

Through The Lens

*A guide to digital photography for computer enthusiasts.
After the click of your camera, you're only half done!*

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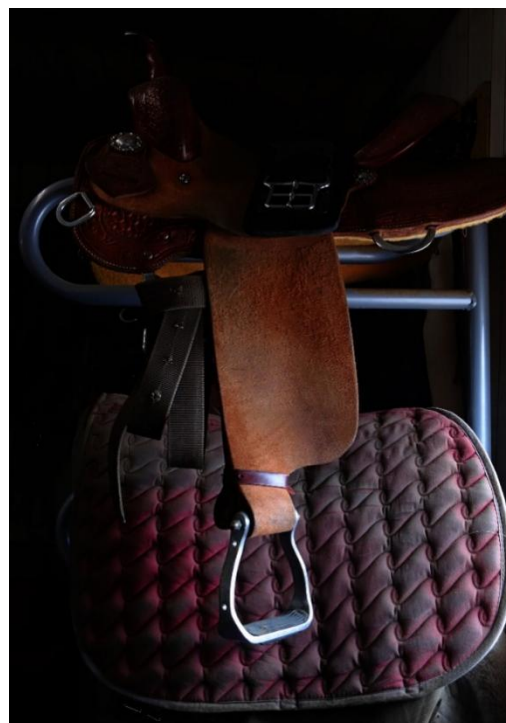
High/low key

by Lynda Buske

Whether intentionally or by mistake, sometimes our images come out a little too dark or a little too light in certain sections. If you notice this on your camera's playback screen and you don't wish to have this effect, you can raise or lower the exposure via the EV (+/-) adjust button (<https://opcug.ca/Photography/GettingOffAuto.pdf>) and retake the photo. Or you can also adjust the exposure in certain areas of an image in post processing on your desktop with free editing software. (<https://opcug.ca/Photography/UsingMasksInPhotoEditingSoftware.pdf>)

If, however, you do want a high/low key image, you can set your EV adjust accordingly. For a high-key image, try setting it between +1 and +2 and check the effect. If you want a low-key pic, set it between -1 and -2. If your camera allows, you can go beyond +/- 2. This feature is even commonly available when shooting with cell phones.

There are certain characteristics typical in high/low key images. Typically, low-key photographs are underlit and feature contrast and dark areas. The photographer may wish to light only specific areas in the frame. A low-key image can add mystery or suggest a dark/serious mood.



High-key images are the exact opposite of low-key ones. The photographer may want to purposely overexpose certain areas of a scene. High-key images are unusually bright with little or no dark shadows present. They can create an ethereal mood or a positive/upbeat look. With a young child, it can suggest innocence and purity because of the large areas of white.

