

Aesthetics:

Originally the study of beautiful things. But currently aesthetics refers to the study or understanding of anything that is visually pleasing or "works" within the boundaries of the principles of art.

Acrylic paint:

A plastic, water soluble pigment used for painting.

Analogous colours:

Colours next to each other on the colour wheel.

Balance:

The art principle which refers to the arrangement of elements in an art work. Balance can be either formal symmetrical, informal asymmetrical or radial.

Calligraphy:

Literally means beautiful line. Typically refers to a type of writing that incorporates the use of a wide pen nib.

Canvas:

Coarse cloth or heavy fabric that must be stretched and primed to use for painting, particularly for oil paintings.

Ceramic:

Clay objects that have been fired twice, the second time with a glaze.

Chalk:

Soft limestone, sometimes used as a drawing material or mixed to make pastels and other crayons.

Charcoal:

A drawing material made from charred wood.

Chiaroscuro:

Italian word for "light-shade". The use and balance of light and shade in a painting, and in particular the use of strong contrast.

Clay:

A natural, moist earth substance used in making bricks, tile, pottery and ceramic sculpture.

Collagraph:

A print made from a collage of assorted pasted materials such as papers, cardboards, string etc.

Collage:

An arrangement of shapes adhered to a background.

Colour:

An element of art that refers to "hue".

Colour wheel:

The organization of colours on a wheel. Used to help understand colour schemes.

Complimentary colours:

Colours opposite each other on the colour wheel

Composition:

The arrangement of the parts of a work of art.

Computer art:

Art made with the use of a computer program.

Design:

From the Italian word meaning "drawing" which also implied planning and composing.

Diptych:

Painting, usually an altarpiece, made up of hinged panels.

Drawing:

Representations on a flat surface usually made with pen, pencil, crayon, chalk or paint with an emphasis on line.

Emphasis:

A principle in art where important elements and ideas are emphasized via composition.

Firing:

The process of baking clay in a kiln or banked fire outside (such as raku firing). This process hardens the clay and makes it very permanent.

Figurative:

Artwork based on the human form.

Fine art:

A term used to describe work that is without any particular function. Typically paintings, sculpture, drawings and prints.

Fixative:

Varnish sprayed or painted onto a surface to prevent smudging or smearing. Usually on a charcoal or chalk pastel work.

Foreshortening:

A rule in perspective to create the illusion of coming forward or receding into space.

Form:

An element of art focused on all three dimensions (height, width and depth).

Gesso:

A surface preparation or primer made of chalk or gypsum for tempura or oil paintings that is painted onto the picture surface.

Glaze:

A transparent or semi-transparent coating of a colour or stain used over oil paintings, plaster sculpture or ceramics.

Gouache:

A watercolour paint mixed with white pigments making it more opaque and giving it more weight and body.
drawing.

Hue:

The technical reference to colour.

Illustration:

An image that accompanies written text and aids in interpreting it.

Kiln:

A large "oven" used for firing clay work.

Line:

An element of art used in drawing, painting and sculpture. A line is the path of a moving point.

Marquette:

French word for "small model". Used particularly by sculptors as a "sketch" of their work.

Medium:

The process or material used in a work of art.

Modelling:

Representation, or making sculptural, three-dimensional forms, usually with clay or wax. Also, making two-dimensional surfaces look three-dimensional, by use of light and shade, colour and form.

Monochrome:

Light and dark tones of a singular colour.

Oil paint:

Paint made by mixing ground pigment with oil (usually linseed oil) as a binder.

Oil pastel:

Oil based crayons.

Palette:

The surface used to dispense and mix paint on.

Paper Mache:

Art works made with newspaper strips that have been moistened with wallpaper paste or laundry starch.

Pattern:

Design, motif or symbol repeated over and over.

Perspective:

The illusion of a three-dimensional space on a two-dimensional surface through the use of vanishing point, converging lines and diminishing sizes of objects.

Portraiture:

Painting or sculpture representing the likeness of a person.

Primary colours:

The basic colours that can be used to mix other colours. The primary colours are red, yellow and blue.

Scoring:

A technique used in preparation for cementing two pieces of clay together using a series of incised lines. Also describes a process for indentation and curved line paper sculpture and folding.

Secondary colours:

Colours made by mixing two primary colours. Orange, green and purple.

Shade:

Refers to the darker values of a colour.

Shape:

The element of art that describes a two-dimensional area (height and width).

Still life:

Inanimate object(s) represented in a drawing, painting or collage.

Texture:

The quality of a surface. One of the seven elements of art.

Tint:

A hue mixed with white to create lighter values.

Photomontage:

Using cut photographs to create a work of art.

Print:

The process of making art from an incised surface that has been inked and pressed on an appropriate surface such as paper.

Relief:

A projection from a surface. A low relief, such as a coin, is called bas relief.

Sketch:

Preliminary or rough draft, typically made with pencil, crayon, pen, brush or pastel.

Tone:

The amount of light or shade in a colour. The value range in a painting.

Watercolours:

Pigment with a water soluble binder. Available in semi-moist cakes or tubes.

Aperture: Simply it is the size of the opening of the lens. This can determine the exposure of an image and is measured in f-stops.

AE: Automatic Exposure.

Ambient light: Is the light that is already present in the scene you are shooting. It can also be known as 'natural light' and is commonly the name for the light.

Aperture Priority Mode: Also abbreviated to A or AV on your camera, Aperture Priority Mode is the setting on your camera that will control the f-number while the camera selects a shutter speed to match the light conditions. Therefore this is a semi-automatic mode and is a mode most photographers use.

Auto-Bracketing: Is the technique where the camera takes 3 or 5 images in a row all at different exposures. Also known as bracketing, it is what photographers use for their HDR images.

B&W: Black and white.

Bokeh: Is produced by blurring the background of an image and is popular in portraits as it forces you to focus on the subject.

BULB: Normally found in the Manual Mode setting. Bulb mode means the camera will keep taking an image until you tell it to stop, usually used for long exposures. This can be by holding your finger over the button or using a remote for your camera.

Burning: Decreases the exposure of an area within your photo. This technique is used within Photoshop and darkroom prints. It's also the opposite of dodging where it increases the exposure of the selected areas.

Camera Angle: Is the specific location at which the camera is located so it can take the shot.

Camera Obscura: Is a technique where light from a scene outside is projected onto a wall or canvas. This then allows the artist to trace the image with a high amount of accuracy.

Camera Raw: Also known as RAW, is an image file that contains a minimal amount of processed data from the scene. Many photographers favour this image format over JPEG as it allows more control at the editing stage.

Cloning: Is a digital processing tool that allows you to copy part of an image to another part. This means you can remove part of an image that is unwanted.

Composition: Is the placement of relative subjects and elements within an image or scene to create a pleasing feel.

Contact Sheet: Used primarily in film cameras, is a sheet of all the frames and is used as a proof print. However, it is now also used with digital images to showcase work to a client from the shoot.

Contrast: Is the difference between the light and dark areas within your images. High contrast means the blacks are darker and whites are brighter, vice versa.

Cropping: When you make an image smaller by removing the outer parts it is referred to as cropping.

Depth of Field: Abbreviated to DOF, is the distance between the closest and farthest subjects in a scene that look noticeably sharp in an image.

Double-Exposure: Superimposing two or more images on top of each other creating a unique image.

DSLR: Digital Single-Lens Reflex

Exposure: Is the amount of light entering the camera's sensor. Too much light and the image is overexposed and not enough light and it's underexposed.

Exposure Compensation: Normally the +/- button on the camera and is where the photographer can control whether you want the image over or underexposed. This can help with sunsets or photographing snow where you want to underexpose and overexpose respectively.

f-Stop: Or f-number is the aperture size or aperture stop in a number that controls the size of the lens opening. Therefore controlling the amount of light entering the camera.

Feathering: A digital editing technique, blurring and smoothing out edges within the image.

Histogram: Is a graph that shows the tonal values within the image, allowing the photographer to pick out which areas are too dark and too bright.

ISO: The sensitivity of a camera sensor is determined by the camera's ISO setting. Lower ISO settings are usually used for bright settings and higher ISO's are used in darker surroundings.

JPEG: An image format (Joint Photographic Experts Group) and is the most common default setting for cameras and phones.

Macro: Photographing objects that are extremely small. Normally macro photographers would use a lens with a 1:1 ratio, which is the size of the subject on the sensor.

Midtone: Or middle tone, describes the middle tones between two colours. For example, grey is the midtone of black and white.

Monochrome: Is defined as an image that is made up of one hue or colour. Most black and white images are made up of black, white and grey.

ND: Neutral Density.

Panning: Moving the camera, usually on a tripod, with a long shutter speed to blur the background.

Rule of Thirds: A compositional technique where you place the main subject or horizon off from the centre. If you imagine a 3x3 grid placed over the image you can place the subjects on the intersecting points which create a more pleasing image

Saturation: Can provide a colour boost to your image by allowing you to change selective colours within the image. Monochrome images are 100% desaturated as there is no colour.

Sharpening: Sharpening defines the edges within an image and can be used to correct the blur within the image.

Shutter Priority: Sometimes S or SV on your camera dial is the mode for which you can change the shutter speed, as the camera matches the correct aperture for the right exposure.

Shutter Speed: The length of time the camera shutter is open for, therefore controlling the amount of time light is entering the camera's sensor. Long exposures use longer shutter speeds and sport/action photographers use quick shutter speeds to freeze the subject.

Telephoto Lens: Long lenses, typically used by wildlife and sports photographers.

Time Lapse Photography: Is a type of photography where a camera captures many images over a set amount of time, to create a video where time is moving faster.

Ultraviolet filter: Protects your camera lens from UV light and scratches.

Viewfinder: The photographer looks through the camera's viewfinder to focus and frame the shot.

Vignetting: Is common in camera lenses and means the darkening of the image corners compared to the centre.

VR: Vibration Reduction, image stabilization technology used within lenses.

Warm Colours: Normally associated with sunsets and is the reds and yellows within the image.

Watermark: Is typically the photographer's logo or name imprinted onto an image to protect the photographer's image.

White Balance: (WB) is used to regulate colours to match the actual light in the scene from fluorescent lighting, sunlight and bulbs and takes into account the colour temperature within the image.

Wide-Angle Lens: The focal length of a lens which is classically smaller than a normal lens, it is normally used by landscape photographers to capture wide scenes.