

How to Start Doing Photography

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There's something captivating about capturing images. If you're just starting out and would like to make photography a hobby, focus on the basics. Assemble gear for taking pictures and practice photographing with manual settings, using a tripod, and composing a shot. If you're an experienced photographer and you're considering making it a career, build on the basics while developing business goals.

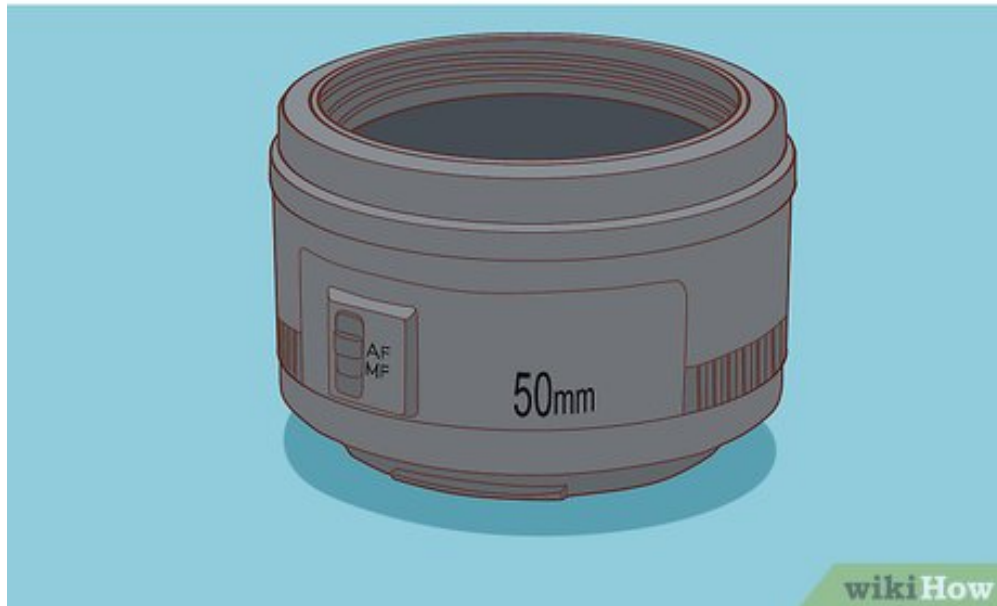
Method 1

Method 1 of 3: Gathering Basic Equipment



1 Choose a camera according to your comfort level. If you're just starting out with photography, choose a point and shoot or digital single-lens reflex (DSLR) camera that you feel comfortable handling. It doesn't matter how many megapixels it can capture or how expensive it is. Start with what's affordable and buy used gear as you learn more.^[1]

- Consider purchasing a refurbished camera that you can learn on.
- Regardless of what type of camera you buy, it's important to read the owner's manual. This will teach you about features that are unique to your camera.



2 Purchase a prime lens if you have a DSLR camera. To have more control over your images, specifically the light and blurring of the background, use a prime lens. This lens is fixed so it doesn't zoom. A prime lens is useful when you're still learning how to balance aperture, shutter speed, and image sensitivity.^[2]

- A common prime lens to start with is a 50mm 1.8.



3 Buy several memory cards so you have backup storage. It's easy to think that if you have 1 large memory card, you're all set. Unfortunately, memory cards can become lost or stop working over time. Purchase a few memory cards in different storage sizes and keep a few in your camera bag so you always have access to memory.^[3]

- Memory cards usually last between 2 and 5 years, so you'll need to replace them occasionally.



4 Get a tripod to capture crisp images. Purchase an inexpensive tripod that you can secure your camera to. The tripod will stabilize your camera so you can take shots with a longer shutter speed without getting blurry images. For example, you can take pictures in the evening when the lighting is low.

- If you can't buy a tripod, set up a stack of books or place your camera on a flat post to steady it.



5 Store your gear in a camera bag. Get a camera bag or backpack that holds your camera, any lenses you want to carry, and your tripod. Ensure that the bag is comfortable to carry around or you'll be less likely to actually use it.

- Most camera bags have small compartments for lenses, filters, and memory cards.



6 **Install photo-editing software on your computer.** Editing your images on the computer is a large part of creating great pictures. Choose a photo-editing software that has tools you think you'll need in post-production, such as adjusting color balance and playing with contrast.^[4]

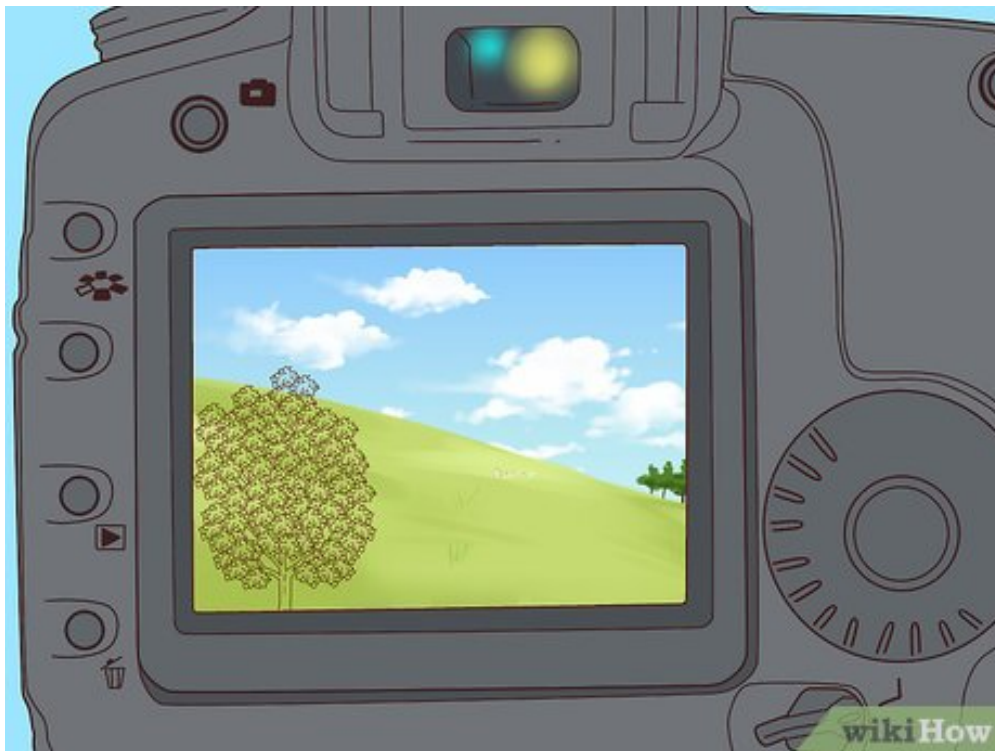
- Capture One Pro, Adobe Lightroom, and Photoshop are popular photo-editing programs. Make sure the image you take is not blurry.

Method 2 of 3: Taking Great Photographs



1 **Photograph things that inspire you.** Find what you're really passionate about photographing and spend lots of time taking pictures of it. Instead of trying to take perfect pictures, try to capture what made you excited about the shot or what sparked delight.

- For example, if you love to travel, take pictures of everything on your trip. Over time, you might find that you're particularly drawn to photographing architecture or people that you meet.



2 Work on composing your shots. As a beginner, **take photographs** of everything that draws and holds your attention. Pay attention to what's in your camera's viewfinder before you capture the image. A classic photography trick is to compose the picture by the rule of thirds. Imagine your frame is divided into thirds going horizontally and vertically. Then place interesting subjects along these lines.[5]

- For example, instead of taking a photograph of a tree in the middle of your frame, move the camera so the tree is off to the bottom left of the frame and you can see the valley behind it.
- If you'd like to take an extremely close up photograph of something, such as a flower or bug, use your camera's macro mode. This will allow you to capture rich details.

EXPERT TIP



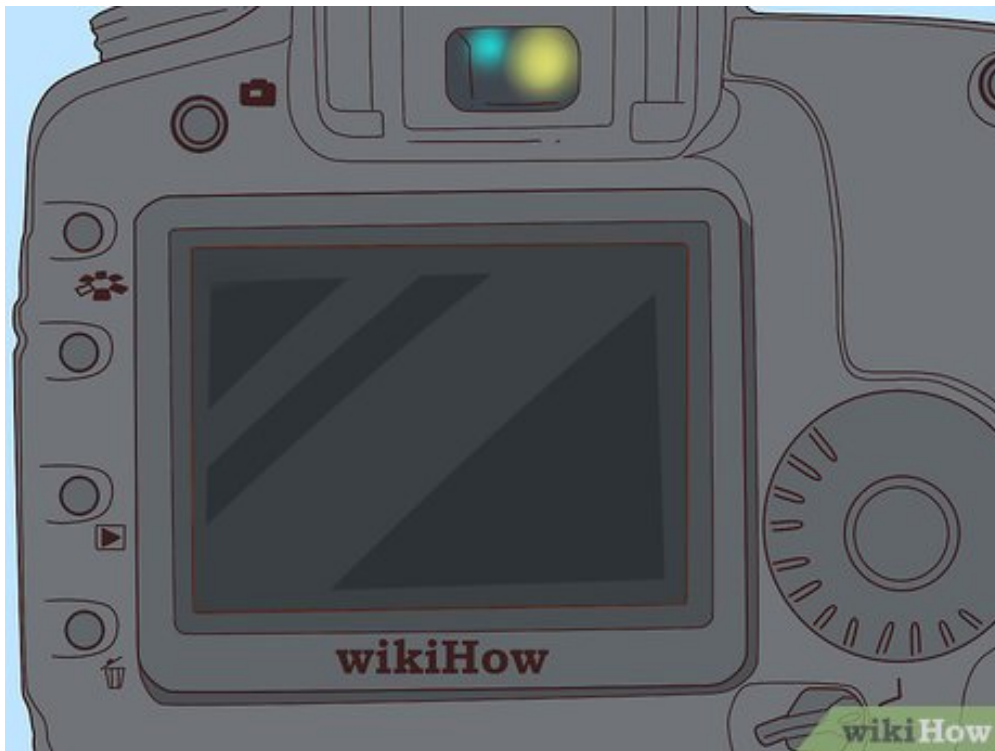
VLAD HOROL
Professional Photographer

Our Expert Agrees: When you're just started getting in photography, the goal is to learn the way light works and how to capture light on your subject. You don't really need expensive gear for that—the best camera is the one you have on you, so if all you have is a camera phone, practice using that.



3 Adjust the distance between your subject. Once you've found something you'd like to photograph and composed a shot, take a few pictures. Then move closer to the subject so it fills the frame and take a few more pictures. Walk around to photograph from different angles and then walk farther away from your subject. You might find that photographing even closer or farther away will give you a better image than the one you imagined.

- This is a great trick to try if you're struggling to come up with a shot. Just start moving around your subject until something catches your eye.



4 Play around with the exposure triangle to have more control. You'll probably start taking photos using your camera's automatic settings. Keep shooting automatic until you're ready to start learning more and being more creative. When you start photographing in manual, you'll be able to control aperture, shutter speed, and **image sensitivity**. These work together to determine the quality of the photo you take.^[6]

- For example, imagine you want to photograph a track race. If you shoot in automatic, the camera will probably freeze the action to create a still image. If you'd rather take a picture where the runner is blurred and appears to be moving fast, use manual to slow the shutter speed.

Tip: If the manual is overwhelming, try focusing on just 1 element at a time. For example, make aperture a priority setting before combining other exposure settings.



5 Find time to practice as much as possible. The best way to improve your photography skills is to photograph as often as you can. To make things interesting, give yourself challenges and show your photos to a photography mentor or friend. For example, challenge yourself to photograph action shots one day. Photograph nature scenes the next day. Then shoot food or fashion images the following day.^[7]

- Consider enrolling in a photography class or taking a workshop where you can get one-on-one feedback.

Method 3 of 3: Transitioning to a Photography Career



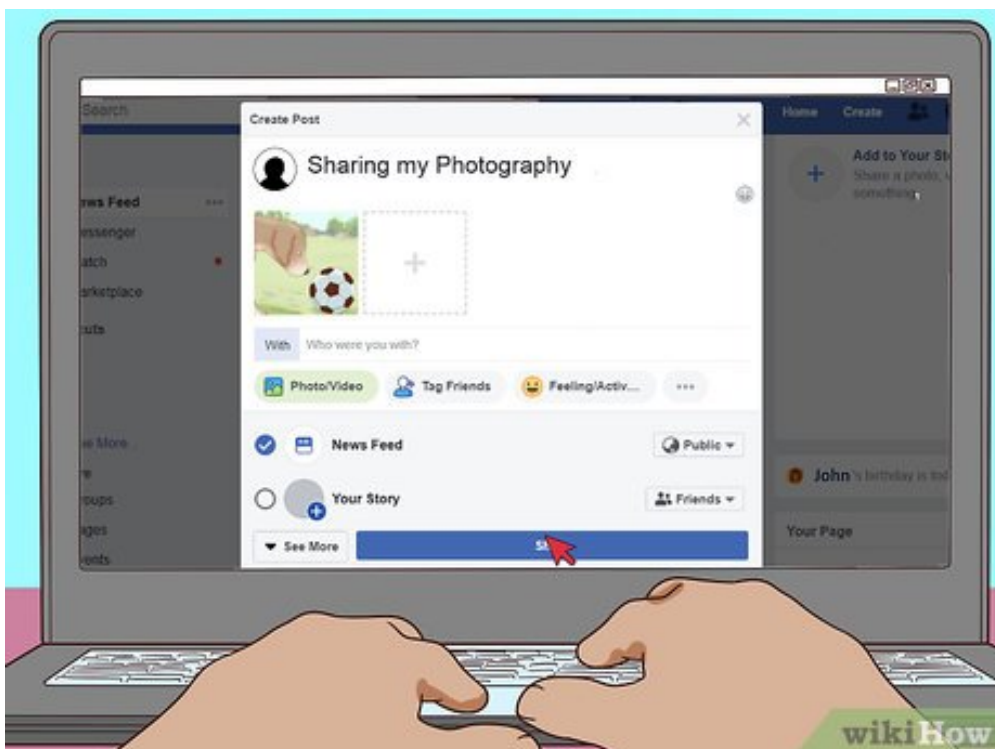
1 Play around with different styles of photography. If you're thinking about a career in photography, you may already know what style of photography you want to do. If not, spend time trying a variety of styles. For example, focus on:^[8]

- Fine art
- Fashion
- Food and product styling
- Nature and landscape
- Family and events
- Photojournalism



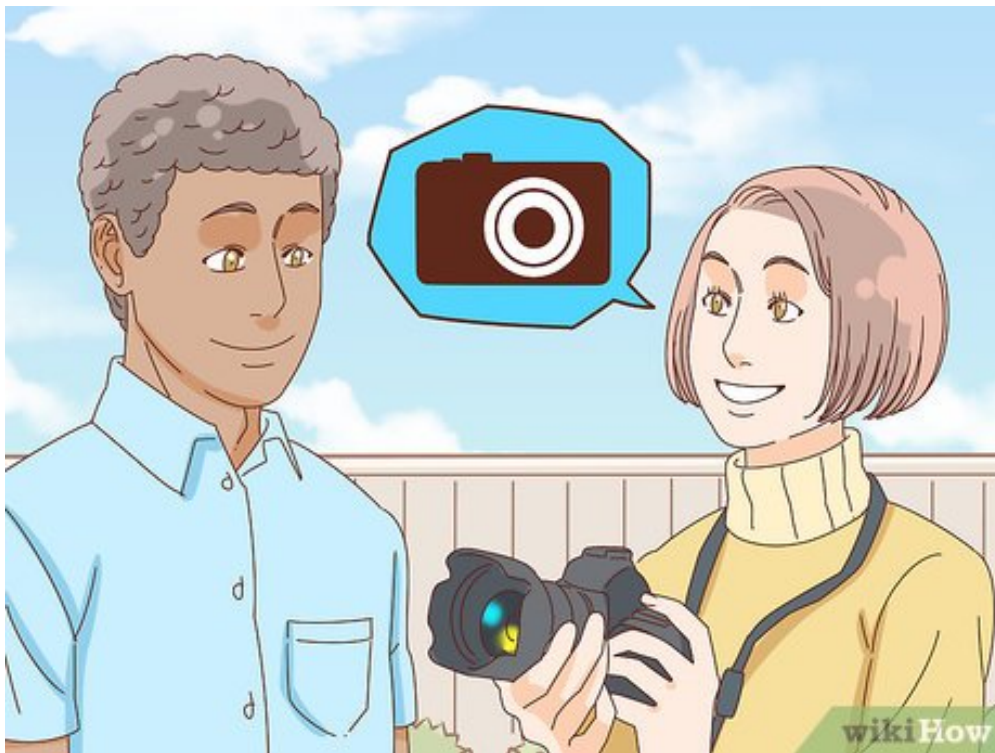
2 Build a solid portfolio of your best work. Once you've accumulated a lot of images that you're proud of, pick 10 to 20 of them to become your portfolio. Include photos that you can show to potential clients. Keep in mind that your portfolio should highlight the style of photography that you want to do for a living.[9]

- Consider having a physical portfolio that you can look through with clients, as well as an online portfolio that you can direct them to.



3 Share your work on social media. Be as active as possible on social media, such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Regular posts and images will earn you a large following that can earn you valuable work. Remember to direct viewers to your website so they can order prints or hire you.[10]

- Some photographers prefer to focus on social media before building a solid portfolio. Since there's no wrong or right way to approach this, do what feels comfortable to you.



4 Learn the business aspects of being a professional photographer. If you're seriously considering a photography career, keep in mind that you'll be doing a lot of other things in addition to photographing. Decide if you're comfortable with balancing these demands or if you'd like to find a business partner.^[11]

- Photographers need great people skills since you'll be interacting with clients.

Tip: It helps to have experience with bookkeeping, website creation, and social media.



5 Set realistic goals for yourself. It's easy to feel frustrated if your photography career isn't taking off as quickly as you thought it would. To help you chart your progress, create a mixture of short term and long-term goals that are achievable. Set deadlines for some of the goals to hold yourself accountable.^[12]

- For example, tell yourself to photograph 3 weddings within 1 year. A long-term goal might be photographing weddings every weekend during the summer.



Community Q&A

Question

How do I take good pictures with a phone camera?



Community Answer

I think it's very possible to take amazing photos using only a phone camera but lighting is everything. If you want to take a quality photo, you just need to know your angles and have a steady hand.

Helpful 40 Not Helpful 4

Question

Is the canon t5 a good camera to start with?



Community Answer

It is a more advanced camera, it will be quite difficult to get used to but once you do, it can be a great experience.

Helpful 26 Not Helpful 5

Question

How do I edit my photos?



Community Answer

See [How to Edit Photos](#).

Helpful 9 Not Helpful 6

Question

Can you suggest some good apps for the phone that can help?



Community Answer

Open Camera is one of the cool apps for taking a nice shot.

Helpful 4 Not Helpful 2

Question

Is the Canon EOS 1200D a good camera to start with?



Γιαννης Μαυριδης
Community Answer

It doesn't matter which camera you have. If you know how to use a camera, you can take beautiful pictures regardless.

Helpful 4 Not Helpful 6

Question

How can I take good photos on my phone?



Community Answer

Load different applications that support good images and camera, such as Youcam, Beauty Plus or Frontback.

Helpful 8 Not Helpful 14

Question

How do I start a photography blog?



Community Answer

Take some quality photos first. After you have that done, go to a blog site that you are comfortable with using. Design your layout and put up your photos. Add text. Tell friends and family members about your blog as well. If you have social media accounts then put your photos up there and add the links to your blog. If you don't have a social media account, that's fine!

Helpful 2 Not Helpful 0

VideoRead Video Transcript

<https://www.wikihow.com/video/1/12/Start+Doing+Photography+Step+0.1080p.mp4>



Tips

- Look through your favorite magazines and books for photography inspiration.
- Only carry the photography equipment that you plan on using since it's easy to get packed down.
- If you're taking photos of people you don't know, ask their permission before capturing the image.

References

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About This Article



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This article was co-authored by **Vlad Horol** and by wikiHow staff writer, **Jessica Gibson**. Vlad Horol is a Professional Photographer and the Co-Founder of Yofi Photography, his portrait photography studio based in Chicago, Illinois. He and his wife Rachel specialize in capturing maternity, newborn, and family photos. He has been practicing photography full-time for over five years. His work has been featured in VoyageChicago and Hello Dear Photographer. This article has been viewed 166,359 times.

★★★★★
2 votes - 100%

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