

# BUTTERFLY WORLD WORKSHOP:

## 1. Photographing a Butterfly Sitting (Perched)

When the butterfly is resting on a flower, leaf, or rock.

### Approach & Setup

- Move slowly and approach from behind or the side — sudden movements will spook them.
- Early morning or late afternoon is best (butterflies are less active and light is softer).
- Use a **macro lens (90–105mm)** or a **telephoto (200–500mm)** for reach without disturbing them.

### Camera Settings

- **Mode:** Manuel mode or use Aperture Priority (A/Av) for beginners for control of depth of field.
- **Aperture:** f/5.6 – f/11 (wide enough for background blur, but stopped down enough to get the whole wingspan in focus).
- **ISO:** I suggest **ISO on Auto** however you can use these settings 100–400 (bright daylight) or 800–1600 (shade/overcast).
- **Shutter Speed:** At least 1/250s up to 5000 to freeze slight wing flicks.
- **Focus:** Single-point AF on the butterfly's eyes if visible, or the nearest wing edge.
- **Stability: note: we are not permitted to use a tripod or monopod at Butterfly World however in the future you can use Tripod or monopod if possible, otherwise brace your arms.**

## Pro Tips

- Watch the wind — a swaying flower can ruin focus. Shoot bursts to increase chances of sharpness.
  - Get eye-level or slightly below for a more dramatic and natural perspective.
  - Background matters: position yourself so the background is distant and clean for bokeh. Watch out for hard shadows or bright light behind the butterfly. Move just a few feet to remove the light look for green leaves or flowers for background.
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## 2. Photographing a Butterfly in Motion (Flying)

This is much harder and requires fast reflexes.

### Approach & Setup

- **Anticipate:** butterflies often return to the same flowers or paths — pre-focus in those spots.
- Stand where light is behind you (front lighting) or slightly to the side for wing detail.
- Use continuous shooting (high-speed burst).

### Camera Settings

- **Mode:** Manual with Auto ISO.
- **Shutter Speed:** 1/1000s – 1/5000s (to freeze fast fluttering wings).
- **Aperture:** f/4 – f/8 (balance between depth of field and light).
- **ISO:** Auto, max 3200 (depends on light).
- **Focus:** Continuous AF (AI Servo/AF-C), with a dynamic or zone AF point to track the butterfly.
- **Drive Mode:** High-speed burst (8–20 fps depending on your camera).

## Pro Tips

- Pre-focus on flowers where they're about to land.
  - Pan with their movement while shooting bursts (like shooting birds in flight).
  - Use back-button focus to keep tracking separate from shooting.
  - Don't always try to freeze wings — sometimes motion blur in the wings with a sharp body makes a more artistic shot (try 1/250–1/500s for this).
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## ✔ Summary Cheat Sheet:

- Sitting: **Manual Mode f/5.6–11, 1/250s+, single-point AF, low ISO.**
  - In Motion: **Shutter Priority, 1/1000–1/5000s, f/4–8, Continuous AF, high-speed burst.**
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## Shooting Butterflies in Motion at 1/5000s

### Why 1/5000s?

- Butterfly wings beat extremely fast (up to 10–20 times per second depending on species).
  - At 1/5000s you'll **freeze even the tiniest wing motion**, getting razor-sharp detail.
  - It's perfect for **bright daylight** — but challenging in shade.
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### Camera Settings

- **Mode:** Manual (M) with Auto ISO (let the camera balance exposure).
- **Shutter Speed:** 1/5000s.
- **Aperture:** f/4 – f/8 (f/4 gives more light and background blur; f/8 increases depth of field so you keep the whole butterfly sharp).

- **ISO:** Auto (set an upper limit — e.g., max 3200 or 6400 depending on your camera's noise tolerance).
  - **Focus Mode:** Continuous AF (AI Servo / AF-C).
  - **Drive Mode:** High-speed burst (use 8–20 fps if available).
  - **Metering:** Evaluative/Matrix metering for balanced exposure.
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### Tips for Success

1. **Bright Conditions** → 1/5000s eats up a lot of light. Midday or sunny conditions work best. In shade, the camera may push ISO too high (grainy).
  2. **Lens Choice** → Use a **fast telephoto** or **macro** (f/2.8–f/4 lenses help).
  3. **Pre-focus** → Butterflies often hover near flowers. Pre-focus on the flower head and wait.
  4. **Shoot Bursts** → Fire continuous bursts; one frame out of many will catch wings open in perfect symmetry.
  5. **Background Awareness** → A high shutter speed will isolate the butterfly, but still watch for distracting clutter.
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### ✅ Quick Setup for Field Use:

- **M mode** → 1/5000s | f/5.6 | Auto ISO (max 3200).
  - **Continuous AF + Burst Mode.**
  - **Track + Pan + Burst.**
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