

Taking Pictures of Flowers

Taking pictures of flowers ranks up there with pictures of sunsets as a popular subject. Flowers offer rich colors, elegant form and striking patterns of petals. You can use the following tips to help you get the best pictures possible.

TIPS

1. Light and weather conditions: Sufficient light is essential for good pictures. The best time to take pictures is in the early morning hours, at sunrise or shortly after and at or near the sunset hours. These two times, often called the “golden hours”, provide sufficient light but not over powering. Sunlight at mid-day is strong and can “burn” out the flower’s colors. A windy day makes picture taking difficult since the flowers may be moving and can blur the result.

2. Camera Types and Settings: You can take good flower pictures with any camera including modest cost cameras, cell phones as well as expensive high end cameras. Many of the cameras provide a setting choice for flowers. This setting automatically sets the aperture opening, shutter speed, etc. to get the best photo. More expensive cameras allow you to set the aperture opening (labeled AV). In this case it’s best to set a larger aperture opening. This provides a sharp flower photos up close and blurs the background often considered the best combination for flower photos.

3. Up Close and Perspective: You can ^{do} photos of flowers up close or from a distance. Up close is often the best to capture the full range of colors and the elegant petal layout. Many take flower photos looking down at the flowers. This is often the best perspective for flowers that are somewhat “flat” like a daisy with wide pedals. In this case you may also take the photo to the side a bit to get part of the stem in the photo for a pleasing contrast. However if the flower is somewhat narrow like a daffodil with long pedals, you may want to take the photo from the side, getting low to capture the flower in its entirety. In either case be mindful of the background. Cluttered backgrounds such as autos, fences, people, etc. can ruin an otherwise nice photo. Move around and check the background before taking the photo. Make sure the flower is in focus. The best place to set the focus is at the center of photo(stamen).

4. Keep it Steady: To capture the delicate beauty of a flower you will want to keep your camera as steady as possible. The use of a tri-pod is the best approach. If this isn’t available, then keep the camera steady. You can try using the shutter speed setting to “freeze” the flower to avoid movement. If it is windy you may not be able to get a good shot. You may be able to block the wind with an umbrella or other material.

5. Special Background Control: If you can’t control the background by moving around, you can use poster board – black, blue, etc. to put in back of the flower. This only works with close-ups.

6. Just Add Water: If you are looking for something extra special for flower photography, this may be it. Flowers that contain rain or dew drops emphasize the pedal colors in a unique way. You may be lucky and catch the dew in the early morning or rain drops after a shower. However, you can add your own effect. A small spray bottle will suffice. Just spritz a little on your flower and you're all set.

7. Subject: Choice of subject is an important part of flower photography that many photographers overlook. You want to make sure the flower is not badly damaged or decaying. Some species do not stay at their best for long and will present you with more difficulties than others. You can often find flowers in parks, at some commercial establishments, and nurseries.