

Top 10 Tips for Bird Photography

There are so many passionate bird photographers out there trying their best capture pin sharp avian portraits. We've created a guide of the top 10 tips that you'll need to know so you don't get in a flap!



Tip 1

Don't get too close to the bird with the camera as they may decide to attack it if they see it as a threat.

Instead use a zoom lens to keep your distance.

Tip 2

Invest in a fast Mirrorless or DSLR camera and one or more telephoto lenses. We would recommend a camera that can handle at least 1/2000th of a second shutter speed with 6 to 9 fps (frames per second).



Tip 3

If you are shooting hand held, you will need to select a shutter speed that is equal to or a higher value than your lenses focal length, i.e. shooting at 300mm then shutter speed needs to be 1/300th or faster, and 1/500th for lens around 500mm. This will help avoid motion blur in the image.

Tip 4

If the bird is watching your movements, stop, and wait for them to be distracted before you take another step.

Tip 5

Choose Aperture Priority and **not** Shutter Priority, when photographing birds outdoors. If we are shooting at high shutter speeds, most likely the aperture will be always set to wide open which will always lose some detail in the final image, due the decreasing focus area.

Worst of all, if the lighting conditions change quickly, the image might come out underexposed – and you might miss the opportunity.



Tip 6

The best time to photograph birds is either during the early morning or late afternoon.

Early morning is typically the best for bird photography, because birds are actively looking for food for themselves and their youngsters.



Aim to wear muted and dark clothes. Try and blend in to the environment – throw on a bit of camouflage if you've got it. Bright clothes are a NO! It will instantly make you stand out to a bird.

Tip 7

Tip 8

If your camera has an AF (auto focus) beep assist (when the camera locks on focus it makes a little noise to signal to the user) then turn it off.

The noise of the shutter will spook the bird so best to take a few shots at distance and more as you close in. Some mirrorless cameras feature a *leaf shutter* which is silent when firing – perfect!



Tip 9

Always focus on the nearest (to the camera) eye of the bird.

It is acceptable to have a blurred tail or other parts of the bird, but at least one eye always needs to be sharp.

For birds in flight, focus on the bird's head or chest.



Tip 10

Shoot lots of images, using burst or continuous mode to help you to freeze moments of take-off or shaking water off wings. These actions are fast moving, don't miss the opportunity.



If you want to find out more about photographing birds, then visit [iPhotography](https://www.iphotographycourse.com/) and join our incredible and comprehensive portrait course. We've got a massive animals module covering more great ideas and tips like these for birds and other wildlife

<https://www.iphotographycourse.com/>