

Set the Camera

notes

Overview

The first step in shooting great images of your work is to set the camera properly.

It doesn't matter whether you're taking the photos with a compact point-and-shoot camera, an expensive DSLR, or the camera in your phone. You won't get great images if you're using the wrong settings. Understanding and applying the correct settings on your camera will save you a great deal of time and effort—and avoid a lot of the frustration.

Did you know that only three settings on your camera matter when shooting images of your work? That's right ... only three! Those settings are image size—where bigger is better, image quality—where less is more, and white balance—for whiter whites. All of the other settings on your camera are optional! How's that for easy?

Which Camera?

Before we dig into the camera settings, though, let's talk about what you should use for photographing your work...which camera?

Which Camera Type?

I'm often asked what type of camera is best for photos of artwork?

Should you be using a compact point-and-shoot camera...invest in a more expensive DSLR...or can you just use the camera in your phone or tablet?

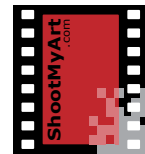
In fact, you can use any of them! An expensive camera is not necessary to shoot your artwork successfully. A compact point-and-shoot camera or the camera in your phone can take great photos. What makes all the difference is learning to use what you have.

Let's look at the camera choices in a bit more detail. And if you're in the market for a new camera, my advice is to pick one that you're comfortable learning to use.

Point-and-Shoot

A point-and-shoot camera has the advantage of being lightweight and having a compact size. They're easy to operate, and many models are fully-featured with functions also found in more expensive cameras. And the price can be hard to beat if you're on a budget.





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On the minus side, the lens is smaller and so the quality of the optics, while excellent, is limited versus a more expensive camera. And there are usually few accessories available and no interchangeable lenses.

This type of camera is an excellent choice for the casual photographer to use for family events and travel.

Digital SLR

By contrast, a digital SLR offers advanced features and better optics with a larger lens. You usually also have the added flexibility of interchangeable lenses for different situations—macro photography, for example.

On the other hand, DSLR cameras are larger and heavier, more expensive, and more complex to operate than most point-and-shoot models.



Mobile Devices

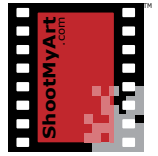
And then there's the camera in your phone or tablet.

It has the advantage of always being with you, and it's compact and easy to operate. There are many free and paid photo apps available to add features and give you more control over the images. Like the point-and-shoot camera, though, the lens is small and has lower-quality optics.



Best Camera Apps

iOS	Android
Free	Free
Camera+	VSCO Cam
VSCO Cam	Paid
Paid	Camera FV-5
Manual	DSLR Camera Pro
ProCam	Manual Camera
ProCamera	ProCapture



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Sifting through the camera apps that are available for your mobile device can be overwhelming, so here's a short list of the top-rated apps for iOS and Android devices.

Any of these will add features to the native camera app in your phone or tablet to help you when shooting your work. I suggest starting with one of the free apps, like VSCO Cam.

For More Info...

Finally, there will be times when you need more information about the settings on your camera or operating it. The instruction manual or user guide provided by the manufacturer is a valuable resource.

A printed copy may have been included with the camera or you can find a copy online. In either case, I recommend you download the digital version from the manufacturer's website and save it on your computer or tablet for easy reference.

Many of the camera apps have on-line or in-app help resources available, too.

Selecting a Camera

1. In the list below, check the box next to any of the statements with which you AGREE.

Point-and-Shoot

- I prefer to use things that are easy to operate.
- I like to carry a camera in my pocket or purse.
- I mostly take photos of family and friends or when I travel.
- I'm on a budget and don't spend a lot for extras.

Digital SLR

- It's easy for me to learn how to use new gadgets.
- I take a bag with all of my camera's accessories when I travel.
- I take photographs of many different subjects to display.
- I can afford to buy a more expensive camera

Mobile Device

- I use my phone or tablet all the time for everything.
- I like to have a camera with me wherever I go.
- I mostly take photos on the spur of the moment.
- I like to take pictures and post them on social media.

2. The best camera choice for your needs will be the one with the most boxes checked under it.