BACKLIT SUBJECT DECISION

Backlight needs a clear exposure priority.

Decide whether the image needs a readable face, a silhouette, or both tones held together.

01	**Intent**	Choose what the viewer must read first. A silhouette needs a clear outline; a portrait needs enough facial information.
02	**Light**	Move slightly to control flare and background brightness. A small viewpoint change may reduce the tonal gap.
03	**Detail**	Check important bright surfaces rather than trying to preserve every sparkle. Review the exposure warning and the actual subject.
04	**Subject**	Make a test frame and inspect the subject. Deeply underexposed faces can become noisy or colorless when lifted.
05	**Choice**	If both ends cannot be held, reposition, add suitable light, wait, or commit to silhouette. Do not assume recovery will solve everything.

Worked example

A figure at the waterline can read beautifully as an outline. If the expression is the story instead, that same exposure may fail. Establish the intended read before deciding how much sky detail to protect.

Keep in mind

Small specular reflections or the sun itself may clip without spoiling the photograph. Prioritize meaningful detail.

Your decision

Intended read

highlight to protect

shadow to preserve

viewpoint change

final choice

Adapted from the PhotoMind source manuscript, section 4.4, pp. 51-54. Examples and worksheet are editorial applications.