



# Balloon Photography Tips





**Getting a decent picture at the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta (AIBF) can be as easy as pointing your camera at the sky. However, there are a few tips and tricks you can follow to get GREAT images that stand out from the crowd and truly capture an unforgettable experience.**



*At dawn, the burners create pictures with amazing color.*

## EQUIPMENT

Any camera can be used to photograph balloons, but a camera with good optical zoom range will allow you to get up close even after the balloons have left the ground.

Cameras with interchangeable lenses like the EOS DSLR or mirrorless

options offer the most versatility. These cameras give you the ability to use a wide-angle lens for shots on the ground, then change to a telephoto lens for the balloons as they ascend.

If you want to keep it simple, Canon PowerShot cameras have built-in zoom lenses. Some of these, like the SX620 HS, span the range from wide-angle though super telephoto.

Here are some recommended cameras and lenses to try. Many of these cameras and lenses will be available for a “test drive” at the Canon Tent.

- EOS 5D Mark II
- EOS Rebel T7i
- EOS M50
- EF 16-35mm f/4L IS
- EF 24-105mm f/4L IS
- EF 70-200mm f/4L IS
- EF 8-15mm f/4L Fisheye



*Be sure to get pictures of the balloons as they are ascending. Having the burner lit adds an extra element to your pictures.*

## CAMERA SETTINGS

The AIBF gives you the opportunity to photograph balloons from dawn to dusk. This presents challenges to the photographer.

Generally, you want to make sure you have a shutter speed fast enough to hand-hold your camera and not get blurry pictures. TIP: Set your camera to Tv Mode (aka Shutter-priority Mode) so you control the shutter speed.

To minimize motion blur, you want a shutter speed of 1/60th sec or faster with your standard zoom lens, and 1/250th sec or faster if you switch to a telephoto zoom.

In low-light situations like dawn or dusk, you will need to raise your ISO to get those shutter speeds. ISO 1600 is a good starting point for photographing the balloons in the early morning as they are being prepared to be inflated. You can use AUTO ISO, as well.

### RECOMMENDED CAMERA SETTINGS:

- Tv Mode
- Shutter speed of 1/60th – 1/250th sec or higher
- ISO 1600 in low light (or just use AUTO ISO)

Keep in mind, these are only guidelines. If you are using a lens that has Image Stabilization, this technology allows you to use shutter speeds lower than what is normally recommended.

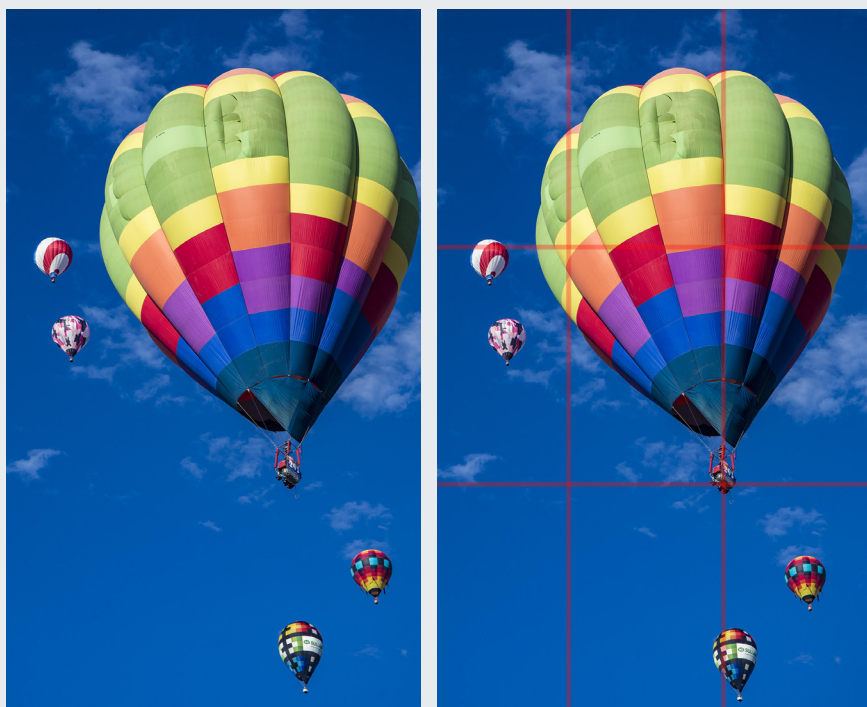


*Don't forget to snap a picture of the Canon balloon!*

## COMPOSITION AND DETAILS

A single balloon by itself in the sky usually makes for an uninteresting picture. But photographs of multiple balloons can be a bit cluttered.

Try to compose your picture so that one balloon stands out as the primary point of interest.



Use the “rule of thirds” to place that balloon a bit off-center for a more appealing image.

Another technique is called framing – you can use other balloons to create a “frame” to draw the viewer’s attention to the primary subject.



*A foreground element can “frame” the subject to eliminate dead space in your frame.*

Adding details to your picture can take an ordinary scene and give it extra appeal. For example, wait until the pilot ignites the burners. The balloon along with the flames from the burners make for a much more interesting picture than the balloon by itself.

**The Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta is one of the most amazing events in the world for photographers. With these tips, you are sure to capture great images!**

