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BEGINNER

Controlling the Light Spilling onto the Subject

Behind the scenes at portrait lighting workshops with Speedlight flash master David X. Tejada

Featuring **DAVID TEJADA**



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D4S, AF-S NIKKOR 70-200mm f/2.8G ED VR II, 1/60 second, f/2.8, ISO 800, manual exposure.

The Portrait Workshop Series

If you're visiting for the first time, we're presenting here a dozen photos taken at portrait photography workshops by the noted commercial photographer and Nikon Creative Lighting System expert David X. Tejada.

To get the most from his tips, techniques and comments, be sure to take a few moments to check out our notes on [flash, metering and the CLS](#) before viewing the photos.



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Spill Control

When you use an umbrella to bounce light, you often get an additional effect: light spilling over onto the background. To prevent that happening in this portrait, David used a technique he calls "the poor man's softbox."

"It's a 60-inch convertible umbrella," he says, "but if I'd opened it fully, it would have spilled light behind the subject, illuminating the background. By collapsing the umbrella a bit, I'm controlling the spill light, preventing it from lighting an area I don't want to light." ("Convertible" means you can remove the outer black fabric and shoot through it as well as bounce light from it.)

There's an SB-800 Speedlight in the umbrella. An SB-900 at lower left was bounced off the ceiling in front of the model to add a little fill light to open up the shadows. A third flash, an SB-900, is at camera right at about one o'clock above the model's left shoulder, and that one has a barn door on it to give sliver-of-light illumination to his head and shoulder. The collapsible, pop-up, black 3x6-foot background reflector on the right side is in place to block light from a row of vertical windows. You'll see that reflector used in several photos in our series.

"When I place a flash inside an umbrella or a softbox," Dave adds, "I like to illuminate the entire interior of the umbrella or the softbox, so I make sure the little plastic diffusion screen that comes with Speedlights is over the flash head—it spreads the light quite wide."

To see more of David Tejada's photography, visit his website at www.davidtejada.com.

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