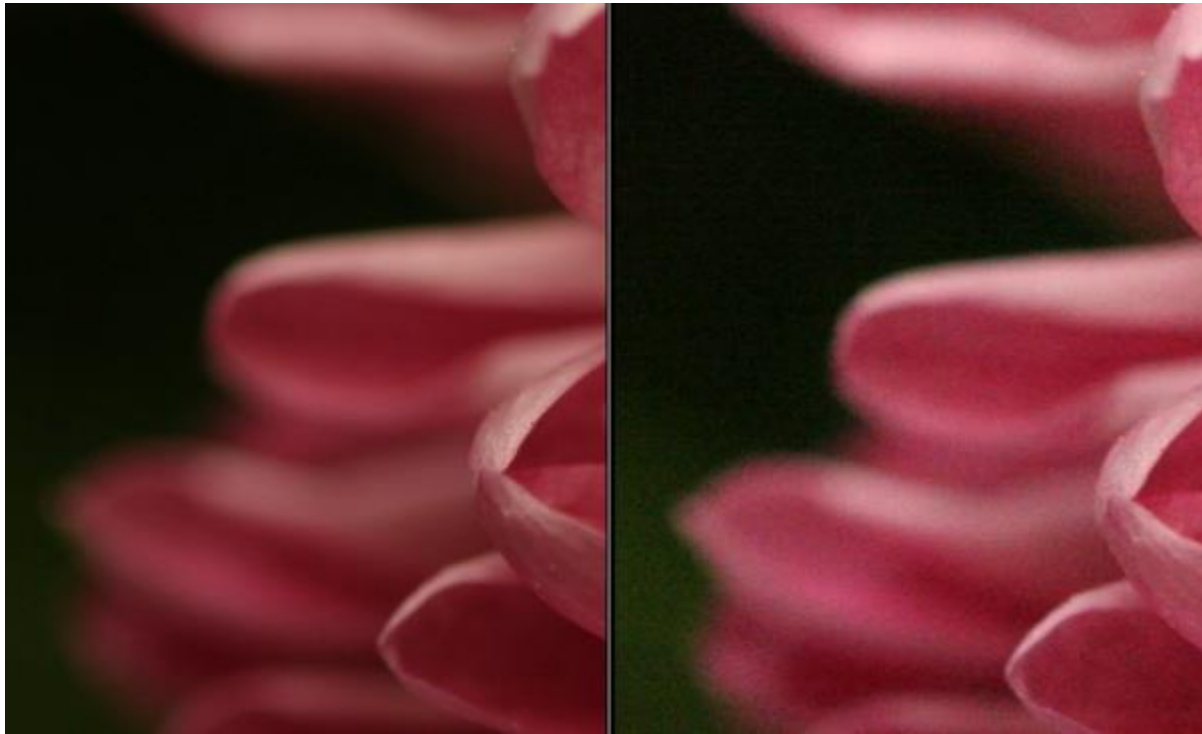


What is ISO?

In traditional (film) photography ISO (or ASA) was the indication of how sensitive a film was to light. It was measured in numbers (you've probably seen them on films – 100, 200, 400, 800 etc). The lower the number the lower the sensitivity of the film and the finer the grain in the shots you're taking.

In Digital Photography ISO measures the sensitivity of the image sensor. The same principles apply as in film photography – the lower the number the less sensitive your camera is to light and the finer the grain. Higher ISO settings are generally used in darker situations to get faster shutter speeds (for example an indoor sports event when you want to freeze the action in lower light) – however the cost is noisier shots. I'll illustrate this below with two enlargements of shots that I just took – the one on the left is taken at 100 ISO and the one on the right at 3200 ISO (click to enlarge to see the full effect).



(you can see larger sized images of both shots [here for the 100 ISO](#) and [here for the 3200 ISO](#))