Chapter 6: Elements of Exposure, External Lights

External lights (either natural or artificial) are the primary source when determining exposure, which then dictates how you setup your camera settings. Here are some key elements when going to shoot photos:

- Ambient Light (Natural/Available Light)
  - The primary light in the scene, this could be sunlight, daylight, golden hour/blue hour. Camera settings should be set to match the intensity of the light.
- Flash/Strobe (Artificial)
  - Used to fill shadows or to overpower the sun. Strobes are essential when the subkect is backlit to match or exceed the brightness of the ambient background.
- Quality of Light (Hard vs. Soft)
  - Hard Light
    - Can be direct sun or clear skies that create high contrast, intense highlights, and deep shadows. This can cause overexposure.
  - Soft Light
    - Can be overcast skies or diffused light, as well as golden hour. This provides gentle contrast, lower intensity, and better retention.
- Positioning and Direction of Light:
  - Key Light
    - This is the main source of light in the scene.
  - Fill Light
    - Helps fill in some shadows.
  - Back Light
    - Not always necessary, but it helps separate people from the background.

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