

TOP TIPS FOR GREAT PHOTOS

Use our top tips if you want to take engaging photos for your social media, blog, website or printed marketing material.

1. Check your lens is clean

A really simple tip to get started that lots of us often forget is to wipe your lens with a microfibre cloth or the corner of your T-shirt to remove any grease or grime. A dirty lens will result in blurred photos.

2. Don't zoom

If shooting with a smartphone don't zoom. Phone lenses are improving but as soon as you start to zoom in you are losing picture quality. Move your subject closer to the camera or think about cropping the image later.

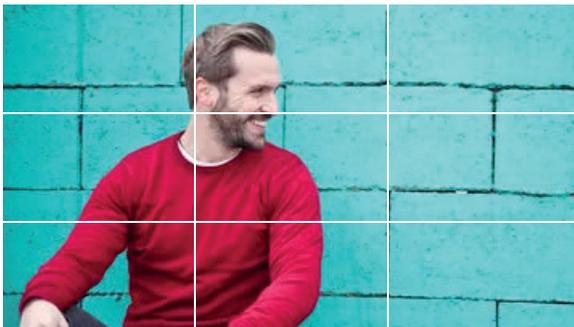
3. Set your camera's focus

Phone cameras automatically focus on the foreground of your frame but you may want the focus to be elsewhere. To adjust your focal point tap the screen where your subject sits to sharpen the view.

4. Think about composition

If you've ever read anything about photography composition, then you'll have come across the rule of thirds. Imagine breaking a photograph down into thirds giving you 9 sections.

When setting up your shot think about where your main subject is going to look best placed. Instead of placing the main subject in the centre of the frame – position it on an intersection of the thirds.



However, with the rising popularity of square photos, sometimes placing your subject directly in the centre of the frame can have a very pleasing effect.

5. Diagonals and symmetry

Using diagonal composition in your shot can emphasise perspective, give the image a sense of depth, and also add dynamism.

In diagonal composition the elements in the image are organised based on a diagonal line but this doesn't always have to be exactly in the centre.

Using symmetry in photography can help create an effect that guides the eye through a picture. We are drawn to visual perfection and compositions that work in harmony. The most common types are vertical, horizontal and reflective.



Diagonals



Symmetry

6. Depth of field

The term 'Depth of field' is the technique used to control the focal area of the camera. The focal area can be controlled to allow everything to be in focus (deep depth of field) or can be used to isolate the subject and blur the background (shallow depth of field).

Smartphone cameras usually have a fixed focal length which means we need to find another way to adjust the depth of field. Adjusting the distance the subject is from the camera can

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achieve similar results to changing aperture settings on a traditional camera.

Using depth of field can result in more professional looking photographs and can also help to highlight or hide certain areas of the image.



Deep depth of field



Shallow depth of field

7. Use natural light

Smartphones aren't great with lighting, so to compensate for this make sure you take photos near natural light. Going outside is a great option, or shoot indoors near a window. However, you don't want to shoot directly into the window or your photo will be too bright. Instead, put your product or subject off to an angle and take the picture with your back to the window.

8. Take candid

People are great subjects for your social media campaigns and photos with faces get 38% more likes and 32% more comments than photos without.

But your subjects don't always need to be posing. Candid shots add a human element to your brand.



9. Try adding props

Adding a prop to your picture can help add interest. Of course, the prop should make sense. Think about how a customer uses your product to come up with prop ideas.



10. Take a variety of shots

Take multiple pictures using different angles and crops. This will allow you to choose the best images later from a selection.

11. Use online editing tools

Once you've taken your shots, use a photo-editing app or tool to crop, straighten, or enhance your photo. Try to avoid filters.

Pixlr Editor, GIMP and Adobe Photoshop Express are all great free options.

12. Think about image resolution

Before you start shooting think about where your image is to be used. A website, blog or social post will only need an image resolution of 72dpi (dots per inch) whereas a printed document will require 300dpi. Check your camera settings before you start to ensure your image is going to be the correct size.