

Mood Of The Weather



Joe Newman at cosmicmudge.com

By Grant Gillespie

An image depicting some aspect of the weather, for example: storm, rain, hail, sleet, snow, fog or wind. Normal sunny conditions or the aftermath are not acceptable.

Mood

The guideline makes it clear, mood means **the weather in action**. The effect of the weather, or its aftermath, no matter how beautiful the image, will not meet the guideline.

Planning for this subject may require some thought about different kinds of the weather, how they can be depicted visually, and how to achieve the shot you have visualised.



Mike Theiss at nationalgeographic.com



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Rain against the window and wind/rain lashing the palm trees are classic examples. The window construction facilitates drips that add to the visual depiction. The wind blows the palm trees, and it also blows the rain making a dramatic scene to capture weather.

Calm Is A Mood, Too??

It could be argued that calm is also a mood, and that's why the guideline clarifies. The subject is looking for "moody" weather, depicting some kind of visual activity. *Beware of separating the subject from the guideline. The guideline is there to clarify and narrow what may be a broad subject.*

Think of depicting a moody person in a photograph. Which is more effective, someone sitting sullen in the corner or someone mid-tantrum? This appears to be the distinction the guideline is calling for. More than a passive scene – aftermath or sunny conditions, the guideline asks for storm, snow, etc. To this point, **snowing rather than snow on the ground**, which is aftermath. *Reference the image at the top of the page.* Much as rain is the weather, flood is aftermath.

Lightning

A favourite 'weather shot' is lightning. There are tomes written about capturing lightning — whether to use a lightning detector to trigger your shutter, and so on. National Geographic photographer Cotton Coulson gives some basic suggestions:

- Camera on a tripod
- Manual shooting mode
- Mirror lock-up & cable release to minimise camera shake
- f-stop to 8 or 11
- Exposure between 5 and 30 seconds
- You want to open the shutter and wait for the lightning bolts to appear in the sky.
- I never know where in the frame they'll appear, focus manually on infinity and include a lot of sky in your composition.



THELIGHTNINGMAN.COM

Bo Isogna at thelightningman.com

Clouds

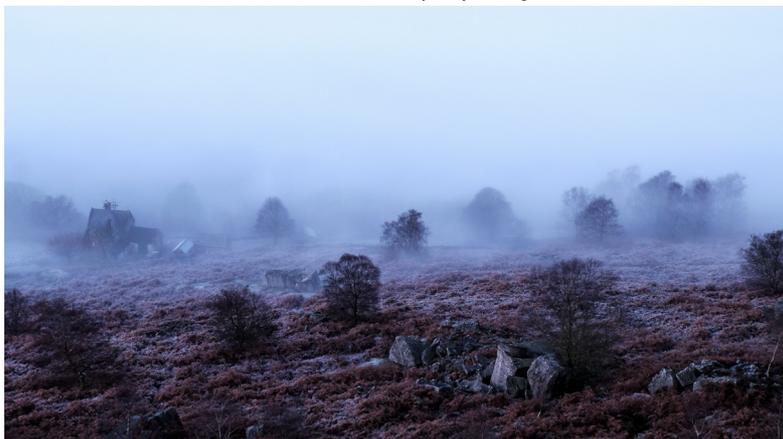
Ominous clouds may be a borderline case. A generous judge may accept "angry clouds", but the spirit of the guideline seems to go against precursor to a storm as much as aftermath of the storm, no matter how much mood it creates. Safer if you can show movement and activity in the clouds.

Fog is listed as an example in the guideline, but not clouds. Fog may be considered "a type of low-lying cloud", and is also described as "visible cloud water droplets or ice crystals suspended in the air at or near the Earth's surface", as if there's a distinction, although I don't see it. Nonetheless (wikipedia) goes on to mention the effect of fog on human activity – and that may be the distinction the guideline is after. Fog has more effect on humans – 'the viewer'.

Fog

Best time for fog is prior to sunset and after sunrise. Best place is near water. Fog tends to wash out colour, so look for something in the foreground bright, colourful and out of the fog. This will add depth to your image. Fog can fool light meters, use exposure compensation around +1EV. If you have more time and equipment, a tripod, Neutral Density Filter, long exposure (30 sec.) will smooth out fog.

Ben Cherry at fujifilm-blog.com



Protect Your Equipment

Storm chaser Jim Reed lets his (professional) cameras get wet, then dries them off with a towel, back in the car. A hole in the corner of a plastic bag big enough to fit your lens through provides good protection in the wettest of weather. Even a lens hood can provide some protection for lenses in light rain. See Further Reading for precautions against cold, humidity and dust. ■

Further Reading:

- <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fog>
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_meteorological_phenomena
- <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cloud>
- <https://fstoppers.com/landscapes/making-most-taking-day-shoot-landscape-photos-182833>
- <https://www.mnn.com/lifestyle/arts-culture/stories/3-ways-use-backlighting-more-creative-nature-photos>
- <http://www.poppphoto.com/how-to/2009/05/jim-reed-extreme-weather-photographer>
- <https://digital-photography-school.com/how-to-protect-your-camera-in-extreme-weather/>
- <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/photography/photo-tips/photographing-weather/>
- <http://digitalphotographysecrets.com/digital-photography-tips-techniques/how-to-photograph-extreme-weather/>
- http://environment.nationalgeographic.com/environment/photos/extreme-weather/#/science-extreme-weather-surfing-wave_47517_600x450.jpg
- <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/magazine/2012/09/extreme-weather-global-climate-change-effects/>
- <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/2015/04/150411-pictures-weather-storm-climate-change-hurricane-tornado-lightning/#/08extremeweather.jpg>
- <https://www.digitaltrends.com/photography/jim-reed-meet-one-of-the-prominent-extreme-weather-photographers/>
- <https://www.lifewire.com/extreme-winter-photography-493772>
- <http://www.jimreedphoto.com>
- <http://www.thelightningman.com/2010/09/13/arizona-lightning-desert-storm-and-operation-desert-storm/>
- <http://www.digital-photo-secrets.com/tip/6641/how-to-photograph-the-weather/>
- <http://www.cambridgeincolour.com/tutorials/fog-photography.htm>
- <https://www.craftsy.com/blog/2013/06/taking-great-photos-in-the-fog/>
- <http://www.digital-photo-secrets.com/tip/4328/capture-photos-foggy-misty-conditions/>
- http://www.canadiannaturephotographer.com/fog_photography.html
- <https://fujifilm-blog.com/2014/12/17/photographing-fog/>