

10 HOT TIPS: COLD WEATHER PHOTOGRAPHY

By Linda Finstad

Whether you enjoy landscapes or action shots there is a virtual winter wonderland of picture taking opportunities waiting just outside your door. From snowball fights to sled races, winter time is here and the fun is just beginning.

Horses are especially fun to photograph in the winter **NATURAL FRAMING**.



However, there are a few things you need to watch out for as you head outside:

1. Keep your equipment dry. Tuck the camera inside your jacket next to your body to prevent it from locking up in cold temperatures, and watch for lens fog.
2. Carry extra batteries. The cold temperatures cause the camera to use much more battery power than normal and your batteries will not last as long. It is better to start out with fresh batteries and carry along an extra set just to be on the safe side. If you aren't using the camera, remove the batteries and place them in a pocket where they will keep warm until you are ready to start shooting.

EXPOSURE GUIDE

3. It is best to overexpose snow pictures by one or two stops because the camera's meter reads the scene and tries to render it as 18% gray. You want white snow, not gray snow so in order to place the snow on the correct tonal range, you would over expose or open up one or two stops, letting in more light.



4. When taking pictures of people in a snowy scene, realize that you will have to choose which is more important the snow or the person. If you overexpose the scene in order to render the snow accurately, the person's face will be overexposed as well. The trick here is to get very close to the person and take a reading directly on the person's face, set the exposure for that reading. Now no matter where you choose to take the picture from, the expose will be correct for the person's face.
5. On a very sunny day, try a polarizer to help cut the glare from the snow. Remember when using a polarizer under normal conditions it may be necessary to open up an additional stop or two depending on the meter reading and light conditions. For bright sunny snow pictures, place the polarizer on the lens and take an exposure reading with through-the-lens metering. That exposure reading is correct for the polarizer under the lighting conditions. Now you have to open up a stop or two in order to render the snow accurately.
6. Another fun thing to try is a soft focus filter, or you can make your own by stretching a piece of nylon stocking over the lens. The effect is a dreamy ethereal look to the photo.
7. Try using slow shutter speeds to capture the action of a snowball fight or a snowball rolling down hill. Panning works great as well. Slow shutter speeds works great with a row of little ones making snow angels. Their legs and arms will be blurred by the action. Try it for some winter fun and great practice.
8. Early morning frost hanging in the trees creates the most spectacular scenes of all and capturing the beauty is easier than you think. Try to shoot on a clear crisp day when the sun first begins to rise. As the sun shines through the ice it creates dazzling sparkles.
9. No one likes ice storms, except maybe a photographer. Postcard perfect images of frozen trees abound everywhere after an ice storm. And don't forget about the icicles hanging down everywhere like glimmering prisms reflecting light in beautiful rainbow patterns. Bundle up warm and get out and enjoy the wonders of nature in the winter.
10. Most important dress warm and have fun – take a flask of Hot Chocolate with you.

