

quick! ...the sky is falling

GRADUATED NEUTRAL DENSITY FILTERS



f14, 1/6sec, ISO 100

The image on the left shows what would have normally been captured by the camera. After metering for the sky and ground, there was a difference of just over 2 stops. For this image I used a combination of a 0.6 (2stop) and 0.3 (1stop) filters. This gave me more control and balanced out the sky and ground perfectly.



f14, 1/6sec, ISO 100, 0.3+0.6 ND Grad Filter

People often ask me, Do you use filters? and if so, what type? The answer is yes I do, but I am very careful in the choice of filters I use. I want to utilise filters that won't artificially enhance the image or create something that just isn't there. Therefore, I limit myself to using just two types of filters, namely a Neutral Density Filter and a Graduated Neutral Density Filter or NDGrads as they are more commonly known as.

Both filters do the same job of reducing the amount of light entering the lens but NDGrads have the advantage of limiting only a portion of the light. In simple terms, an NDGrad is a filter where one half is darker than the other.

These filters come in various strengths usually 1,2 and 3 stops.

Ireland is a country where clear blue skies are the exception rather than the norm and NDGrads can be the photographers best friend. The main reason for using NDGrads is to balance the exposure difference between the sky and ground. In order to do this effectively your camera should be set to manual. To determine what strength of filter to use, firstly, take a meter reading for the sky and then one for the ground (I tend not to use spot metering for this). The difference between these two readings will indicate what strength of filter to use.

what do I use



I use Lee Filters, They give faithful colour reproduction and have a wide range of filters and accessories to choose from.

www.leefilters.com

...don't Panic!!

Software has come along way in recent years and if you find your self caught without a filter, just bracket the exposure. You'll have more work to do later on the computer, but you can achieve similar results and in some cases even better.

recommended accessories



Lens Cloth

Gets rid of finger prints, smears and raindrops quickly and easily.

www.cameraclean.co.uk



Air Blower

When dirt is just stubborn.

www.giottos.com



Starter Kits

An ideal kit to get you started.

www.leefilters.com



An Crann Sceirdiúil The Windswept Tree

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