

# PHOTOGRAPHY

TIPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Eyepiece/Viewfinder

Prism

Lens Elements

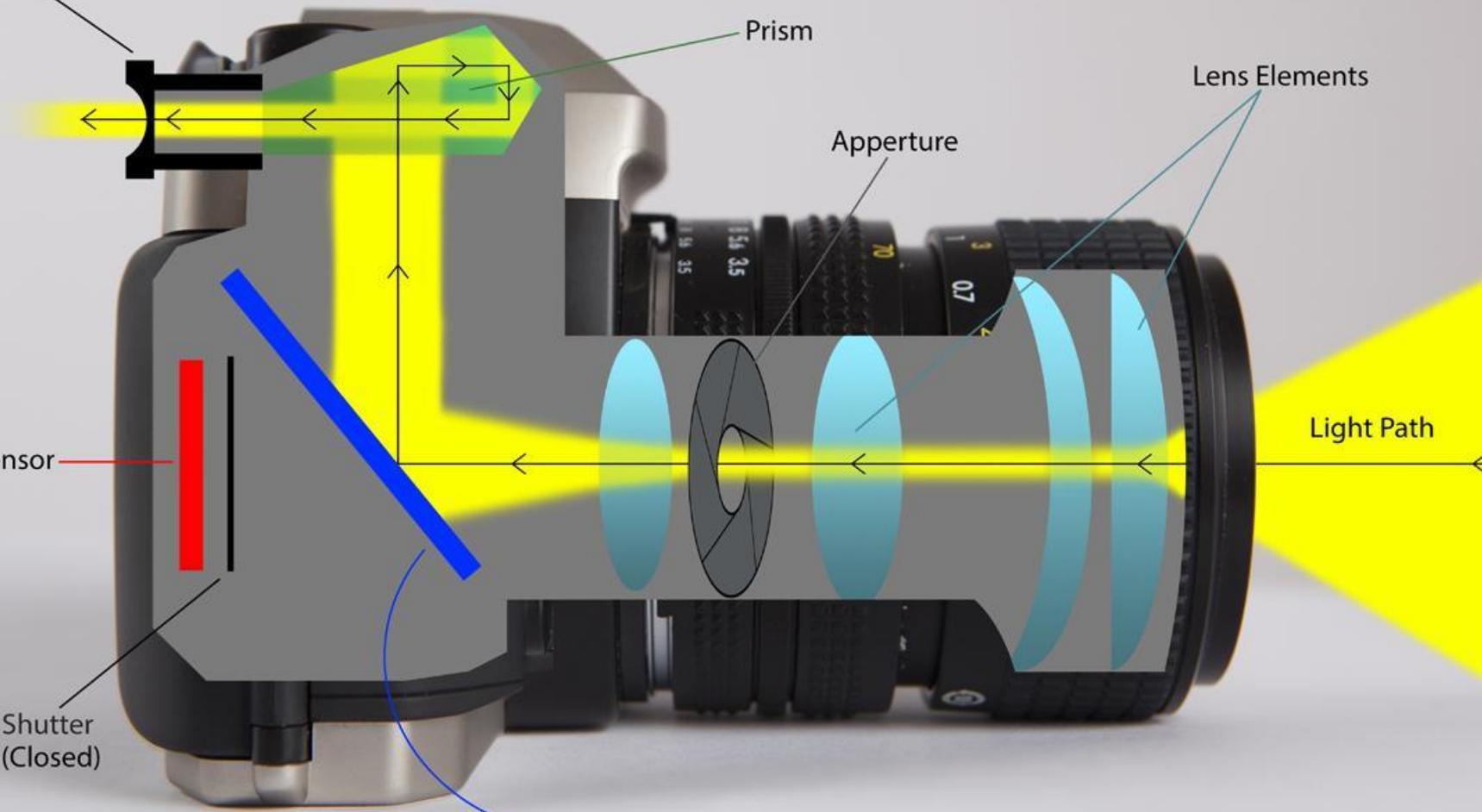
Aperture

Light Path

Sensor

Shutter (Closed)

Mirror (Down Position)



# CAMERA SETTINGS

## 4 Main Settings to Remember

- ISO – ‘noise’ or grain
- Aperture – depth of field
- Shutter – motion blur
- White balance – color temp

# COMMON SCENARIOS

## Indoor Candid

- Shutter – 60<sup>th</sup> or faster
- Aperture – f2.8+
- ISO – 400+

## Sports/Action

- Shutter – 500<sup>th</sup>
- Aperture – f4
- ISO 200+

# CAMERA RECOMMENDATIONS

- What will the images be used for?
- Compare camera specs to get the best results for your needs.

## Consider:

- Ease of use
- Brand and reviews
- Megapixels to meet needs (quality, file size/time, cost)
- Type of camera needed (DSLR, point and shoot, fixed or zoom, etc.)
- Budget



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# Nikon D750 vs Fujifilm FinePix X100 vs Canon EOS 5D Mark II

View comparison selection ▶

**Scores** | Specs | Measurements | Lenses tested

## Nikon D750



### ▶ DxOMark Sensor Scores

Overall Score	[?]	<div style="width: 93%;"></div>	93
Portrait (Color Depth)	[?]	<div style="width: 24.8%;"></div>	24.8 bits
Landscape (Dynamic Range)	[?]	<div style="width: 14.5%;"></div>	14.5 Evs
Sports (Low-Light ISO)	[?]	<div style="width: 2956%;"></div>	2956 ISO

DxOMARK

## Fujifilm FinePix X100



### ▶ DxOMark Sensor Scores

Overall Score	[?]	<div style="width: 73%;"></div>	73
Portrait (Color Depth)	[?]	<div style="width: 22.9%;"></div>	22.9 bits
Landscape (Dynamic Range)	[?]	<div style="width: 12.4%;"></div>	12.4 Evs
Sports (Low-Light ISO)	[?]	<div style="width: 1001%;"></div>	1001 ISO

DxOMARK

## Canon EOS 5D Mark II



### ▶ DxOMark Sensor Scores

Overall Score	[?]	<div style="width: 79%;"></div>	79
Portrait (Color Depth)	[?]	<div style="width: 23.7%;"></div>	23.7 bits
Landscape (Dynamic Range)	[?]	<div style="width: 11.9%;"></div>	11.9 Evs
Sports (Low-Light ISO)	[?]	<div style="width: 1815%;"></div>	1815 ISO

DxOMARK

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# Nikon D750 vs Fujifilm FinePix X100 vs Canon EOS 5D Mark II

View comparison selection [▶](#)

Scores		Specs		Measurements		Lenses tested					
<p><b>Nikon D750</b></p> 				<p><b>Fujifilm FinePix X100</b></p> 				<p><b>Canon EOS 5D Mark II</b></p> 			
Type	Professional	Type	High-end compact	Type	Semi-Pro DSLR						
Announced	Sep. 2014	Announced	Sep. 2010	Announced	Sep. 2008						
Indicative price (USD)	2300	Indicative price (USD)	999	Indicative price (USD)	2199						
Sensor type	CMOS	Sensor type	CMOS	Sensor type	CMOS						
Resolution	6032 x 4032	Resolution	4310 x 2870	Resolution	5634 x 3753						
Sensor photo detectors (Mpix)	24.32	Sensor photo detectors (Mpix)	12.37	Sensor photo detectors (Mpix)	21.14						
Sensor size (mm)	24 x 35.9	Sensor size (mm)	15.8 x 23.6	Sensor size (mm)	24 x 36						
Color filter array	RGB	Color filter array	RGB	Color filter array	RGB						
Pixel pitch (µm)		Pixel pitch (µm)		Pixel pitch (µm)							
Bits per pixel	14.0	Bits per pixel	12.0	Bits per pixel	14.0						
Focal length multiplier	1	Focal length multiplier	1.48	Focal length multiplier	1						
Aspect Ratio	3:2	Aspect Ratio	3:2	Aspect Ratio	3:2						
ISO latitude	50 - 51200	ISO latitude	100 - 12800	ISO latitude	50 - 25600						
Shutter type	Mechanical	Shutter type	electronic	Shutter type	Mechanical						
Fastest - Slowest speed (s)	1/4000 - 30.0	Fastest - Slowest speed (s)	1/4000 - 30.0	Fastest - Slowest speed (s)	1/8000 - 30.0						
Frame rate (fps)	6.5	Frame rate (fps)	5 or 3	Frame rate (fps)	3.9						
Live view	Yes	Live view	yes	Live view	Yes						
Stabilization	No	Stabilization	No	Stabilization	No						
Firmware		Firmware		Firmware	2.0.8						
Dust cleaning	Yes	Dust cleaning		Dust cleaning	Yes						
Mount type	Nikon F FX	Mount type		Mount type	Canon EF						
Weight (gr)		Weight (gr)	405	Weight (gr)	810						
Battery type	Li-ion, EN-EL 15, 7V, 1900mAh, 14Wh	Battery type	Li-ion, NP-95, 3.7 V, 1800 mAh	Battery type	Li-ion, LP-E6, 7.4V, 1800mAh						

# SHOOTING OPTIONS

1. If you don't understand manual don't use it.

2. Suggested Settings:

- Program Mode - Camera picks all settings
- Shutter Priority - You choose the shutter, camera picks the aperture (movement)
- Aperture Priority - You choose aperture, camera picks shutter (depth of field)
- Auto ISO - Most point and shoot cameras have this, also
- Manual - You pick all settings

Beginners - use auto settings while training yourself by observing.

Shoot a lot and if you have time, just take the camera out and experiment.

# SUCCESSFUL GROUP PHOTO TIPS

## Lighting – even light is best

- On a sunny day, find a place in shadow with shadow in the background.
- Avoid the middle of the day.
- In morning or evening light, shoot with the sun behind the group, against a shadowed wall or trees.
- Overcast days are great for group shots!

## Camera Settings

- Good depth of field (F5.6+), tripod, 1/125 shutter, adjust ISO for proper exposure (lower in the sun, higher in the shade).
- White balance is different in the sun than it is in the shade.

# HELPFUL TOOLS & THOUGHTS

[DXOMark.com](http://DXOMark.com) – compare equipment

[Udaho.edu/photo](http://Udaho.edu/photo) – to review our work samples

[Lynda.com](http://Lynda.com) – training and tutorials

Look at good work everywhere and consider how it was done.

# PHOTOGRAPHY

Department of Agricultural and Extension Education  
Professional Development Days  
October 2, 2015

University of Idaho



## Online Publication of Student Photos

- ◆ There is a great deal of concern and confusion surrounding the topic of posting student photos online.
- ◆ We are going to discuss some of the Do's and Don'ts when it comes to online publication of photos.



**\*\*See attached PDFs for additional information and sample forms on this subject.**

## Social Media

- ◆ When is it okay to upload student photos on the internet?
  - ◆ The safest answer is that unless you have permission from the student and his or her guardians, you should NEVER assume that you can publish their photos and/or full names online.
- ◆ Many schools and school clubs have created social media accounts to share events, notifications, and student achievements.
  - ◆ These sites can be an excellent way to keep your community updated when used *appropriately!*

## Things to Consider BEFORE Posting Online

- ◆ Check your school administrative policies regarding student privacy, camera devices, and photo sharing.
  - ◆ These can likely be found in the school handbook
- ◆ Photo Release Forms
  - ◆ Find out whether your school requires photo release forms to be sent home to parents/guardians.
    - ◆ This form either confirms or denies their approval for their child's photos and/or name to be released.

## ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES CAMERA DEVICES

Cameras, as well as other electronic devices with photographing capabilities are not to be used for unethical and illegal purposes. When you take pictures of other people without their permission, you risk discipline for invasion of privacy and harassment. These devices also can be used to reproduce copyrighted material, so their misuse can lead to penalties under federal copyright law. To address these concerns, the following guidelines apply to possession and use of camera devices.

- Camera devices may not be used to photograph another person who has a reasonable expectation of privacy without that person's knowledge and consent.
- Camera devices may not be used in a way that would violate another person's copyright.
- Camera devices may not be used to harass, intimidate, or bully another person or to invade another person's privacy.
- An image taken using a camera device may not be published, broadcast, or transmitted to any other person, by any means, without the knowledge and consent of each person appearing in that image. The following locations are prohibited from use of camera devices:
- Camera devices are not allowed in any locker room, restroom, or any other place where other people have a reasonable expectation of privacy.
- Camera devices cannot be used in a classroom without permission from the teacher.

## Photo Release Forms

- ◆ CHECK THE FINE PRINT!
- ◆ Some forms have a general, all inclusive publication release (i.e. all forms of school district publication outlets).
- ◆ Others may be more limited.



## Posting on Social Media

- ◆ Here is where things can get tricky...
- ◆ As a teacher you are employed by the school district, however your personal Facebook page likely IS NOT covered under the photo release form for the school.
- ◆ Therefore, posting photos of your students and their names may be in violation of student privacy.



## What should you do?

- ◆ Your FFA Chapter social media accounts may also be at risk.
  - ◆ First, check your school policy and then talk to your administration about your situation if you have any doubt as to whether you are covered.
- ◆ It may be possible to create your own photo release form to send home with your students.

## Photo Disclosure Form Tips

- ◆ Classroom and field-trip experiences may be published in public spaces online (for example school Flickr and Facebook account).
- ◆ When student images are posted, only first names or nicknames will be referenced.
- ◆ No identifying characteristics about students (beyond first names or nicknames) will be published in public spaces online.
- ◆ Work produced for education purposes may be published in public spaces in order to encourage global collaboration among students and teachers.
- ◆ Comments on student work will be moderated by the teacher to ensure only appropriate information is shared and received.
- ◆ Online safety and appropriate behavior will be emphasized whenever sharing student work online. Online spaces will be treated as classroom spaces.

Published by Kim Cofino

## Online Photo Management

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Professional Development Days  
October 2, 2015

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# Online Photo Storage Sites

- ◆ **The options for online photo management are constantly changing!**

- ◆ *Here are 8 popular sites*

1. Flickr
2. Amazon
3. Apple iCloud
4. Microsoft OneDrive
5. Dropbox
6. Google+
7. Picturelife
8. SmugMug



- ◆ **Flickr**

- ◆ 1 TB free storage

- ◆ **Amazon**

- ◆ A nice option for people who are already paying for Amazon Prime
- ◆ Offers unlimited photo storage for members

- ◆ **Apple iCloud**

- ◆ Syncs your iOS devices- reasonably priced
- ◆ Great for committed Apple users

- ◆ **Microsoft OneDrive**

- ◆ Previously called "SkyDrive"
- ◆ 30 GB free storage
- ◆ Uses a tag feature to automatically group photos into categories

- ◆ **Dropbox**
  - ◆ Offers “Carousel,” an app for automatically backing up and displaying photos
  - ◆ 1 TB of storage for \$10/month
- ◆ **Google+**
  - ◆ Unlimited free uploads at 2048 pixels
  - ◆ Great web-based editing tools
- ◆ **Picturelife**
  - ◆ Links to social media accounts to back up all your pictures and store in one place
- ◆ **SmugMug**
  - ◆ Targeted for professional and semi-pro photographers
  - ◆ 2 week free trial followed by fee services
  - ◆ Performs as an online portfolio with photo purchasing options

	AMAZON	ICLOUD PHOTO LIBRARY	ONEDRIVE	GOOGLE+	PICTURELIFE	DROPBOX	SMUGMUG	FLICKR
Auto-Upload	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Share to External Social Networks	●	●	Desktop only		●	●	●	●
Share to Web Gallery		●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Public, Writable API	●		●		●	●	●	●
Integrated Printing Service		●	●				●	●
Cloud Editing				●	●		●	●
Display RAW Files	●	●		●	●		Premium only	
Host and Stream Video	●		●	●	●	●	●	●
Timeline View for Photos	●	●	●	●	●	●		●
Mobile Album Creation		●	●	●		●	●	●
Search by Filename			●	●		●		●
Import from Social Networks				●	●			
View EXIF Data	Partial	●	●	●	●		●	●
Photo Deduplication		●			●			●
Platforms	Web, iOS, Android, PC	Web, iOS, Mac, PC (Photo Stream only)	Web, iOS, Android, PC, Mac	Web, iOS, Android	Web, iOS, Android, Mac, Windows	Web, iOS, Android, Mac, PC, BlackBerry, Ubuntu	Web, iOS, Android, Windows	Web, iOS, Android, Windows Phone
Free Storage	3-month trial	5GB	15GB, or 30 GB with auto-upload enabled	15GB	8GB + bonuses for connecting services	2GB	14-day trial	1TB
Pricing Tiers	Unlimited w/ Prime (\$99/year as of April 28th) or \$12/year a la	20 GB: \$0.99/month 200GB: \$3.99/month 500GB: \$9.99/month 1TB: \$19.99/month	100 GB: \$1.99/month 200GB: \$3.99/month	100 GB: \$1.99/month 1TB: \$9.99/month 10TB: \$99.99/month 20TB: \$199.99/month	25 GB: \$5/month, \$50/year 100 GB: \$10/month, \$100/year Unlimited: \$15/month.	1TB: \$9.99/month or \$99/year	Unlimited (plans from \$5 to \$25 a month)	1TB: Free (ad-supported) or \$6/month to remove ads (for pro it's unlimited storage at \$6.95/3 months.

## Additional Photo Management Sites

- ◆ 500 Pixels/500px
- ◆ Adobe Reveal
- ◆ Dotphoto
- ◆ DropShots
- ◆ Facebook
- ◆ Fotki
- ◆ Instagram
- ◆ Phanefare
- ◆ Photobucket
- ◆ Shoebox
- ◆ SlickPic
- ◆ Snapfish
- ◆ Shutterfly
- ◆ Zenfolio



## Photo Editing

- ◆ Like photo storage sites, there are just as many options when it comes to photo editing!
- ◆ Adobe Photoshop leads the industry in photo editing but that doesn't mean it is the best option for you! There are many editing sites for various expertise levels in a wide price range.
- ◆ Check out this site (or attached PDF) for photo editing recommendations based on beginner, professional, and most inexpensive options.  
<http://www.reviews.com/photo-editing-software/>

## Photo Editing

- ◆ If you are interested in photo editing here are some tips:
  - ◆ Check to see if your school has a subscription for a photo editing service.
  - ◆ Try out the free trials of several photo editing sites to see which one suits you.
  - ◆ Look into free editing sites such as Picasa, GIMP, and Pixlr that can be great for beginners.

# PHOTOGRAPHY COMPOSITION

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# INTRODUCTION

- ◆ The first rule of photography is that there are no RULES!
- ◆ However, there are composition guidelines that will help you improve the quality of your shots!

# RULE OF THIRDS

- ◆ Imagine that your image is divided into 9 equal segments- 2 vertical and 2 horizontal lines.



Image by Dennis Jarvis.

## RULE OF THIRDS

- ◆ The [rule of thirds](#) says that you should position the most important elements in your scene along these lines, or at the points where they intersect.
- ◆ Doing so will add balance and interest to your photo. Some cameras offer an option to superimpose a rule of thirds grid over the LCD screen, making it even easier to use.

## RULE OF THIRDS

- ◆ When photographing moving subjects, pay attention to the direction they are moving.
- ◆ As a general rule you should leave more space in front of them than behind, to show where they're going.



Image by muskva.

## RULE OF THIRDS

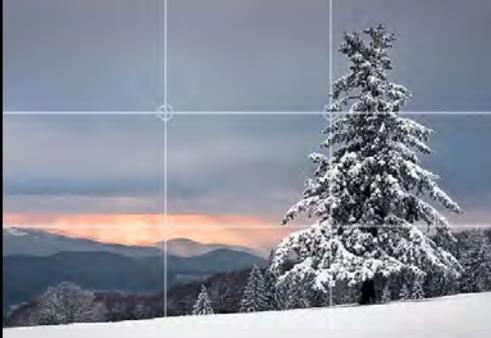


Image by Andreas Wonisch.

- ◆ For landscape shots, place the horizon along one of the horizontal lines to avoid a “split in two” feel.
- ◆ Try to include an interesting object, like this tree, positioned according to the rule of thirds to anchor the photo.

## BALANCING ELEMENTS

- ◆ Placing your main subject off-center creates a more interesting photo but it can leave a void in the scene which can make it feel empty. **[MOON]**
- ◆ You should balance the "weight" of your subject by including another object to fill the space. **[BIRD]**



## LEADING LINES



Image by Pierre Metivier.

- ◆ When we look at a photo our eye is naturally drawn along lines.
- ◆ By thinking about how you place lines in your composition, you can affect the way we view the image—pulling us into the picture, towards the subject, or on a journey "through" the scene.

## SYMMETRY & PATTERNS

- ◆ We are surrounded by symmetry and patterns, both natural and man-made.
- ◆ They can make for very eye-catching compositions, particularly in situations where they are not expected.



Image by Fabio Montalto.

# VIEWPOINT



Image from AlwaysBreaking

- ◆ Our viewpoint has a massive impact on the composition of a photo- as a result it can greatly affect the message that the shot conveys.
- ◆ Rather than just shooting from eye level, consider photographing from high above, down at ground level, from the side, from the back, from a long way away, from very close up, and so on.

# BACKGROUND



Image from N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission

- ◆ How many times have you taken what you thought would be a great shot, only to find that the final image lacks impact because the subject blends into a busy background?
- ◆ Look around for a plain and unobtrusive background and compose your shot so that it doesn't distract or detract from the subject.

# DEPTH

Image by Jule Berlin



- ◆ You can create depth in a photo by including objects in the foreground, middle ground and background.

- ◆ Another useful composition technique is overlapping, where you deliberately partially obscure one object with another. The human eye recognizes these layers and mentally separates them out creating an image with more depth.

# FRAMING

- ◆ The world is full of objects which make perfect natural frames, such as trees and archways.



Photo by Brandon Reece

- ◆ By placing these around the edge of the composition you help to isolate the main subject. The result is a more focused image which draws your eye naturally to the main point of interest.

# CROPPING

- ◆ Often a photo will lack impact because the main subject is so small it becomes lost among the clutter of its surroundings.

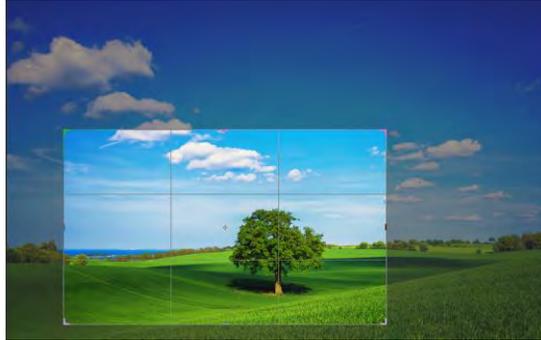


Photo from studio.envato.com

- ◆ By cropping tight around the subject you eliminate the background "noise," ensuring the subject gets the viewer's undivided attention.

## REVIEW

- ◆ With the digital age in photography we no longer have to worry about film processing costs or running out of shots!
- ◆ Take advantage of this fact and experiment with your composition - you never know whether an idea will work until you try it.
- ◆ Keep these composition guidelines in mind and use what works for you!

# SECTION IV-ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES

## *CAMERA DEVICES*

Cameras, as well as other electronic devices with photographing capabilities are not to be used for unethical and illegal purposes. When you take pictures of other people without their permission, you risk discipline for invasion of privacy and harassment. These devices also can be used to reproduce copyrighted material, so their misuse can lead to penalties under federal copyright law. To address these concerns, the following guidelines apply to possession and use of camera devices.

- Camera devices may not be used to photograph another person who has a reasonable expectation of privacy without that person's knowledge and consent.
- Camera devices may not be used in a way that would violate another person's copyright.
- Camera devices may not be used to harass, intimidate, or bully another person or to invade another person's privacy.
- An image taken using a camera device may not be published, broadcast, or transmitted to any other person, by any means, without the knowledge and consent of each person appearing in that image. The following locations are prohibited from use of camera devices:
  - Camera devices are not allowed in any locker room, restroom, or any other place where other people have a reasonable expectation of privacy.
  - Camera devices are not to be used in any classroom without permission from the teacher.



**Community Consolidated School District 15**  
 580 North 1st Bank Drive  
 Palatine, Illinois 60067  
 847-963-3000



**Student Name/Photo Release Form**

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**TO: Parent/Guardian**

Please check one box, sign and date form, and return with registration materials. This form must be on file for each student, and is valid as long as your child attends any District 15 school. If you choose to change your child's release status, you must submit a new form. Forms may be obtained from your child's school.

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**School:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ID #:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Yes, I give permission for my child's first and last name to be released and for my child to be photographed or videotaped while in school or during school-related activities outside the classroom.**

By checking "yes" and signing this consent form, I give permission for my child's **first and last name and/or photograph** to be used in publications, presentations, videos, or Web pages, or news releases produced by District 15, or by agencies working with the district. My child's first and last name and/or photograph may be included in news releases distributed to newspapers and other news media.

NOTE: No payment will be made to a child photographed under terms of this release or to his/her family if and when the photographs are used in district publications, presentations, video productions, or Web sites. Parents/guardians waive the right to preview or approve the finished photographs or video.

**OR**

**No, I do NOT want my child's first and last name released nor my child to be photographed or videotaped while in school or during school-related activities outside the classroom.**

Checking "no" and signing this form means that my child's name and/or photograph may NOT appear in any District 15 publication, presentation, video, Web site, or news release produced by District 15 or by agencies working with the district that gets distributed outside of the school community. (Annual school yearbooks are considered internal school publications and are not subject to these restrictions. If you wish your child's name/photo not be included in the annual school yearbook, please notify your school principal in writing.)

It also means that my child's name and/or photograph may NOT be included in news releases distributed to newspapers and other news media.

**Parent/  
Guardian  
Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

# Posting student photos on the Web

by [Scott McLeod](http://bigthink.com/articles/posting-student-photos-on-the-web) <http://bigthink.com/articles/posting-student-photos-on-the-web>

As a technology leadership guy who also happens to have a law degree, I often get asked legal questions related to school technologies. Today, at the request of Miguel, I'm going to discuss issues related to posting student photos on the Web. I'll preface this discussion with my usual caveats that 1) I am not offering legal advice, 2) I am not in an attorney-client relationship with anyone, and 3) I always recommend that folks consult their school district's attorney regarding legal issues.

## *Pictures taken for school-related purposes*

Schools take pictures of students all the time - for yearbooks, at athletic events, in class, at artistic performances, etc. Often they want to post those pictures to the Internet, thus making those photos potentially available to a global audience.

Every school district should have a policy for dealing with student photos. That policy should comply with the federal [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](#) as well as any relevant state statutes (for example, Minnesota has the [Government Data Practices Act](#)).

Schools should solicit parents' permission to post photos of their child on the Web. The permission form should clearly describe the anticipated ways in which the school will use student pictures. When posting photos, schools should try their utmost not to post accompanying names at all → the next best option probably is to post students' first names but not last names. Sometimes schools need to post students' full names → for example, an online feature of the star pitcher on the softball team or the lead actress in the school play → but these situations should be carefully thought out beforehand to minimize parental concerns about student privacy and safety. Parents should be informed of all of the various permutations so that they can make informed choices about when to grant or refuse permission for their child's photo to be used.

Schools have the difficult obligation to somehow monitor which students' photos can be used online and which can't. For example, if a photo taken of a class activity has a student in the background whose parents refused permission, that photo likely can't be used online, even if the focus of the picture was on other students.

Another dilemma for schools is what to do with parents who don't return the permission form. Schools basically have two options when this occurs:

- assume they have permission to publish unless parents turn in the form and opt out; or
- assume they do not have permission to publish unless parents turn in the form and opt in.

The latter option is more protective of students and is generally the one I recommend to educators.

Here are some example policies, forms, and other resources related to school use of student pictures:

- [Fairfax County \(VA\) Public Schools](#)
- [Beverly Hills \(CA\) Unified School District](#)
- [Columbia \(MO\) Public Schools](#)

### ***Pictures taken by parents or other guests***

In an interesting twist, Miguel and I recently had an exchange about an e-mail he received from a technology coordinator:

A parent has taken photos at school events, primarily athletic events, then posted them on her own personal web site (without permission of the students or parents involved) with prices for purchasing. I know there could be a problem if the students were identified by name but they are not. There are no captions at all.

Our superintendent is out of town. I'm sure someone has encountered this situation. Does anyone know if this is legal?

Here's my take on the situation: if the pictures were taken in a public place, or in a place where parents / guests had permission to take pictures (e.g., inside school or on school grounds), I believe that parents or guests are legally entitled to take the photos and/or sell them. If a school district wanted, I think it could have a policy prohibiting anyone taking photographs within school buildings or on school grounds, but the enforcement and/or public relations issues would be difficult.

I found some excellent resources on this issue:

- <http://tinyurl.com/93e9x>
- <http://www.krages.com/ThePhotographersRight.pdf>

Of course a school district can always request that photographers exhibit some sensitivity to folks' concerns about privacy and safety, particularly since most of the subjects of the photos are minor children.

### ***Conclusion***

Obviously the issues surrounding photographs of students on the Web are numerous and complex. The challenge for schools is to balance their (and parents') desires to publicize the great things that are happening in their organizations with their responsibilities to protect children and to satisfy parental concerns about student privacy and safety. The guidelines described here also would pertain to videos of students, not just photographs.

How does your school organization handle issues related to online publishing of student photos?

# The 3 Best Photo Editing Software for Beginners

<http://www.reviews.com/photo-editing-software/>

Choosing the best photo editing software for beginners is about finding a product that offers a nice variety of editing tools along with helpful online resources to teach you how to use the software. A software that has a user-friendly interface will also be extremely valuable to beginners. Price is likely going to be another big concern if you're new to photo editing because you probably won't want to pay the high prices that accompany most professional photo editing software. Many products offer free trials, which is a great way to test out the software and see if it is a good fit for you. The three companies listed below represent some of the best photo editing software for beginners based off the above criteria.

## [1. Adobe Photoshop Elements 12](#)



Adobe Photoshop Elements 12 is one of the best photo editing software for beginners because it offers an impressive selection of editing tools along with some very nice online resources to help you learn how to use all aspects of the software. A user guide and video tutorials are a good place to get started, but if you need a little extra help, you can always contact Adobe for assistance. One really unique thing about Adobe Photoshop Elements 12 is that you can choose between different modes based on your level of experience. So, for example, a complete beginner may want to start with the Quick mode, while those with a little more experience may opt for the Guided or Expert modes. Photoshop Elements 12 also has quite a few advanced editing tools available, so that you will never feel restricted with what you can do. Adobe Photoshop Elements 12 also offers a 30-day, full-service free trial, which gives you a great opportunity to see if the software is what you're looking for. [Get Details](#)

## [2. ACDSee Pro 7](#)



ACDSee Pro 7 is another one of the easiest photo editing software for beginners. Though lacking some of the more advanced tools found in Adobe Photoshop Elements 12, ACDSee Pro 7 has a nice array of standard editing features and a very customizable interface, all at a fairly reasonable price. You may have to be a little more self-sufficient when it comes to finding answers because live chat and phone support are unavailable, but ACDSee has a community forum and knowledge base, along with a user guide, to help beginners learn how to use their software. When you purchase ACDSee Pro 7, you will also get access to 10 GB of cloud storage space absolutely free, so you can upload your photos to the Internet and have access to them whenever and wherever you need it. Like Adobe Photoshop Elements 12, ACDSee Pro 7 has a 30-day free trial available, and this may be a good place to start if you are new to photo editing software. [Get Details](#)

## [3. ACDSee 17](#)



ACDSee 17 is another solid choice if you're interested in photo editing but aren't quite sure where to begin. It's the most affordable software on the list, so if price is your main concern, ACDSee 17 may be a good software to choose. There aren't many ways to contact the company for support, but there are a fair amount of online articles and tutorials to help you understand how to use the software. The interface is very user-friendly, which should help quite a bit with the initial learning curve. Painting and drawing options are limited in ACDSee 17, but there is still a good variety of standard editing tools, and even some more advanced tools for those who want them. As with the other companies on this list, ACDSee 17 offers a full-service trial for 30 days, which should give you plenty of time to see what the software has to offer. [Get Details](#)

## The 3 Best Professional Photo Editing Software

Finding the right professional photo editing software can be tricky because there are so many factors to consider. The available editing tools will obviously be the biggest thing to look at, but it's also important to think about how easy the software is to use. A customizable interface can make working within the software much more enjoyable. For many, the industry standard for professional photo editing software is Adobe Photoshop CS6, but it's also very expensive, and if you have your budget to think about, it might be necessary to consider some other options. Another factor worth looking at is what kinds of resources the company provides to help you learn how to use the software. There will always be a considerable learning curve when working with professional photo editing software, so the more resources the company offers, the sooner you should be able to get up and running.

### [1. Adobe Photoshop CS6](#)



Adobe Photoshop CS6 is the premier professional photo editing software on the market today. Its extensive array of photo editing tools are unmatched by any other photo editing software in the industry, and its customizable interface will make it easy to find exactly what you are looking for whenever you need it. Adobe Photoshop CS6 also comes with basic video editing features and some excellent content-aware tools, which should help speed the editing process up considerably. All of these features may be a little overwhelming at times, and that's why Photoshop also has user guides, video tutorials, and a knowledge base available to help walk you through all of the different functions. The one thing that might prevent people from choosing Adobe Photoshop CS6 is the price tag. It is the one of the most expensive photo editing software on the market. If price isn't a big concern, however, you won't find a better value than Adobe Photoshop CS6. [Get Details](#)

## **2. Adobe Photoshop Elements 12**



Adobe Photoshop Elements 12 also earns a place among the best professional photo editing software because it offers many of the same features as Photoshop CS6, but at a fraction of the cost. It doesn't have video editing capabilities, but almost all of the advanced photo editing tools found in Photoshop CS6 can also be found in Elements 12. The user-friendly interface and excellent online learning materials should help ease the initial learning curve and get you going even faster. Adobe Photoshop Elements 12 also has a nice collection of file management and image organization tools, which will be very useful if you have a large volume of photos that you are working with. Missing professional editing tools, like content-aware tools, could be a problem for some, and if you need these tools for your work, it's probably best to choose Photoshop CS6 over Elements 12. [Get Details](#)

### [3. ACDSee Pro 7](#)



ACDSee Pro 7 is another nice photo editing software for professionals. It's priced about the same as Adobe Photoshop Elements 12 and has a strong array of both standard and advanced editing tools. The reason it ends up in third place on this list is because it is missing some tools that professionals might require in their day-to-day work, such as the ability to create layers in your images. That being said, there are still a lot of things to appreciate about ACDSee Pro 7, including its strong image organization and management capabilities, which will be invaluable if you have a large number of photos that you are working with. You will also get 10 GB of free cloud space when you sign up for ACDSee Pro 7, so that you are able to store your photos online and access them from anywhere whenever you need them. ACDSee Pro 7 also comes with a 30-day free trial, allowing you to test out the software before committing to making a purchase. [Get Details](#)

## **The 3 Best Cheap Photo Editing Software**

When looking for the best cheap photo editing software, price is obviously the most important factor to consider. However, it's also a good idea to think about what kinds of tools you need in your software and what kinds of learning resources are provided by the company. This will be especially important if you're new to photo editing software, but it will be valuable to more experienced users as well because there is always an initial learning curve with any software. If you're still unsure of which product to choose, it's not a bad idea to look for free trials, so that you can really get a feel for what it's like to work within the program before making a purchase. The three companies listed below represent some of the best cheap photo editing software available, and would be a good place to begin your search.

## **1. ACDSee 17**



ACDSee 17 is one of the most affordable photo editing software on the market, making it a good choice if you're looking for a quality program but still have your budget to think of. It offers a nice selection of standard and advanced editing tools, and has a clean, user-friendly interface to make navigation within the software easy. Its digital painting tools are rather limited, but its image organization and management capabilities are strong, which is great if you have a large number of photos that you are working with. ACDSee provides several online resources like a user guide and a community forum to teach you how to use the software, which should help out with the initial learning curve. ACDSee 17 also comes with a free 30-day trial, so you can test it out beforehand to see if it is the right software for you before committing to a purchase. [Get Details](#)

## **2. Apple Aperture 3**



Apple Aperture 3 is another of the best cheap photo editing software on the market. It's missing some drawing and painting tools, but it has a good variety of standard editing tools that are perfect for the average consumer. Organizing and managing your files within Aperture is simple, thanks to the iCloud Photo Stream, which keeps a 30-day backup of your photos, so you don't have to take up a lot of space on your computer with storing images. An online knowledge base and video tutorials should help users transition smoothly over to Apple Aperture 3 no matter what program they were using before. One thing that may prevent some people from choosing Aperture, though, is that it is only available for Mac, so if you own a PC, you'll have to choose a different software from this list. [Get Details](#)

### **[3. Adobe Photoshop Elements 12](#)**



Adobe Photoshop Elements 12 is the most expensive product on this list, but you will get some additional features for the extra cost. Photoshop Elements 12 also has one of the best arrays of photo editing tools that you'll find in a software of this price, making it a good choice for advanced and beginning photo editors alike. You'll be able to choose between Quick, Guided, and Expert modes based off your level of experience, which should make working in the software very simple. If you do need a little help, Adobe has several detailed video tutorials to guide you through the different functions of Elements 12. Like ACDSsee, Adobe Photoshop Elements 12 has a 30-day, full-feature free trial available, which should give you plenty of time to test out all the features of the software and see if it is the right fit for you. [Get Details](#)

# Simple Tips for Taking Pro-Level Photos

Face it: your Instagram page could use a helping hand. Here's how to grab better shots, no matter what you're using.

One day, far into the future, digital archaeologists will dig through layers of Internet topsoil and come upon a point in human history flooded by terrible brunch photos. The ubiquity of cameras means everyone is now a photographer, to the degree that knowing the alphabet makes any 7-year-old a novelist.

In terms of megapixels, your iPhone camera is ahead of the \$100 PowerShot you packed to Good Charlotte concerts in middle school. What's more, the cost barrier to real cameras, like, detachable-lens-DSLR-catch-a-hummingbird-in-flight cameras, is lower than ever.

So, how do you differentiate yourself from the pack and sow your Instagram or Flickr with beautiful images? Consider this your free photography primer. Class is in session.

## Composition

If there's one principle that will make your photos dramatically better, it's how you frame your subject.

There's this thing called **the rule of thirds**. Imagine your screen or viewfinder is cut by two vertical lines and two horizontal lines, making four intersection points around a central box. Actually, most cameras (real and mobile) have an option for this viewfinder to actually appear.

Our natural tendency is to put photo subjects in that center box. But our natural tendencies produce bad photos. **Offset your subject** by putting them on one of those four intersections. And any lines, like the horizon, tops of buildings, or somebody's eye level should go on one of the horizontal thirds - not the center.

Shots composed like this are much more pleasing to the eye. Look at award-winning photographs. Subjects rarely occupy the middle of the frame, unless they're staring straight at the lens.

So, if you're not centering, where should the extra room go? Great question. **Give your subject more room in the direction action is happening**. If a person is facing to the right on your screen, give more space to the right. If someone is throwing a ball, give more room in front of them than behind. This relieves tension for the viewer.

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# Lighting

In essence, photography uses light to print an image onto film or a computer chip. Just like with your eye, everything in the photo depends on the available light. Use it to your advantage.

**Natural light will make your photos awesome.**

Rule of thumb: **When using the sun as your light source, stand between it and your subject**, and allow the sun to hit the subject at an oblique angle. This will give you a nice profile with some shadow instead of a flat, washed-out image.

Oh, and let's get one thing out of the way right now about mobile photography: **stop using your stupid flash.** It will never, ever, ever, make a picture better. If you're in a dark restaurant, don't use your flash. If you're at a concert at midnight, don't use your flash. If you were with Bane in the black prison hole in the third Batman movie and you wanted to take a selfie, you'd still ruin it by using your flash.

The flash on your phone or even the one attached to the top of your DSLR basically gives you an unregulated burst of light. It is why every picture you've ever taken after 9 p.m. looks like a crime scene photo. Instead, try to use whatever light is available to make the picture happen. This is a lot easier with DSLRs because you can alter shutter speed, aperture, and ISO (more on those later).

**Tip:** If your food is so gorgeous that you must snap a picture of it, instead of using your cell flash, have a friend shine their mobile flashlight through a napkin (acting as an impromptu diffuser) and take a flash-less photo, or have them bounce it off a white plate, onto the food while you shoot. Both of these methods soften the light, and therefore, the contrast on the photo.

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## The Technical Stuff

Okay, all the aforementioned tips are applicable to any level of photography, including mobile. But assuming you have or may someday have a camera with changeable settings, you'll want to be familiar with **shutter speed, aperture, and ISO.**

### Shutter Speed

This is how fast the shutter moves to capture your image. We'll wait while you let that bit of hidden knowledge soak in.

Despite being obvious, it's pretty important. The faster the shutter moves, the more instantaneous your picture. Or, the slower it moves, the more blur in your picture. Sports photos = crazy fast shutter speed, like thousandths of a second. Cityscape images with the headlights all blurring into colorful rails of light = very slow shutter speed.

The thing is that **the lower your shutter speed, the brighter your picture** because there's more time for light to enter your lens. That's the trade-off. So if you're in a dark room, not using your flash, you'll probably need a lower shutter speed, but may wind up with some blurry images since even slight movements of the camera can show up when the picture takes longer to capture.

## Aperture

This measures **the opening in the camera behind the shutter that allows light to hit the computer chip**. It also controls something called **depth of field**, which defines how much of your photo will be in focus (as opposed to being blurry).

Aperture is measured in something called **F-stops**. The higher the F-stop, the darker the image and the greater the depth of field. So, for example, f/8 is a long depth of field and needs more lighting, either by the sun, or artificial means. f/2.8 is a shorter depth of field, but performs better in low light.

So for landscapes, where you want a lot in focus, you want that f/8 (or something similar). Portraits (yes, including selfies) need a shorter depth of field and more light, so you'd go with the f/2.8.

## ISO

**The base level of light hitting your image sensor**. It determines what you do next with shutter speed and aperture. Higher ISO means you can use higher shutter speeds, meaning less blur. Good, right?

Well, here's the trade-off: **Higher ISOs mean more noise in the image**. When you see a lot of reddish-purple grains in your image, that's a too-high ISO. ISO 100 is a base level. A lot of people just leave it on the auto setting.

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# Photographing Your Significant Other

Okay, just a parting word of advice. Most of the time, pictures aren't as flattering as we'd like them to be. Let me rephrase. Most of the time, pictures aren't as flattering as your girlfriend or boyfriend would like them to be, and that's your fault. Keep the both of you happy by learning how to do it better.

Whenever possible, **shoot at a downward angle**. This accentuates things like nice cheekbones, catchlights in the eyes from the sun, and carefully crafted hairstyles. An upward angle, on the other hand draws out such desirable features as the double chin, the protruding stomach, and the flared nostril. Your call.

Also, people look better when you shoot them at an angle instead of straight-on. This highlights their profile — the contours of their face, the subtle shadows on their skin — instead of flattening them out.

And finally, when doing the infamous couple-selfie, make sure you and your SO look at the little lens instead of the big screen. Otherwise your gaze will be slightly and annoyingly off-center, like something caught your attention at the last second.

So there you have it. Put those into practice, and the Instagram likes and Facebook compliments will start rolling in. You're an artist now, just like Ansel Adams. Only difference is that instead of gallery exhibitions, you parlay your art for electronic affirmation on social media. Nothing wrong with that.

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