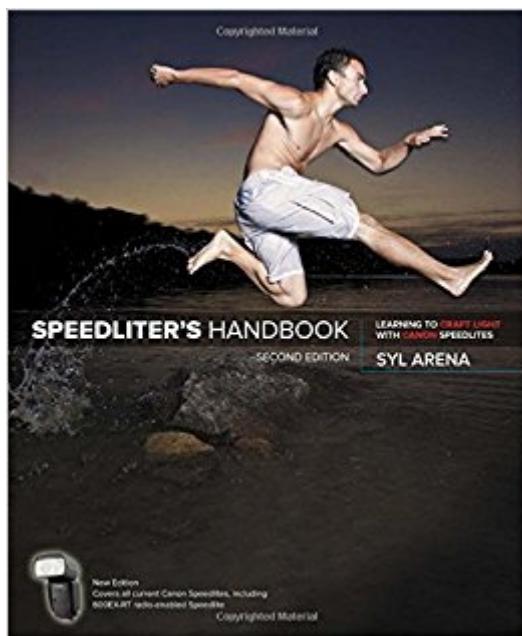


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# Speedliter's Handbook: Learning To Craft Light With Canon Speedlites (2nd Edition)



## Synopsis

For those new to flash photographyâ "or for anyone who has previously given up out of frustrationâ "Speedliterâ "TM's Handbook, Second Edition, is a revelation. Follow along as photographer Syl Arena takes you on a journey that begins with an exploration of light and color, moves through a comprehensive discussion of the Canon Speedlite family and all of the accessories and equipment available to the Speedliter, and finally, explores crafting great light in one photo shoot after another. Whether you want to make a classic portrait, photograph a group, capture an important event, or create dramatic color effects in your images, Speedliterâ "TM's Handbook shows you how. In this fully updated second edition, Syl includes all of the newest Canon gearâ "including the radio-enabled 600EX-RT Speedlite and ST-E3 Transmitterâ "to ensure that you are completely up to date on all of the components in the Speedlite system. He also includes a downloadable online supplement on the brand-new 430EX III-RT Speedlite. Plus, he covers his newest best practices and workflows so you can make the most of your Canon gear. In this new edition, youâ "TMll learn how to: see the various properties of light itself, as well as the differences between how your camera sees versus how you see use all the buttons and dials of the entire Canon Speedlite familyâ "from the flagship 600EX-RT and the new 430EX III-RT to vintage models like the 550EX understand the basics of on-camera flash . . . and the benefits of getting your Speedlite off the camera beautifully balance flash with the existing ambient light get amazing shots with just one Speedlite, all the way up to a dozen Speedlites use the right Speedlite mode for the job: E-TTL, Manual, Multi, and more use color gels to balance color, as well as create dramatic effects tame the sunâ "or any really bright lightâ "with high-speed sync use Speedlites when photographing groups and events choose your cameraâ "TM's exposure settings to capture the shot that you truly want and much, much more

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Back in the dark ages of view cameras and enlargers, Syl Arena studied commercial photography at Brooks Institute and fine art photography at the University of Arizona. An early indication of Syl's willingness to explore the boundaries of photography was his construction of a pinhole camera into which he loaded 20 x 24 litho film. Over the years, Syl has shot commercially for newspapers, magazines and catalogs. He has been recognized for his expertise on color-critical workflow and his ability to turn noon to night by firing off a dozen Speedlites simultaneously. Today, Syl covers the world of photography on his blog [PixSylated.com](http://PixSylated.com), is a full-time art teacher, and leads workshops around the world including at the popular Maine Media Workshops. He is the author of the best-selling first edition of Speedliter's Handbook, as well as *Lighting for Digital Photography: From Snapshots to Great Shots*. He lives in San Luis Obispo, CA, and can be found at [pixsylated.com](http://pixsylated.com) and [sylarena.com](http://sylarena.com).

I was fortunate to participate in a 2 day workshop with Syl in the lead up to this book, and now I have the book in my grubby little hands, I can heartily recommend it for anyone who is trying to get something more from their speedlites than Canon seems to think they are capable of. If you've just bought your first speedlite, then this book will walk you through everything you need to know to get it off the camera \*and\* keep the wonderful E TTL functionality that so many people misunderstand or seem to dismiss as gimmicky. If, like me, you've got a couple of speedlites and had already got them off the camera, then there is \*still\* material in here that will help you up your game and expand what you are able to make these wonderful little lighting gadgets do. My biggest revelation in off camera E TTL speedliting? Buy a long E TTL cable :) Syl turned me onto what can be achieved if I get my master speedlite off the camera, on a cable so I can trigger my slave anywhere, including behind my model. So simple, yet I never thought of it. There are tons of full color photos in the book that cover every topic covered in writing, making it perfect for us visual learners. Did I mention, it's Canon specific? So little has been written for us ... all those "brand independent" books I've read and purchased in the past still assume only Nikon is able to handle off camera flash work, never really

giving Canon their due. Finally, something I can simply follow along with the buttons on my own system and understand the same terminology. Simply - \*the\* book to buy if you want to get better at what we do in the Canon world.

I've decided to write this review in terms of what I'm getting out of this book. To put it in context, I'm a Canon shooter (just stepped up to a 60D) and have, of course, Canon flashes. I've wanted to do more with flash, but the details (with explanations of why, not just how) of using the 580EXII (for example) are very hard to find. As a result, 90% of my images are landscapes and I've shied away from using flash. No more. Until now, the only things I could find were a few online tutorials and a very good book by NK Guy. Although that book is excellent, this one is better (buy this one first, but if you can afford it, get both.)

Top Ten benefits (for me) of this book.

1. Great explanations of using light. By that I mean to create shadows and give definition. On the opening pages there's a picture of a white square against a black background. Next to it we can see that the square was simply a sheet of copy paper. We can see that because the author crumpled and then straightened it, giving it texture that the light could use to create those shadows and make it obvious. In two pictures and two paragraphs, the author said more about using light than hundreds of others tried to do elsewhere.
2. Great explanations on how to manipulate the buttons on the Canon flashes to make them do what you want. [Note: some of that is quite tricky, such as the need to hold a button down for 2 seconds in order to get into a specific configuration mode].
3. Great tips, such as telling you that if the flash modifiers are not 100% secured into the flash head, the controls won't work.
4. Excellent step by step instructions through the menus on both the flash units and the camera bodies.
5. Clear and understandable explanations about master and slaves, groups, channels, etc.
6. Clear and understandable explanations about ratios between flashes and how to set and control them from both the flash and the camera.
7. Some very useful tips for using Canon-compatible flashes and even non-compatible ones.
8. Good descriptions of studio lighting, and of combining (ganging) flashes.
9. A very nice section on flash modifiers (scrims, gobos, snoots, etc). That reminds me, there are sidebars that explain all the jargon. Very useful, indeed.
10. Several chapters at the end that put it all together, including one that explains the cover shot.

This is a long awaited, MUST BUY book for Canon flash users. By the way, the author maintains a blog that's well worth following, too. It's at [speedlighting.com](http://speedlighting.com). Also, check out another great book of his, *LIDLIPS.Â LIDLIPS Lessons I Didn't Learn In Photo School: 100 Modern Insights On Photography*

Simply put, the best book/reference tool that I have seen to date on speedliting (regardless of

brand). So much great information, presented in an easy to understand manner, and with terrific explanations as to the why behind Syl's methods and choices. Canon shooters in particular will absolutely love this volume. The author clearly spent a great deal of time and effort creating this book which is evident in the amount and quality of examples, both the photos and the fabulous "syllustrations". Great reference books only come from a combination of knowledge and passion for the subject, and it is clear after reading this book over the last two days that Syl has both in abundance. Worth every penny.

**Speedliter's Handbook: Learning to Craft Light with Canon Speedlites**

I'm digging into Syl Arena's book on Canon Speedlite's and it is great. If you are a Canonista you want this book! It's specific to Canon flashes and cameras, but also covers lighting in general. It starts by covering how light interacts with the thing you are taking a picture of, and how it effects the image you end up with. A big takeaway is that the shadow parts of your picture are just as important as the light parts. The book really explains how lighting equipment works, including the specifics of Canon Speedlites along with studio equipment along with specific recommendations. It answers questions like "What's flag?" or "When should I use a CTO?" For me this is great stuff, it's really taking the mystery out of lighting techniques for me. Then the book has a ton of example images, each with a description of how the lighting was setup for the image and why the lighting was setup that way. It also shows what happens to the image when you setup the lighting the wrong way. It covers everything from "How do I make a portrait with one Speedlite." to "What do I do when the sun is in front of me." My plan is to use these as a lesson plan to practice using my Speedlites, and I sure can use the practice. Super book that covers everything from the aesthetics of lighting to how to use a guide number. Highly recommended.

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