# Photographing Miniatures

A quick guide to getting better photos of the small plastic people you paint.

Follow me on Instagram
@justmakesstuff

Read my Blog
justincoquillon.co.uk

# A bit about me

I'm a passionate amateur who enjoys sharing what I've learned. As a keen photographer I've found real enjoyment in combining that hobby with my current passion of Miniature Painting.

**I am not a professional but I am an addict.**

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# Understanding Exposure

Mastering your camera's settings
and manual controls.

# Exposure

Exposure relies on the relationship between these 3 settings.

**ISO**
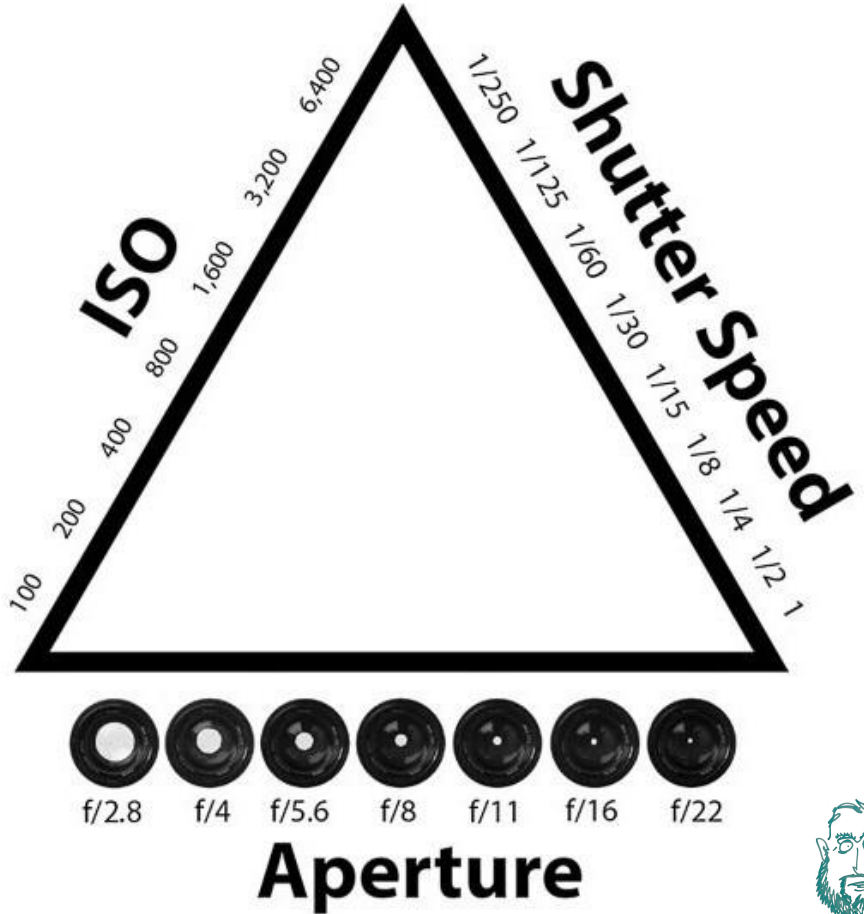Light sensitivity of the sensor

**Aperture**
Size of the lens opening

**Shutter Speed**
Time of exposure

Changing any one of these, means another must also change one setting up or down to keep balance.

# ISO

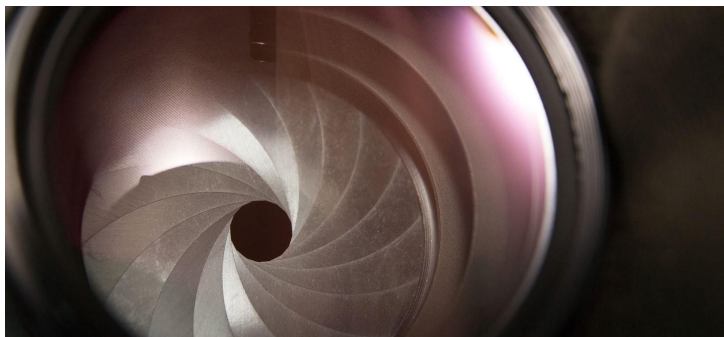For miniature photography you should use a low ISO setting.

Higher ISO settings will let you shoot in low light, or without a tripod, but can cause visible "noise" in the image.



ISO 100 · ISO 3200 · CLEAN IMAGE · NOISY IMAGE

# Aperture

The size of the aperture affects the depth of field (how much of an image can be in focus).

For mini photography you tend to want a high aperture f/11-f/22 (small opening).



| f/1.4 | f/2.8 | f/5.6 | f/11 | f/22 |
|-------|-------|-------|------|------|
| Very Large Aperture | Large Aperture | Medium Aperture | Small Aperture | Very Small Aperture |
| Very Small Depth of Field | Small Depth of Field | Medium Depth of Field | Large Depth of Field | Very Large Depth of Field |
| Almost Nothing In Focus | Little In Focus | Some In Focus | Much In Focus | Almost All In Focus |
| Brightest | Bright | Medium | Dark | Darkest |

A low aperture keeps only the immediate subject in focus

A medium aperture allows more of the picture to be in focus

A high aperture allows all of the image in focus

# Shutter Speed

The time that the camera exposes the photograph for is a simple control over how much light is allowed in.

For mini photography a longer shutter speed is often best.

This balances out the High Aperture and Low ISO.

For this reason you might want to invest in a simple tripod.
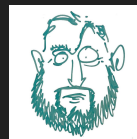
Most camera apps (look for Pro Mode) or modern cameras
allow you adjust Exposure Compensation (EV).

For black backdrops, try putting it down,
and for light backdrops, try increasing it.

# The Basics

Tips to getting a better photo

# Backdrop and Lighting

Use a simple black or white or textured backdrop and clip in place. A lightbox isn't necessary.

Place the mini a good distance away from the backdrop vertical.

Make sure you can even and ideally soft / diffused light from above. Tissue paper can help achieve this.

Bring the camera and lamp down low to the mini and bounce light off the ground up onto the mini to bring out the detail.

# Getting Creative

Mastering your camera's settings
and manual controls.

# #vignette28

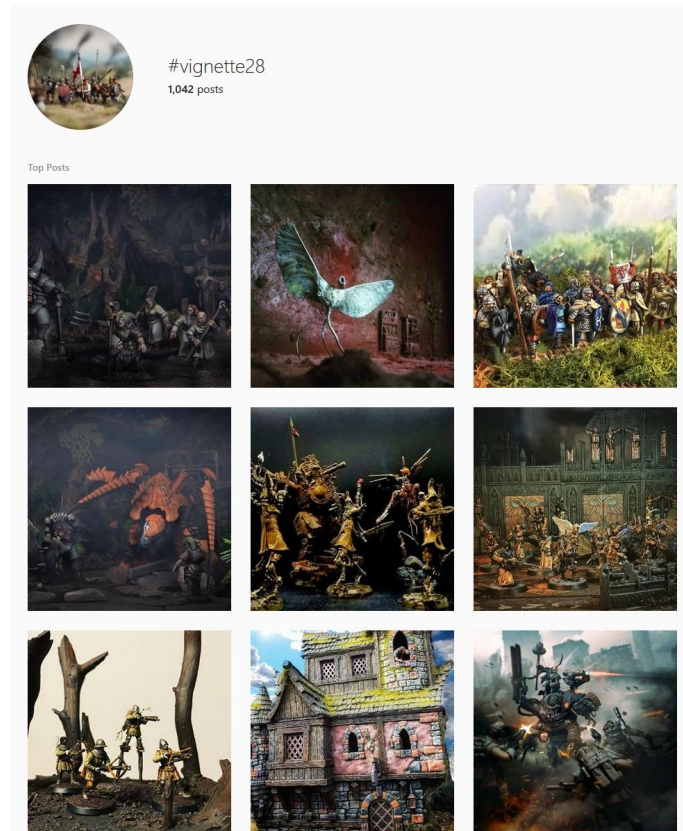*"A small, pleasing picture or view.*

*An evocative, description, account, episode.*

*A single image that communicates the mood*

*and atmosphere of an event or moment.*

*Dedicated to scaled models and miniatures"*

Find more examples of
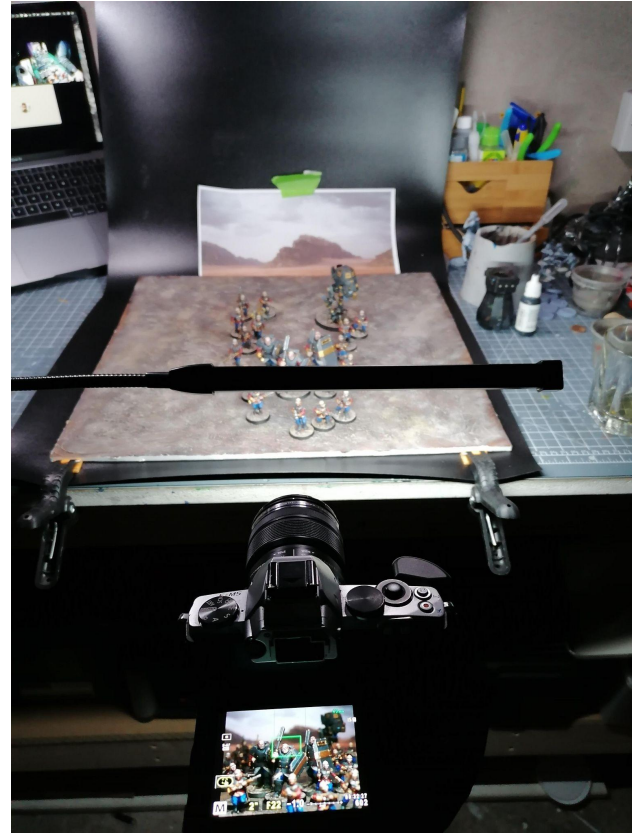#Vignette28 on Instagram

What is Vignette28?

# Building a Vignette

Creating in-world scenes and bringing your mini to life can be achieved with 3 simple additions.

1. A textured display board
2. Scenic backdrops (basic A4 colour inkjet prints will do)
3. Terrain pieces and scatter terrain

[Find more examples of #Vignette28 on Instagram](#)

Some examples of shots using the same lighting and changing world details.

Plain black backdrop.

Two desert backdrops (bright and grimdark).

With the addition of some terrain pieces.

# Editing

Even great photos can need
some final touches

# Final touches

I edit in Photoshop Express on my mobile (free to use).

Use the Wand to auto-fix (often worth a try).

Crop to the size / aspect ratio you want.

Apply a dark or light vignette (under corrections) to help boost the backdrop.

Tweak exposure, highlights or saturation (under corrections) as required.