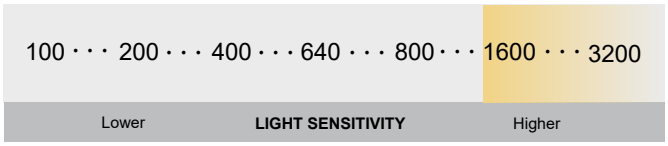
MILKY WAY PHOTOGRAPHY CHEAT SHEET

APERTURE

Shoot wide - your aperture will want to be wide. At least f/3.5 and wider in most cases.

ISO



Start at ISO 3200 - most astrophotography is done between ISO 1600 and ISO 6400.

SHUTTER SPEED

Setting the correct shutter speed is one of the toughest things to do in astrophotography, but there's an easy way to figure it out and it's called **The 500 Rule.**

THE 500 RULE

DIVIDE 500 BY THE FOCAL LENGTH OF THE LENS THAT YOU'RE USING.

So, if you have a 24mm lens on a full frame camera, you will set your shutter speed to 20s (500/24=20.83).

If you're working with a crop-sensor camera be sure to account for the crop factor (typically 1.5 for Nikon and Sony, 1.6 for Canon).

As an example, using the same 24mm lens on a Nikon crop, you'd end up with an effective focal length of 36mm (24x1.5=36).

Applying the 500 rule will yield a shutter speed of 13sec. (500/36=13.89).

IF THIS DOESN'T WORK, REPLACE 500 WITH 600 IN THE CALCULATION (WHICH IS "THE 600 RULE").

TIP:

Use live view - this makes it a lot easier to compose your shot as often you won't be able to see anything through the viewfinder.

TIP:

Shoot raw - you will need to do some post-processing so make sure you get as much image info as possible by shooting raw.