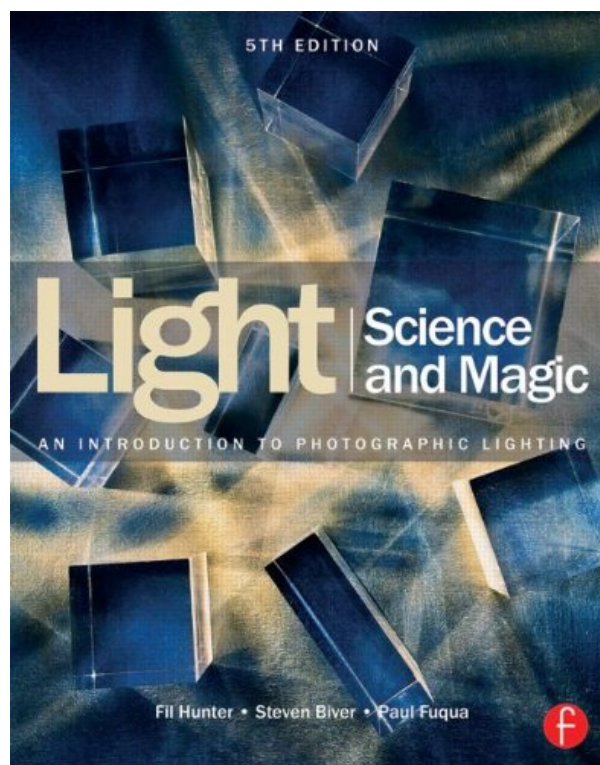
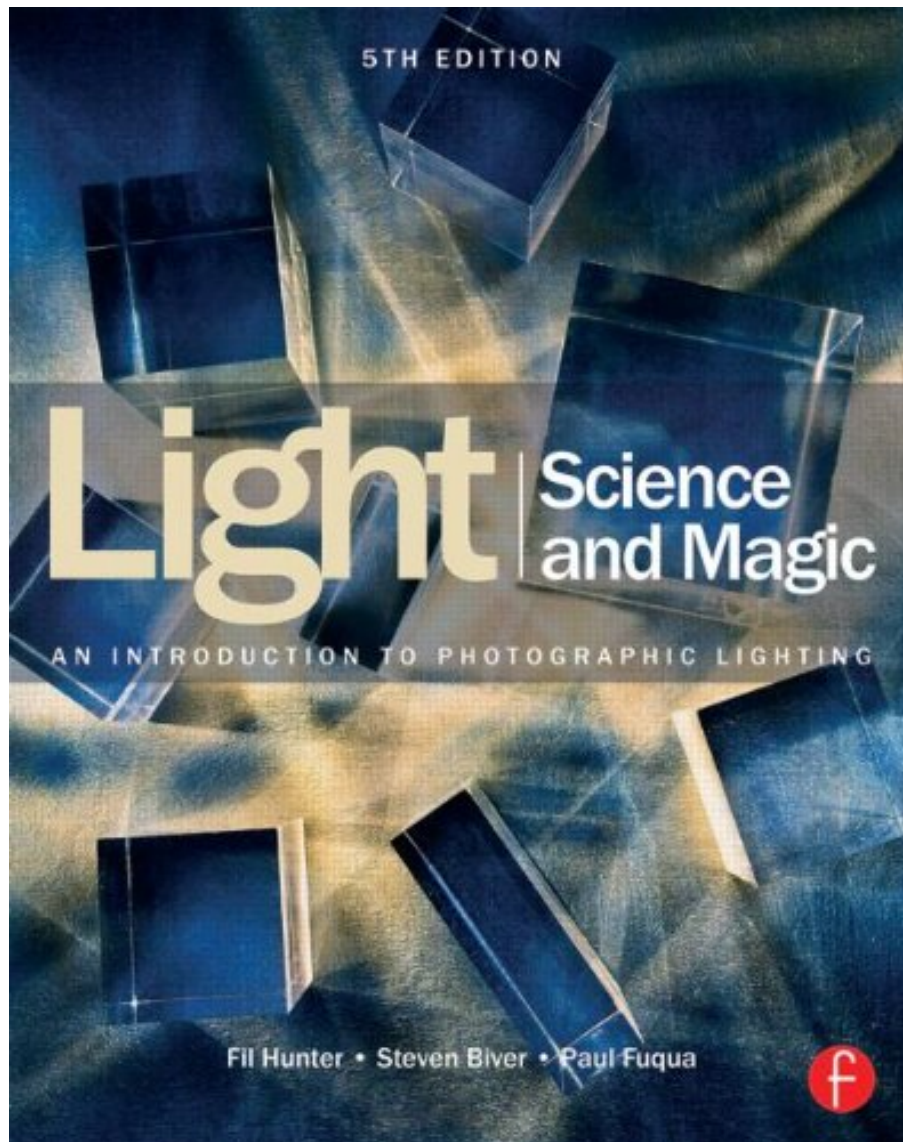


**LIGHT SCIENCE & MAGIC: AN
INTRODUCTION TO PHOTOGRAPHIC
LIGHTING BY FIL HUNTER, STEVEN
BIVER, PAUL FUQUA**



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Review

"This book offers a set of tools that a photographer can use to promote their own sense of art and beauty. While your photographs reflect your individual taste and vision, the tools in this book give you options to highlight or diminish the elements in the photograph and as a result, lift those images to something more, something even better. The authors have done an amazing job by writing about a difficult subject in an easy style that allows the reader to fully understand the concepts of lighting and how it will shape your images." - Apogee Photo Magazine

About the Author

Fil Hunter was a highly respected commercial photographer specializing in still life and special effects photographs for advertising and editorial illustration. During a career spanning over three decades, he worked for such clients as America Online, US News, Time-Life Books, Life Magazine (27 covers), the National Science Foundation, and National Geographic. He taught photography at the university level and served as technical consultant on a number of photographic publications. Mr. Hunter won the Virginia Professional Photographer's Grand Photographic Award three times.

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LIGHT SCIENCE & MAGIC: AN INTRODUCTION TO PHOTOGRAPHIC LIGHTING BY FIL HUNTER, STEVEN BIVER, PAUL FUQUA PDF

Photographic lighting is a topic that will never go out of style, no matter how sophisticated cameras and other technology get. Even with the most high-tech gear, photographers still need to put a lot of thought and vision into lighting their photographs in order to get great results. This key skill has the power to dramatically and quickly improve photographs.

Light Science and Magic provides you with a comprehensive theory of the nature and principles of light, with examples and instructions for practical application. Featuring photographs, diagrams, and step-by-step instructions, this book speaks to photographers of varying levels. It provides invaluable information on how to light the most difficult subjects, such as surfaces, metal, glass, liquids, extremes (black-on-black and white-on-white), and portraits.

This new edition includes:

- All new chapter titled "Setting Up Your New Studio"
- A re-vamped and expanded chapter 8 now titled "Making Portraits"
- New appendix of reliable photo gear sources
- Over 100 new photographs and informational sidebars
- Updated information about advances in flash equipment, LED panels and fluorescent lights

Styles of lighting continue to change, but the nature of light will always remain the same. Once photographers understand the basic physics of lighting, they can apply that knowledge to a broad range of photographic styles.

- Sales Rank: #33260 in Books
- Published on: 2015-02-27
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.30" h x .90" w x 7.50" l, 1.88 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 400 pages

Review

"This book offers a set of tools that a photographer can use to promote their own sense of art and beauty. While your photographs reflect your individual taste and vision, the tools in this book give you options to highlight or diminish the elements in the photograph and as a result, lift those images to something more, something even better. The authors have done an amazing job by writing about a difficult subject in an easy

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Most helpful customer reviews

92 of 93 people found the following review helpful.

A book you will actually use

By Andy in Washington

I consider myself a professional photographer. I don't make my living at it, but I do earn enough from it to pay for all the equipment I own. I am a lover of flash photography, and regularly use about a dozen different strobes, lights, flashes, and controllers.

I also own well over 100 books on photography. They are divided into two groups. The first is a small shelf in my office that holds maybe 15 books, the other is a large shelf in the attic that holds the remainder. This book has earned a place on the small shelf-it is that useful.

The Good Points

* The title is somewhat misleading. When I bought the book I was expecting a collection of lighting tricks designed to produce nifty special effects. That is not what the book is at all. Rather it is a review of many standard lighting techniques useful in everyday situations. There are tips on portraits, still life, product photography, and even some basic theory of light.

* Everything is kept simple. The authors don't go out of their way to impress you with how brilliant they are, they avoid the use of jargon, arcane terms and other vocabulary designed to show off rather than inform.

* The book shows real examples, and shows the lighting setup used and the results obtained. The lighting drawings are somewhat inexact, but certainly detailed enough to understand and duplicate the setup. They also do not go out of their way to specify exact exposure details, and instead direct the reader to "experiment". I have watched several photographers who I could consider first-tier professionals use the same technique-set up the light, take a shot, fix the lights....repeat until you get what you want.

* The examples they use are generic enough to be useful on a wide variety of subjects. As an example, some of the specific lighting challenges which the book covers include a glass of beer, glass vases and decanters, chessboard, a black prop on a black background, and metallic and shiny surfaces. While the book is certainly not a cookbook for every possible shot, if you master these techniques you are halfway home for just about any lighting assignment.

* While not a scientific work by any means, the authors do provide some basic theory of light (such as polarization) which should be detailed enough to help out any level of photographer understand what is going on.

* None of the material is in any way specific to any particular brand or style of equipment.

The Not So Good Points

* This is not an introductory book. There is almost no information on setting up camera exposures, flash modes. Knowledge of histograms is assumed, as are some very basic photoshop techniques for analyzing/correcting photos.

* The book ended too soon. I love the format of showing the same photo, lit with multiple techniques along with a lighting diagram for each photo. I would love to see a book of just photos and diagrams in the same format as the authors used. Some of my most challenging photo assignments (such as jewelry) were not discussed, and I could use the help.

* The lighting diagrams are not very detailed. No dimensions are given, nor is actual exposure information disclosed. Even with the diagrams and the book in front of you, a successful photo is still going to require some additional knowledge of lighting as well as a bit of experimentation.

Overall

* I found the book useful, and I already thought I knew quite a bit about flash lighting. A true photo beginner would probably struggle with the book unless they already have knowledge of how to set up flash exposures. I would have liked to see another 200 pages of specific examples, but there was a good range of material shown, and it is in a format that I can easily find and use.

* I recently had a client who wanted a picture of a decanter of red wine, with several glasses, shot on a glass tabletop. I wish I had this book before that photo session...countless hours of profanity might have been prevented.

* I would not recommend the book unless you own an SLR, at least one strobe or flash unit (preferably at least two), maybe a reflector or two, and a couple tripods. All of the tips in this book involve placing light sources in specific places-tough to do without some minimal amount of equipment. If you just have a small on-camera flash, there isn't much in this book that is going to help you.

27 of 28 people found the following review helpful.

Excellent Third or Fourth edition

By zphage

I have both the third and fourth editions.

I don't think there is enough new stuff to bother buying this edition if you already have the third edition.

They update stuff to meet the modern digital age and go a little more into lighting when outside and extreme white, black, and mirrored backgrounds.

If you don't have this book then get this newest edition, if you have the third you are fine.

11 of 11 people found the following review helpful.

Essential introductory guide to photographic lighting

By Alan Shi

There's a good reason this book is on the strobist 'bookshelf' list of recommended books: it's excellent.

I was initially sceptical of this book when I flipped through it and saw that the first chapter looked more like a high school physics text on the properties of light than a photography book. Quickly, however, I was thrilled to learn how well this initially dry material was subsequently built upon to show real applications to lighting technique used in photography. In fact, by a large margin, the best parts of this book are the first 7 chapters that deal with technical aspects of lighting, particularly with respect to how they apply to photographing different kinds of materials, and how to control the different kinds of reflections to obtain the best results.

After a basic primer on the properties of light and reflections, this book goes into details about how to use light to reveal surface details and contours, and deal with tricky subjects like photographic metal and glass. The coverage of these topics is top-notch. There's great detail, with easy-to-understand explanations and examples. If there's one thing that might be improved, it's probably the lighting diagrams that accompany the examples. These diagrams are all drawn in two dimensions even though it can be clear that the height of the lights matter to the descriptions in the text. In some cases, obviously 3D concepts are not well communicated in a 2D diagram at all. Nevertheless, the content is still very clear, and the writing is excellent.

The book gets a bit more random towards the end. There's a chapter essentially on portrait lighting, and it does a decent job covering some basic lighting arrangements and key problems/considerations, it didn't nearly have the same impact for me as the earlier part of the book. I'd say this chapter served as an ok introduction, but the information is really compressed, so you'll definitely do better with a dedicated book on the topic.

Chapter 9 deals with 'extremes', and the book starts to delve into technical camera / post-processing topics rather than purely be about lighting. The chapter starts off with a discussion of the 'characteristic curve' (think curves in Photoshop) but this was probably presented in a more confusing way than necessary. I also thought some of the claims about compression of highlights in the top part of the histogram for digital might be inaccurate (or at least not relevant enough to merit suggesting *underexposure* of highlights--not just to avoid clipping, but in general--to get better contrast). Almost every other technical source I have read advocates exposing-to-the-right for digital because of the *greater* tonal information captured (as opposed to what this book claims, which is that it falls off quickly at the top end even before clipping). The jury's still out on that for me. Chapter 9 also deals with photographing white-on-white and black-on-black subjects, with interesting tips for both situations (both from an exposure standpoint and a lighting standpoint).

The last chapter was a bit of a grab bag of short topics mostly for the novice photographer, covering topics like colour balance, and gels. This felt more like a few random blog entries thrown together than earlier chapters, but still decent if you've never read about these topics before.

Overall, despite its (relatively minor) flaws, this is an excellent book on photographic lighting that is both inspiring and educational. It is also a great book that will surely encourage further study. Often after reading about a given topic, I felt inspired to go out and try the techniques described (whereas after reading most other books, I felt content to just understand the ideas intellectually). I'm sure most other readers will feel the same way as well. Highly recommended.

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