



7 Digital Camera Tricks Used By The Pros

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Introduction

If you're just starting out in digital photography, you may find it challenging to take good photos. Perhaps your shots turn out blurred, too light or too dark. Perhaps you don't understand how the camera flash, aperture or shutter speed works. Somehow, you never quite produce the quality shots that you see in those glossy magazines.

Well, that's the purpose of this report, "**7 Digital Camera Tricks Used By The Pros**". It aims to share with you 7 professional tips on how you can shoot better pictures. Read these tips and more importantly, apply them – you will definitely help you become a better photographer. Have fun reading and enjoy your learning experience!

So let's get started with the first tip ...

Trick #1: Get To Know Your Digital Camera

Does this sound familiar? You buy the latest digital camera out there, come home, rip off the box, then proceed to fiddle with the device. You briefly flick through the hundred page camera manual and then never look at it again. Not a good idea! If you buy a digital camera, you owe it to yourself to understand its ins and outs.

The first thing I do when I get a new camera is to play around with its exposure controls. If all you do is use auto mode, there's not much you'll learn. Switch to the manual, aperture priority or shutter priority modes (if your camera supports them) and read up on how they work.

One of the best techniques to understand your camera's exposure controls is to use different settings for the same picture.

Select a scene for your photo, then shoot using Auto mode. Note down the settings, switch to Manual mode, and use slightly different settings than the one used in Auto mode.

For example, you may compensate the exposure by +1/3 EV, and take a second picture. Next, take a third picture with exposure compensation of -1/3 EV. Use the same approach and play with the aperture, shutter speed, white balance, and so on.

Review the pictures you've taken. Which picture is the best one? Note down the settings you used. The next time you want to take a picture of this particular scene, you will know the exact settings to use.

You can easily repeat this exercise with other situations: indoors, action pictures, macro photography, sunny skies, cloudy skies, portrait, etc. At the end of these photo exercises, you will know what your camera is capable of doing well and what it does not do well.

Just applying the simple tip above will vastly improve the quality of your photos. Good luck!

Trick #2: How To Compose Your Photo

Now, let's keep going with the second trick.

Have you ever wondered how the professionals come up with such interesting perspectives of our world using their photos? The truth is, learning to compose pictures properly is an important skill to pick up.

One of the most important rules in photography, as most professionals will tell you, is the **Rule of Thirds**. Most of us rarely plan our shots - we simply whip out our cameras and start shooting. The professionals will say 'Apply the Rule of Thirds'.

The Rule of Thirds says that we should divide each photo frame into nine sections, much like a tic-tac-toe board. The subject or points of interest in the photo should then coincide with any of the four points of intersection on the tic-tac-toe board.

Another way of composing the photo is to lay the subject on the lines of the tic-tac-toe board, which gives a different and often interesting perspective.

Try out the above tip in your next photo shoot and see if you can get better looking results.

Trick #3: Learn To Control the Flash

Wow, we're already into the third trick. I hope you've already started seeing better results in your photos.

Now, moving right along ...

One of the most important things you need to know about digital photography is to control the flash. Personally, I hate to rely on the automatic flash that comes with the digital camera. Depending on the situation, you need to switch off or switch on the flash.

For example, when taking outdoor photos, it is sometimes good to turn on the flash to illuminate the subject, especially if he or she is in the shade. On the other hand, you can also choose to turn off the flash when taking indoor shots. Sometimes, using the flash indoors will result in unnatural skin color and harsh glare in your photos.

Remember that the quality of the light is as important as the quantity. If you're using electronic flash, you want to avoid the harsh illumination that flash typically provides. I often drape a handkerchief over my camera's flash. This reduces the flash illumination to a more reasonable level while softening the light.

Trick #4: Hold The Camera Steady

Congratulations! If you've read up to this point, you should be well on your way to sharper, more beautiful digital photos.

Without further ado, we move into the next trick.

When you press the shutter release button and take a photo, a lot of things can happen. One quite likely but unfortunate event is that you press the shutter release button too hard, jar the camera during exposure, and produce a blurry picture.

There are a few ways to avoid this. One method is to use your camera's self-timer to trip the shutter after a few seconds rather than using your finger.

The other way is to use a tripod for the shot, but this works only if you have the luxury of spending time to set it up. It's probably not recommended for quick and dirty snapshots.

A third suggestion is to use a remote shutter-release control to trip your camera's shutter without touching it. There are different remote releases for different cameras - it can be a cable that attaches to your camera or an infrared remote control. These devices let you take the photo at the exact instant you want.

Learn to apply the above tip in all your subsequent photo shoots. Good luck!

Trick #5: Play With The ISO Setting

Moving on to the next trick ...

I find the ISO setting in digital cameras very useful. The ISO setting of a camera essentially controls its sensitivity to light.

If you're taking a photo of a still object, like a flower, then always use a low ISO setting. It allows for a longer shutter speed and produces a cleaner image.

If you're shooting a moving object, like a baby playing with a toy, then a higher ISO setting of say 400 would be better. Do take note, however, that a higher ISO setting gives a faster shutter speed and requires less light. This will produce noisier photos.

Just applying the above tip in will allow you to get much nicer looking shots. Feel free to [share with me](#) your results.

Trick #6: Control The Shutter Speed

Ok, we move on to our next trick.

Shutter speed one of the most fundamental principles in photography. Learning to control the shutter speed is critical to taking good pictures.

If you have a point-and-shoot camera, then it may not matter too much. Simply set the camera to automatic mode and snap the picture. The camera's in-built auto exposure settings will take care of the shutter speed settings for you.

If, however, you have a more advanced camera, then the choice of shutter speed clearly matters. What you need to remember is this - shutter speeds are very closely linked to movement.

Use a slow shutter speed (say 1/60 or lower) if you want to introduce some blur in the picture to display speed in the subject. Remember, however, that a slow shutter speed will mean you need to hold the camera totally still for a longer period of time.

If you can't do this, your image will usually turn out bad. To work around the problem, use a tripod or steady your arms somewhere before taking the shot. As a general rule, if the shutter speed is 1/30 or slower, I'll definitely use my tripod to steady the camera.

Use a fast shutter speed (say 1/125 or higher) if you need to capture a fast moving subject. Good examples include a passing car or a bird in flight. Now, one problem with fast shutter speeds is that you can totally miss the shot because the shutter opens and closes so fast.

To workaroud this, you can try one of two things. First, avoid the camera LCD - look through the viewfinder with one eye and use the other eye to spot the subject crossing the camera's field of view. Second, you can try uses a lens that increases the field of view, allowing you more time to take the picture.

Trick #7: Get A Tripod For Your Camera

This is the last tip in this report. I hope you have benefited from the photography tips I've shared. More importantly, you should now be able to take much better photos to show your family and friends! Good luck and happy shooting!

Moving right along to our final trick ...

I recommend this tip to all budding photographers - camera tripods are an essential tool in your photography arsenal. When will you need a tripod? Well, it's useful if you're taking shots under low-light conditions or trying to capture fast moving objects. I like to use a tripod when taking night shots city streets, for example.

Always make sure you check stability of the tripod when the legs are fully extended. Adjust the tripod to a proper height, then check if it wobbles after you apply some

pressure to the top. If the tripod is made of sturdy material and is of good quality, it should remain firmly in place even with some pressure on it.

Another thing to bear in mind when buying a tripod is the weight of your camera. Remember, if you have a professional digital SLR, the total weight of your camera, lenses and flash unit will make the whole setup pretty hefty. Make sure that tripod can carry the total load.

Conclusion

And that's the end of this report! I hope you've enjoyed it. Feel free to drop by my website below and learn more about digital photography.

Best Regards,
Gary Hendricks
Basic-Digital-Photography.com

P.S. Incidentally, if you want to improve your digital photography skills, you may want to take a look at [Digital Photography Success](#). This e-book is 174 pages long with 11 extensive chapters. It includes excellent step-by-step instructions on how to take pictures of beautiful landscapes, people, nature, fireworks, night scenes, etc. Learn how to shoot professional photos - just like those you see in glossy magazine covers.

<p>Gary Hendricks runs a hobby site on digital photography. Visit his website at Basic-Digital-Photography.com for tips and tricks on buying digital cameras, as well as shooting great photos.</p>
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