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Use a neutral colored wall such as white, gray or black (this will eliminate distractions)



→ photographiNg artwork🦛



Photograph your artwork before it is framed. (this will eliminate reflections from glass or plexi)





Be sure that artwork is parallel to camera lens (this will eliminate "keystoning")



Edges are not parallel

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Hang your artwork at eye level to photograph (it will be easiest this way)





Don't photograph on a patterned or colored wall





Don't photograph your artwork behind glass (unless you have non-glare glass and a polarizing filter)





Don't photograph your artwork at an angle (this will result in the sides or your artwork being angled; sometimes this can be fixed in post-processing, but don't count on it)





Don't show hanging clips or nails if possible







Use outdoor light on a cloudy or overcast day!

If you do not have adequate indoor space photograph on a cloudy or overcast day to create a soft, even and diffused light on your artwork.



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Use Window Light

If photographing inside use a large window to diffuse the light.

Place your artwork parallel to the window to get even and diffused light.

You should not see any cast shadows on your artwork



LIGHTING



Continuous Studio Lights

Using studio lights gives you light that is predictable, consistent and repeatable

Continuous lights are those that do not flash or "strobe"

Continuous lights offer a "wysiwyg" (what you see is what you get) type of lighting)



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Continuous Studio Lights

There are a variety of types of lights including: LED, fluorescent, tungsten, and halogen (to name a few).

LED lights have gained a lot of popularity in the last few years

I suggest finding lights that are daylight balanced

Purchasing two is a must because you will need a minimum of two lights to evenly light your work



LIGHTING



Continuous Studio Lights

Use either shoot through umbrellas or soft boxes of equal size to diffuse the light

Set up lights at an equal distance from artwork

Set up lights at a 45 degree angle from artwork

Set lights to same power output











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LIGHTING



Strobe Units

Like continuous lights, strobe units offer predictable, consistent and repeatable lighting

They offer more power which means more flexibility with camera settings

The drawback is that they require more technical knowledge to operate successfully









Strobe Units

There are a variety of types and brands of strobe units. They vary in price depending on the manufacturer and the power output

Purchasing two is a must because you will need a minimum of two lights to evenly light your work

If you have a small piece of artwork you might be able to use an on camera flash unit (don't use the flash pointed directly at the artwork, bounce it!)





LIGHTING



Strobe Units

The setup is the same as continuous lights. Use either shoot through umbrellas or soft boxes of equal size to diffuse the light

Set up lights at an equal distance from artwork

Set up lights at a 45 degree angle from artwork

Set lights to same power output



http://www.marcdalessio.com/photographing-paintings-with-a-dslr/



CAMERA CHOICE



SMARTPHONE

A smart phone is doable, but will not provide the quality or the flexibility of a DSLR or mirrorless camera.

If you decide to use a smartphone, look for camera apps that allow you to adjust settings such as white balance and shutter speed.

If is helpful to buy a basic tripod to stabilize the phone while shooting.



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CAMERA CHOICE



POINT & SHOOT

A point & shoot will (depending on year of production and model) will offer a higher quality image with more settings from which to choose.

Finding a camera that will shoot in manual mode is best.



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CAMERA CHOICE



DSLR or MIRRORLESS CAMERAS

DLRs and mirrorless cameras offer the most flexibility in camera settings and accessories. The image resolution or quality is much higher than your smartphone or point and shoot cameras.





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EXPOSURE MODE: MANUAL MODE

Shooting in Manual mode will allow you to select your aperture, shutter speed, ISO and White Balance Settings



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SHUTTER SPEED:

The shutter speed determines how long the shutter is held open to allow light to enter the camera. It is measured in seconds and fractions of a second. The shutter speed also controls how motion is captured. Faster shutter speeds are better if you are trying to freeze motion or avoid camera shake.

If you are not using a tripod, shoot faster than 1/60th of a second.

If you are using a tripod, you can shoot a bit slower. Although, if you are shooting slower than 1/15th of a second, I suggest using a remote. If you don't have a remote, set your camera on a delay (self-timer).

If you are using studio strobe units you will have to shoot at your camera's sync speed. For Canon this is usually 1/200th, for Nikon, 1/250th. You can find your camera's sync speed in the owner's manual.



APERTURE:

The aperture is the size of the opening in the lens that determines how much light enters the camera. It also determines your depth of field (how much of a scene is in focus from foreground to background) in an image. The higher the aperture (smaller openings) number the greater depth of field. The lower the aperture number (wider openings) the shallower the depth of field. The aperture is usually designated by the letter "f". Example: f8 or often f/8

For 2-dimensional artwork I suggest starting at f5.6.

If you have a piece that varies in depth, you may want to start at f8.

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ISO

The ISO setting determines how sensitive your sensor is to light. When you increase the ISO number the sensor's sensitivity to light increases. You also increase the amount of visible noise when you raise the ISO number.

> In general it is best to use the lowest ISO you can. Usually this is ISO 100 or 200.

Higher ISO can cause unwanted noise in the image.



WHITE BALANCE

The White Balance settings adjusts the colors in your image with the goal of making the colors look realistic and making neutral colors appear to have no unwanted color cast.



AWB/Auto White Balance	AWB	3000-7000 [°] Kelvin
Daylight	*	5200°
Shade		7000°
Cloudy, twilight, sunset		6000°
Tungsten	*	3200°
White Flourescent		4000°
Flash	4	6000°
Custom WB		2000 [°] 10000°
Color Temperature	K	2500 [°] 10000°



WHITE BALANCE

The White Balance settings adjusts the colors in your image with the goal of making the colors look realistic and making neutral colors appear to have no unwanted color cast.

You can start out by selecting Auto White Balance (AWB).

If the colors do not appear realistic and the neutrals appear to have a color cast, try setting the white balance to match your shooting conditions.

For example, if you are shooting outside on a cloudy day, select the Cloudy White Balance Setting.

Creating a custom white balance using a target card is even better.





To get a proper exposure use the camera's internal light meter as a starting point

Adjust the shutter speed, aperture, and ISO to get the meter reading to the "0" or correct exposure reading



The meter is showing a correct exposure



The meter is showing the scene as overexposed by one stop

The meter is showing the scene as underexposed by two stops



The tonal values represented in the artwork and the color of the wall may cause an incorrect meter reading.

If you initial exposure is too dark or too light, make the adjustment by changing the aperture, shutter speed or ISO



The meter is showing a correct exposure

-2 •• -1 •• 0 •• +1 •• +2

The meter is showing the scene as overexposed by one stop

-2 • • - | • • 0 • • + | • • + 2 •

The meter is showing the scene as underexposed by two stops



Don't forget the suggested range of settings discussed earlier for aperture, shutter speed and ISO

Here is a quick refresher:

If you are not using a tripod, keep the shutter speed faster than 1/60th second.

If you are using a tripod, you can use very slow shutter speeds as along as you are using a remote or have the camera set on a delay or self-time mode.

You want to keep your aperture at a maximum of f/5.6. F/8 or higher (smaller openings) are best.

You want to try and keep your ISO as low as possible to avoid unwanted noise. Try and stay around ISO 100 or 200. Depending on the quality of the camera ISO 400 may be acceptable

Having ample light will allow you to have more flexibility with these settings.



→ BEST ←

To get the best exposure reading for your artwork use a incident light meter or what is commonly referred to as a "hand held" light meter

These meters measure light falling on your subject rather than measuring light reflecting off your subject (like your camera does)



For the most part, all the fundamentals discussed previously apply to 3-Dimensional artwork

The biggest difference from photographing 2D work from 3D work is that you usually want the have shadows

Shadows create depth and dimension

When 3D artists show their work it is important to get a sense of the depth of the piece along with seeing the surface quality or texture of the piece

The presence of shadows will allow the viewer to see the surface quality or texture of the artwork



To create shadows you need uneven lighting (which is different from what we discussed for 2D artwork.

You can try using one light along with a reflector to "open" the shadows

If you are using two lights set at a 45 degree angle (like the 2D setup), lower the power of one light so the light is uneven.



Two Lights - Equal Power



Two Lights - One Powered Down

-> PHOTOGRAPHING ARTWORK <---



Professional Table Top Set Up for Small Works



PHOTOGRAPHING ARTWORK <---



If you are on a budget and photographing at home, try making a seamless background with a piece of paper taped to a wall and a table.

You can also find indexpensive "pop up tents" online to create soft light (right)



Often times you can create 3D artists will use a background that has a gradient from black with white

If you are using a plain colored background it might seem as though your work is floating in a nondescript space

To make the 3D piece feel grounded you can use "graduated" background paper

If you don't have a graduated background paper you can create a gradient on the background by blocking or "flagging" part of the light source. This only works if the light source is placed directly above the artwork.





https://photography.tutsplus.com/tutorials/how-to-photograph-ceramics-and-3-dimensional-products-with-one-light--cms-22924

→ PHOTOGRAPHING ARTWORK←

Another importance difference between photographing 2D and 3D artwork is the need to see 3D work from different perspectives.

Placing 2D artwork is straightforward, but the question for placing 3D artwork on a background is: What angle do I display it?

The answer is: multiple angles!

It is important to move the piece around to photograph various sides of the work.

Keep in mind, showing the shape of the piece is important. Look for angles that really highlight or define the shape of the piece.

