

# THE ULTIMATE MILKY WAY PHOTOGRAPHY PREPARATION CHECKLIST

## Finding Perfect Conditions

**Moon Phase**

You'll want to shoot on nights with no visible moon, as it will outshine the stars; check the moon phase using the "Deluxe Moon" app.

**Weather Conditions**

Clouds will block out the stars so only shoot on clear nights.

**Location Scouting**

It's hard to find great locations in the dark, so come prepared with an idea of where you want to shoot.

## Essential Packing



**Wide Angle Lens**

This will allow you to use a slower shutter speed and capture more light.



**Tripod**

Essential for long exposures.



**Cable Release**

Avoid camera shake by using a remote to take the photo.



**Extra Batteries**

Long exposures will drain your camera batteries fast.



**Memory Cards**

The last thing you want is to run out of space half way through the night.



**Headlamp**

Keep both hands free for carrying your gear.



**Warm Clothing**

It gets much colder at night than you may expect.

## Optional Extras



**Sleeping Bag**

It's hard to stay warm at night, especially when you're not moving, so this can really help.



**Camera Cleaning Kit**

Keep your lens clean of any accidental smudges in the night.



**Camp Chair**

A luxury when you're sitting in one spot all night.



**Floodlights**

If you want to play with lighting the scene.

## Camera Setup

**Use the Widest Focal Length Possible**

You'll be able to capture more of the sky and use a longer shutter speed.

**ISO to 3200 (Adjust Based on Shutter)**

A great starting point.

**Turn on Long Exposure Noise Reduction**

If you're using an ISO of 3200 or above, this can help to reduce noise.

**Set Shutter Speed Using 500 Rule**

Divide 500 by your focal length to work out your maximum shutter speed (without capturing motion blur), e.g.  $500/14\text{mm} = 35$  seconds.

**Shoot in RAW**

This will give you the best image quality.

**Manually Focus to Infinity**

This is where the stars will be at their sharpest.

**Set The Aperture Wide Open**

To allow as much light in as possible.