

After many years of doing photography as an amateur, I came to a few simple and rather trivial realizations.

1. Focusing on the flaws of your camera is just an excuse to buy new hardware. Re-reading reviews of your current camera is the best remedy for that. The awesome features that made you buy the camera and overlook its shortcomings are still there.
2. Practically any current DSLR and mirrorless camera from Sony, Olympus, Canon, and Nikon is more than good enough if you are an amateur or enthusiast. That has been true for a while.
3. Reading the manual that comes with your camera is not a bad idea at all.
4. The more you use your camera the less its deficiencies and quirks matter. Most of the camera's limitations can be solved through creative thinking.
5. Obsessing about image quality is counterproductive. If you think that your photo is bad because corners are not sharp, then your photo is probably not that good to begin with. The subject and your interpretation of the scene is what provokes an emotional response, not the dreamy bokeh and corner-to-corner sharpness.
6. Here's a subjective observation after visiting photography forums regularly and reading through thousands of posts: the more someone is obsessing about gear, the higher the probability that their photos are nothing special.
7. You can take great photos with a kit lens. In fact, if you are not a professional, lenses don't matter all that much.
8. Stop worrying about what lenses you should get. All you may need is a travel zoom and one or two primes for your favorite photography subjects.
9. Keeping focus on improving your photography through developing skills is much, much harder than fantasizing about how the newest camera model or lens will allow you to do something amazing.
10. Understanding the fundamentals of digital image manipulation is more important than learning what buttons in your favorite application to push for the desired result. If you know how sharpening works and what curve adjustments do, you'll have less difficulty figuring out how to use this functionality in a specific application.
11. Learning is hard, but it will make you better. Comparing is easy, but it will make you miserable.
12. Most photography competitions are a waste of time. Focus on improving your skills, finding your own style, and making connections.
13. One day, a backup will save your bacon.

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