



HOW TO TAKE PHOTOS OF YOUR ARTWORK

Quality photos of your artwork are essential for building a digital portfolio, reaching a wider audience, and showcasing your work overall. These images play a crucial role in submissions to exhibitions and art competitions, enhancing your credibility as an artist. Quality digital photographs make a difference, opening doors to increased recognition and opportunities to sell your work.

Step 1: Set-Up

You will need:

- a blank wall (2D art) or a clean empty backdrop (3D art) larger than your piece of artwork
- a DSLR camera (You can set up an appointment to rent one from Quad City Arts!)
- Good lighting (diffused natural light or professional lighting)
- Tripod (optional)

Stage your artwork so it looks its best. Remove any distracting elements that may be in the frame of your camera such as smudges on the wall or wrinkles on your backdrop. Make sure you are using good lighting. Avoid harsh highlights or shadows. Represent your work accurately!

Step 2: Taking Your Photos

As long as you are using a quality camera, you can get away with using the automatic settings feature to take photos of your artwork. Keep it simple.

Take a few test shots and adjust the position of your artwork and lighting accordingly.

Make sure all of your artwork is in frame, but do not leave too much space around your artwork.

If you are having trouble with blurry photos, consider using a tripod to keep your camera still.

Step 3: Editing

Editing can be intimidating, but a few simple corrections will elevate your photos and allow you to stand out from amateur artists.

Choose an editing software that will allow you to crop and color correct. You shouldn't need to make any drastic changes if you took quality photos. **The goal of editing is to accurately represent your artwork.** Straighten edges, and crop anything that doesn't need to be in frame. Be sure your white balance is correct. You may need to do further color or lighting correction depending on the lighting you originally used.

Software Options:

- Photoshop
- Lightroom
- Adobe Express
- GIMP
- Fotor

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Tips & Tricks

Practice makes perfect, but here are some pointers to give you a head start:

- Capture many photos of each artwork and then choose the best one to edit to perfection.
- Your background should be white or another neutral. The artwork should speak for itself.
- Detail shots are not usually necessary.
- Name your photos with their title to keep your files organized.
- If your piece is framed behind glass, consider taking photos without the glass to avoid reflections.

Examples

Here are some examples of what to avoid and what to strive for.



Crooked, Harsh Shadow



Needs Color Correction



Messy Background



Good Composition



Accurate Colors



Clean Background

