

## Blogger's Guide to Photography: your pictures will rock in 10 painless steps

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Follow these 10 steps to better photos of your handmade creations. Your readers will revere you as a photographic goddess. We already know that you're a killer quilter, knitter, sewing maniac...or you probably wouldn't be reading this. These are just a few helpful hints to show off your creations as best you can.

- 1) **Get armed and dangerous:** Find your camera's manual in your desk drawer or get access to it online.  
Stay with me here. Even the most simple camera has some basic settings that can help you to take better pictures. I'll talk about a couple really easy ones below. [Nikon](#) and [Canon](#) both have extensive libraries of manuals. It is probably not too hard to find the manual for your camera online if you put it somewhere 'safe' and have never seen it since.
- 2) **Find the light:** Like Claude Monet and his study of [light on haystacks](#), art and photography is after all simply an effort to capture beautiful light. The 'prettier' your pictures are, the 'prettier' your hand made projects will look on your blog.
  - a) Only take photos during the day with natural light. Go outside, get to where light comes in a window, but find the light around you. Use a magnet to hold your quilt block on your frig in order to photograph it if that is the only place in your house with good light.
  - b) Study the light in your house at different times of the day. My bathroom is great in the morning and my living room is great in the afternoon. Move your quilt blocks or knitted socks around the house with you until you find the best light to shoot them in.
  - c) Indirect light is usually best since it avoids harsh shadows and brings out softer colors in your project. Find the right balance between good lighting a room but for the most part you don't want it to shine directly on your project.

- 3) **Don't zap things:** Turn off your flash.

Just turn it off and leave it off. Period. Your camera manual will tell you how to turn it off. Flash photography on small textile projects is never pretty unless done using studio lighting and flash bulbs with reflective umbrellas. Even I don't have that kind of a set up for my blog photos!

- 4) **Set the table:** When you photograph your projects, the 'ambiance' around what you are photographing is as important as the subject itself.

Either keep it very simple and clutter free or add a few cute items in that go well with your subject. Do NOT have items in your photo that are not planned. Before you snap the photo, look around all the edges of your view finder or screen and ensure that there is no clutter in the frame that should not be there.

- 5) **Get close:** Find out the minimum focus distance for your camera.

This will tell you how close you can come to your subject without it being blurry. Often times automatic cameras have a 'macro' mode that you will want to use. This is in some cases denoted by a 'flower' icon on your camera setting dial.

Sometimes getting right up close to your subject can really give viewers a good idea of the handwork that you accomplished and a feel for the textures of your piece. I often shoot pictures of my quilting work at an angle so you can see the details up close but also get a feel for the entire piece. Example photos [here](#) and [here](#).

- 6) **Freeze:** No matter what, photos that are crystal clear help your readers enjoy the project you are working on.  
Either get a tripod, or be sure to hold your breath while you snap your photo. Lean on something if you can, but DO NOT MOVE while you take the picture.
- 7) **Let it be:** As fun as it is to play with your photos after you take them, IMHO good photos are captured on your memory stick and can be only slightly altered by your computer before they look really crazy.  
A bad picture that has bad light cannot be saved. Just delete it from your memory stick and move on.
- 8) **Clean up your act:** Keep your lens clean. If your kids or pets like to lick the lens of your camera, follow the instructions in your manual to keep it free from dust and yucky stuff.
- 9) **Be mean:** Look at your photos with a critical eye.

If you don't like what you see, reshoot your photos with a different angle and with different light. Or if the surroundings looked good on your camera but don't turn out well on your computer, then try shooting again in a different environment. If you don't love it, and it's not you, just try again or wait until you find what you do love and post that on your blog.

- 10) **Be you:** Express the unique style that is yours alone through your camera.

You probably have a blog because you make unique creations. It's cool to create projects that you love and want to share with the universe through your photos (quilts, knitted items, clothing, dolls, toys...etc) but you must also express your own way of 'seeing' through these photos.

If you collect tea cups, show some of your collection in the corner of that photo of your latest quilt block. If you have the most beautiful toes on the planet, sneak one in while you photograph the sock you have in progress. Let things that are uniquely 'you' shine through in your photos.

I collect depression glass, so you'll notice that it shows up every once in a while in my posts. It's usually not the subject, but it adds a bit of 'me' to the photo while still keeping the focus on my quilting. Example [here](#).

Thanks for reading, best of luck behind the lens, and I look forward to seeing your unique creations and your photographic point of view.

Sincerely,

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