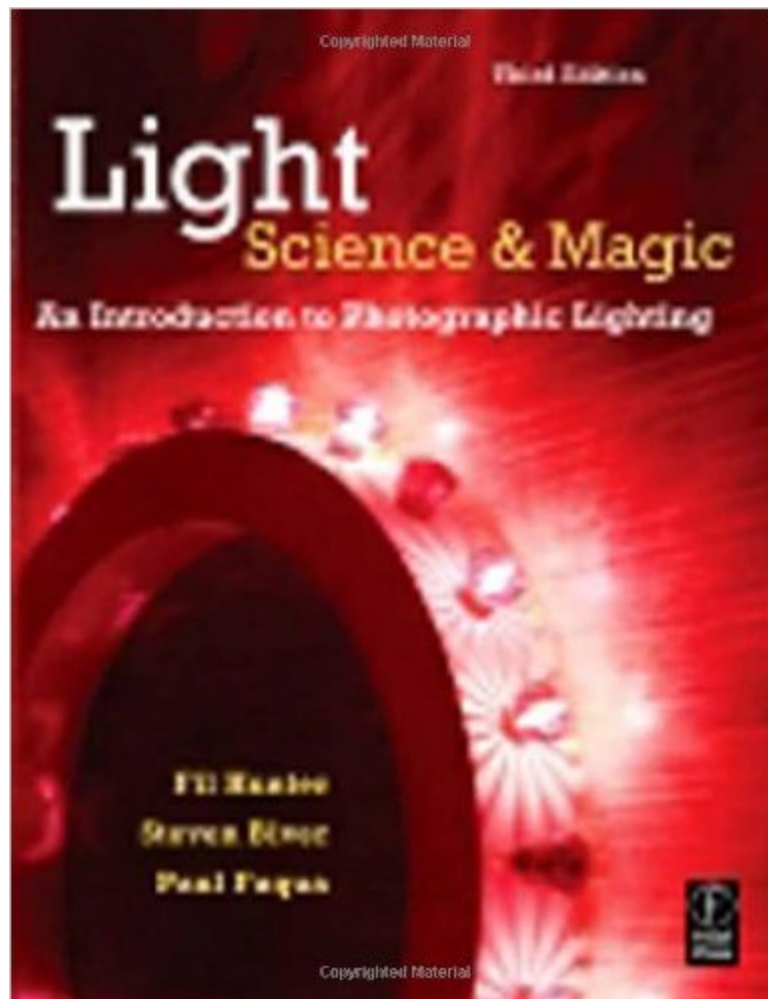


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# Light: Science And Magic: An Introduction To Photographic Lighting



## Synopsis

An amazing (and some would say magical) resource on photographic lighting that has been talked about in the community and recommended for years. This highly respected guide has been thoroughly updated and revised for content and design - it is now produced in full color! It introduces a logical theory of photographic lighting so if you are starting out in photography you will learn how to predict results before setting up lights. This is not primarily a how-to book with only set examples for you to copy. Rather, *Light: Science and Magic* provides you with a comprehensive theory of the nature and principles of light to allow you to use lighting to express your own creativity. Numerous photographs and illustrations provide clear examples of the theories, while sidebars highlight special lighting questions. Expanded chapters on available light in portraiture, as well as new information on digital equipment and terminology make this a must have update!

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Fil Hunter and Paul Fuqua have written a truly essential reference for product photographers and an outstanding educational text for all photographers. *Light, Science and Magic* teaches its readers the principals of lighting. It describes in detail how to light surfaces, metal, glass, liquids, extremes (black-on-black and white-on-white), and people for different effects. These subjects were chosen because they are reputed to be the most difficult subjects to light. But because the book emphasizes the principals of lighting, those lessons can be applied to all lighting situations. The

examples in *Light, Science and Magic* are in-studio, but the principals apply out-of-doors and anywhere that there is light. You don't need to have a background in studio photography or a knowledge of lighting equipment to understand and benefit from this book. You need to have only a good understanding of exposure and camera operation. Information on basic lighting equipment is found in the appendices for those who are unfamiliar with studio equipment. Because the principals of lighting apply equally to film photography and digital image capture, most of this book's content will not go out of date. No photographer should be without the knowledge in this book. If you can absorb all of the book's content, there is nothing that you will encounter in all your photographic adventures that you won't know how to light to get the effect you want. It is well worth its price!

I love the approach in this easy to read book. The authors' philosophy is to be as creative in as many ways as possible, even down to improvising equipment and overcoming lack thereof. If, say, candles will suffice, then why use strobes? I feared a huge shopping list for my foray into the world of studio lighting. This very helpful alternative to months of expensive experimentation has shown me a more structured approach, the focus being on Return on Investment while maximising results.

Whether you're a beginner with a point-and-shoot or a professional with a huge investment in equipment, you need to know how light works. This book can teach you everything you need to know. It has both theory and practical guidance. The authors don't tell you which lights to use in a given situation -- they teach you how to determine what lighting to use to achieve the effect you want. And they help you select lighting equipment. To be fair, it's not always an easy read (there's a lot of theory and some math/physics to wade through), but it's worth the effort. I saw the difference in the next roll I shot. I only wish I had found this book a few years ago...

I was looking for some literature regarding lighting that would cover basics for product photography. Unfortunately, most books indulge in a certain high level lingo that would confuse most of the readers. One could easily see which author has more experience based on the level of simplicity he or she uses in order to explain some concepts. A friend of mine lent me this book and I have now the chance to write a short review about it. First of all: the book is excellent. The paper and printing quality (full color for all photographs and diagrams) are outstanding. One can easily see essential details in images, like different textures and appearance of surfaces under various lighting setups. So this is a big plus. The book is divided in 10 chapters as follow: 1. How to learn lighting; this chapter gives you basic information regarding general lighting principles, the way the author chose the

examples and - most important - why did he chose those examples, the rationale behind all exercises and some hints for the way you should approach each exercise (procedures, goals - what you should get) and also some general information about shooting equipment that one needs in order to perform the exercises in the book.

2. Light: the raw material for photography. This chapter explains in detail, but not to boredom and in a very plain and explicit manner the properties of light that each photographer should know and understand in order to take proper images. What I most liked is the fact that the author starts from a basic principle (almost as an axiom) that the most important factor for photography is not the gear but the light and the way a photographer understands and uses light.

3. The management of reflection and the family of angles. Basic information about the way light is reflected by various materials and surfaces, discussions on the placement of the sources of light relative to the observer (camera) in order to get different results, polarization and some exercises that helps you apply the theory.

4. Surface appearances. This chapter elaborate a bit more some concepts from the previous chapters, with focus on surface appearance, textures, boundaries and some many other information about way different objects appear in different lighting setups. Many exercises included, things that you should try by yourself.

5. Revealing shape and contour. A very good read about methods of adding 3D appearance to 2D images using shadows, tonalities, surface detail etc. This is a chapter with a lot of info about "providing real life appearance" of your 2D images.

6. Metal. How to photograph metal surfaces. Detailed examples and information about reflection on metal surfaces, ways to reveal detail and avoid loss of detail in different lighting setups, information and exercises on photographing metal boxes, special challenges imposed by round metal objects (like globes) and the special issues such photos pose.

7. The case of the disappearing glass. This is one of the most interesting chapters and deals with photographing glass and glass objects. Various methods are explained and actions needed for succesful photographs are detailed in very clear steps, with plenty of rationale and concepts in behind. A special section deals with glass objects with liquid inside, that act as lenses and pose special problems to inexperienced photographer.

8. An arsenal of lights. This chapter will be the favourite for portrait shooters, people that want to learn and understand ways of lighting for portraits. The images are "disassembled" in their components by each light source in order to familiarize yourself with the effects of light characteristics, placement, intensity etc.

9. The extremes. This deals mainly with high-key, low-key and special (under or overexposed) images, situations that require such artwork and the interaction of environment (backgrounds etc) and the objects to be photographed.

10. Traveling light. This deals entirely with strobes (flash photography) and with special issues using flash. If you are new to concepts like guide number, bounce, feathering etc.,

this chapter will place more... light to it. Also, provided are a lot of practical examples that you should also try. Overall this is one of the best educational books about photography - in general - and lighting - in particular - I have ever read. The language used is plain, concise and extremely to the point, the concepts are extremely well explained, reasons for different results are given and principles are well laid, just to be followed. I would STRONGLY recommend (actually I have already ordered one for myself) this book to anyone is interested in understanding more the light, lighting, studio setups and general knowledge about light and photography, actually the most important ingredient for each image you might take.

Not just a bag of tricks, it teaches a way of thinking about light that promotes a better understanding and enhanced problem solving. At Strobist we are way into photographic lighting - too much so, our spouses might add - and this is the best book on the subject that I have seen yet. This new (3rd) edition has full color all the way through, with updated photos that are simpler, to distill the lessons right down to the concepts being taught. It is about time this book got the production budget that it merited. I cannot imagine there is a photographer out there that would not benefit from this book.

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