How to Photograph in Manual Mode

1) Move your camera dial to '**M**'.

2) Look through your camera's viewfinder, press half-way down on your capture button, and look at the **light meter** at the bottom. Aim for the little tick to be at 0 in the center.

- What I do: Because it's important to retain information in the highlights of my photos, I tend to underexpose my photos in order to do so. If you overexpose your photos, it's hard to get those details back in post-production. (So in other words, a dark photo is better than a light photo.)

3) Set your **ISO**. What I like to do is start with my ISO at 100 to ensure that my photos will be getting the least amount of grain, and then go up as needed.

- ISO 100 is ideal for sunny, direct light.

- ISO 400-800 is a great start for indoor photography or cloudy situations.

- Higher ISOs are crucial for low-light situations or night photography.

4) Choose your **shutter speed**. Start at 1/150+ of a second as a starting point.

5) Set your **aperture**. Because I know that I generally want a shallow depth of field in my images, I will set my aperture to a low F-stop.

- Low F-stops are great for focusing on something very specific, such as a product in a photo or your main subject.

- F5.6 - F8 is an ideal range for portraits to capture the entire face, not just the eyes or the nose.

- Higher F-stops are helpful for getting a ton of detail in focus, like in landscapes.

6) Check your **light meter again.** Double check to see that your light meter is properly exposed at 0, or underexposed a tick if you prefer to do what I do. You can use your main dial at the top of the camera to quickly adjust your light meter for proper exposure, too.

7) Take your photo.