Canon 60d Quick Guide

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INTRODUCTION TO THE CANON 60D: A VERSATILE DSLR FOR ENTHUSIASTS

The Canon 60D is a beloved DSLR that bridged the gap between amateur and semi-professional photography when it was released, and it remains a capable camera for many modern shooters. Whether you are picking up this camera for the first time or returning to it after a hiatus, a solid **canon 60d quick guide** can help you unlock its full potential. This guide covers everything from essential settings to advanced shooting techniques, ensuring you get the most out of this robust camera body.

The Canon 60D features an 18-megapixel APS-C CMOS sensor, a vari-angle 3-inch LCD screen, and a continuous shooting speed of 5.3 frames per second. It was designed for photography enthusiasts who want more control than an entry-level DSLR offers but do not yet need a full-frame professional body. With its intuitive controls and excellent image quality, the Canon 60D remains a popular choice for portrait, landscape, and action photography.

KEY FEATURES OF THE CANON 60D AT A GLANCE

Before diving into setup and shooting, it helps to understand what makes the Canon 60D special. The camera introduced several features that were advanced for its time and remain relevant today:

- **18MP APS-C CMOS Sensor** – Delivers sharp, detailed images with good dynamic range and low noise up to ISO 3200.
- **DIGIC 4 Image Processor** – Provides fast processing speeds, accurate colors, and smooth image rendering.
- **Vari-Angle 3.0-inch LCD** – A fully articulating screen that makes composing shots from awkward angles effortless.
- **9-Point All Cross-Type AF System** – Ensures quick and accurate autofocus in various lighting conditions.
- **1080p Full HD Video Recording** – Captures smooth video at 24, 25, or 30 fps with manual exposure control.
- **1.6x Crop Factor** – Effectively extends the reach of your lenses, making it ideal for telephoto and wildlife photography.
- **Built-in Wireless Flash Control** – Allows you to trigger off-camera Speedlites without an external controller.

GETTING STARTED WITH YOUR CANON 60D

Initial Setup and Menu Navigation

When you first power on your Canon 60D, you will be prompted to set the date, time, and language. This is important because these details are embedded in your image file metadata. After completing this initial setup, take a few minutes to explore the menu system. The Canon 60D menu is logically organized into shooting, playback, and setup tabs. Familiarizing yourself with these tabs early will save you time later when you need to adjust settings quickly.

One of the first settings you should adjust is the image quality. For the best results, select **RAW** or **RAW + Large JPEG**. RAW files give you maximum flexibility during post-processing, while JPEGs are convenient for immediate sharing. If you are new to RAW editing, shooting RAW + JPEG provides a safety net until you become comfortable with software like Adobe Lightroom or Canon's Digital Photo Professional.

Choosing the Right Memory Card

The Canon 60D uses SD, SDHC, and SDXC memory cards. For reliable performance, choose a card with a write speed of at least 30 MB/s. UHS-I cards are recommended for continuous shooting and video recording. A 32GB or 64GB card provides ample storage for a full day of shooting, even when capturing RAW images. Always format your card in the camera rather than your computer to ensure proper file system alignment.

UNDERSTANDING THE SHOOTING MODES

The Canon 60D offers a range of shooting modes that cater to different skill levels and scenarios. Here is a quick breakdown of the most important ones:

Basic Zone Modes

These are fully automatic modes where the camera makes all the decisions. They include **Full Auto**, **Portrait**, **Landscape**, **Close-up**, **Sports**, and **Night Portrait**. While convenient, these modes limit your creative control. Use them in a pinch, but graduate to creative zone modes as soon as you feel comfortable.

Creative Zone Modes

These modes put you in control of the exposure triangle—aperture, shutter speed, and ISO. They are essential for developing your photography skills:

- **Program (P)** – The camera sets both aperture and shutter speed, but you can shift the combination or adjust other parameters like ISO and white balance.
- **Aperture Priority (Av)** – You choose the aperture, and the camera selects the appropriate shutter speed. This mode is ideal for controlling depth of field in portraits and landscapes.
- **Shutter Priority (Tv)** – You set the shutter speed, and the camera picks the aperture. Use this for freezing or blurring motion in sports and action photography.
- **Manual (M)** – You set both aperture and shutter speed independently. This mode gives you complete creative control and is essential for consistent studio or night photography.
- **Bulb (B)** – The shutter stays open as long as you hold the release button. Use this for long exposures like light trails and astrophotography.

MASTERING THE AUTOFOCUS SYSTEM

Understanding AF Modes

The Canon 60D features three autofocus modes that you can select via the switch on the front of the camera or through the menu:

- **One-Shot AF** – The camera focuses once and locks. Ideal for stationary subjects like portraits, landscapes, and still life.
- **AI Servo AF** – The camera continuously adjusts focus as the subject moves. Perfect for sports, wildlife, and moving vehicles.
- **AI Focus AF** – The camera starts in One-Shot mode and switches to AI Servo if it detects motion. A useful hybrid for unpredictable subjects like children or pets.

Selecting AF Points

By default, the Canon 60D uses automatic AF point selection. However, for precise focusing, manually select a specific AF point using the multi-controller joystick on the back of the camera. In portrait photography, for example, selecting the point over the subject's eye ensures sharp focus. In landscape photography, using the center point and recomposing is a reliable technique. The camera's 9 cross-type points are sensitive and accurate, even in low light.

VIDEO RECORDING WITH THE CANON 60D

The Canon 60D was one of the first DSLRs to offer full manual control during video recording, making it a popular choice for videographers on a budget. Here are some tips for getting great video:

Setting Up for Video

Switch the live view/movie switch on the back of the camera to the movie icon. Press the start/stop button to begin recording. For the best quality, set the movie recording size to **1920 x 1080 at 24 fps** for a cinematic look, or **30 fps** for standard video. Use a fast SD card with a write speed of at least 30 MB/s to avoid recording interruptions.

Manual Exposure for Video

For consistent exposure throughout your video, switch to **Manual (M) mode** before recording. Set your aperture for the desired depth of field, shutter speed to twice your frame rate (e.g., 1/50 for 24 fps), and adjust ISO for brightness. Use the camera's built-in microphone for casual recording, but consider an external microphone for better audio quality. The 3.5mm microphone jack on the side of the camera allows you to connect a shotgun or lavalier mic.

CUSTOM FUNCTIONS AND PERSONALIZATION

One of the strengths of the Canon 60D is its extensive customization options. By tailoring the camera to your shooting style, you can work faster and

more efficiently. Here are some key custom functions to consider:

- **C.Fn I: Exposure** – Set the **ISO speed setting increments** to 1/3 stop for finer control or 1 stop for quicker adjustments. Disable **Safety shift** if you want to maintain full manual control.
- **C.Fn II: Image** – Adjust **Long exposure noise reduction** and **High ISO speed noise reduction** based on your shooting conditions. For low-light work, enable these features to improve image quality.
- **C.Fn III: Autofocus/Drive** – Enable **AF-assist beam firing** for better focus in dark environments. Set **AF point selection method** to your preference—many users prefer using the multi-controller directly.
- **C.Fn IV: Operation/Others** – Customize the **SET button** to control functions like the image quality, ISO speed, or flash exposure compensation. Assign a function to the **Depth-of-field preview button** if you rarely use it for its intended purpose.

You can save your settings to one of the **Custom shooting modes (C1, C2, C3)** on the mode dial. For example, you might configure C1 for studio portraits with specific white balance and flash settings, C2 for landscape long exposures with mirror lockup, and C3 for sports with AI Servo AF and high-speed continuous shooting.

ESSENTIAL LENSES FOR YOUR CANON 60D

The Canon 60D is compatible with Canon EF and EF-S lenses. The 1.6x crop factor means that a 50mm lens becomes an 80mm equivalent, and a 70-200mm lens becomes a 112-320mm equivalent—a significant advantage for telephoto work. Here are some lens recommendations for different types of photography:

- **All-Purpose Zoom** – Canon EF-S 18-135mm f/3.5-5.6 IS STM covers a wide range of focal lengths from wide-angle to medium telephoto. The STM motor ensures quiet and smooth autofocus for video.
- **Portrait Prime** – Canon EF 50mm f/1.8 STM is an affordable lens that produces beautiful bokeh and sharp images. The f/1.8 aperture allows for excellent low-light performance and shallow depth of field.
- **Wide-Angle** – Canon EF-S 10-18mm f/4.5-5.6 IS STM is ideal for landscapes, architecture, and interior shots. The image stabilization helps with handheld shooting in low light.
- **Telephoto Zoom** – Canon EF 70-300mm f/4-5.6 IS II USM provides excellent reach for wildlife and sports. The image stabilization and fast USM autofocus make it a versatile companion.
- **Macro** – Canon EF-S 60mm f/2.8 Macro USM delivers 1:1 life-size magnification for detailed close-ups of flowers, insects, and products.

USEFUL ACCESSORIES FOR THE CANON 60D

While the camera itself is capable, a few accessories can enhance your experience and expand your creative possibilities:

- **External Flash** – The built-in flash is adequate for fill light, but an external Speedlite like the Canon 430EX III-RT provides more power, faster recycle times, and wireless control.
- **Battery Grip** – The Canon BG-E9 battery grip holds two LP-E6 batteries and provides a vertical shutter release for comfortable portrait orientation shooting.
- **Tripod** – A sturdy tripod is essential for long exposures, macro photography, and video work. Look for one with a ball head for easy composition.
- **Remote Shutter Release** – The Canon RC-6 wireless remote or a wired RS-60E3 remote allows you to trigger the shutter without touching the camera, reducing camera shake.
- **Camera Bag**