

Tips for Photographing Artwork

OUTDOOR SHOOTING

Try to shoot outside

The problem with lights the home is that they invariably cast shadows. If you have spotlights in your ceiling for example, and you lay your picture flat on a table or on the floor, it's next to impossible not to cast your own shadow as you lean over to snap your shot.

So the easiest way to achieve great lighting is to go outdoors. Because you have a single light source (the sun) it's easy to position yourself to one side of the picture and take an overhead shot without casting your own shadow.

If it's really sunny, you can place the piece in a large shadow area (like the shadow of your house) to make sure the colors do not get washed out.

OTHER TIPS

Avoid "hot spots"

Watch for areas where the light hits and causes reflections, especially if there is a shine to the work. Adjust the angles of the lights or use a white foamboard and experiment with different angles to allow the light to reflect on the work, instead of hitting it directly.

Don't forget to focus

If you are using a phone or tablet, don't forget to focus on the object by tapping on the screen and holding on the object you want to focus on. It's always a good idea to take at least 3-4 photos, from slightly different distances, giving the camera time to adjust to the new focus are between your shots.

INDOOR SHOOTING

Hang your artwork on the wall

If at all possible, hang the work on a neutral (white, black or gray) wall at the same height as the camera on a tripod or resting sturdily on a table.

Light the work from at least two sides

When shooting indoors, try to do so in a room with plenty of windows and natural light. To avoid shadows, you want to have light hit the piece from more than one side, so supplement window light with a lamp (floor lamp is ideal).

Edit sparingly, to make sure the image reflects the artwork

Consider tweaking the image in the following ways, only if needed:

- rotate or straighten
- crop unwanted borders
- increase/decrease overall brightness
- increase/decrease overall saturation
- increase/decrease overall contrast
- adjust the overall tint

