

Tips for taking top photographs

By Jenni Metcalfe

1. Compose the shot so that it tells a story - think about the rule of 3s where if you divided the photograph into 9 squares, each square would tell you something about the story the photograph is telling. At the very least try to have something interesting in both the foreground and the background.

2. Photography is really "painting with light" - ensure the scene is well lit, especially people's faces (mornings and late afternoons are often the best for taking well lit photographs; cloudy days will also give you even light on people's faces); if someone is wearing a hat, tilt it back so we can see their full face.

3. Try to get people doing things (e.g. examining a plant, digging a hole, etc) rather than staring blankly at the camera - but do take some head and shoulders close up shots of all interviewees; the best shots show people and the landscapes with which they are connected.

4. If your photo includes water with a clear horizon line - make sure it is horizontal and that the water isn't flowing up or down hill!

5. Try to get different angles on the same shot - kneel or lie down to get a shot from below; stand up high to get a shot looking down.

6. When you're taking shots of a person, get them to talk to someone to one side of you so that they are not staring directly into the camera lens; they are also likely to feel more relaxed this way and you're more likely to get a natural shot.

7. Watch that the background light does not overexpose your shot or make the face of a person you're shooting too dark. Use a fill flash with someone who has strong light behind them.

8. Take lots of photos - the more you take, the more likely there will be one photo that says it all!

9. Enjoy!!!

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