

BASICS OF BETTER UNDERWATER PHOTOGRAPHY

CLOSE FOCUS WIDE ANGLE

OPTICAL OCEAN SALES
UNDERWATER PHOTOGRAPHY EQUIPMENT



CLOSE FOCUS WIDE ANGLE

Emphasizes a foreground subject, while showing the reef or environment surrounding it.

The basic technique is to get close to the subject while balancing the lighting between foreground and background.

Camera settings for ISO, shutter speed and aperture are used to expose the background, while strobe lighting is used for the foreground subject.

KEY ELEMENTS

- ▶ Get close
- ▶ Use a wide angle lens
- ▶ Determine the background exposure
- ▶ Use your strobe to light the foreground subject
- ▶ Focus and recompose shot
- ▶ Include a background element for perspective and drama.
- ▶ Vertical orientation may work best.



USE A WIDE ANGLE LENS

THE WIDER
THE BETTER

A wide angle or fisheye lens will
give sharper corners and greater
depth of field throughout the shot.



THEN GET
CLOSE

AS CLOSE AS YOU
CAN FOCUS.





BASIC STARTING CAMERA SETTINGS

- ▶ **Mode:** Manual or shutter priority
- ▶ **Focus:** Single or Spot
- ▶ **Compacts:** Macro Mode
- ▶ **ISO:** 100-200
- ▶ **Shutter Speed:** 125th and up, depending on light
- ▶ **Aperture:** f/8
- ▶ **Internal Flash:** Forced, manual (turn power down), rear-curtain sync
- ▶ **External strobe:** Manual



1/125

START BY
DETERMINING
BACKGROUND
SHUTTER SPEED



1/250

When you get to the location you'll be shooting, try a shot of just the water column. Experiment by changing the shutter speed, shooting up at different angles to get the color you want.

THEN LIGHT THE FOREGROUND WITH STROBES

Determine a good position and power for your strobes to fill the foreground subject. The idea is to balance the lighting and make it look natural.





USE SINGLE POINT FOCUS & RECOMPOSE

FOCUS ON THE EYES
THEN REFRAME

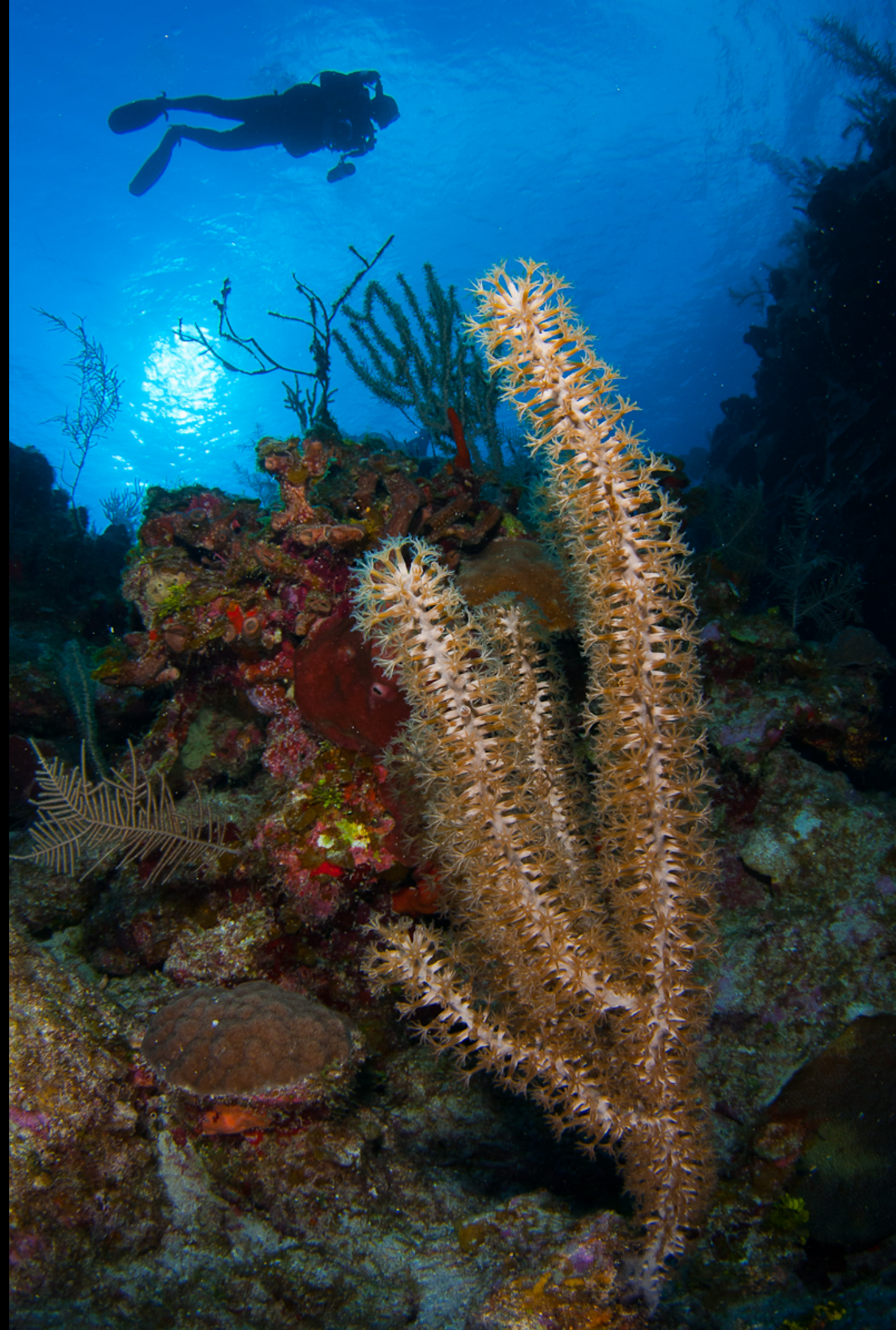
Switch your camera to single point or spot auto focus.

Focus on the eye of the foreground subject, lock focus with a half click, then recompose the shot by moving the camera.

LAYER YOUR COMPOSITION

TRY TO BUILD
PERSPECTIVE

Adding in a diver, the boat, or other background element adds drama and perspective.





SHOOT VERTICAL

BRING ON THE BLUE

Shooting vertically can allow you to shoot up and get more perspective and light into the background.

When shooting vertically, position your strobes so that they evenly light the subject.

Many times keep them in tight, well behind the lens port and turned outwards. Short arms can be ok if the visibility is good.

To balance the light evenly, the strobe that is at the bottom is powered down slightly, and the top one turned up.



Part of the “Basics of UW Photography” Series

OPTICAL OCEAN SALES

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1800 Westlake Ave. N, Seattle, WA 98109

800-359-1295 / 206-284-1142

orders@OpticalOceanSales.com

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