

Howdy. Howdy, and welcome to Moose Podcast number 391.

Hard but essential.

I could add boring in there, but yeah. No, we'll keep it that way. How are you folks doing? Hey. Today is. That's right. April Fool's. Yeah. My. My juvenile mind. What many places? Things I could do with this podcast being it is April 1st, but I decided not to go there. Those people who travel with me on were on my adventures. They know there's two things I take seriously photography and food. After that evening's Fair Game and since the podcast is about photography, well, I'm going to keep it on. Let's say not the April Fool's side of things. So. Welcome. Welcome. Thanks for spending some time with me on this day. Hope you've had a great week. All is well here in Montana. Spring is. He doesn't know what to do had it's been spinning snow and rain. The birds are quite active. We've got most of our spring migrants have reappeared, which is fun. We haven't got a hummingbird yet. I've actually got out that new hummingbird feeder that has a built in camera and air sensing and it's picked up a lot of birds, but not Hummers. So. Fingers crossed soon. Hey, I want to thank my good friends at Bedford Camera Bedford's dot com. You know, they've got a lot going on. They've got the photo expo going on in May in Little Rock. It's a great event. I've spoken there before, and it's it's a marvelous, marvelous venue. And they've got all sorts of great presentations during the day. They've got workshops, they've got all the major manufacturers and vendors are there. It's just, hey. You want a really great experience. Head to Photo Expo. And of course, they're going to have expo pricing. Guess what? You mentioned my name and you're going to see an extra 5% off that expo special price. Or if you go to any one of their stores or call them on the phone or head to the Web site, you're going to also get that special pricing at, hey, let me tell you, that's real cash in your pocket. You might need some things for the solar eclipse that's coming up here in, what, ten days? Two weeks. They've got it all there for you. They've got the servers. They got the inventory. They got the pricing. They got the Moose discount Bedford's camera. I remember that. The them for sponsoring the Moose podcast. A couple of things that have come up this week. One I want to talk about. Folks. I posted a opening in our Monument Valley adventure, which comes up at the end of the year here, which has at this point has been filled. And now we will say, hey, I never saw that on your workshop page. Well, here's the deal, folks. Just so you know, we offer a lot of workshops and some of them are a special workshops in the fact that. Well, they require. Some skills. Point blank. They're not just for someone who just bought a camera. And so I sent out special invites to these groups who have been on workshops previous previously with us. And they never actually those workshops never hit the website. So. That Monument Valley region. Why you did not. See it posted before. It's one of those special invites that went out and I had an opening. So if you want to get in on that, you could say the the special invite list. You had to go on a workshop or two with us and we have to sorry, we have to know you've got some skills to go with it. So not that that guarantees that everything's going to work because it's not always been as successful as the original, you know, intention. But basically we're trying to get the most out of that photographic experience, both learning and the best photographs. So that's why we we keep doing it the way we're doing it. It's just so that answers a bunch of questions came up. Why no one saw that moment Valerie posted till just now. All right. What else have I got? I guess that's that's about it. Let's get right into this week's episode. Hard but essential. Now. If you go back. Way back for me, go way back. And when you had your probably literally your first writing lesson in school, kindergarten, first grade way back then. It's. You brought out this box. Shiny. Smelt like wood shavings and gave everybody their first brand new

number two pencil. And before we could learn to write my first lesson and I remember this because and it always has intrigued me ever since we had to learn how to properly hold the pencil. Yeah. Something so rudimentary now that we don't probably even think about it, but we had to be taught how to hold that pencil. And if you if you look at people today when they're writing after bad that's a challenge is to see people actually writing. You'll notice that there are a lot of different ways that people hold a pencil and or pen or a stylus or an apple pencil. Well. The same thing holds true for our camera gear before we actually start making images and be challenged. Knowing our camera gear, as in simply where things are. It's a hard thing to learn, but it is essential and it's probably one of the more boring tasks. Definitely not rewarding photographically. But I can tell you firsthand, watching people who have no bloody clue where the focusing ring is or how to, you know, take a lens off its collar, how essential it is. And you would think that, you know, and I always think this people you know, people are so smart and I know they're smart because they've earned the money to buy the camera gear. I mean, you've got to give yourself credit. If you have got that expensive camera gear you have put in your time and you have the gray matter in which to earn the money to buy that gear. So you are smart yet. When it comes to putting a camera hand that is going to mush. But it's and it's and it's really hard to to learn this coldhearted bastards I affection and calm. But it is essential now. Let me give you a simple example. In this in our age of mirrorless lenses tend to have a number of rings on them. And back in the day of film, you had just one ring on a lens and you rotated it and it would focus. Well, now you have rings that can do everything from aperture. Your program, you can program to it in on the Z9. You can program this here on the Z 604. You've got two sets of buttons. And what three or four rings are collars that you can program. That's a lot to have to to think about. Learn and be able to do without looking. And that's kind of the important caveat. All this we need to make that camera seamlessly part of our photographic experience. We don't we don't want it to be a roadblock. And I've seen photographers who man, they smack up against a camera and they can't get any further. And you're missing the photograph of a lifetime because you don't know. The basic controls where they are and what they do and understand that I'm not talking about. Mastering the different autofocus modes of the Z9 here. I'm not talking something really sophisticated. I'm talking about just knowing where the bloody focusing ring is on your lens. The Z 404 or five. It's got two and one is really narrow and it's got a star pattern to it. So texturally you can feel a difference in the focusing ring. Just has those parallel rubber ribs on it. But they're on the lens barrel. If you want to focus, you can only turn the one right and you rotate it. So the first challenge that you need to learn is which direction do you rotated to get it to focus closer and which way do you rotated to focus further now? Why would that be? Something you need to know? Because you're using a lot of focus. All right. Car to the table. Auto focus doesn't work 100% of the time. It doesn't. If you're using AI detection. It's not actually looking for an iris in a pupil and eyelids in an eye. It is looking for that circular pattern. And the most common place in which it is, quote unquote, fooled. Okay. Which it's not. It's it's doing its job. It just it doesn't have the complete brain capacity we have. So if you're lying on the beach and this is where I want, I take people down to the beach panning The first thing I always warn them is those specular highlights of the water as the waves come and go. A camera likes to grab onto them. There are these beautiful round patterns and just like, there it is, and it locks onto it. Your subject goes round. It's out of focus. So why do you need to know the folk singing? Well in that scenario. Well, let's say you're photographing hummingbirds and those little dudes

mandated, they're gone. Their buzz. And the number of times I take a picture and I swear to Pete, there was a hummingbird in that viewfinder when I went click, only to see that the eye picture's empty. There's nothing there. Boy, right there. Just fast as could be. And then if in that frustration of them gone, you hit the autofocus button again, it's going to go where to find a pattern. Well, why would you need the focusing ring? Getting to the point. I have found that when the camera does this beach panning hummingbirds, whatever it is, if I focus the lens closer, not going to infinity, but going to its minimum, forcing distance. And then hit my back button af on button. The camera then goes out to find the subject. And in that process, it locks back on to the subject very quickly. Now, if I go to infinity and then hit the F on button. It's coming back to find the subject just takes longer. And I want to lock on faster. Well, in order to get to that minimum focusing distance, I have to know where one that focusing color is on the lens and then to which way to rotate it to get to that minimum focusing distance. And I know this sounds very elementary and just bloody obvious. But I have seen over and over and over again folks fighting. Very smart people fighting with their gear. For the simple, hard fact that they haven't learned the essentials, some of their basic operations. What else can I talk about? Well. You have the shutter release button. That's a big button you push that makes the camera make all those pictures. Well, depending on a camera body. Talking about the Z8 or Z9, for example, right now, z6 to, you know, even the C, even the Z 30, Z 50. Next to and between the shuttles, bud and yourself. When the camera's up to your eye, there are three other little buttons. You've got one for ISO. You have one for exposure compensation. You have one that starts and stops the video. And with the z9 G8 and stuff, you can program those buttons to do other things other than ISO exposure comp start or stop video recording. I watch people and they're trying to dial in exposure compensation and also they hit their ISO and then their ISO goes bonkers and then they come back and they change their their their exposure compensation process. They hit their sub command dial in the front and they have that program. So maybe their aperture changes. And if you use shooting flash where you just lost it, let alone try and keep a subject in the viewfinder. There's a bunch of buttons. Another really essential button, central button, as far as I'm concerned, to make that camera body an essential part of you, the photographer. And there we're talking about you here. You have to be the one that's driving this boat. Okay. There's the the italicize I button. I as in me, the photographer, and those things that I need really fast. Now, all my settings for these cameras are on the website. Updated just what, over a week, two weeks ago when the the Z eight got its new firmware. So they're all there. And I'm not really talking about perfecting settings. We've done podcasts on set and I'm talking about just getting to know your camera and what these were. These things are these very I mean, it's the number of times I've seen people holding their camera and things don't work and they get all frustrated. And I have to say, well, you have your vertical firing button turned on. And since you're touching that with the palm of your hand, the other things are working. So you either learn to keep your hand off that button or you lock the button so it doesn't mess everything up. And you know what I'm talking about? It's happened to me. It's happened to you. It's happened to our friends. You're in the heat of battle. You're shooting like crazy. And something goes black, blue. And your mind just goes. Rather than stepping back and solving the problems. And the only way you can do that is muscle memory. And it's hard, but it's essential. You have to learn that camera. And yes, after all these parables and I have so many more, I've seen it all. And it boggles my mind because sometimes people are just bloody stubborn. They just. I've spent my

\$6,000. Why do I need to learn? Right. \$6,000 spent. It should do it for me. I know. How do you do this? I'm not making this up. It's what I do. I have witnesses. I get in my comfortable chair. Be it on the deck in the summertime by the fireplace in winter time. I have my favorite programming on either music. On the big screen and in my lap is my camera, and all I'm doing is holding it. And without looking, I'm manipulating it and saying in my head, I want to be at F8 and I'll click that. So come on, dial number of clicks to get there with the lens I have on, then I look. Yep, I got it. I want an exposure. Compensation. I want this, I want that, I want to minimum focus and I do it and I wrote find it and rotate with outlook in the camera body. I just. Enjoy the entertainment that's in front of me. I do it over and over again. Now I understand that. Being someone who makes their their finances with that camera, it makes sense to do this all over time so I can talk to my client, have that camera ready to go. Get it to my eye. Get the shot. PD Q captured that moment. But here's the thing. You folks, you work hard. You work hard 9 to 5, 40, 60 hours a week, and then you're your recreation. Is that photography? And it's not very recreational. When you're frustrated, you're not getting the shots. And in that night, you go back, you mumble that you missed the pictures. You went on this great trip, you went all this distance and you come back with nothing. But let's be honest, it's on you. You if you if you don't make a living your camera, you still have to know this horribly essential thing. And that's how that camera has its controls laid out and how you want those controls. To bring your ideas to that click. You've got to make the time you've got in. Doesn't take hours every day. You'd be surprised if you just did a couple minutes every night for a month. That camera, you would know. You would know how to unlock the collar on the flash to take it off the camera. You'd know that the collar can rotate. You know, the collar can come off, the foot come off. You can replace it, you know, without focusing ring is, you know, that that other ring you've you have programed on there. For example, myself, the Z 604 TSI, the very last Rotatable collar. Before you get to the big bell on the lens it doesn't do a 360 does this little click stop I program out that to turn on the DCS crop turn it on and off as a very last ding ding. And when I first thought, hey, this would be a quick and easy way of doing it, I had it in program, the little brain I have to remember to do it. And how do I do that? Put the thing in my lap and just practice. It's called Miss Muscle Memory for a reason. And that's this is all we're talking about is taking some time with our best friend, getting to know them better. So when we want them to perform. To perform. When they give us advice, we know we can trust her or not. And once you get to this point, then you start. I bet. I bet you'll grab out that instruction book, which you should do every six months, because the better you learn it and then you read the instruction book stuff. The instruction book will make more sense to you. You'll put it in the settings that make that camera sing for your photography. And then guess what? You go out shooting and you'll be more successful and your photography will grow. And it's just. It. Just like learning to hold that pencil again. You can't. You can't write. Until you know how to use that instrument. Hard but essential. You folks have a marvelous week. I hope the April Fool's jokes that before you today. Bring a laugh to you and a smile and keep you going. Remember to go out and make every click. Your story.