

# How to capture the *feeling* of a Seascape

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1. The key to successful coastal photography is to find a pleasing shot of the convergence of land, waves, and the sky in a dynamic, ever changing view.
2. **What is the character of the beach as you see it?** Look for elements to portray the character. Elements may include the color, power, beauty or mood.
3. **Focal Point** - Distinguish your photo with something of interest that will act as the main feature in your photo and then base your composition around that.
4. **Your foreground element is important in a Seascape** The foreground will help anchor a Seascape and give the photo the depth you want to portray. When using a wide-angle lens, get close to your foreground element.
5. **Where will you position your horizon?** If great clouds, make horizon lower. If sky is dull, make the horizon higher. To incorporate as much of sky and foreground element, consider a portrait orientation.
6. **Try a different point of view.** Try getting down low! Look at an angle down the beach. Try getting closer to the water – or in the water! Shoot back at the land. Look around for leading lines.
7. **Light has three basic qualities- intensity, direction and color** and all of them are affected by the time of day.
8. **SUNRISE:** Wonderful color (hopefully)– without Intense Light. Colors are more muted – pastels. Look for golden light hitting dunes and water. Long shadows due to direction of the sun.
9. **SUNSET:** Intense golden light or rainbow of colors. Direction of light on an angle- can make interesting patterns, dimensions and textures. Look for the color explosion about 30 minutes after sunset.
10. **NIGHT:** Twilight -the surface of the earth is neither completely lit nor completely dark- deep blue skies. Trust the histogram rather than the LCD screen when the light is dim.
11. **Exposure** Set exposure for the brightest element and underexpose for darker, deeper colors. An aperture of F/4 to around F/8 softens sun. An aperture near F/22 gives a star shape in the sun. Bracketing several exposures and then blending together into a final image is helpful.
12. Your shutter speed will have a big impact on the overall mood of the resulting images.

13. Suggested shutter speeds – motion of the waves:

**1/100 or faster** -will freeze the water's motion & power

**1/30second** or longer -begins to blur the water

**1/20 to ½ second** -illusion of motion while retaining a reasonable amount of detail of the water

**30 seconds** - motion of waves is smoothed out and water takes on a misty look

**1 second** -the water begins to look foggy/milky

**2 to 10 seconds**-records the swirls and streaks of the water in rock pools and shallow areas

14. **WAVE** Try to start shooting a few seconds before you anticipate a wave crash and shoot continuously throughout. Start shooting just as the water hits the beach to catch the lines of water receding after a wave for that soft look and leading lines back into the ocean.

**Try the following to add that special touch to your Seascape images:**

15. **REFLECTIONS!!** Any time you're shooting around bodies of water, be aware of the potential for enhancing your image with reflections. Tidal pools and puddles can reflect the sky or clouds.

16. **TEXTURES, PATTERNS, LINES!!** As the angle of the sun becomes angled in the morning or evening, you will see more textures, patterns and lines revealing themselves in the sand and dunes.

17. **SHADOWS!!** Shadows from the angled sun can become the focus of your image. Look for shadows from palm trees on the shoreline. Shadows can add mood and drama to your photos.

18. **SILHOUETTES!!** Some of the silhouettes you might look for are palm trees, birds, fishermen, people on the beach...whatever adds to the story you are telling in your image.

**ENJOY YOUR TIME AT THE BEACH!!!**

**I hope you capture the story and feeling you want to convey in your next seascape!**

**Note:** If you have made the move from a DSLR to a mirrorless camera, I would love to hear what you think! Back and arm issues are making me consider mirrorless!!

Feel free to email me at [jennibrink@gmail.com](mailto:jennibrink@gmail.com) with any questions.