



GUIDE TO PHOTOGRAPHING YOUR WORK

Step One: Research the Shot

Before you begin photographing your own work, look at existing work that you enjoy.

Make a list of photography references that you think would be suitable for your project.

This will give you ideas about composition, lighting, backgrounds and angles that will be suitable for your project.

Some good resources are the websites 500Px and Pinterest and the social network Instagram.



Lighting

Good lighting is essential.

Find the best light source in your home or studio.

Natural light is the best source of lighting, so this may be near a large window, or outside if possible.

Artificial lighting is an option but can yield poor results if not used properly.

Do not use the flash on your camera.

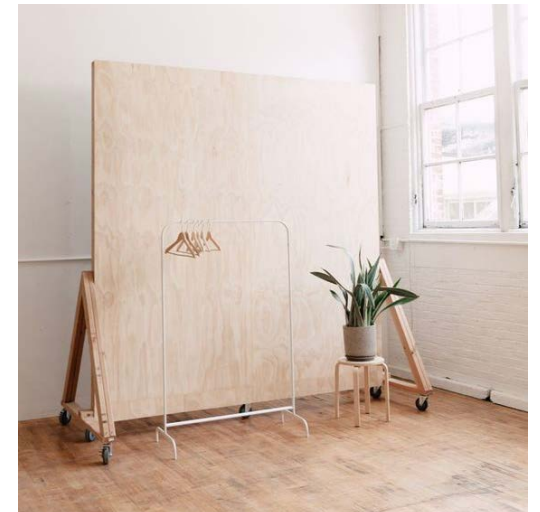


Set the Stage

When you have determined your best light source, find a backdrop for your shoot.

This could be simply against a wall, on a floor, or on a table — just remember to position your work against some that will not draw attention away from it.

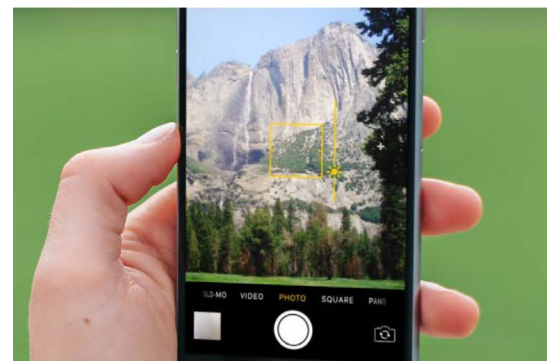
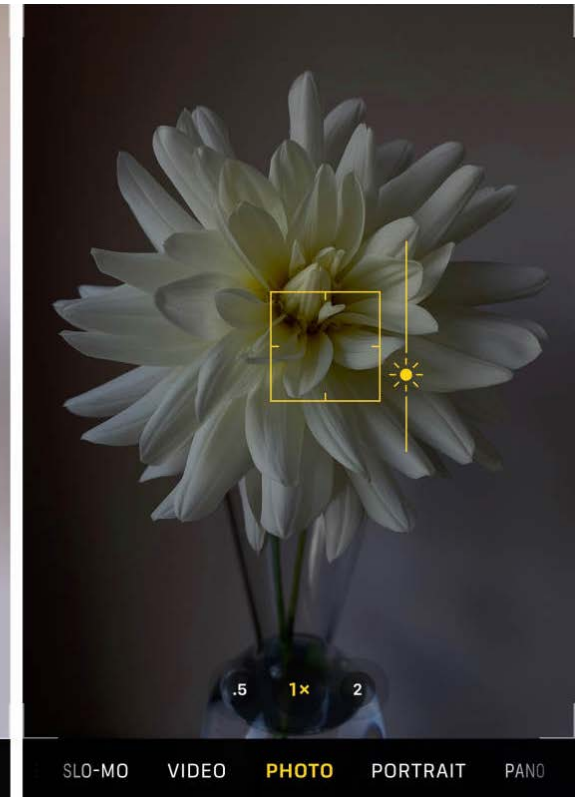
Remove all clutter and distracting objects. The composition should be simple and clean. There should not be anything in the shot that is not part of your composition.



Set Exposure and Focus

Now that you know what you want to shoot, where to shoot and are happy with your lighting, it's time to set up your camera.

If you are using a camera on your smartphone:
Smartphones will automatically adjust exposure and focus accordingly. That's great for taking photos, you can press and hold the phone screen to lock the exposure and focus, giving your photos a consistent look.



Angles and Framing

Choose between shooting in landscape and portrait. Your subject matter will determine which is more suitable for your purposes.

Choose where you want to put your subject matter and where you want to leave negative space. The subject can be dead centre, or can be set off to either side.

A wide shot will give a sense of your subject in the context of the space they are in.

A close-up (or macro) shot will put greater emphasis on smaller details at the expense of wider context.

Shooting from above or below will give different and potentially revealing perspectives on your subject matter.

Your subject matter will determine which is the most suitable for what your trying to capture in your composition. If your are unsure, experiment with a combination of different approaches to framing and angles.

Wide Shot



Move in closer



Shoot from above or below



Macro shot



Editing

After you have taken all of your shots you can choose to edit these further if you wish to make some further changes. However, it is better to rely on getting the best results possible from lighting, framing and composition while taking the photos.

Most smartphones will have a built-in editing software that will allow you to make basic adjustments such as cropping or reframing the image, or tweaking contrast, brightness and colour levels.

If you want to go a little further in editing, Lightroom Mobile is a free app from Adobe that give you all of the functions of Lightroom Classic, their photo editing software. Another alternative is a free, web-based photo editor such as Pixlr.

