

The
3 Digital
Photography

The step-by-step secrets for how to
make your photos look like the pros! **Book**



Scott Kelby

Author of *The Digital Photography Book, volume 1*,
the best-selling digital photography book of all time!

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*For my in-house editor Kim Doty.
One of the best things that ever
happened to my books is you.*

Acknowledgments

Although only one name appears on the spine of this book, it takes a team of dedicated and talented people to pull a project like this together. I'm not only delighted to be working with them, but I also get the honor and privilege of thanking them here.

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Other Books By Scott Kelby

Scott Kelby's 7-Point System for Adobe Photoshop CS3

The Digital Photography Book, vols. 1 & 2

The Photoshop Elements Book for Digital Photographers

The Adobe Photoshop Lightroom Book for Digital Photographers

The Photoshop Book for Digital Photographers

The Photoshop Channels Book

Photoshop Down & Dirty Tricks

Photoshop Killer Tips

Photoshop Classic Effects

The iPod Book

InDesign Killer Tips

Mac OS X Leopard Killer Tips

The iPhone Book

About the Author



Scott Kelby

Scott is Editor, Publisher, and co-founder of *Photoshop User* magazine, Editor-in-Chief of *Layers* magazine (the how-to magazine for everything Adobe), and is the co-host of the weekly video podcasts *DTown TV* (the weekly show for Nikon dSLR shooters) and *Photoshop User TV*.

He is President of the National Association of Photoshop Professionals (NAPP), the trade association for Adobe® Photoshop® users, and he's President of the software training, education, and publishing firm Kelby Media Group.

Scott is a photographer, designer, and award-winning author of more than 50 books, including *The Digital Photography Book*, volumes 1 and 2, *The Adobe Photoshop Book for Digital Photographers*, *Photoshop Down & Dirty Tricks*, *The Adobe Photoshop Lightroom Book for Digital Photographers*, *Photoshop Classic Effects*, *The iPod Book*, and *The iPhone Book*.

For five years straight, Scott has been honored with the distinction of being the world's #1 best-selling author of all computer and technology books, across all categories. His books have been translated into dozens of different languages, including Chinese, Russian, Spanish, Korean, Polish, Taiwanese, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Dutch, Swedish, Turkish, and Portuguese, among others, and he is a recipient of the prestigious Benjamin Franklin Award.

Scott is Training Director for the Adobe Photoshop Seminar Tour, and Conference Technical Chair for the Photoshop World Conference & Expo. He's featured in a series of training DVDs and online courses, and has been training photographers and Adobe Photoshop users since 1993.

For more information on Scott and his photography, visit his daily blog at www.scottkelby.com

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SHUTTER SPEED: 1/10 SEC

F-STOP: F/3.5

ISO: 800

FOCAL LENGTH: 18mm

PHOTOGRAPHER: SCOTT KELBY

Chapter One

Using Flash Like a Pro, Part 2

Picking Right Up Where the Last Book Left Off



I know what you're thinking: "If this is Part 2, where is Part 1?" Well, Part 1 is actually Chapter One back in volume 2. "Wait a darn minute—you're pulling that old 'bait and switch' scam, right?" No, a bait-and-switch scam is where you see an advertisement for a washer and dryer for a really low price (the bait), but then you go to the store and they tell you it's sold out, and then they try to talk you into buying a more expensive washer and dryer that they have in stock (that's the switch). My scam is totally different: (1) This book isn't about washers or dryers, and (2) I didn't offer a cheaper book, and then try to trick you into buying a more expensive book. Instead, my scam is called a "jump back," where I'm trying to get you to buy more books. Here's how it works: You've already bought volume 3 (the book you're holding in your hands right now), but on the first page of the book (this page), you realize that you should have bought volume 2 first, because it had a chapter with the most essential stuff about wireless flash. That way, you'd be ready for the stuff in this chapter, which is what people who read volume 2 told me they wanted to learn about next. So now, you have to "jump back" in your car (get it?) and head to the bookstore to buy volume 2. But, then, once you're home and you start reading volume 2, you soon realize that I assume if you're reading volume 2 that you have already read volume 1, so I skip over stuff that I figure you already learned in volume 1. Now you have to "jump back" in the car again and go buy volume 1, as well. It's a classic jump-back scam, but of course I would never admit that, especially here in the book. The whole thing is like the hit TV show *Lost*. If you didn't start watching it until Season 3, you'd realize it was aptly named.

9 Things You'll Wish You Had Known...



(1) You don't have to read this part. That's because I created a video that explains how to get the most out of this book. It's really short and to the point, but I promise you it will make using and learning from this book much more enjoyable (plus, then you can skip reading this section, because the video covers it all). You can find the video at www.kelbytraining.com/books/digphotogv3.

(2) Here's how this book works: Basically, it's you and me together at a shoot, and I'm giving you the same tips, the same advice, and sharing the same techniques I've learned over the years from some of the top working pros. But when I'm with a friend, I skip all the technical stuff. So, for example, if you turned to me and said, "Hey Scott, I want the light to look really soft and flattering. How far back should I put this softbox?" I wouldn't give you a lecture about lighting ratios or flash modifiers. In real life, I'd just turn to you and say, "Move it in as close as you can to your subject, without it actually showing up in the shot. The closer you get, the softer and more wrapping the light gets." I'd tell you short, and right to the point. Like that. So that's what I do here.

(3) This picks up right where volume 2 left off, and this stuff in this book is what people who bought volume 2 told me they wanted to learn next. So, for example, in the chapter on wireless flash, I don't show you how to set up your flash to be wireless, because all that type of stuff was already covered in the flash chapter in volume 2. Instead, it picks up right after that, with all new stuff. Now, should you have volumes 1 and 2 before...

...Before Reading This Book!



...you read this book? It's not absolutely necessary, but it certainly wouldn't bother me one bit if you did (like how I phrased that? A very subtle, soft-sell approach. Compelling, but yet not overbearing). All joking aside, if you're into off-camera flash or studio lighting, it is helpful to have read at least volume 2, because those chapters in this book figure you already learned the basics in volume 2.

(4) Sometimes you have to buy stuff. This is not a book to sell you stuff, but before you move forward, understand that to get pro results, sometimes you have to use some accessories that the pros use. I don't get a kickback or promo fee from any companies whose products I recommend. I'm just giving you the exact same advice I'd give a friend.

(5) Where do I find all this stuff? Since I didn't want to fill the book with a bunch of Web links (especially since webpages can change without notice), I put together a special page for you at my site with a link to any of the gear I mention here in the book. You can find this gear page at www.kelbytraining.com/books/vol3gear.

(6) The intro page at the beginning of each chapter is just designed to give you a quick mental break, and honestly, they have little to do with the chapter. In fact, they have little to do with anything, but writing these off-the-wall chapter intros is kind of a tradition of mine (I do this in all my books), so if you're one of those really "serious" types, please, I'm begging you—skip them, because they'll just get on your nerves.

That Was Only 6. Here Are the Last 3



(7) If you're shooting with a Sony or Olympus or a Sigma digital camera, don't let it throw you that a Nikon or Canon camera is pictured. Since most people are shooting with a Nikon or Canon, I usually show one or the other, but don't sweat it if you're not—most of the techniques in this book apply to any digital SLR camera, and many of the point-and-shoot digital cameras, as well.

(8) There are extra tips at the bottom of a lot of pages—sometimes they relate to the technique on that particular page, and sometimes I just had a tip and needed to fit it somewhere, so I put it on that page. So, you should probably at least take a quick glance anytime you see a tip box on the bottom of a page—ya know, just in case.

(9) Keep this in mind: This is a “show me how to do it” book. I'm telling you these tips just like I'd tell a shooting buddy, and that means oftentimes it's just which button to push, which setting to change, where to put the light, and not a whole lot of reasons why. I figure that once you start getting amazing results from your camera, you'll go out and buy one of those “tell me all about it” digital camera or lighting books. I do truly hope this book ignites your passion for photography by helping you get the kind of results you always hoped you'd get from your digital photography. Now, pack up your gear, it's time to head out for our first shoot.

Soft Light on Location (the Budget Way)



Back in *The Digital Photography Book*, volume 2, I went into great detail about how important it is to diffuse and soften the light from your small flash, so you get professional looking results. Although I usually have you firing through diffusers, here's another way to get the job done, which is particularly handy for people shooting without an assistant or anyone who can help wrangle the gear during the shoot: use a shoot-through umbrella setup. Now, before I get into this, I want to say up front that I just flat-out don't like reflective umbrellas, where you aim the umbrella and flash away from your subject, then the light from your flash hits the inside of the umbrella and travels back toward your subject like a lighting grenade. Yeech! However, in this case, you're actually aiming the flash at your subject, and you're using a special translucent shoot-through umbrella that's designed to let you fire your small flash directly through it and right at your subject, giving you a much more concentrated beam than a reflective umbrella does. The advantages are: (1) you can get softer wraparound light with it because you can put the umbrella very close to your subject, (2) it's an umbrella, so it's very compact, (3) you can control how large your light source actually is (see the next page), and (4) it's incredibly inexpensive for a pro setup (yes, a lot of working pros use a similar setup). To make this all work, you need three things (besides your flash unit, of course): a shoot-through umbrella (I use a Westcott 43" Optical White Satin Collapsible shoot-through umbrella, which sells for around \$20); a tilting umbrella bracket, with a flash shoe to support the flash and a slot for the umbrella to slide through (I use a LumoPro LP633 Umbrella Swivel with Flash Shoe Adapter which sells for around \$18); and a lightweight light stand (I use a Manfrotto lightweight 6'2" Nano Stand—around \$60). So, the whole setup is just under \$100.

Controlling Softness with an Umbrella



If you're using a shoot-through umbrella, you have to decide how soft you want the light to be that comes through that umbrella. Well, this is partially controlled by how far back you place the flash from the inside of the umbrella. I usually want really soft light for shooting things like brides, and portraits of families, etc., so I slide the umbrella out around two feet from the flash. That way, the light from the flash fills as much of the umbrella as possible, making my light source bigger, which makes my light softer (remember that from volume 2? The bigger the light source, the softer the light?). If you want sharper, edgier light, you know what to do—slide the umbrella in the adapter, so it's much closer to the flash. Now the flash has much less room to spread, and your light will be smaller, more direct, and less soft.

Get More Control Using a Portable Softbox



If you've got a few more bucks to spend, then you can move up to a small softbox designed for off-camera flash. I think there are two big advantages to using this over a shoot-through umbrella: (1) The light is more contained and directional than with a shoot-through umbrella, so it's easier to get more dramatic light, since it only goes where you aim it. (2) They don't seem to blow over as easy when using them outdoors. This is bigger than it sounds, because umbrellas catch the wind like you can't believe, and even the slightest wind can send the whole thing (umbrella, stand, and your flash) crashing over. The small-flash softbox I use is the Lastolite Ezybox. I like that it's so small and portable—it collapses down to a small round shape (like a reflector)—and it sets up without having to use steel rods, so it only takes two minutes. Plus, I love the quality of its soft, directional light. There are different sizes, but I use the 24x24" size.

Hand-Holding an Ezybox

You don't have to use a light stand to hold your flash and Ezybox. You can have a friend (or a bridesmaid, or an assistant, etc.) hold them using a special accessory, which is a small (24" tall), lightweight, hand-held stand with a handle on the bottom that lets your Ezybox pretty much go anywhere your friend can go, turning your friend into what has become known in flash circles as a VAL (the acronym for a voice-activated light stand).

What Your Flash's Groups Are For



If you want to control your wireless flashes independently of each other, then you need groups. For example, let's say that you have one flash off to the left of your subject, and one flash behind the subject lighting a white seamless background. You'd want to be able to control the power of each flash individually, so if the background flash is too bright, you can turn it down without having the front flash power down, as well. You do that by assigning one flash to Group A, then the other flash (the background flash) to Group B. Now you can control the power of each one individually, without disturbing the other. Also, you can have more than one flash in each group. So, if you have two flashes on the background (one lighting the left side; one lighting the right), and you put them both on Group B, they would move up/down in power together, but your front flash (which is still on Group A) would be unaffected. Sweet! You assign a flash to a particular group right on the flash unit itself.

What Your Flash's Channels Are For



As long as you're by yourself, just you and your flash, things are good. But what happens if you're hired to shoot an event, like a wedding for example, and you have a second (or third) photographer shooting along with you (it's more and more common to have a second shooter at a wedding—especially weddings in Texas, where the ceremony is held on a grassy knoll. Sorry, that was lame)? The problem you'd probably face is that sometimes the second shooter's camera would trigger and fire your flash (and vice versa). That's why your flash has different channels. At the beginning of the wedding, you'd set your flash to Channel 1, and you'd tell your second shooter to set their flash to Channel 2. That way, your camera will only trigger your flash, and theirs will only trigger their flash. By the way, you have to set the channel in two places: (1) on the wireless flash unit itself, and (2) on whatever you're using to trigger your flash. For example, if you're shooting Nikon and the second shooter is using their camera's built-in Commander unit to control their wireless flash, you'd need to have them set their Commander to Channel 2. If you're shooting Canon, then you're probably using another flash mounted on your camera's hot shoe as your master flash, and in that case, you'd set that flash to Channel 2. If all of this "master" and "wireless" stuff sounds confusing, then you now know why I said you really need to read volume 2 of this book first, because it covers all the basics of wireless flash. Then all this would make more sense (and it would sell another book, which isn't a bad thing).

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