

Photography

Six ways to be a better photographer-right now

by Justin Hackworth

Have something to say. Photography is a language. Use the pictures to communicate something you feel deeply about. What do you care about? Your family? Trees? Paris? What do you want to tell others? It doesn't have to be some heavy-handed social issue but your pictures will be stronger if you've given some thought to what you want to say.

Include some mystery in your pictures. Consider posing a question in the image, rather than supplying the answer. Give your viewers a reason to keep looking at the picture.

Get inspired. Look at the work of other photographers especially those that have shaped the medium. Knowing where photography came from and where it's going opens you up to endless image making possibilities.

Don't get discouraged. Learning to make really good photographs takes time. Realize this from the start and you'll avoid frustration and find ways to keep going. Put in your time. You'll get it.

Ask for help. You don't have to figure everything out on your own. When I'm asked questions, I'm always willing to share what I know, and most photographers feel the same way. I still email photographers with questions about their process, their business structure, what equipment they use, and 100 other things I want to know. Remember, when they respond, for heavens sake, thank them.

Have fun. Experiment. Make mistakes. Take chances. Assign yourself a project. Explore. Have even more fun and take even more chances.

