

Selective focus

However if only your main subject is in focus and everything else is out of focus it can make our main subject really stand out of the background.

The area that is out of focus is called **bokeh** – a word borrowed from Japanese. Bokeh refers to the area of the frame that is pleasantly blurred and out of focus, while the main subject is sharp and in focus.



Here's a snap of one of my daughters again. Look at the background – see how it's blurred out? Notice how the background doesn't attract your attention, and your eye stays on the main subject?

To get bokeh you need to have a narrow depth of field. This means a low ISO setting and/or poor light, and/or a high shutter speed since all of these will give you a wide open aperture. (see what I mean – everything affects everything else).

A telephoto lens setting will also give you a narrow depth of field.

When you are doing close-up shots the depth of field is also narrow, and focus can be tricky.

Also it's easier to get this selective focus technique to work if the main subject is quite close to you and the background is a long way away.

What you are doing here is increasing the proportional difference between the subject and the background.