

LOCATIONZ course Module One

## Camera Gear | DSLRs

What cameras are suitable for landscape photography

### Essential Features in a DSLR:

The essential features to look out for are:

- **Mode dial** – this is marked with the shooting modes: A / AV (Aperture Priority), S / TV (Shutter Priority), M (Manual), B (Bulb).
- **Large sensor size** – 18 megapixels or more
- **Histogram** – to check the exposure before you click
- **Live View** – to frame your shots accurately
- **Shutter release cable port** – for long exposures
- **AF back button** – so you can focus without using the shutter button.

### Suggested Camera Models:

Entry-level Crop Sensor DSLRs with great value:

- Nikon D5600 – 24.2 megapixel
- Canon Rebel EOX T6i – 24.2 megapixel

Mid-Range Crop Sensor DSLRs include:

- Nikon D7500 = 20.9 megapixels
- Canon 80D = 24.2 megapixels



*If you are a semi-pro photographer; or if you're getting paid for your work, you should go full-frame.*

The most suitable Full Frame DSLRs are:

- Canon EOS 7D Mark II – 20.2 megapixel, but 10fps – great for action photography.
- Canon 6D Mark II = 26.2 megapixels – can create timelapses, dual pixel focussing.
- [Canon EOS 5D Mark III](#) = 22.3 megapixels – older workhorse, but many professionals use them (inc. Ray).
- [Canon EOS Mark IV](#) = 30.4 megapixels – 4K video (but cropped), dual pixel focussing.
- Canon EOS 5DS = 50.6 megapixels – what the famous landscapers use (inc. Andris Apse).
- Nikon D610 = 24.3 megapixels – lightest full-frame on the market.
- Nikon D750 = 24.3 megapixel – older, but many professionals use them.
- Nikon D810 = 36.3 megapixels – solid all-round DSLR with huge mega-pixel count.
- Nikon D850 = 45.7 megapixels – very high specced camera, used by the pros. Features include: a tilting touch-screen LCD, excellent battery life, focus stacking, time lapse functions and an AF auto fine tune mode for calibrating your lenses.
- Sony Alpha A7R III = 42.2 megapixels – videographers are selling their Nikons and Canons for this. Features include: weather-sealed, robust construction; tilting touchscreen, in-body 5-axis stabilization; pixel shift mode for super high-resolution files. Cons: Battery life isn't up there with the Nikon D850.



## Camera Gear | Lenses

### What lenses you need for landscape photography

#### Essential features in a lens:

While a **prime lens** has less moving parts, and gives premium quality, they are expensive. I recommend you invest in some quality **telezoom lenses**. Primarily a **wide-angle zoom**, plus a **telephoto zoom lens** – this will cover most of the focal range you need, and be suitable for portraits and wildlife too.

For full-frame DSLRs, a 16mm or 17mm wide angle is perfect for big landscapes. Because of the crop factor on APS-C cameras, this equates to about 24mm. For these DSLRs, I suggest buying a 10-20mm super-wide angle lens. Before purchasing, ensure that the lens fits your camera mount! Usually, you can fit a pro-level, 'full-frame' lens onto an APS-C camera.

#### The essential features to look out for are:

- Sharpness – lenses have a 'sweet spot' around the mid-aperture range. You won't need 'fast' lenses (f/1.8).
- Aperture Range – for landscapes you'll be shooting f/8 to f/22 to get a large depth of field.
- IS = Image Stabilisation; VR = Vibration Reduction – this is for shooting hand-held.
- Manual Focus button

#### Suggested lenses:

##### APS-C lenses:

- Sigma 18-50mm f/2.8
- Canon 15-85mm f/3.5-5.6
- Canon 10-22mm f/3.5 – 4.5 USM
- Nikon 12-24mm f/4 G
- Nikon 10-24mm f/3.5-4.5 G
- Sigma 10-20mm f/3.5 EX DC HSM

##### Full-Frame lenses:

- [Canon 17-40mm f/4 L USM](#) (pictured)
- Canon 16-35mm f/2.8 L Mk2
- [Canon 70-200mm f/4 L IS USM](#) (pictured)
- Nikon 14-24mm f/3.5-4.5 G
- Nikon 16-35mm f/4
- Nikkor 70-200mm f/4G VR



## Camera Gear | Tripods

### What stabilisation you need for landscape photography

#### Why you need a tripod:

If you're serious about photographing the landscape, you need to invest in a sturdy tripod. Period. In low-light situations, you won't be able to hold your camera still at shutter speeds slower than 1/60th of a second. That's during the golden hour and blue hour - the best times to shoot landscapes!

Lock your DSLR on a tripod because:

- It avoids camera shake (i.e. blurry photos).
- You can accurately fine-tune each composition.
- It will slow you down; make you more intentional.
- It will free your hands, (e.g. to apply filters, or pick your nose)

#### Essential features in a tripod:

- Tall enough so you can stand up straight and view the LCD display - without bending down.
- Compact enough to fit on a daypack.
- Strong enough to withstand strong winds.
- Light enough to carry for hours - buy a Carbon Fibre model if you can afford it.
- Ball Head - quicker to use & more compact than video heads.
- The tripod head must be rated to hold the weight of a heavy DSLR.
- Bubble Level - important for creating panoramic stitches or filming video.

#### Suggested Tripods:

- [Manfrotto 190CX PRO3](#)
- Manfrotto 055 CXPRO4  
... these offer a compromise between weight and stability.
- Giottos Vitruvian VGRN8255
- Benro TMA 28A Mach 3 (aluminium)
- Benro TMA 38CL Mach3 Long series (carbon fibre)

#### Suggested Ball Heads:

- [Manfrotto 498RC2 or 496RC2](#) (pictured below right)
- Giottos MH1312-652
- Giottos MH5400-652
- Benro B3 (pictured below)



## Camera Gear | Filters

### What filters you need for landscape photography

#### Why you need filters:

Why waste money on filters, when you can do it all later during post? Good question!

Yes, you can add a ND Grad effect in Lightroom or Photoshop – that's true. And in Nik Effects, you can add a 'polarization' effect to enhance the blues and saturate your image. However, there are some things you cannot replicate on the computer, such as eliminating reflections or slowing down your shutter speed to blur clouds or moving water. It's better to get it right 'in camera.'

#### Types of filters:

- **UV** – ultra violet filters are good to protect the lens. However, they can add lens flare and reduce image quality.
- **CPL** – the circular polarising filter is *the* most useful filter. It cuts through reflections, makes the sky a deeper blue, and saturates your scenes with colour.
- **ND** – Neutral Density filters allow for longer exposures, and are excellent for shooting waterfalls.
- **ND Grads** – these have a graduated vignette, perfect for holding back a bright sky, and taming the high dynamic range within a landscape. 'Hard' grads are better for seascapes with an obvious horizon, while 'Soft' grads are better for mountainous terrain, or when the horizon is not dead straight.
- **Reverse ND Grads** – brilliant for balancing the exposure of a glaring sunrise with the darker surroundings.

#### Filter Brands:

If you're starting out, try the plastic kits from **Cokin** (France). The **Cokin P series** is a good compromise between quality and cost.

The next level up is to buy the **Hi Tech filters** from Formatt in the UK. Their filter holders are aluminium while the actual filters are made from resin. While resin filters can cause colour casts in your images, they're more durable than glass. Consider the **85mm Master Kit**.

If you're a professional, you should be using 100mm glass filters from top brands like **Lee** (UK) or **NiSi** (China). Click on the blue buttons below to buy the **NiSi starter kit** that Ray Salisbury uses. Larger 100mm filters allow for wider angle shots, say, with a focal length of 16mm, without vignetting.



#### Suggest Filter kits from NiSi:

- **NiSi 70mm Filter System** – for lenses from 37mm–58mm including Compacts and small Mirrorless.
- **NiSi 100mm Filter System** – for lenses from 49mm–82mm including Mirrorless and DSLR cameras.
- **NiSi 150mm Filter System** – for lenses with a round front element or thread above 95mm. Perfect for wide angle lenses on DSLR and Mirrorless models.

Get NiSi Filter kits through Hot Pixels Photography

BUY IN NEW ZEALAND

BUY IN AUSTRALIA

BUY FROM AMAZON