Night Photography Basics

Exposure, noise, and composition after dark

Elena Kowalski

Evening Photography Club

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Overview

Exposure at night

Gear comparison

Wrap-up

The exposure triangle in the dark

- Wide aperture ($f/1.8$–$f/2.8$) to gather more light
- Longer shutter speeds, watch for star trails above 20s
- Higher ISO trades noise for a usable frame

Common lens choices

Lens	Max aperture	Best for
14mm prime	f/1.8	Wide milky way shots
24-70mm zoom	f/2.8	Flexible framing
50mm prime	f/1.4	Low-light portraits

Two columns

Do

- Use a sturdy tripod
- Shoot RAW for noise recovery

Avoid

- Handheld shots below 1/30s
- In-camera long-exposure NR on star fields

Before your next shoot

1. Check the moon phase and light pollution map
2. Bring a spare battery — cold drains them fast