution is limited to a maximum of 2048 x 1536.

15 Shooting web/email quality For low-resolution images suitable for web sites and emailing choose the SQ2 setting. On the lowest resolution setting (640 x 480) the file will be approx. 0.2Mb, ideal for internet transmission. There are four resolution settings available for the SQ2 setting.