



1. AVOID DISAPPOINTMENT

Remember that our eyes can see a much greater dynamic range than any consumer digital sensor image in any camera. If we remember that, we can avoid disappointment when photographing subjects in tricky lighting conditions, such as when a subject is strongly backlit, which often requires the use of a flash.

2. ACCENT ON APERTURE

Set your focal point. Experiment with foreground vs background focus. [Include f/stops!]

3. SET YOUR SHUTTER SPEED CAREFULLY

If you want to capture something in motion, adjust your shutter speed to 1/250 or 1/500 of a second. Experiment also with shooting with a slow shutter speed (1/30 of a second and below --- keep in mind you may need a tripod) to add a sense of motion to your pictures.

4. BE ON THE LOOKOUT

Always be looking for unique photographic possibilities.

5. BE PREPARED

This may sound like a simple tip, but if you are always prepared to take pictures --- with a full charged battery, plenty of free space on your memory card, and easy access to your camera accessories --- you may not miss great photo opportunities.

6. COMPOSE CAREFULLY

Placing a subject in the center of the frame can be boring; hence the saying, "Dead center is deadly." An interesting composition technique is to imagine a tic-tac-toe grid over the scene, and then place the main subject where any two lines intersect.

7. THE EYES HAVE IT

In wildlife photography, and with portrait photography, your subject's eyes should be in focus and well lit. If the eyes are not naturally lit, use a flash or reflector to lighten them.

8. HAVE IT BOTH WAYS

When photographing people, take traditional portraits (head shots) as well as environmental portraits (pictures of a subject in his or her environment). Both types of portraits are effective, and each type tells a different story.

9. THE NAME OF THE GAME IS TO FILL THE FRAME

Fill the frame with the subject, and you will avoid "dead space" --- that is areas of a picture that do not add anything. Use your lens to zoom in --- move in closer to fill the frame.

10. SEE THE LIGHT

When looking at a scene, look for highlight and shadow areas that comprise the contrast range of the scene. When shooting digital, you want to expose for the highlights, the bright areas of a scene. In editing, it's relatively easy to bring back shadow detail but difficult to rescue lost highlights.

11. THINK FLASHY PICTURES

Learn how to use your flash to enhance indoor and outdoor pictures. Learn how to balance the light from the flash with the available light.

12. YOU SNOOZE, YOU LOSE

Get up early and stay out late to catch the beautiful light of the "golden hours." Pictures taken at those times have deeper shades of red, yellow, and orange and look more pleasing to our eyes than pictures made around noon, when the light is "cooler," having a blue tint.

13. ENJOY YOURSELF

We should take our photography seriously, but if we keep it fun, our final product will reflect the feeling we had when we originally made the picture. There's an old photo adage, "The camera looks both ways; in picturing the subject we are also picturing ourselves."