

## Mrs. Mitchell's Top 12 Tips for Taking Better Photos

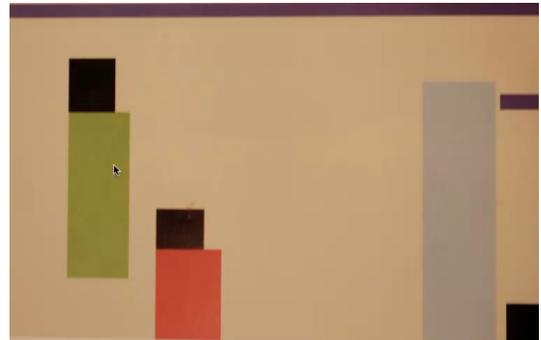
1. **Think before you click!** Photography is about making a lot of thoughtful choices. Slow down and think about what you are capturing before you hit the button to make the image. Consider if what you are photographing is interesting and if it will gain the attention of your viewer. Most good photography has intention behind it and is not just random.



2. **Move!** Don't just stand up tall with the camera up to your eye; this is the viewpoint most people see life from. Try different perspectives- stand on something, lay or kneel down; these can be more interesting because they are not how we are used to seeing the world around us. Also, reposition yourself and camera until you get just what you want; your subject can't always move but you can.



3. **Visualize the Composition!** Think of the scene as shapes, colors and values instead of WHAT it is. Imagine what it will look like as the final photo.



**4. Get in close!** Take a step in, move your arms in closer, zoom in. This is the number one difference between a new photographer and professional; the professional gets in closer. Getting in closer helps simplify the image making it bolder and makes your thinking clearer for your viewer. Look at the edges of your frame and move to get rid of anything distracting before you take the photo.



**5. Vertical!** You can turn your camera to take vertical shots. Sometimes the vertical composition is better for the subject you are shooting.



**6. Body!** Pay attention to your body. Are you holding still? Keep your elbows in. Slow your breathing to help hold your camera still.

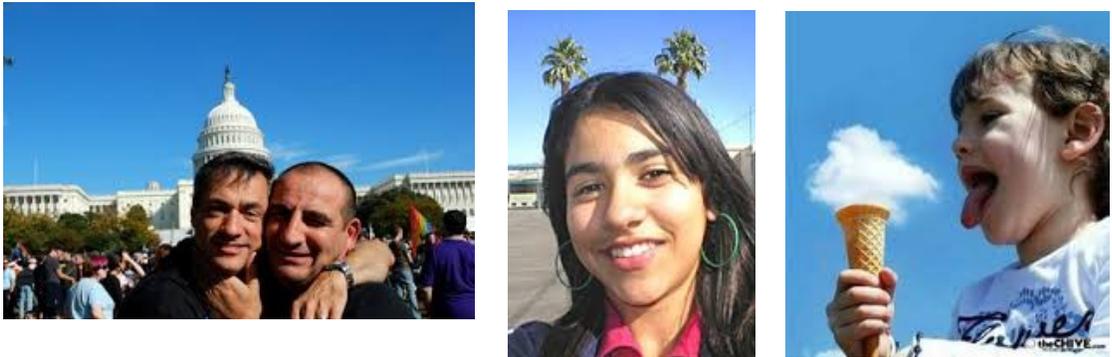
**Digital Camera**

## How to hold a camera

It's worth taking a few minutes to practise holding your camera before you start shooting – you'll get sharper shots

- FINGER**  
The camera body is designed to be gripped with your right hand and your index finger over the shutter release. You should be able to press the button without having to reposition your grip.
- HAND**  
Press your thumb in your left hand. You should be able to bend the ball of the hand to zoom or focus with this hand, leaving your right hand to grip the camera body.
- ELBOWS**  
Tuck your elbows into your body to steady your camera steadily. The further out your elbows are, the more unstable you will be.
- EBROW CONTACT**  
Lift the camera up to your eye and rest the viewfinder against your eyebrow. This creates another point of contact on the body for more stability.
- LEGS**  
Place your legs a little apart so you're balanced. If you're looking to take a shot from more one foot forward to create a sturdier body shape.
- TAKE A MAT**  
When shooting in less than ideal outdoor conditions, you might get a wet or oily surface. Take a mat or a plastic bag to place under your knees for comfort and to avoid staining your clothes.
- BACK PANEL CONTROL**  
Tuck your thumbs in the correct position. Your thumbs will be placed to access the controls on the back of the camera to alter the shooting settings.
- BRING ONE LEG UP**  
By crossing one leg in a crouching position and bringing your leg up you can turn your body into a human tripod. Place your elbow on your knee to connect your leg and arm together, creating a tripod position you don't wobble around.
- LEAN IN**  
Leaning against a wall creates instant support for your camera. This can be useful when shooting at slow shutter speeds without a tripod.
- REST ELBOWS**  
If you're not sure where to rest your elbows, lean your elbows on a steady surface. Look for flat surfaces, such as a table or wall.
- CONTROL YOUR BREATHING**  
Once you've taken your breath in, you'll find you move around a lot more. It's amazing how much of a difference not holding your breath can make.
- PORTRAIT**  
If you're looking at your camera to a point of concentration, don't use the shutter release at the top. If you do, the other way around your arms will become all tuck up!

7. **Background!** Sometimes you pay too much attention to the foreground and don't consider what is behind it. In photography three dimensions flattens out into the two dimensional rectangle that becomes your photo; so remember things flatten out. Avoid mergers. That said, mergers can be fun to play with too!



8. **Light!** Cameras are devices that capture and record light. Pay attention to the light. What is your light source? What is its direction of the light coming from? What are the qualities of the light? Do you need to come back at a different time of day when the light is better on your subject?

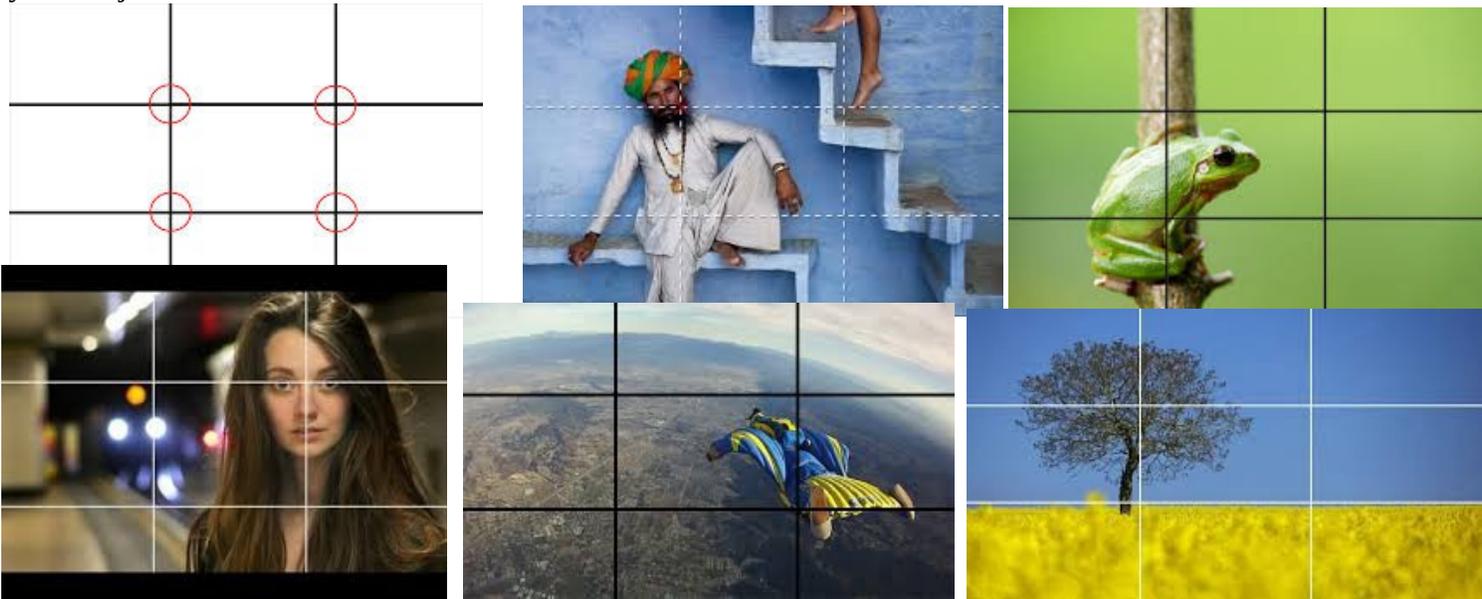
**Experiment with a single light source**

Using an angle-poise lamp (or other single light source) enables you to create a range of different effects. As you can see from the images here, changing the position of the light alters the effect, and some positions are clearly more flattering than others.

To soften the harshness of a single light, try using a reflector on the opposite side to 'bounce' light back onto your subject.

	 From right side	 From above
 From left side	 From below	 From behind

9. **Rule of Thirds!** Get your subject out the middle. Imagine the thirds grid and pick a spot to locate your subject other than the middle. Does your camera have the rule of thirds grid to help you line up your subject?



10. **Timing!** Be ready: camera with you and in a ready position. Follow your subject with your camera at your eye.



11. **Framing!** Using either a natural or man-made found element, you can “frame” your subject—directing the viewer's attention to it. Finding these vantage points can be fun for you and more engaging for your viewer.



12. **Experiment!** If you have an idea, try it. Take risks. Sometimes the best images come from taking a chance. What would happen if... I zoomed my lens in and out while I shoot? I took a blurring image? I put my camera on self-timer and shot out of the refrigerator?

