

8 Ways to Improve your Photography

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Introduction

A guru said "Experts are once idiots." and he related this true tale :

One not-so-guru technical person, Mr B spent 3 days trying to solve a problem on a hard drive.

The problem was driving him nuts and he had no choice but to seek advice from a REAL GURU. The real guru shook the drive and heard the noise it made. He advised MR B to change 2 screws on the drive. Mr B did so and true enough the hard drive works!

Mr B was really impressed and asked the real guru " How did you do it? I spend 3 days trying all ways and means but couldn't solve the problem. You just shook it and knew where was the fault"

The real guru replied "Oh!.. Cos i spent 2 weeks before i managed to solve the exact problem that you are facing."

Okie I am no guru or expert but here is just some tips to share. may you become a real photography guru soon!



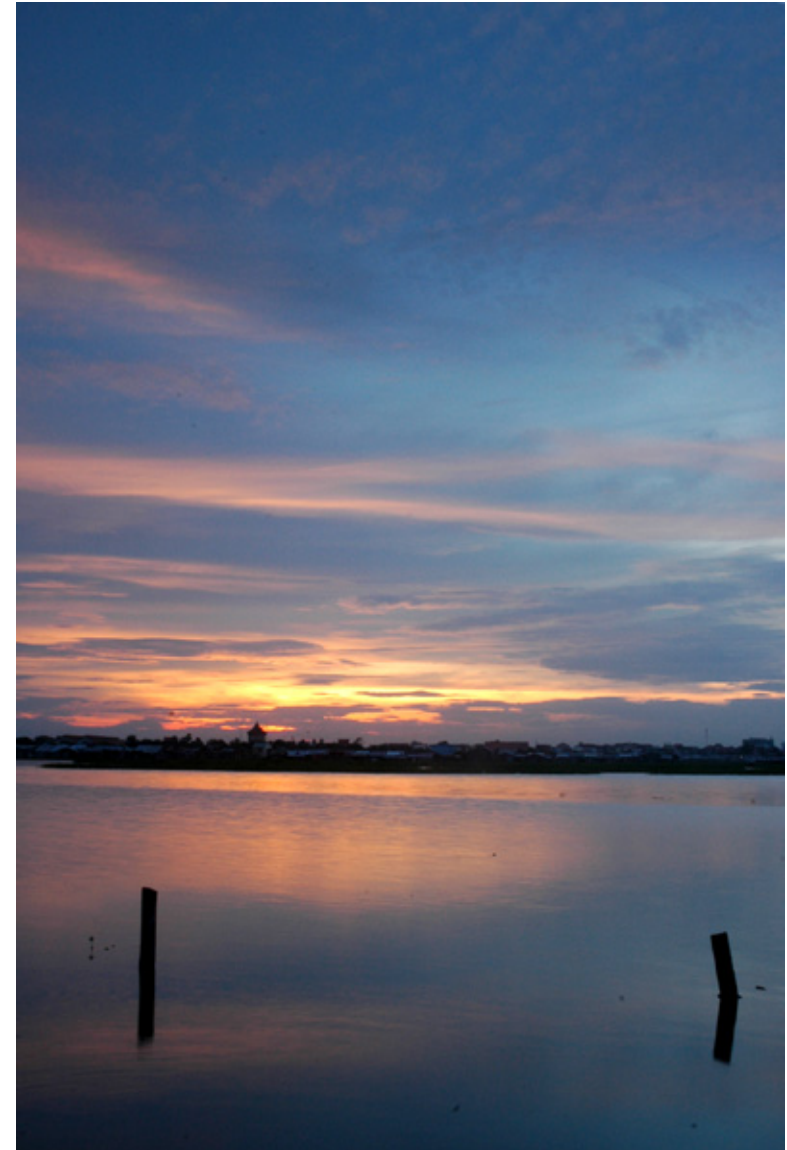
1) Shoot more at the right time

Since photography is painting with light, shoot more during the time where the light is good.

There are periods of the day where we termed them to be the "magic hours". Like the name, it means that the light during such hours are quite *magical*.

Typically light from 7am to 9am and 4pm to 7pm is good. You should also try 1/2 hour before sunrise and 1/2 hour after sunset.

These are the times where the light is warm creating a golden brown tone in your photos. Go shooting more often during these time slots and rest during the 11am to 3pm timing where light is strong and harsh.



2) Make every shot count



I know most of us shoot using digital cameras these days. But if you always think of “shoot now and delete later”, then you will be forever deleting pictures.

Slow down your shooting speed, do not abuse the shutter button. Think before you press the shutter button. Would you be deleting the picture later?

If you need to take more photos of the same scene, then vary the angle, the aperture in a meaningful way.

3) Learn the rules, follow the rules, break rules

As a novice, you pick up simple composition rules such as Rule of Thirds , use of leading lines etc.

Next we should follow the rules and use them in our composition.

As you progress on , such rules should no longer bind you. Feel free to break the rules



4) Get nearer to the subject

"If Your Pictures Aren't Good Enough, You're Not Close Enough"

- Robert Capa, war photographer

Try filling the whole frame with your subject especially if it is a human. This not remove distracting background but also allow you to know your subject better.

The best way to get nearer is to use your legs and walk. Yes, some people may turn away if they spot you but very often they are willing to be photographed.



5) Know your Equipment

Understand the functions and limitations of your camera. Learn to use the Aperture Priority, Shutter Priority and the macro modes if your camera has them. Many people continue to use the Automatic mode on their DSLR cameras as they find using the other modes too complicated. Trust me, it is not.

As for limitations, understand what your camera can't do and don't attempt to do it. Eg shooting that little bird on the tree. The temptation to get new equipment is always there but do a self check.



6) Expand your knowledge

As a novice, attend a photography course to jumpstart your photography skills and also to get to know more hobbyists. We conduct monthly foundation courses and the students found it beneficial to them.

Go to seminars and workshops for more specialized subjects. Read books or internet forum. See what others shoot. All these help to expand your knowledge.



7) Partner your hobby

Do you like to travel? Are you a collector? Do you dive? Then do travel photography, product photography, underwater photography! Not only it give you more opportunities to shoot but it will also increase your knowledge of your other hobby.



8) Find a mentor

Find someone whose works you admired and who is willing to guide you.

Let him/her critique your works and accept the critique humbly. There is no need to defend your works yet. I know sometimes you want to explain the circumstances that you took the photo.

Posting a few of your selected photo on the better known forums may help too.

