



Better Communication Through Images

## Studio Lighting Masterclass

Presented by the Treasure Coast Photography Center

Instructor: (TBD)

Format: 3 instructional sessions + 2 independent studio assignments

Duration: 3 weeks (1 session per week + independent studio work)

Level: Intermediate to Advanced

Location: TCPC Studio, Fort Pierce

Recommended Prerequisite: Familiarity with manual exposure controls and basic portrait composition.

### Course Description

This hands-on masterclass develops professional-level lighting proficiency through a

structured blend of classroom instruction, guided studio exercises, independent assignments, and group critique sessions. Participants will learn to build, balance, and shape light using both continuous and strobe systems. Equally important, they will develop the ability to evaluate and articulate photographic intent, participate in constructive critique, and apply feedback in subsequent sessions. Students work in pairs throughout, alternating roles between photographer and lighting assistant.

## SESSION 1 — The Language of Light: Continuous Lighting Fundamentals

### Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will:

- Understand the function and interplay of main, fill, back, and background lights.
- Identify how modifier choice (softbox, umbrella, reflector, etc.) affects mood and contrast.
- Balance light ratios using distance and intensity adjustments.
- Apply white balance and color temperature control for accurate skin tones.
- Collaborate effectively with a partner to design lighting setups.

### Instructional Component

Overview of studio lighting safety, setup, and workflow.

Demonstration: constructing a four-light setup using continuous LED lights.

Lighting diagram demonstration and documentation best practices.

Discussion: emotional tone and storytelling through lighting.

### Assignment #1 — “Shape and Shadow”

**Learning Objective:** Apply continuous lighting techniques to control contrast and reveal texture.

**Description:** Work in pairs to design and photograph two distinct portrait lighting scenarios:

- *Soft Light Portrait* — low-contrast, flattering illumination for a natural look.
- *Dramatic Light Portrait* — high-contrast setup using hard light and minimal fill to emphasize form.

### Requirements:

- Use all four lighting positions at least once.
- Create lighting diagrams and label distances, heights, and modifier types.
- Capture 3–5 final portraits per lighting setup.
- Write a short paragraph describing your creative intent for each lighting design.

**Critique Format (Session 2):** Each student presents one image per setup and receives structured feedback on lighting balance, mood, composition, and artistic intent.

## SESSION 2 — Power and Precision: Working with Studio Strobes

### Group Critique (First Half of Class)

Review and discussion of “Shape and Shadow” assignments.

Peer feedback and instructor analysis focusing on problem-solving and refinement.

Students identify one aspect of their lighting they plan to improve during strobe practice.

### Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will:

- Operate studio strobes using triggers and sync systems.
- Match exposure using flash meter readings.
- Translate continuous lighting setups into strobe equivalents.
- Control lighting ratios through power settings.
- Develop consistency in multi-light exposures.

### Instructional Component

Introduction to strobe systems, modeling lights, and power output adjustment.

Hands-on demo of trigger setup, sync troubleshooting, and metering workflow.

Practice session: recreating Session 1’s lighting setup using strobes.

### Assignment #2 — “Light in Motion”

**Learning Objective:** Apply strobe lighting to create expressive, technically precise portraits.

**Description:** Recreate both lighting setups from Assignment #1 using studio strobes.

Measure, document, and maintain defined lighting ratios (e.g., 2:1 or 4:1 between key and fill).

Select one of the following creative directions:

- *Cinematic Mood:* dramatic, directional light and color gels to evoke atmosphere.
- *High Key Glamour:* bright, even light for an editorial look.

### Requirements:

- Use the flash meter to measure and record exposure readings.
- Include one behind-the-scenes photo showing the lighting setup.
- Submit final portraits (3–5 images per setup) plus diagrams and exposure notes.
- Write a short paragraph explaining how lighting ratio influenced the final image mood.

**Critique Format (Session 3):** Each participant presents one image per theme for critique and feedback from both peers and instructor.

## SESSION 3 — Mastering the Studio: Live Model Shoot + Final Critique

### Group Critique (First Half of Class)

Review of “Light in Motion” assignments.

Structured group discussion led by instructor:

- Consistency of lighting ratios
- Exposure accuracy
- Storytelling through light and shadow
- Personal growth since Session 1

### Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will:

- Work efficiently in a live, time-constrained studio environment.
- Direct a model with professionalism and confidence.
- Adapt lighting setups creatively for different poses and expressions.
- Demonstrate full technical mastery of both continuous and strobe systems.

### Instructional Component

Collaborative planning of a live model shoot.

Advanced lighting demonstrations:

- Feathering light for subtle transitions
- Creative edge and rim lighting
- Use of colored gels for mood and separation

Participants rotate roles as Lead Photographer and Lighting Assistant.

### In-Class Exercise — “Live Model Photo Session”

Each pair will have a designated window to photograph the model using their chosen lighting design. Afterward, the group reviews a selection of images in-camera to discuss lighting precision and creative choices.

**Outcome:** Participants leave with a professional mini-portfolio and a deeper understanding of how to design, execute, and evaluate studio lighting.

## Course Materials

- Camera with manual controls
- Memory cards and spare batteries
- Tripod (recommended)
- Optional: handheld flash meter

- Notebook or tablet for lighting diagrams
- Studio lighting equipment provided by TCPC

## Course Completion

Students completing all assignments and participating in critiques will receive a TCPC Certificate of Completion for the Studio Lighting Masterclass. Select images may be featured in a TCPC Studio Showcase or website gallery.

**Presented by the Treasure Coast Photography Center (TCPC)**

For more workshops, visit [www.tpcinc.org](http://www.tpcinc.org)