

Topic 1 – Commanding the Mode Dial

Learning Outcomes

In this topic, you will learn more about how to control the functions on your mode dial. We touched on this before but I want to go through these in detail so that you will be better equipped with the language when we move onto shutter speed, ISO and aperture in future topics.

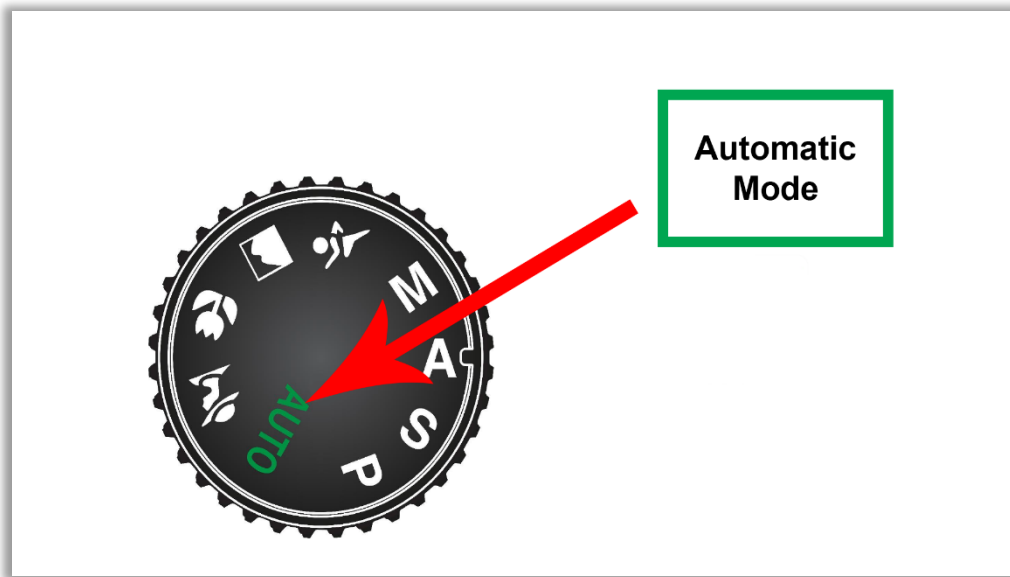
The Mode Dial



Pre-sets and modes bind you to their predetermined results. That's not to say that these modes will give you bad photographs, in fact, you can get some pretty nice shots through using these pre-sets. However, there will be times in which you want more control of the camera and that is why we encourage better understanding of the camera's settings so that you know how your camera will behave in certain environments.

Working with your Camera

Automatic Mode



Auto mode: The camera controls all aspects of the camera, shutter speed, aperture, ISO in order to achieve a good exposure.

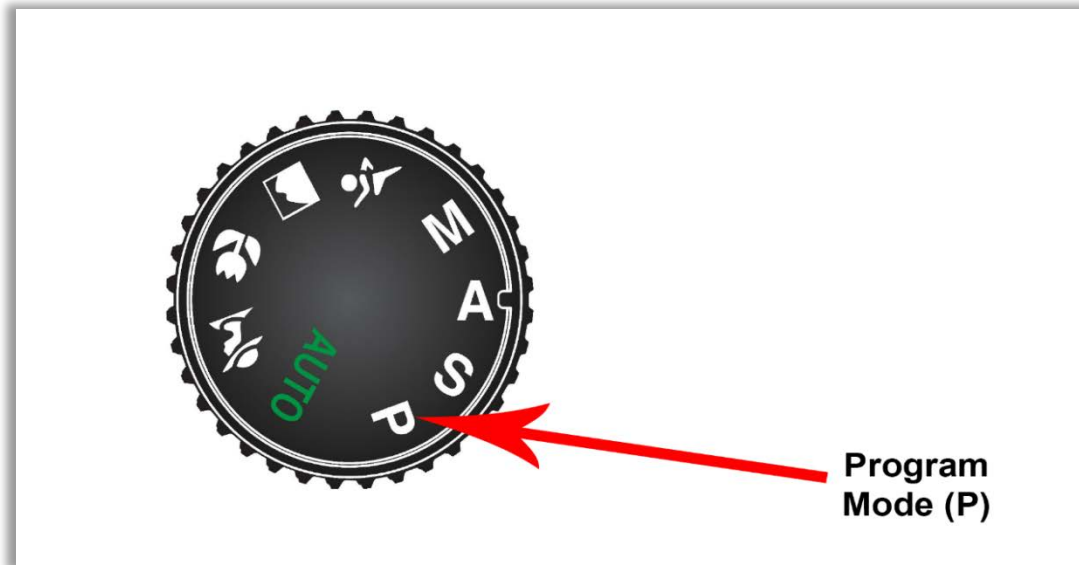
This mode is useful when we are new to photography but through practice, you will gain the confidence and skill to move on from here.

It is labelled by green text or a green box and is usually called AUTO which is good for first time users as it is self-explanatory, like most of the modes.



Working with your Camera

Program Mode

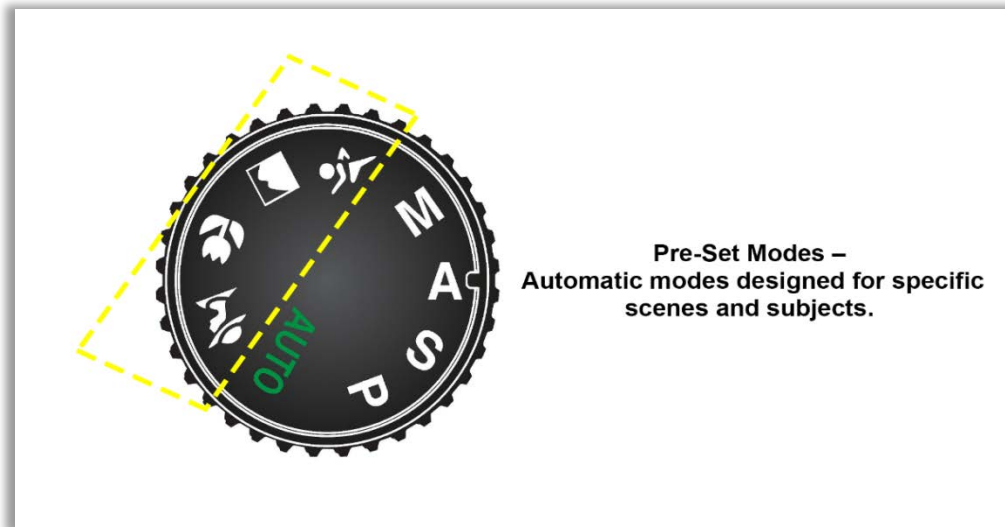


Program Mode: The camera controls most aspects of the camera, namely shutter speed, aperture and ISO in order to achieve a good exposure. However, it does allow you to take control over some functions such as the autofocus mode, drive modes and the flash.

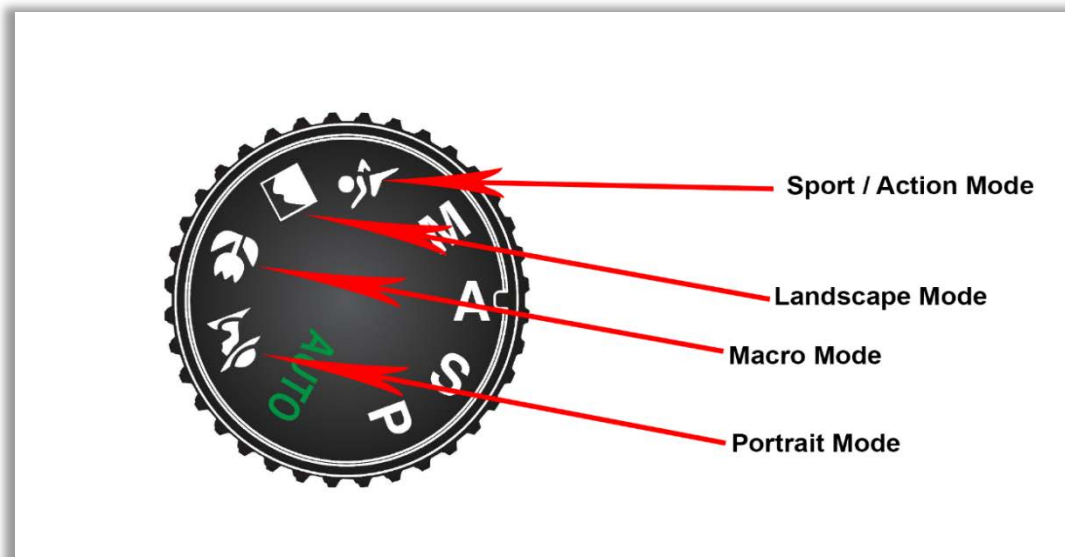


Working with your Camera

The Pre-set Modes



Pre-set modes are automatic modes designed for specific scenes and subjects.



There are four pre-sets that we will look at in detail:

1. Sport/ Action Mode
2. Landscape Mode
3. Macro Mode
4. Portrait Mode



Working with your Camera



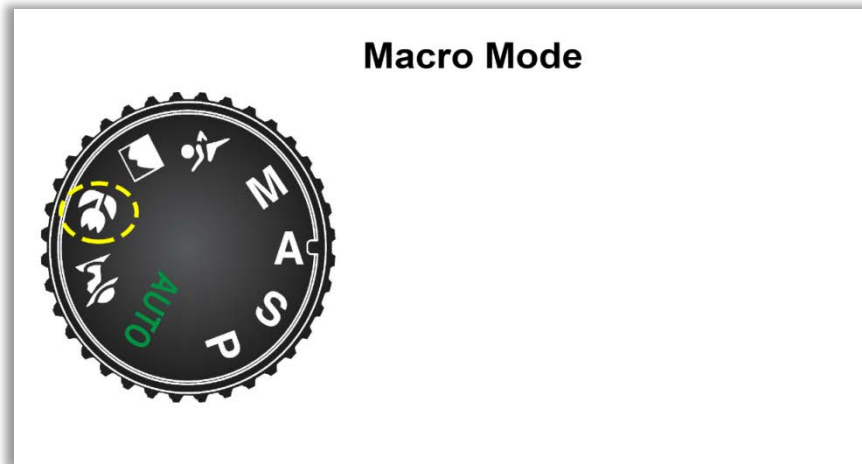
Sports Mode – In this mode the camera gives you a combination of settings to capture moving subjects, while still maintaining a good exposure. In this mode, the camera also prioritises fast shutter speeds to capture motion as static which is very important if you're following a fast sport such as hockey or rugby.



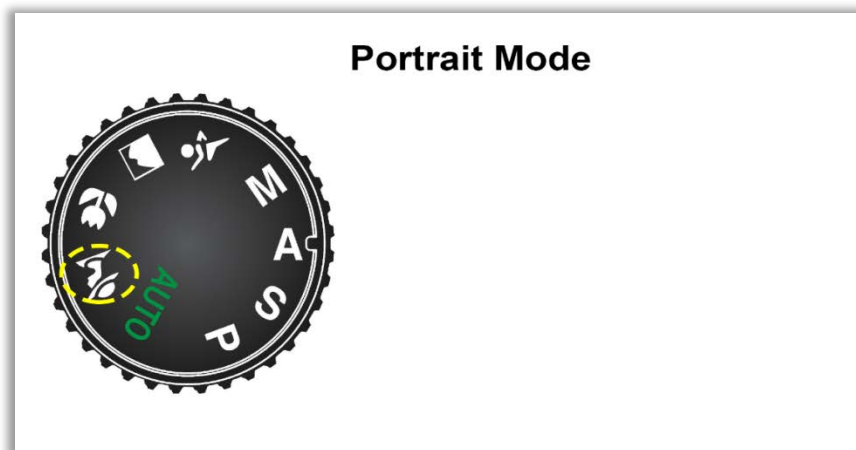
Landscape Mode - In this mode the camera gives you a combination of settings to capture scenes where everything is in focus from the foreground to the background, while maintaining a good exposure. The camera prioritises small apertures to produce this effect.



Working with your Camera



Macro Mode - In the mode the camera allows you to get physically very close to the subject to fill the frame and emphasis its detail.



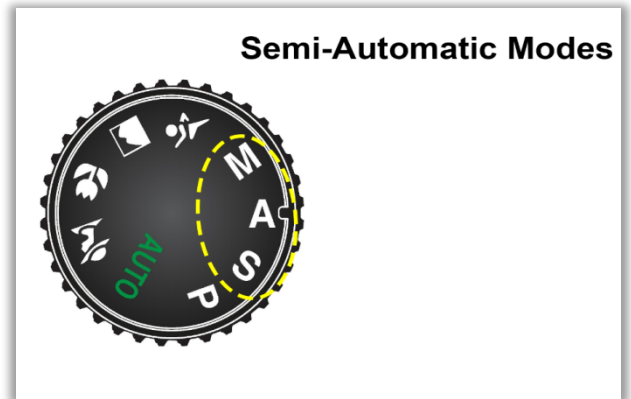
Portrait Mode - In this mode the camera gives you a combination of settings to capture scenes where the main subject is in focus but the background is out of focus. The camera prioritises large apertures to produce this effect.



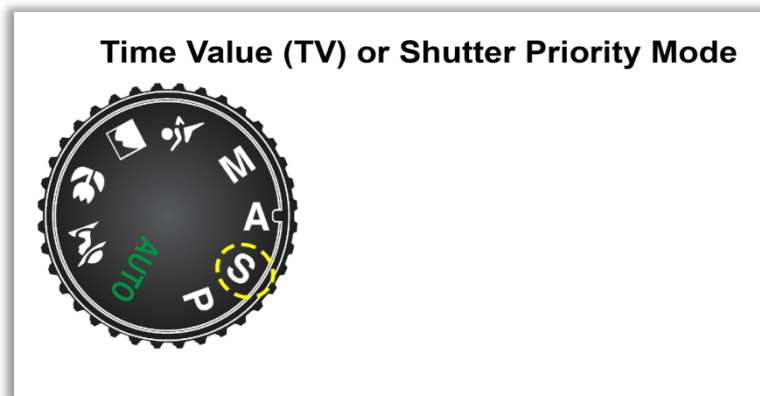
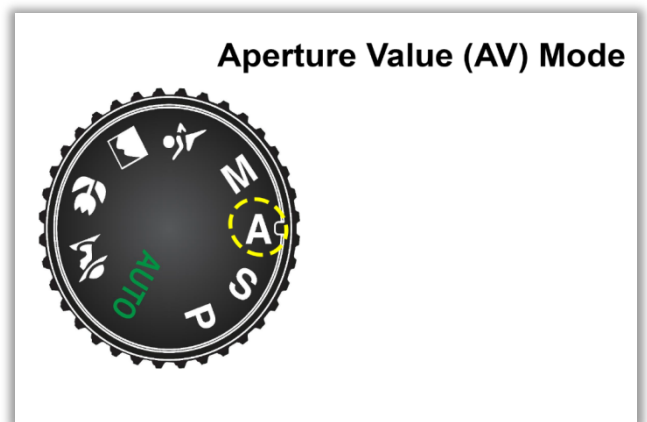
Working with your Camera

Semi-Automatic Modes

These modes allow you to take control over some of the camera's main functions while the camera adjusts all the other settings to maintain a good exposure. This is the step before going fully manual when using the camera.



Aperture Value (AV) Mode - In this mode the camera gives you control over the aperture settings which allows you to control the depth of field in your photograph. The camera controls all other functions to ensure that the exposure is the correct level of brightness.



Time Value (TV) or Shutter Priority Mode – This mode is known as can be called the Time Value (TV) or Shutter Priority Mode but I tend to call it the Shutter Mode. In this mode, the camera gives you control over the shutter speed settings which allow you to control the motion in your photograph. The camera controls all other functions to ensure that the exposure is at the correct level of brightness.



Working with your Camera

Manual Mode



Manual Mode gives you full control over all functions of the camera. This includes the shutter speeds aperture, ISO settings, and the other functions that the camera has at your disposal.



Working with your Camera

What have we learned today? A Summary

We have learned about the pre-sets available on the mode dial on our DSLR cameras and what these pre-sets are designed to capture.

We have also looked at our semi-automatic mode and what these modes are best suited for.

To conclude, this will help you to extend your vocabulary around photography for the detailed topics to come around shutter speeds, aperture and ISO.

