

... I wrote a post on Digital Photography Review (DPR) some weeks back (about 10 April, 2013) where I described my current settings. You can read it here – [My HS50 EXR - My Current Settings](#)

At the time I mentioned they were my current settings as I would not normally be using DR 100% on a Fuji EXR camera. My preferred setting is DR 200%.

Well, after some 2,200 images, and a lot of those as test images, I have finally settled on my settings whereby I am getting very good, and very consistent results.

They should not be taken as a blanket rule for all, but they are suitable for the type of photography I do. Perhaps for you also. You will only know if you try them.

*Note – I also have the HS30 EXR and I find these settings are equally applicable for that. However, the HS30 EXR overexposes about half a stop and I find I need to use more EV correction.*

One thing that really bothered me with the HS30 EXR and the HS50 EXR was that with dynamic range (DR) set above DR 100% there is colour bleed, lack of colour acuity and accuracy, and also lack of fine detail.

You can see my DPR post about this here (In particular, read Part 3 DR v DR) – [My HS50 EXR - Getting The Best IQ](#)

Anyway, having experimented further and also looking at incredible, and consistent, results from the HS30 EXR from a gentleman called Electric Bill (on another forum), I have blended my settings with his.

The big change from my past settings is to use Astia (he uses Velvia), DR 200% and to set Colour to +2 (High) and Tone to -2 (Soft). More about this below.

So, here are the primary settings I will continue to use :

*Note - If I don't mention a particular setting then it is either something I have turned off, or it is not relevant, for me. For example, Face Detection. I always have that off as it slows down the shoot time and, frankly, I just find it incredibly annoying.*

Program AE (P) Mode – This allows the shutter and aperture to 'float'.

*Note - It is equally valid to use aperture priority (A) or shutter priority (S) if you desire and if you wish to fix those values*

ISO – 1600 (Auto) – This allows me the most flexibility in a myriad of lighting environments. The good news is that the camera will always opt for the lowest ISO and also that even ISO 1600 is very usable for prints at A3, or greater. However, if you want the very best image quality (IQ) for a particular scene, then you should set the ISO to suit. For example, if I were shooting landscapes I would be using a tripod and have the ISO set to ISO 100.

Image Size – L (large) 4:3 – Do not shoot M (medium) size unless you want a watercolour effect. It is a total myth that any Fuji EXR camera should be only shot at M size. I also have the F200 EXR and if you shoot M size there is little discernible difference. However, with the HS30 EXR and the HS50 EXR there is a pronounced difference. Not only is there less detail but it also introduces lack of colour acuity and more pronounced colour bleed. L gives detail that M never can.

*Note – I also prefer 4:3 as I have a standard set of printing sizes I use and will crop/resize in post process, if desired. For example, my normal print size is 11 x 15.5 inches which is a ratio somewhere between 4:3 and 3:2. This allows a print on an A3 sheet, with some border for mat (passepartout) mounting, or on a 12 inch paper roll, again with some border.*

Image Quality – Fine + Raw – This gives me the option to use Raw to 'rescue' an image if required. Mind you, the Jpegs are so good that it is a rare occurrence.

*Note – By rescue I mean using the Silkipix RFC supplied with the camera, not LR 4.4 or ACR 7.4 as they have their own issues, particularly with colour bleeding. That doesn't mean to say they are useless. Quite the contrary. However, if you want the best detail and best colour acuity and the least colour bleed, then use the Silkipix RFC. I also have the Fuji X-E1 and it is equally applicable for that camera*

Dynamic Range – DR 200% – Up until now I was using DR 100% due to issues with colour bleed with higher DR settings. Same as DPR pointed out about the X20 in their review. I have changed back to DR 200% as it was always my preferred option. Why ? By setting Colour to +2 and Tone to -2 (see below), colour bleed is less, although not entirely eliminated

Film Simulation – Soft (Astia) – Again, I was using Provia before but with my new Colour and Tone settings Astia is once again a much better choice for colour acuity, less colour bleed and more accurate skin tones. With any Fuji camera which has Astia as an option, it has always been my preferred choice

White Balance – Auto – Really, you cannot fault this. Why stuff around with something that simply works

Colour – plus 2 (High) – Read about this below

Tone – minus 2 (Soft) – Well, I wouldn't have thought these two settings (Colour and Tone) would have much effect, but they do. By setting Tone (contrast) to Soft you reduce contrast but also reduce noise. If you use this on its own then the image will be quite washed out. Used in conjunction with setting the Colour (saturation) to High then that compensates for any loss of colour acuity whilst not (re)introducing noise

Sharpness – plus 2 (Hard) – This gives you the most fine detail and tends to negate some of the over aggressive effect of the in-camera NR. Would be good if you could turn NR off, but you can't.

*Note - For prints to A3, even larger, the effects of any 'hard' sharpening are not in the least visible but there will be more fine detail. If this worries you, then set sharpening to standard (0). However, keep in mind that you cannot sharpen detail in post process (PP) that does not exist in the first place*

Noise Reduction – minus 2 (Weak) – My first comment when I got the HS30 EXR and then the HS50 EXR was that the sensor was more noisy than I thought it should be in this day and age. And it is. However, by using the settings I describe here you can mitigate the effect. Using NR -2 (Weak) allows more fine detail. The Fuji NR system is aggressive, to say the least, no matter what setting you use. You only have to compare a Raw file to a Jpeg to see the difference. Keep in mind that NR minus 2 is 'Weak', not off

Photometry – Average – I am not a fan of 'Multi' and I find Average works very well in most situations.

*Note – I also use Spot if the subject is brightly lit against a dark background*

AF (Auto Focus) – AF Tracking – If you want consistent, accurate and fast focus, don't look past this. You don't need to follow the manual's instructions – Simply centre your subject, half-press (and hold), recompose, move how you will, or let the subject move how it will, and the camera will keep focus fixed on the subject. This is brilliant

Flash – minus 2/3 – I rarely use flash but I find it is a little harsh unless toned down a little

Electronic Level – On – How did we ever live without this ?

IS Mode – Shooting + Motion – It may be a bit rougher on the battery but focus is faster

EV Compensation – minus 0.33EV or minus 0.67 EV – I find both cameras (HS30 and HS50) overexpose slightly. The HS30 more so. By setting EV down a little then the risk of blown highlights is pretty well eliminated

That's it. Try them for yourself. No warranty or guarantee provided, express or implied