



TAKING GREAT CELL PHONE PHOTOS

— *a guide* —

FOR MORE TIPS, TRICKS, AND WISDOM, VISIT

— HEARTSSPEAK.ORG —



A stellar portrait is a vital step to helping an animal connect with a potential adopter. With the right light, a little consideration for your background, and some insider info on what settings to use, your cell phone can be a powerful tool for creating unforgettable adoption portraits that save lives.

Whether you're a seasoned photographer looking to complement your craft with the portability of a cell phone, or a shelter volunteer hoping to better capture spur-of-the-moment magic during your next dog walk, you'll be happy to know that a little knowledge goes a long way in the realm of phone photography.

GENERAL TIPS FOR ALL SMARTPHONES



For a better quality image, seek out good lighting as opposed to using the flash. For example, if you're outdoors, wait until the sun goes behind a cloud or find a patch of shade. If you're inside, position your subject near a window to take advantage of that beautiful, filtered, natural light. In general, avoid direct sunlight if you can.



Use your feet to zoom! Move closer to your subject as opposed to using the zoom function on your phone. Because it is a digital zoom rather than an optical zoom, it'll reduce the quality of the image.



If your phone has a 'pro' or 'manual' mode, use it so that you can adjust exposure and focus, and ultimately have more control over the quality of your shot.



Keep your lens clean. It's easy to forget that the phone lenses gets dusty (and slobbery), too!



In low-light conditions, stabilize the camera phone by holding it with both hands and brace your upper arms against your body when you shoot. This may help to avoid blurriness.





Use the tried-and-true 'rule of thirds'. When you're composing your photo, imagine two horizontal lines and two vertical lines crossing like a grid on top of it. Try to situate elements of interest (like eyes!) at the intersections on that grid.



Anticipate shutter lag. Get used to your camera phone's timing so when something interesting happens, you'll have a good feel for the point when you need to press the shutter release to capture the most interesting moment.

TIPS FOR IPHONE



Use the volume buttons on the phone or your Apple earbuds as the shutter button instead of the on-screen button, and you might have less camera shake to battle.



Try using HDR! It helps with drastic lighting conditions and gives more vibrant colors, especially outdoors in bright sunlight.



Gain more control over the exposure of your image by using the focus and exposure lock function. Just tap the screen where your subject is to lock your focus and exposure (a little yellow icon will show up on your screen to indicate lock), and then slide your finger up or down on the screen to adjust exposure. This is especially useful when your subject is much darker than the background.



Want a more of a shallow depth of field to blur out some of that background clutter and pull attention into your subject? Move in closer and then use the focus lock feature.

PHOTO EDITING APPS

Want to polish up your photos, crop, or optimize them for use on social media? There's an app for that!

Adobe Photoshop Lightroom

Available for both iPhone and Android, this stylish app brings all of the sophistication of Adobe Photoshop and Lightroom to a paired-down, user-friendly photo editing option. It can handle all the basics, including exposure, color, and cropping adjustments, while also allowing you to share your images directly to social media.



FOR IPHONE

Snapseed

This all-purpose photo editor will allow you to make exposure, color, and sharpening adjustments, crop, rotate, and adjust perspective, and even add text overlays. It's incredibly easy to use and boasts a powerful set of tools, making it one of the most popular photo editing apps for iPhone. If you're just getting started with phone photography, this is a great first stop for editing!

VSCO

VSCO (pronounced *visco*) is a combination photo editing and sharing app that offers an elegant and subtly beautiful range of one-tap presets. You can also make the basic adjustments to exposure and color.

FOR ANDROID

Bonfire Photo Editor Pro

This option has become increasingly popular for Android and includes all the basic editing tools along with over 100 unique effects and filters.

PhotoDirector

This option combines a feature-rich photo editor with all the bells and whistles, with ultra useful tools such as a collage maker. Change white balance or saturation, apply photo effects and adjustments to an entire image or specific areas, and remove unwanted objects.



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