

MY PLACE PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION FOR SCHOOLS IN SCOTLAND

HOW TO TAKE GREAT PHOTOGRAPHS STUDENT RESOURCE

Here are our Top Ten 10 Tips to becoming a fantastic photographer...

1. Wait for the camera to do its business!

Ever thought you'd taken a brilliant picture but it turned out to be really fuzzy? That's the dreaded camera shake. It happens when you move the camera too quickly after you press the button.

Most digital cameras have a slight delay between when you push the button and when the camera records the image. Any slight movement while the camera is taking the picture will cause a blurred picture.

Be patient! Push the button, and count to 3. Then move the camera.

2. Hold still!

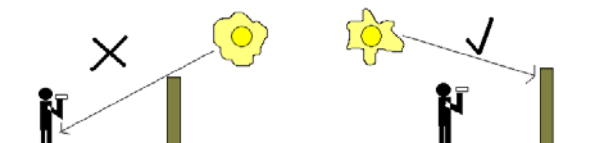
Another cause of the dreaded camera shake is an unsteady hand. **Hold the camera firmly.** For added steadiness, try leaning against a wall, or resting the camera (in your hands, of course!) against something, like a fence.

And here's another hot tip: **the worse the weather, the steadier you need to hold the camera.** That's because it takes longer for the light to go into your camera, and light is needed to create a good, bright picture.

3. Squeeze the shutter button sloooooowly!

Jabbing the button down too quickly is a BIG mistake. Press it sloooooowly. This lets the camera's technology do its thing. It also makes sure your picture is bright enough (what we call *exposure*).

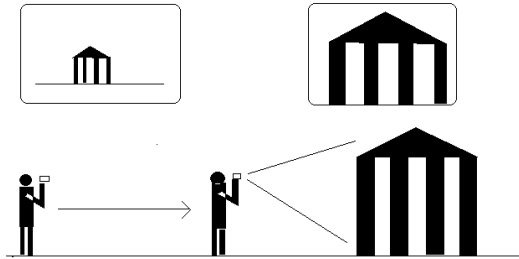
Most digital cameras work best if you **gently push the button down half-way, let the picture come into focus, and then finish taking the picture by pushing the button down all the way.**



4. Don't let the sun catch you out!

As a general rule, **make sure the sun is somewhere behind you when you take your picture**. In other words, you want the sun shining on the thing you are photographing, not shining on you!

This makes sure the picture comes out bright enough.



5. Keep on Movin'

Great photographers spend their time **planning a photo**.

Move around a bit and look at the building from a few different spots (try out different perspectives) before taking a picture.

Remember - **try to get all the important bits in the picture** if you can. For example, cutting off the top of a church spire can spoil an otherwise great photo.

6. Look up! Look Down!

Just as walking about will change how your picture looks, so will **looking up and down**.

- There are lots of **interesting details on the top half of buildings**. Often, people don't look at these, so they make a great subject for a picture.
- You can get an interesting view by **getting low down** (try putting the camera on the ground or on something small, and then taking a photo) or by **getting above** something and looking down on it. But remember – **be safe!** Find a spot where you can stand steadily. You don't want your camera to fall to the floor – or worse still, yourself!



LOOKING DOWN

A different view from higher perspective of some historic paving at Edinburgh Castle, complete with tourists!



LOOKING UP

A statue by Clodagh M. (age 11) Some things make bigger impressions from a different point of view.



GETTING LOW TO THE GROUND

A worm's eye view of St Andrew's Church, Edinburgh, achieved by putting the camera on the ground

7. Have an Eye for Detail

Sometimes concentrating on parts of the subject is more interesting than looking at the whole building. Looking at the carved details on gravestones, or specific parts of a building can be very interesting. We can sometimes lose sight of the small bits when we concentrate so hard on the whole.



The old fireplace at Lowrie's by Carla A (age 9)



The Bright Padlock by Laura M (age 10)

8. Check it out!

If you are using a digital camera, check each photo after you have taken it. You can then decide if there's anything you want to change in your next photo. Small changes can mean the difference between an OK photo and a *great* one. It may be something simple like you didn't take it quite straight enough, or cropped it in the wrong place.

9. Take plenty of pictures

Don't expect to get a great picture first time. Back in the days of film, professional photographers used to be happy if they got one good photo in a roll of 36 pictures. Sometimes they would take weeks to get that special photo. You might catch something particularly interesting after a couple of tries, such as a person walking by, a boat sailing past, or a bird flying in the sky.

10. Happy Snapping!

Remember to enjoy yourself, the more fun you have the better your photographic experience will be.

SUPPORTED BY

