

3 Simple Steps to Great Smartphone Photos

NOTES

STEP 1: LIGHTING

• Light is the most important thing when it comes to photography. The best light is the free light – the sun!

WHY I LOVE SUNLIGHT

- Unless you're a professional photographer, you most likely don't have photo lights. When you try to use lamps or overhead lighting in your home, the colors are usually too warm in your photos. When you place your project by the window to be photographed, the difference is huge! Do not use lamps or overhead lighting. Stick with sunlight.
- Find your sweet spot in your home and time of day that you get the best light.

MY FAVORITE DIRECTION OF LIGHT

- Light coming from one side is the easiest direction to photograph, and it gives the most depth, texture, and details in your photos.
- Back light usually dims out a lot of the detail and blows out color; front light flattens out the object and provides less shadow.

HOW I BOUNCE AND DIFFUSE LIGHT

• If there is too much shadow, use a piece of foam core to bounce the light off the side. You can also buy an inexpensive foldable light diffuser, ripstop cloth to hang in your window, or a diffuser/reflector set (preferably a silver reflector, as gold tends to add too much warmth).

TIPS FOR THE BEST LIGHT OUTDOORS

- Don't shoot in direct sunlight, or else you will have a photo full of hot spots and shadows. Look for a spot of shade in the lawn or beside a building. You can also bring a diffuser outside with you to have someone hold it up as a shade while you photograph.
- Look for how much light there is on one side vs. how much shadow is on the other; create dimension and depth to make sure the texture shows for a much more interesting photo.

STEP 2: STYLING

- Styling is where you can get really creative and add your own personality to your photos.
- Think of styling as building a frame around the craft or object that you're photographing, and enhance it by bringing the attention to the object itself.

START WITH A GREAT BACKGROUND

- Choose backgrounds that are rich and textured, without too much pattern and visual motion.
- We love to use linen fabric, natural papers adhered to foam core, and wood.
- Photographing in nature brings a lot of beauty and richness to your photos.

HOW I USE THE RULE OF 3 & ODD NUMBERS

• Using 3 or odd numbers creates a nice flow and visual interest in photos.



ADDING SOFTNESS, TEXTURE & NATURE

- When photographing a crisp, white or bright object, use fabric and natural elements like a pine branch to create softness.
- Nature always seems to make a photograph look better! Greenery, wood slices, or sticks are some of our favorites.

TELL A VISUAL STORY

- Think about how the objects you're using relate to the project. We love to bring in tools or materials used to make the project, so it really showcases that it is handmade.
- Three of our favorite props are: old scissors, ribbon, and vintage books.

SHOOTING LIFESTYLE & FLAT LAY SHOTS

- Lifestyle shots: when photos are set up to look like they're actually in the environment they're being used
- Flat lay shots: a photo from the top view

STEP 3: COMPOSITION

HOW I CREATE VISUAL MOVEMENT

• We love to use ribbon to add movement to items that are flat; this draws your eyea into the photo and keeps you there a bit longer.

THOUGHTFUL CROPPING

• Try backing out and taking a photo of the whole scene, then practice cropping to make sure your craft is the main focus of the photo. When you practice this, it will really train your eye.

TRYING DIFFERENT ANGLES

• Photograph your project from various angles to add a professional looking touch.

LOOKING FOR BALANCE & WHITE SPACE

- Watch for dead (or "white") space in your photos sometimes white space in photos is really beautiful, but make sure that it's balanced.
- Lia's challenge: shoot photographs in a square (great for social media!)
- Use #liasphotochallenge when posting on social media so we can see what you have learned!

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