

## How to take great photos with your cell phone camera

Here are some ideas to help you take much better cell phone pictures. Try them out! If you come up with some good ideas to share, please [contact us](#) so that we can consider your tip for inclusion here.

- 1.) **Brace your elbows against your body, or brace against a wall, tree, or other structure.**  
When you hold camera away from your body, it is not nearly as steady. Motion translates to blurry pictures.
- 2.) **Gently tap the shutter.**  
Tapping the shutter button hard introduces vibration right as you are taking the shot. Again, motion translates to blurry pictures.
- 3.) **Remember the “rule of thirds.”**  
Never split the horizon or subject of interest in the middle of the frame. The horizon or subject of interest should be placed one third of the way from the edge of the frame. To turn on the grid for iPhone, go to Settings > Camera > Grid. For Android phones, launch the Camera application, go to Settings, scroll to “grid lines”, and turn them on.
- 4.) **Tap to focus.**  
Do not assume the camera knows what you want to focus on. Once you have composed your shot, tap the subject of the picture. This will cause the camera to auto-focus on the subject, and it will also adjust the exposure correctly for the subject.
- 5.) **Empty space is good.**  
If you include space around your subject, it draws attention to the subject, and it makes your photo that much more interesting.
- 6.) **Reflections are interesting.**  
If you are near water – even a puddle in the street – or glass or other reflective surface, consider capturing a reflection of your subject on that surface.
- 7.) **Adjust the exposure.**  
This is especially important if you have a strongly backlit subject, i.e. a person with a bright sky behind them. Use the exposure control to eliminate the shadows. Also see tip 4 above regarding tapping on the subject.
- 8.) **Use leading lines.**  
In some pictures there are lines that lead to the subject. These could be train tracks, a rope, a street, a piece of a building, or any other object. These add depth and interest to your photo.
- 9.) **Use symmetry and patterns.**  
A highly symmetrical photo can be interesting. Similarly, a photo with repeating patterns such as flowers, windows, houses, bottles or other objects also make good compositions.
- 10.) **Do not zoom, get closer.**  
The digital zoom on cell phone cameras can make for grainy photos. You are better off getting closer to your subject to get a clean and crisp results.