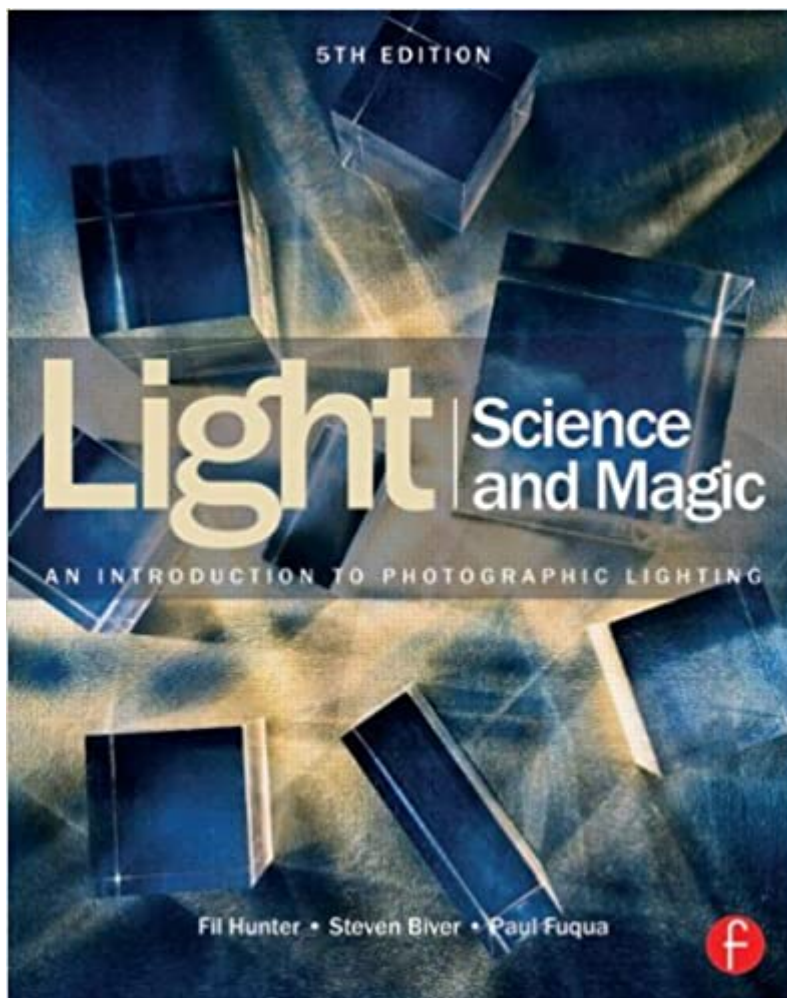




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Light Science & Magic: An Introduction To Photographic Lighting



Synopsis

Photographic lighting is a topic that will never go out of style, no matter how sophisticated cameras and other technology get. Even with the most high-tech gear, photographers still need to put a lot of thought and vision into lighting their photographs in order to get great results. This key skill has the power to dramatically and quickly improve photographs. *Light Science and Magic* provides you with a comprehensive theory of the nature and principles of light, with examples and instructions for practical application. Featuring photographs, diagrams, and step-by-step instructions, this book speaks to photographers of varying levels. It provides invaluable information on how to light the most difficult subjects, such as surfaces, metal, glass, liquids, extremes (black-on-black and white-on-white), and portraits. This new edition includes: All new chapter titled "Setting Up Your New Studio" A re-vamped and expanded chapter 8 now titled "Making Portraits" New appendix of reliable photo gear sources Over 100 new photographs and informational sidebars Updated information about advances in flash equipment, LED panels and fluorescent lights Styles of lighting continue to change, but the nature of light will always remain the same. Once photographers understand the basic physics of lighting, they can apply that knowledge to a broad range of photographic styles.

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Customer Reviews

"This book offers a set of tools that a photographer can use to promote their own sense of art and beauty. While your photographs reflect your individual taste and vision, the tools in this book give

you options to highlight or diminish the elements in the photograph and as a result, lift those images to something more, something even better. The authors have done an amazing job by writing about a difficult subject in an easy style that allows the reader to fully understand the concepts of lighting and how it will shape your images." - Apogee Photo Magazine

Fil Hunter was a highly respected commercial photographer specializing in still life and special effects photographs for advertising and editorial illustration. During a career spanning over three decades, he worked for such clients as America Online, US News, Time-Life Books, Life Magazine (27 covers), the National Science Foundation, and National Geographic. He taught photography at the university level and served as technical consultant on a number of photographic publications. Mr. Hunter won the Virginia Professional Photographer's Grand Photographic Award three times. Steven Biver has over twenty years of experience as a commercial photographer specializing in portraits, still life, photomontage, and digital manipulation. His client list includes Johnson & Johnson, USDA, William & Mary College, Conde Nast, and IBM. He has been honored with awards from Communication Arts, Graphis, HOW Magazine, and Adobe, who have also included his work on a Photoshop 'extras' disc to inspire other photographers. He is also the co-author of FACES: Photography and The Art of Portraiture, another Focal Press publication. Paul Fuqua has worked as an editorial and wildlife photographer for more than thirty-five years. He started his own production company in 1970 and is dedicated to teaching through the use of visuals. Paul has written and produced educational and training material in a variety of fields including law, public safety, history, science, and the environment. For the last ten years he has produced educational material dealing with the natural sciences and the need for global habitat stewardship. Paul is also a co-author of FACES: Photography and The Art of Portraiture for Focal Press.

I have been reading a lot of photography books of late, on average two a month for over a year, and they usually address different concerns. This one deals exclusively with lighting and takes the problem at the root. This is the only one I read so far that starts with the fundamentals of what is light and how it behaves, and leads the reader down the thought process required for proper illumination of any subject starting from first principles. Many other books deal with the pure portrait lighting (Master Lighting Guide for Portrait Photographers - comes to mind), only flash photography (Joe MacNally's excellent - Sketching Light) or lighting gear (Syl Arena's - Speedlites Handbook). "Light, Science and magic" is explicitly positioned as a textbook on lighting and only lighting. The reader is supposed to know his or her camera and how to get a proper exposure. There

are a few useful hints geared towards digital photographers for instance on how underexposing makes sense for digital where overexposing did for film, the histogram and the effects of over manipulation, the curves etc. The only remark I would question in the whole book is on page 278, where the authors suggest that Ansel Adams' zones would be 0 on the left side and X on the right side of the histogram - that would be true if the sensor covered the whole dynamic range of the possible pictures, from pitch black to clean, sun-lit snow. The book starts with a recap of what is light. Full disclosure, I was trained a physicist and considering this book is subtitled "An introduction to photographic lighting" I was expecting heavy-handed approximations. Not so. The subject matter is exposed in a very simple yet not simplistic way. This is the first of all the photography books I read that properly explains polarizing versus non-polarizing reflections and the proper usage of polarizing filters with a very striking example (figures 4.11 and 4.13). It then addresses all the classic problems: diffuse versus direct reflection (how to shoot shiny surfaces, flat versus round objects, from small objects to buildings etc.) and proposes a number of solutions to the usual and more unusual issues such as with white on white or black on black pictures. (I am surprised that the words "dynamic range" do not seem appear in the book.) It ends with portrait and how to manage the real world lighting indoors or outdoors, strobes and speedlights but without dwelling on such techniques as bouncing flash as much as many other books I have seen. All in all an excellent reference book on lighting, one I found myself thumbing through over and over even before I was done reading it the first time. If you are looking for an overview of digital photography including composition, exposure, color management etc., this book is probably too specialized (try one of my favorites in that category, one I open regularly: *Â Â Digital Photography Lighting For Dummies*). If what you want is a collection of hints and tips on how to get a nice picture in such or such situation, check out Scott Kelby's *Â Â The Digital Photography Book, Part 2* *Â Â* and *Â Â Part 4* *Â Â* (not part 3). If you are interested in composition, pausing etc., have a look at *Â Â Picture Perfect Practice*. However if what you want is a solid foundation for how light behaves and what are the classic thought processes when addressing lighting issues, this is the book for you.

Excellent resource for learning or reminding yourself of some of the finer intricacies of lighting. This was purchased specifically to get a better handle on lighting highly reflective and circular, reflective objects. The information and tips in this book allowed me to quickly get a grasp on some of the watch-outs so I could quickly dial in some techniques before a test shoot. Information is well organized chapter-by-chapter and easy to scan. This is a book that I'll keep in my library for a long time *ÂfÂçÂ â -Â â* mostly as a reference. I would recommend at least a basic

understanding/practice with off-camera lighting or light technique. Some of the concepts explained later in the book reference ideas that are initially hard to grasp until you've gone through the trial-and-error of testing light on products or people.

A must have book for learning photographic lighting. Finally, I found a book that actually teaches lighting concepts instead of the common "cookbook" type guides, through a recommendation! After searching, Light Science & Magic didn't even show up! After practicing the techniques, you will be able to creatively light anything. While Light Science & Magic covers lighting concepts well, you should look elsewhere for equipment usage. There's some information about setting up a studio but it's too little to be very useful.

Light is the medium of the photographer, and this book is an excellent resource to understand how it behaves and its effect on a photograph. Unlike a lot of books that simply introduce a lighting scheme or recipe to how to achieve a certain look to a photograph, this book goes a step further to describe what is happening to the light and how it affects the final result. The examples and diagrams are extremely helpful and walks the reader through a number of modifications to the lighting of a scene so you can see exactly what is happening. This might not be a book for everyone, and I've certainly seen pros that couldn't tell you why they place lights the way they do, other than the fact that it's worked for them in similar situations in the past. This book helps you break out of those conventional schemes and helps you understand how to manipulate light both under studio and on location to achieve your personal vision. I would go so far as to say this should be required reading for any photographer regardless of level of expertise. Don't just read the book though, I encourage you to use your own equipment to work through each of the lighting scenarios and achieve the results for yourself. You'll work for your portfolio at the end of it and taken your photography by at least one level if not more by the end!

Books that are hard to put down once picked up are rare these days. Be you a budding photographer in need of education or a seasoned pro looking for a new trick or two, this book is a solid treatise on the topic of light generally and photographic lighting specifically. Topics range from light science to light placement to light polarization, etc. Lots of real examples help nail down concepts and invite the curious to try the techniques themselves. My library is mostly electronic these days. Shelf space for real books is reserved for only the most special, seasoned or useful writings. A new print book almost always never makes the grade. For photographers this book

easily makes the cut. The book delves reasonably deep into topics, but is arranged so you can assimilate new methods and tips with sporadic readings. Yes... this means this is a good bathroom reader. This is certainly the best \$21 I've spent in a great while.

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