

Off camera flash

Photography Lighting Techniques

Flash on the beach

In clear summer days, sun projects high-contrast light that does not help shooting pictures on swimming costumes, like in this post. Then, what do we call high contrast when we talk about lighting?

Sunlight is a high contrast light source that comes into contact with the earth from just one point, casting intense and defined shadows. Because of it's distance from our planet, its rays reach the surface of the earth in parallel.



Modelo [Gemma Cadenas](#)

<http://off-camera-flash.com/english/2012/02/flash-on-the-beach/>

High light contrast can be easily noticed in a shadow's outline. When this is harsh, and depending on the light incidence angle, it can enhance unwanted skin textures for this kind of assignments.

To lower the contrast, light needs to be more diffuse, coming from different angles or its source has to be bigger than the object that we want to light up. For this reason in cloudy days light is more diffuse ...but we wouldn't see our nice blue sky!



I placed a [translucent umbrella](#) between the sun and our model to increase the diffusion surface. However by using the umbrella as the only main light, we lost light intensity and resulted in a low contrast situation. Therefore, to correctly expose for the skin and the swimming costume, we had to overexpose but then the blue of the sky looked faded.





As noticed in the previous photograph, I used an umbrella to increase the size of the light source and to better control the flash light intensity. By doing this we gained more incidence angles on our model, less contrast and more control over light intensity.



Another advantage of having lowered the flash light intensity by using the umbrella is that we could also apply a ¼ CTO (orange color temperature) gelatin. It gave a warm look to the model skin but did not affect the sky color.



And the sun begins to set ...

When the sun was setting, we had the opposite problem and now we had a low contrast situation because the sky barely illuminated our set.

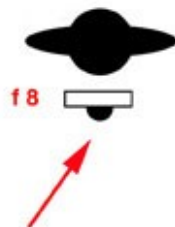
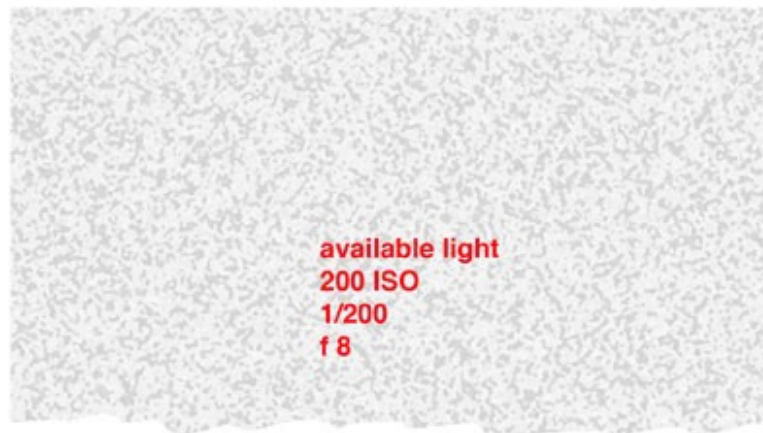


Now in this example we wanted to increase the contrast and to add slight warm color dominance. We moved the umbrella further away from the model to make our light source “smaller” and consequently gaining contrast. This time we used another correction gelatin $\frac{1}{2}$ CTO. Easy!



The flash utilized in these take was a Metz 32 CT3 of the 80´ s and one of [my DIY batteries](#).

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