

Smartphone Photography Guide

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Introduction

Smartphone photography is an ever-changing landscape with the constant release of new technology and apps. This guide will help you harness what's available, get the best out of your smartphone and learn to take better pictures. We will cover everything from composition and effects to photo editing and social media. The word camera is used in this guide to refer to the camera of your phone, so keep that in mind as you read.



Chapter 1: Basic Fundamentals of Exposure

Apps are available that let users shoot in manual mode, and some phones even have full manual mode built right into the stock camera app. This means you have control over all the parameters of exposure (shutter speed, aperture and ISO). What we will discuss in this chapter are the basics of exposure and understanding the three parameters that are used to alter the light and characteristics of a scene.

The first parameter is shutter speed; this is the length of time your camera's sensor is exposed to the light/scene you are photographing. The main thing to understand here is that the longer your shutter is open, the more light the sensor in your camera is exposed to. As an example, let's say the proper exposure of a scene is a shutter speed of 1/30th of a second with an aperture of F2.8 and an ISO of 100, now let's say you shoot that same scene at 1/60th of a second and leave the other parameters unchanged, you will cut the light in half, underexposing the image by one stop, meaning it will be darker.

The creative effect of shutter speed is that it is used to freeze motion or blur an object in motion. If you have ever seen a picture where water is smooth and ghostly, it's because the photographer used a long shutter speed. When you see a sports photo where all the action is frozen perfectly, it's because the photographer used a very fast shutter speed.





The next parameter is aperture. This is the iris of the lens. , You actually have one of these in your eye and it has the same function. It is used to cut down on the light or let more light in, depending on how bright or dim the light is. If you go outside on a very bright day your pupils will become very small to prevent you from being blinded, likewise, in a dark room your pupils will dilate in order to let more light in and help you see. This works the same way in photography, and the same example we made above with shutter speed applies here also. If the proper exposure is a shutter speed of 1/60th of a second with an ISO of 100 and an aperture of F2.8, then if you shoot the same scene with the same parameters but change the aperture to F1.4, you will double the light coming in, overexposing the scene by one stop, meaning it will be brighter.

The effect of aperture is that it determines the depth of field of the image. If you have ever seen a picture where everything is out of focus except for one small sliver of the image, it's because the photographer used a very large iris (1.4 for instance). The opposite of that would be a scene where everything is sharp focus, which would require a small aperture (F16 for instance).





The last parameter to discuss is ISO. This is a signal boost that changes the light sensitivity of the sensor. The basic rule of ISO is that you use it when you need to make the scene brighter. Most cameras use a base ISO of 100, raising the ISO to 200 will double the light, raising it further will continue to increase the light. Its worth noting that the more you raise the ISO the noisier/grainier your picture will get, staying at the base ISO will give you the cleanest possible image your camera is capable of.

All of these parameters can be used together to alter the light, and this is where experimenting and practice is needed. Not every scene is going to require the same thing, so play around with these parameters and get familiar with what they do.

Chapter2: Getting the Best Results From Your Cell Phone

Cell phones are very capable devices for taking pictures and in many ways have caught up to dedicated devices such as advanced P&S and DSLR cameras. Being able to carry such a capable camera with you at all times in your pocket is great, and something those who use bigger cameras can't do. After all, it's often said that the best camera is the one you have with you.

You may open your camera phone app and feel a bit overwhelmed by all the features available, but you shouldn't be, because one of the great advantages of these cameras is their ability to handle most of the hard work for you. The chapter above that goes over the parameters of exposure is useful in learning to understand what those things do to effect an image, but your camera is smart enough to do all that stuff for you. Honestly, it's a good idea to let the phone decide what the settings should be. It will get things right 99% of the time, and only in the most challenging situation will it get confused and need you to step in to get the picture right.

There may be advanced things you want to accomplish with your phone, such as long exposures at night or HDR. As long as you can get the camera on a sturdy device that will hold it still, such as a mini tripod, the camera can still make all the right decisions in order to provide proper exposure and great looking pictures.

The main thing to understand is that there is nothing wrong with using your cell phone like a point and shoot camera; that is what they were designed for anyways. Let the camera decide the technical stuff, and you can focus on the main creative aspects of the image, like composition, framing and focus.

Chapter 3: Natural Light

Light is what shapes and forms the image, without it, there wouldn't be a picture to take. Understanding how to see the light, how it will create the resulting image, is one of the most powerful abilities a photographer can have.



One of the things that ruin many pictures is harsh, high-contrasting light. This is the light that is typically present in the middle of the day when the sun is overhead. If you have to shoot in these conditions, you can use photo-editing apps afterwards to tame the contrast, but the best pictures will often be created in more ideal light.

There are a few types of light that are best for photography. What you want to look for is that beautiful golden light that's present an hour or two after sunrise and before sunset, this is the light that really makes an image pop and glow. There's also a soft light that happens right after sundown or before sun up that is very pleasing. Even cloudy overcast days can be some of the best days to take pictures because the light is very soft and flattering for subjects.

There are no rules when it comes to how you shoot the light. You can shoot with the sun to your back, or you can shoot right into it (this is called backlighting). Those are creative decisions that

all photographers have to make. In most cases, it's just going to come down to finding the right light in the first place.

Many landscape photographers choose to shoot into the light; for a seascape with the light shimmering off the water for instance. But you could also shoot away from the light if there's an object in the frame that you wish to illuminate.

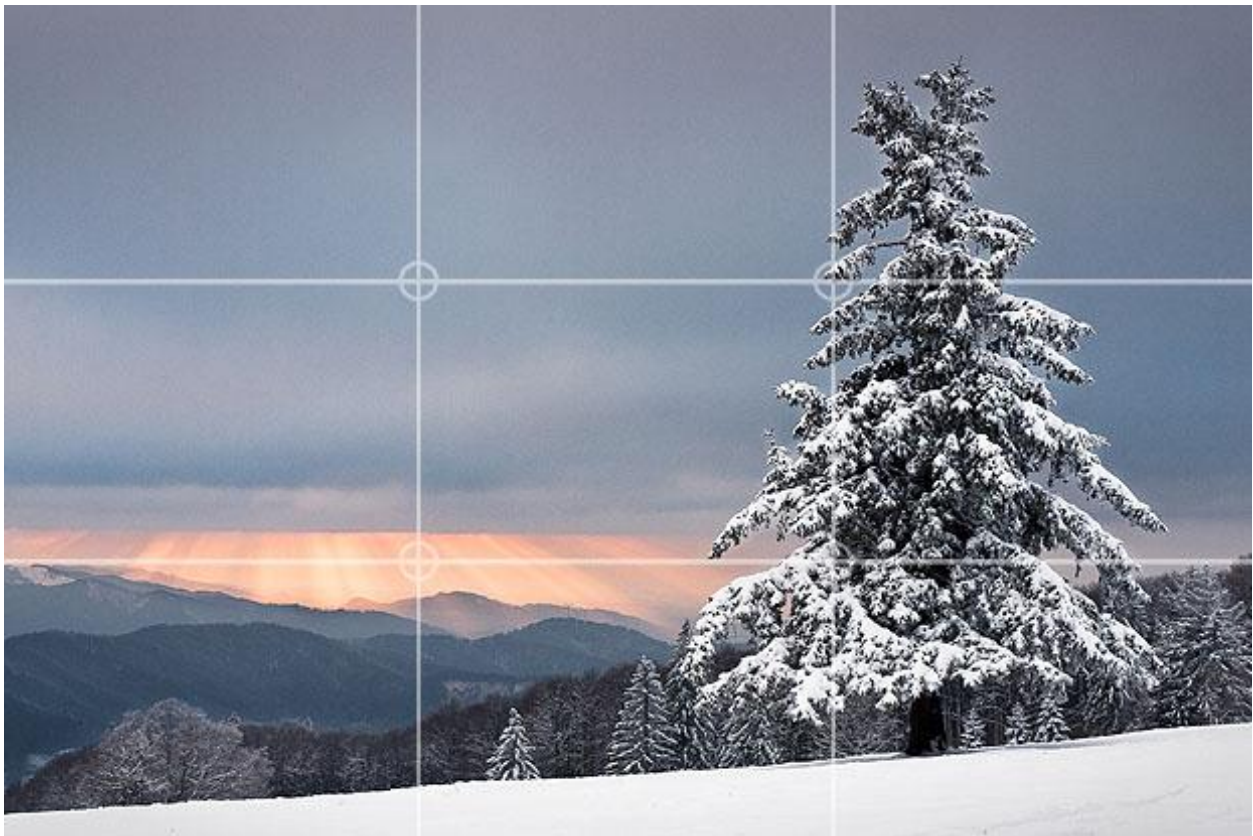
If you're shooting a portrait of someone, or a selfie, the picture is going to be much more pleasing if you shoot it on an overcast day when the light is really soft and flattering, or when the sun is just on the horizon and has that nice glow that isn't so harsh. If you are indoors during the day, face a window and use the light coming in as your light source. This light is also very nice and flattering.

Another cheap but very effective way to increase the quality of the light is to use an inexpensive car windshield screen as a reflector. These can be found anywhere that sells automotive stuff. When you're taking a picture of someone, have the light come from behind or to the side of them, and use the reflector to bounce the light back up at them. This will fill in the shadows and create a very nice, even, glowing light.

It's all up to you and that's one of the beautiful things about photography. But understand that the quality of the light you shoot in can really make or break a shot.

Chapter 4: Keys of Creating Great Pictures

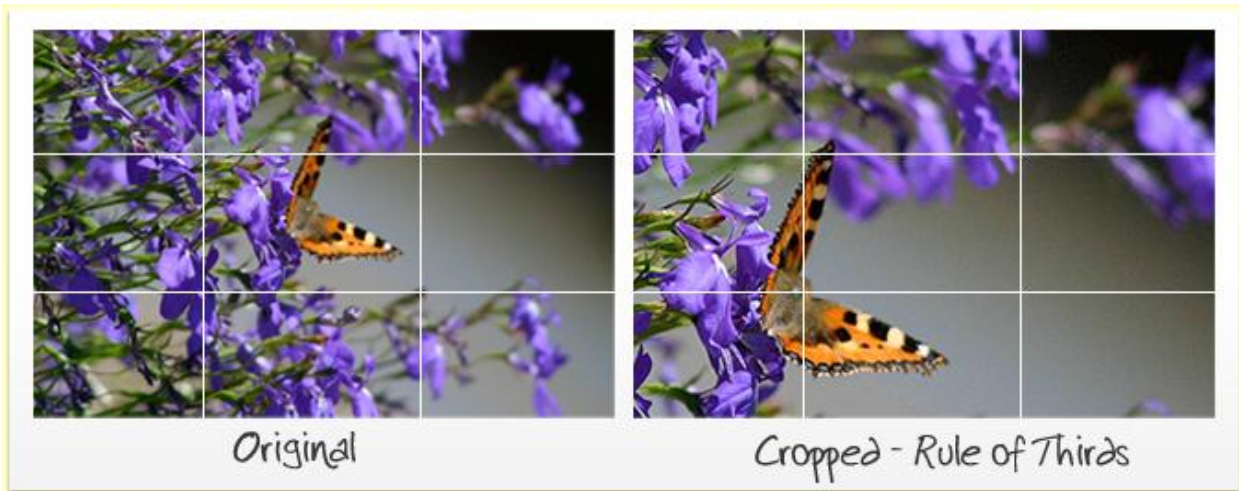
Taking great pictures isn't just as simple as finding a great scene that looks beautiful and pointing your camera at it. There are a lot of different elements that will decide whether it's just a pretty picture, a really great picture, or a complete dud.



Composition is probably the biggest creative factor in photography. This is the act of composing the image, like a painter composes a painting.

One of the most practiced techniques in composition is the rule of thirds. Imagine if there were four lines dividing your photo into a grid, the main point to the rule of thirds is that placing your subject or point of interest on one of the converging points between the lines will result in the most pleasing image.

Another point of the rule of thirds is that it promotes balance. So for instance, in a landscape you may place the horizon along the top line and have the foreground come up to the bottom line. Another example may be placing the eyes of a subject along the top line and the mouth along the bottom line.



There are many ways to use the rule of thirds and it's just a starting point to help you compose images. Your camera app might even have a setting in the menu to enable a grid that will show this to you as you take pictures. If not, a lot of photo related apps have this feature and it's extremely helpful in getting the image right.

Negative space is a term used in photography that refers to empty space in the image. Negative space is used a lot in minimal style photography. It's a powerful tool that can really anchor your subject and create a lot of drama.



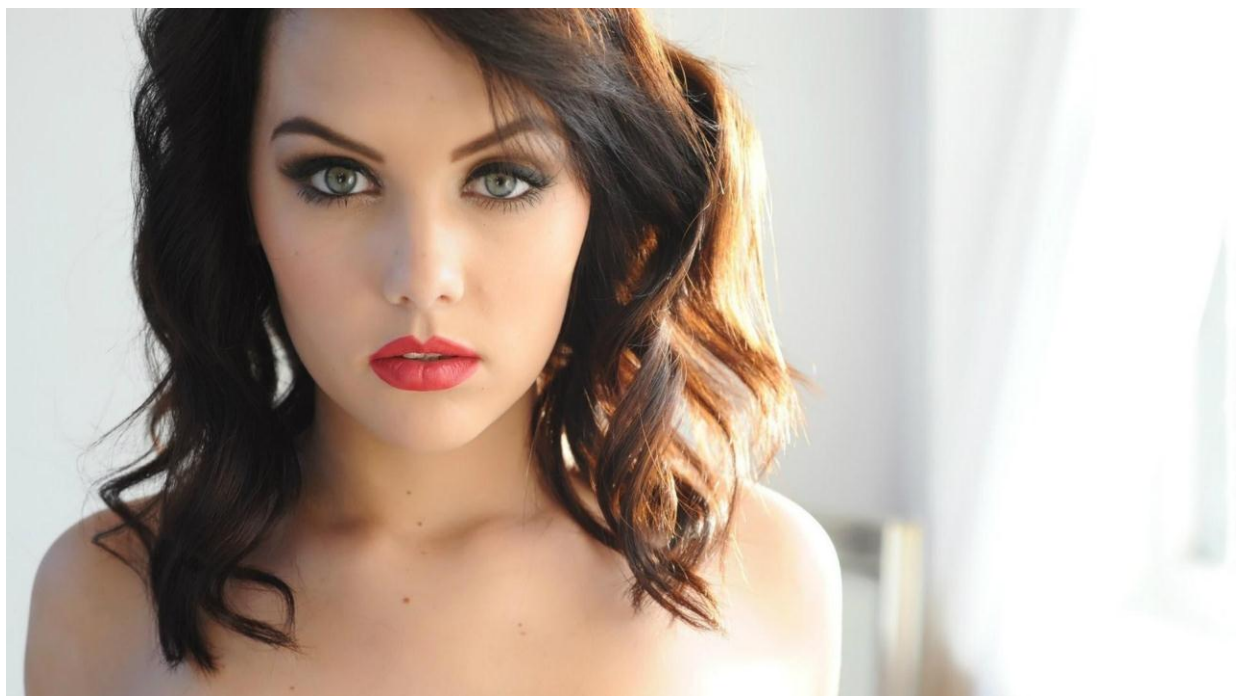
A lot of beginners probably think negative space is just bad, wasted space, but it can really be a key to a great photo. The important thing is that you shouldn't feel obligated to crowd the frame to create interest. Let your subject breathe.



The use of color can also make or break an image. You don't want to have a bunch of clashing colors in the frame. A better practice would be to look for scenes that don't present such a wide range of colors. You want colors that work well together and don't clash.



Focal length is another aspect that affects the image greatly. Most phones have a lens that zooms, and you will most likely want to play with the zoom in each scene to see what looks good to you. One of the generally accepted truths is that portraits shot with a long lens are more flattering, because they show less distortion; and you don't want someone's face to look distorted. The long end of the zoom will also blur the background from your subject, creating separation and really making your subject pop.



Another one that might be more obvious, is that if you want to capture a wide vista, you generally are going to want to shoot with a wide lens so you can capture the whole scene. Likewise, a distant detail you want to focus on should be zoomed in on so that it takes up more space in the frame.





Chapter 5: Taking Better Selfies

A lot of people take selfies with their smart phones. If you want to take better selfies, here's how. As talked about in the natural light section, you want to use a nice flattering light source, such as the light shining in from a window if you're indoors, the soft light on an overcast day, or the golden light near sunrise and sunset. If it is the middle of the day under very bright light, find an area in the shade and take the picture there, as the light will be much nicer.



The point of all this is to lower the contrast. High contrast is often unflattering in portraits, especially on the face. You also have the option in photo editing apps to turn down the contrast if the picture was taken in harsh bright light. This will smooth out the tones and give it a nicer more natural look and feel. Just don't turn the contrast down too much because it will wash the photo out and make it very dull.

One important factor is how you use the light you have. You can face the light source, which will brighten up your face and give you a very clear, natural picture; or you can face away from the light, so that you get backlighting and a very dreamy, dramatic effect. You can also play with the angles. Don't think it always has to be one way or the other. If you face to the side with the light coming in from a window, the shadows will create a dramatic effect and bring out your facial features. Have fun and experiment.

Another thing to remember about very bright light, is that it will force you to squint your eyes and then you won't look your best. You will look much better when your eyes are wide open and relaxed, not strained and squinted.

Also, play with the angles when you aim the camera at yourself. You don't have to just face straight into the camera. Find the most flattering angle that works for you. That might be from slightly below, slightly above, or from either side. You can even face completely to the side, which is a profile shot.

Don't necessarily think you have to smile either. Even though a smile always looks nice, try different expressions. You might surprise yourself.



Make a mental note not to scrunch up your neck, because it might give you a double chin. What you want to do is slightly stick out your chin but not look like you're straining yourself.

If you really want to take unique, great selfies the best thing to do is take a different approach from the typical handheld shot where you point the camera at yourself. The thing about holding the camera at arms length is that the lens will need to be at a wide setting, which will distort the features of your face, and that's no good. It's not that a wide setting on the lens is a bad thing, it's that from close distances it distorts your face. The further away it is, the less distorted it will be with a wide lens.

One great way to do this is to put the camera on a tripod type device. You can buy these, or make one yourself out of cardboard. You can even use a pair of folded up sunglasses as a stand that your phone sits perfectly in. This is essentially just a stand that holds the camera in place while you stand in front of it from a distance.

Once you get some distance between yourself and the camera, you can zoom the lens in, which gets rid of all distortion and flattens the image. This is one of the keys to making a beautiful portrait.

Here's one way you can make a cardboard stand. Take a piece of cardboard and cut a piece out that's 5-6 inches long and about 2 inches wide. Then, cut two one- inch slots in each side that are as thick as your phone. Now if you fold it in half your phone can rest in each slot, and it is held in place. This can be placed anywhere to take a picture and you can carry it with you in wallet.

When you use any kind of tripod or stand, you will want to either set the camera to go off with the self timer, or if you have an iPhone, you can actually take the picture with the volume buttons on a pair of apple headphones/ear buds; when doing this, it takes the place of a shutter release cable.

Chapter 6: Using a Selfie Stick

Selfie sticks are small and portable. You can take them anywhere and they are really fun to experiment with. What it does is it places more distance between yourself and the camera by a pole, allowing you to include more of the environment, and create some really awesome pictures.



You hold one end of the stick and extend the camera out in front of you, then press the button on the selfie stick and voila! You can change the angle and the length to give you different effects so you get the best picture.

If you combine the tips from the selfie section with this device, it really opens up some cool possibilities. You can use it to create all kinds of cool perspectives that are really hard to do without it.

It's great for group shots because it lets you get the camera far enough away to include everyone in the shot. It's probably the easiest way to take a nice group shot.

It can be used in pretty much any scenario to make an otherwise boring image come to life, such as riding a ski lift. You could use it to get you, as well as the entire mountain and lift chair into the shot. You could use it at a place like the Grand Canyon or on the top of a skyscraper to get the whole scene into the shot with you. It can also be combined with other cool effects like long exposure and panorama to give you some really interesting, one-of-a-kind self-portraits. The possibilities are endless.

The other cool thing is that it's available as a Bluetooth or wired device, so you have that option. Either way, a button on the selfie stick is used to trigger the camera and it's super hassle-free.

These things don't only come in handy for photos either. You can use them to record videos of yourself doing all kinds of things from a cool perspective. All you do is hold it and go about doing whatever it is you want to record. Examples of this are all over the place now on sites like YouTube and Instagram.

Chapter 7: Using Add On Lenses

One of the best things you can get to expand the capabilities of your smartphone is a set of external lenses, such as the popular 3-in-1 kits that include a fisheye lens, and a macro lens that also works as a wide-angle. These lenses let you capture things your phone can't do on its own.

The wide angle lens

An external wide angle is great for capturing scenes that your normal camera lens can't do because it can't get wide enough. A lot of smartphones can zoom out to a rather standard wide length, but with an add-on wide-angle lens you can extend that and capture more of the scene.

This is really great for things like landscapes and cityscapes where you want to get a great sense of space in the picture, like a mountain range or a vast shot of a city skyline. It's also super handy for group photos so everyone can be included.

The Macro Lens

The macro lens is great for capturing small details close up; that's what it was made for. You can use this to take really cool and interesting shots of things like flowers, insects, or capture the fine details on anything.

It's cool what small things look like when you blow them up big. All you really need to do with a macro lens is get really close. What this does is magnify the subject so it looks much bigger and you can see it much clearer.

You can shoot macros of all kinds of things; anything you can think of, really. For example, you can take pictures of drops of water on flower petals or blades of grass and get really cool effects. You can take pictures of the small details of things like coins, things around the house, or whatever you come across outside. The biggest thing is just to experiment.

The Fisheye Lens

This is great for taking in really wide, vast scenes, as well as action shots and dramatic moments. It's a very wide lens that captures a lot of the scene and has no distortion correction, so you get the cool effect that the lens is named after.



Fisheye lenses are popular in action sports like skateboarding and snowboarding because they really exaggerate what's happening. It has the ability to make the scene look a lot bigger and the person in it a lot smaller; so as you can imagine, someone clearing a 10-foot jump on a snowboard might look like they are going over a 50-foot jump. The key to all this is knowing how to use the lens.

If you get too far back with the fisheye lens then everything looks small, but if you get close to the action, it really spreads things out and gives you that great, exaggerated perspective.

Another key to creating this effect is to get low, and I mean really low, like right off the ground. What this does is it makes someone look like they are much higher up in the air than they really are, again, because of the distortion. Just make sure you are pointing the camera up.

You can also use the fisheye lens to make objects like buildings and waterfalls look much taller, as well as make things like bridges look longer. The key to this, again, is to get close. To make a bridge look much longer, you would want to get as close as you can while making sure you can still see the whole thing in the picture, so it appears that one end is very close and one end is very far away. The same would go for a building. If you're standing at the bottom and point up, as long as you make sure you can still see the bottom of the building, the top will look very high and far up.



The fisheye can also be used with a selfie stick to create some really cool self-portraits. You could use that combination on the top of a building or mountain and make it look like you're standing on the top of the world.

Chapter 8: Photography Tricks and Effects

In this chapter, we are going to go over all kinds of different tricks you can try. Use your imagination because a lot of this stuff can be combined and used together to get even more creative with your photography.

Panorama

Everyone has seen a panorama shot. They are very wide, breathtaking shots. With cell phones now you can take them very easily. Pretty much every phone has this option available in the menu or it can be done by any one of the available apps.

The way you take a panorama is you take your phone and sweep across the scene (for instance, from left to right or top to bottom) while taking a number of pictures, then the phone does the hard work of stitching them together to make one big picture.

You can do really cool things with panoramas, like include yourself or someone else in each of the shots so they appear multiple times, like a bunch of clones! All you need to do to accomplish this is set the camera up on a tripod like device, and then stand somewhere in the frame for every shot. If you were shooting someone else you would have them stand wherever you want in each of the pictures to be combined.

You can do a panorama in all kinds of situations to get cool pictures; like if you're driving in a car, take a panorama out the window of everything as it flies by. See what you can come up with. Some really cool stuff can be done, so get creative.



Shooting Through Objects

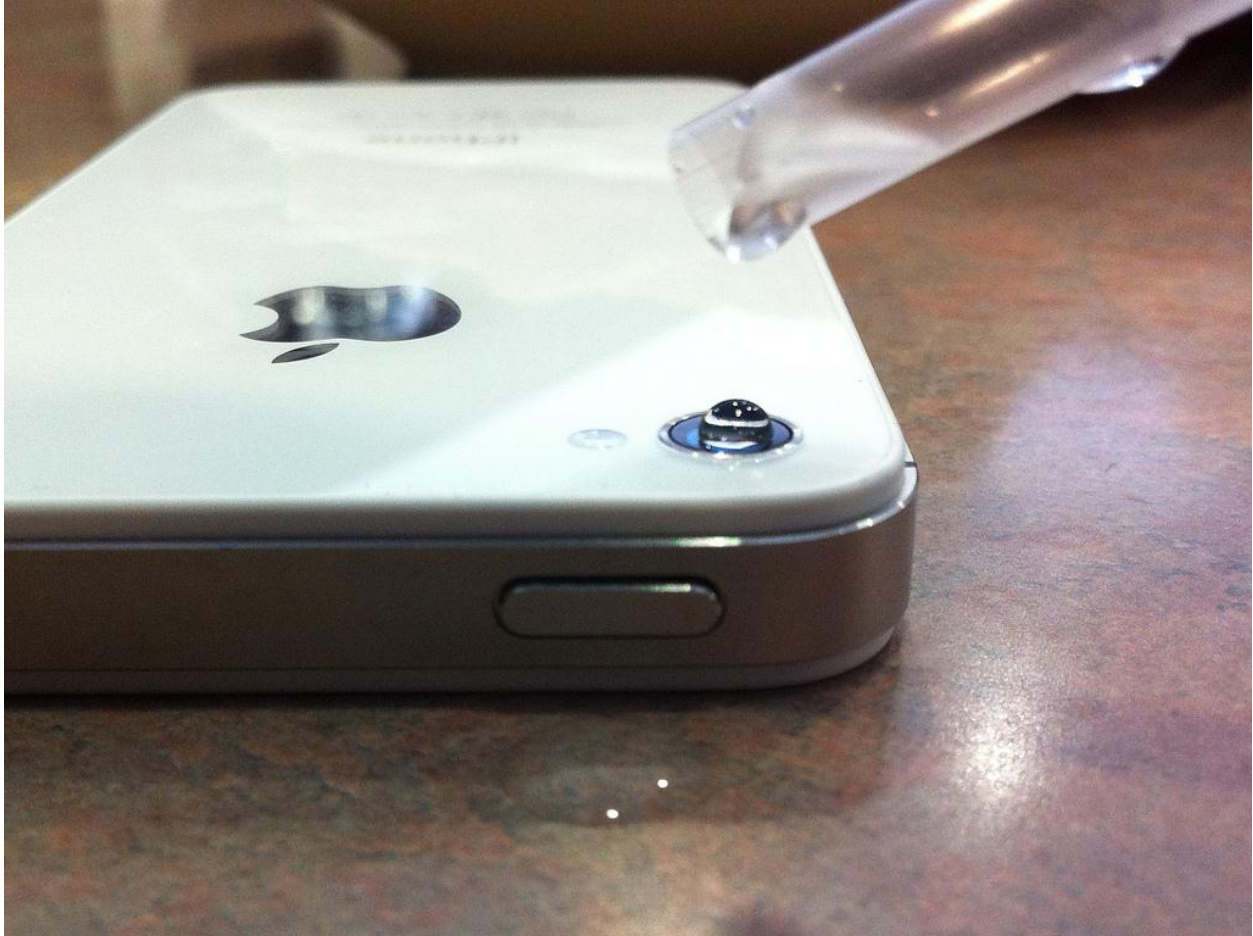
You can get some really cool effects just by shooting through different objects.



If you take a pair of binoculars and put your camera phone up to the eye, you can use that to zoom in and shot telephoto.



You can also drop a tiny bead of water onto the lens on your phone and use that to take macro shots like we talked about in the macro section. The water droplet works as a magnifier in this instance.



You can shoot through all kinds of stuff, like glasses, kaleidoscopes, or actual camera lenses. You can even put your camera in a glass or plastic bottle, cut in half and submerged in water, and get underwater shots. Try all kinds of stuff. Anything you can think of that's translucent can be used.



Light Painting

Light painting is when you set your camera for a long exposure in the dark. You then paint the scene with a light source, like a flashlight, glow stick, sparkler or anything else that produces light. Essentially this is recording light trails.



What you want to do is use a tripod-like device and set the camera in the area that you will paint. The more time you have, the more painting you can do; so set the picture for a long time, such as 30 seconds, a minute, or as long as your phone allows. Once you take the picture, the camera will begin to expose the scene. This is when you jump in and do your thing.



You can paint all kinds of stuff, even pictures themselves. You could have two or more people stand in place and have each person paint big letters so it spells out a word. You can have one person stand in place and have another person twirl a light around them so it looks like they are in some kind of space age cocoon.

You can outline things like cars, pets, park benches, fire hydrants, or anything else you can think of. You can shine a light to illuminate different objects. You can even light up different parts of the picture in different colors by using filters in front of your flashlight. Really, anything that lights up can be used. Try all kinds of stuff. Use your imagination.



If your phone does not provide long shutter speeds for the effect, you can use Slow Shutter Cam app for iPhone or Camera FV-5 for Android.

HDR

Pretty much all phones these days have a HDR feature in the menu or you can use an app. HDR stands for High Dynamic Range, meaning there is a very wide range of tones across the image. All cameras have a limited range of tones they can capture from the light of a scene. HDR uses multiple exposures of different values to give you as much detail in your pictures as possible. You really don't have to worry about any of the technical stuff though, because the camera will do all that for you. You just need to take the picture and adjust to taste

In HDR mode, your camera is going to take three pictures in a row at different exposure levels and then combine them. Because of this, you are going to want to use a tripod device or make sure you hold your camera as steady as possible. Otherwise, the picture will turn out blurry.

HDR typically looks best with things like landscapes, or pictures of things like cars and buildings. It is not the most flattering way to take a portrait so be careful. Unless you want your subject to look like an alien.

If you want more control and capability over your phones stock camera app, use VividHDR for iPhone and Pro HDR Camera for Android. These are powerful HDR apps that we will discuss in the apps section.

Long exposure night photography

If you have ever seen one of those pictures where there's a street but all you see are the streaks from the tail light but no cars. This is because the photographer did a long exposure and this is how you do it.



Place your phone on a tripod like device and set it up so it will capture the scene you want, but think ahead about what path cars will take. You need to do a little bit of planning to get the best result.

Once you have the shot set up, have your camera take a long exposure. In most cases the longer the better, so 30 seconds to a minute is good; or as long as your phone will allow. Unfortunately, a lot of phones don't allow for very long exposure times.

The camera will capture the light of every car that goes by and what you're left with is the trails from the light. This is pretty much the same thing as light painting except you're not doing any of the painting, the cars are.

You can do long exposures at night of anything that has lights and capture the trails. One cool way to do this is to get near an airport and capture the lights of the planes as they land and take off. Another way is to capture boats as they go by in a harbor, or wherever they may be. Just keep in mind with slower moving objects more time on the exposure is better.



If your phone does not provide long shutter speeds for the effect, you can use Slow Shutter Cam app for iPhone or Camera FV-5 for Android.

Sequence

Most phones have a burst function where the camera will take a series of images in fast succession. This is really helpful in capturing action shots. That way you get every bit of the moment.

You could take a sequence of anything, such as someone hitting a baseball. Once you have all the images, you can use apps or even the built-in functions of your phone that will put a grid of the images together like a collage so you can see the whole sequence of events in one picture.

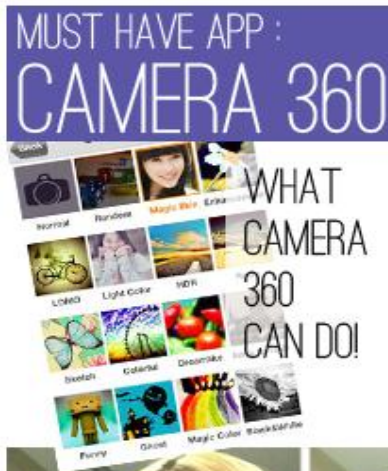


This is a really cool way to capture moments and has a whole range of possibilities, from sporting events, to action sports, to pranks or even family moments like someone opening a gift.

Get out there and give it a try.



If your phone's stock camera doesn't have a burst mode, use the Camera 360 app and for creating the image grid, you can use PhotoGrid app.



I wish to be as pretty as my pictures. Haha! Camera360 is definitely for all of us Instagram freaks.



Selective color

This is an effect that is available through various apps, some of which we will discuss later. What it does is makes the whole image black and white, except for the parts of the image you want to keep in color. It's really easy, all you do is take the picture and edit it in the app later on.



This can be used to really draw attention to a subject. You could select just the dress someone is wearing, or the dress and the other colors in the frame that match. You can use it to make just the eyes of someone have color and really pop out from the shot. You can use it to make patterns really pop out by having them only in color. Try it out, experiment, and have fun.



A couple of good apps that gives you a lot more control over selective color are Colorsplash and Camera 360.

Chapter 9: Useful Photo Apps

There are a lot of apps available for smartphone photographers that allow you to do all kinds of things like add functionality to your camera, add and adjust presets, as well as exposure parameters. Here, we will talk about some of the most useful ones.

Photo Editor

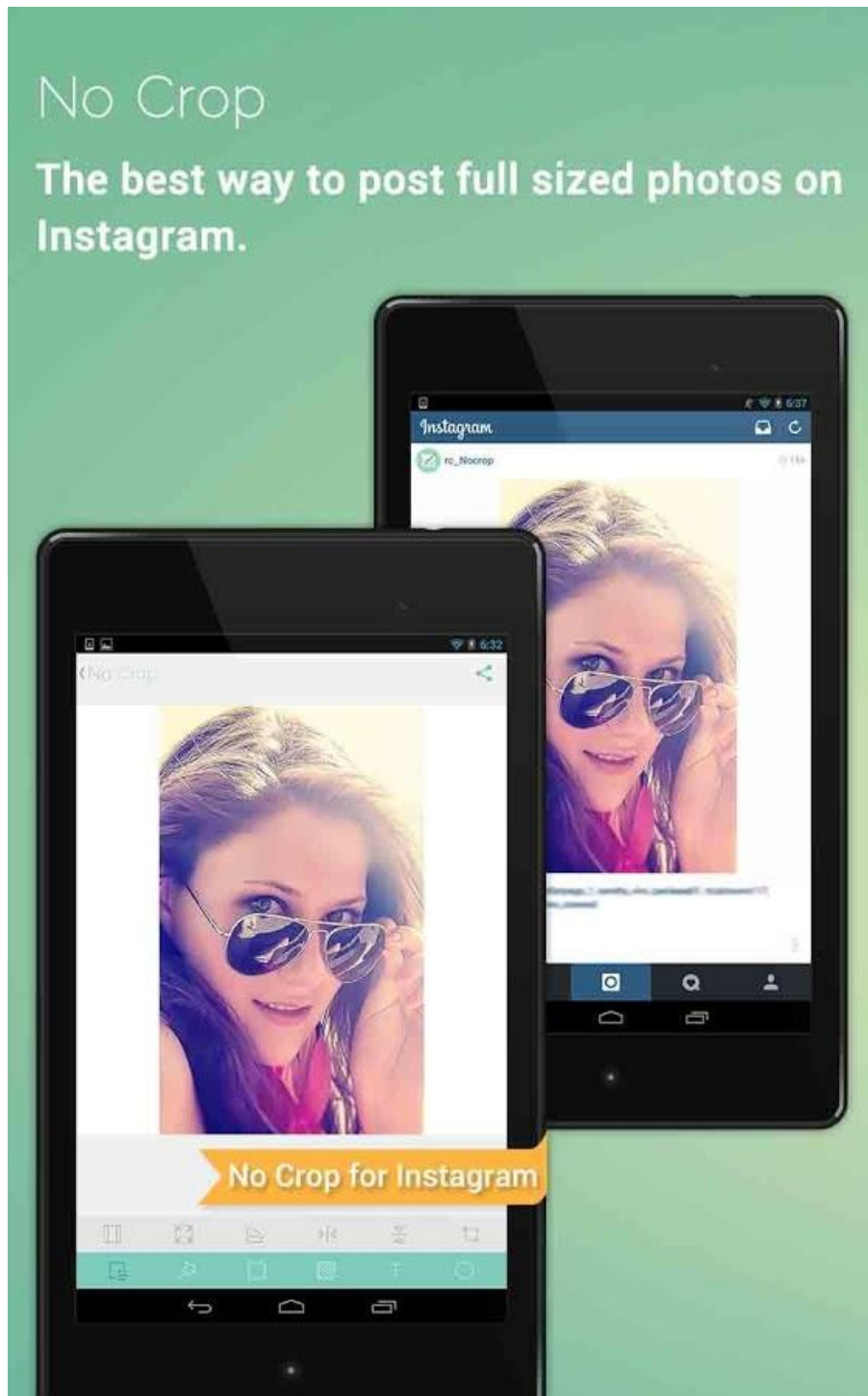
This app, and ones similar to it, are straight-forward photo editing tools. They allow you to do things similar to what you would do with traditional software on a computer. This allows you to adjust things like curves, levels, saturation, color temperature and balance, crop images and a lot of the other basic photo editing abilities that a lot of people are used to having with software like Photoshop.



There is even a Photoshop app available for smartphones. These apps would be more for people who want to have more control over the fine-tuning of their image as opposed to simple apps that apply a pre-made filter; even though a lot of these apps now have filters available and also have effects presets.

No Crop

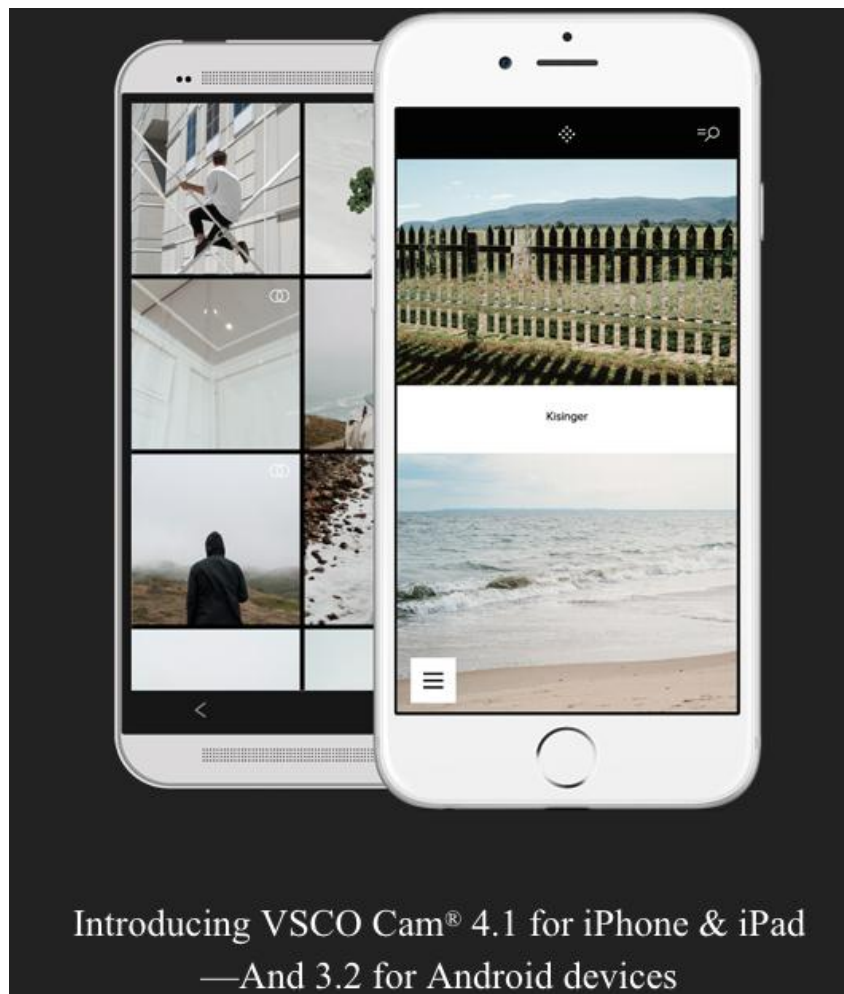
No Crop and similar apps are for when you upload images to websites like Instagram that automatically crop your photo to a square. The thing is, you don't always want to crop your picture to a square, and this gives you that option.



Your original intentions are captured with the whole image and that matters to a lot of people, whether it's in landscape orientation; meaning the wide way or portrait orientation meaning the tall way. Using this app to keep the photo intact is a good idea if that kind of thing matters to you.

VSCO

This is highly regarded as the best, or one of the best, photo editing and filter application apps. Not only does it have very nice and unique preset filters, but it also offers a fair amount of fine-tuning through a straightforward, minimal design and user interface. You can buy additional preset filter packs through the app that give you a wide range of possible looks. Each filter can be adjusted through the app.



VSCO also has a community side to the app, similar in ways to Instagram, where you share images amongst other users.

Camera FV-5

This is a great all-in-one camera app that gives you much more functionality over your camera stock camera app. If you want more control over taking pictures, and a user interface similar to a DSLR or dedicated camera, this is a great tool for you.

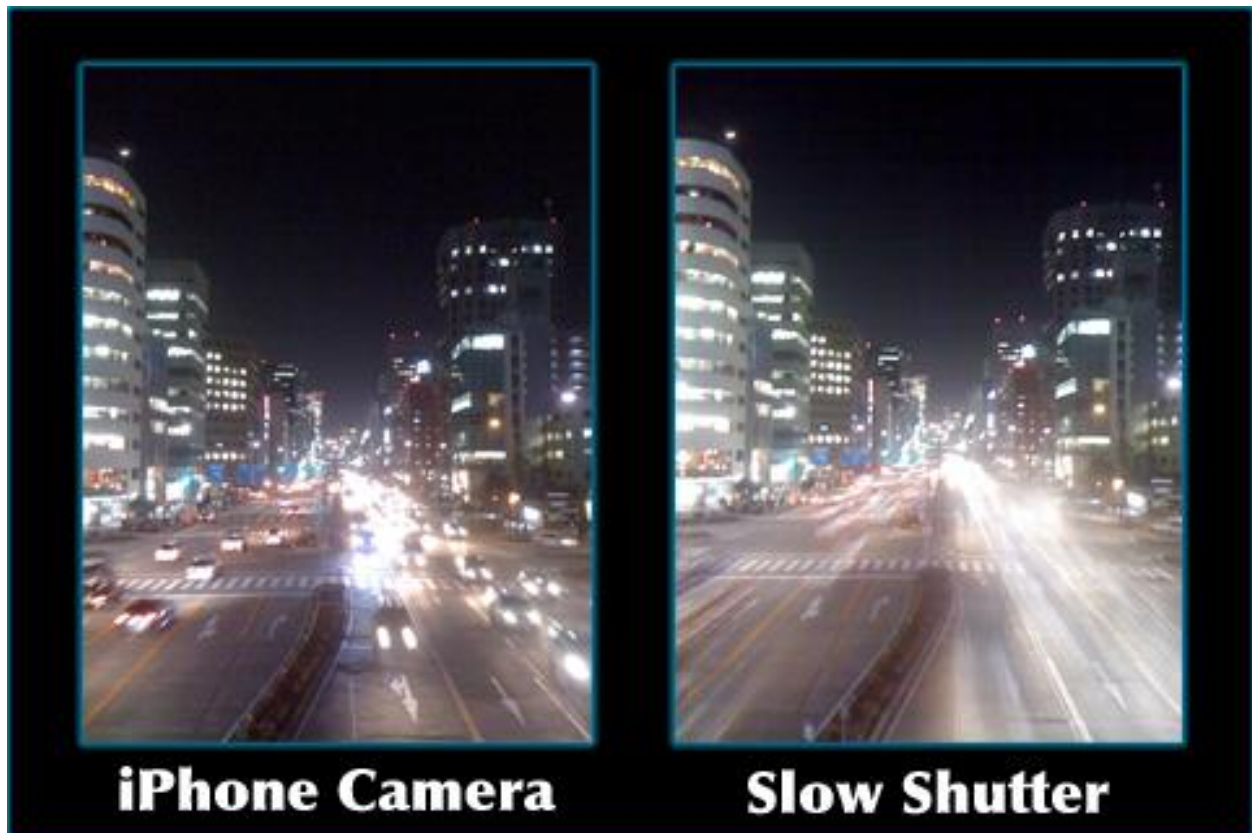


You have access to a lot of the manual controls, such as white balance, focus mode, ISO, exposure compensation, and light metering modes. All of this is displayed on the screen in real time so you see what's happening. You can even do time-lapse with this app and have HDR included. A lot is possible with this app.

It's not the easiest app to use and has a bit of a learning curve, unless you are already familiar with what a lot of these parameters control. But if you have used a DSLR in the past, it should be a breeze. Regardless, it's pretty powerful and worth learning how to use to get the most out of your images.

Slow Shutter Cam

This is an iPhone app for extending the shutter speed capabilities of your camera, if you use android then the previously discussed Camera FV-5 is the best option for you.



Simply, if you want to do light painting and long exposures, this is the app you want on your iPhone. Because shooting with a slow shutter speed is a function of the camera, this is naturally a camera app, and the interface is nice and simple to use.

The two modes in this app you want to stick to are manual mode, so you get as much control as possible over the length of the shutter speed; and a cool mode called light painting, which is designed specifically for that.

VividHDR for iPhone and Pro HDR Camera for Android

These apps perform the same function. They are nice full-featured HDR apps.



You get all kinds of control over creating HDR images. We spoke about doing this effect with your stock camera app previously, but you might want more control. These apps will give you that. You will also get all around better results over your camera's stock app because they are designed with HDR specifically in mind.

The differences between what you can create with these as opposed to the stock app are kind of shocking actually. These are much more capable. You have full control over all parameters of the image to give you exactly the effect you desire.

AfterFocus



One big advantage of a camera like a DSLR is that the large imaging sensor and lenses allow for easy blurring of the out of focus areas, which is called shallow depth of field. What this app does is allows you to take your smartphone images into the app, select the area you want to stay in focus, and blur the other parts of the image out, giving you a similar look to what you could get with a DSLR.

This is a very easy to use app and works surprisingly well. It provides a lot more control over the blurring of the image as opposed to simpler functions in apps like Instagram. It is very useful for things like selfies, portraits, pictures of cars and pets.

PhotoGrid



This is a grid app that lets you make collages and lay your images into a grid. You can also add text and borders. It's fun to play with if you want to make a collage or sequence your images like we talked about in the tricks section.

Camera 360

This is a camera and photo-editing app that is geared more towards presets and photo optimization. It has a lot of available effects that aren't just filters, but tools to help optimize and enhance your pictures. It also has adjustments like levels, contrast, and control over color parameters. You can even lay graphics and textures over your images to get some really cool looks.



The camera side of the app also gives you a lot of added functions over your phone's stock camera app and is very easy to use. It gives you a bunch of different picture-taking modes like auto, portrait, night and scenery, and each one has a series of further presets you can use to take the initial picture. They are shown in real time, so you see exactly what the picture will look like with the filter added. All kinds of effects and functions are available, like burst mode, selective color, double exposure and grid. It is really just a nice and highly useful all-in-one app.

Colorsplash

We discussed the selective color effect in a previous chapter and that's what this app is designed for. It has a camera mode, though it is not as fully featured as some of the other camera apps discussed.



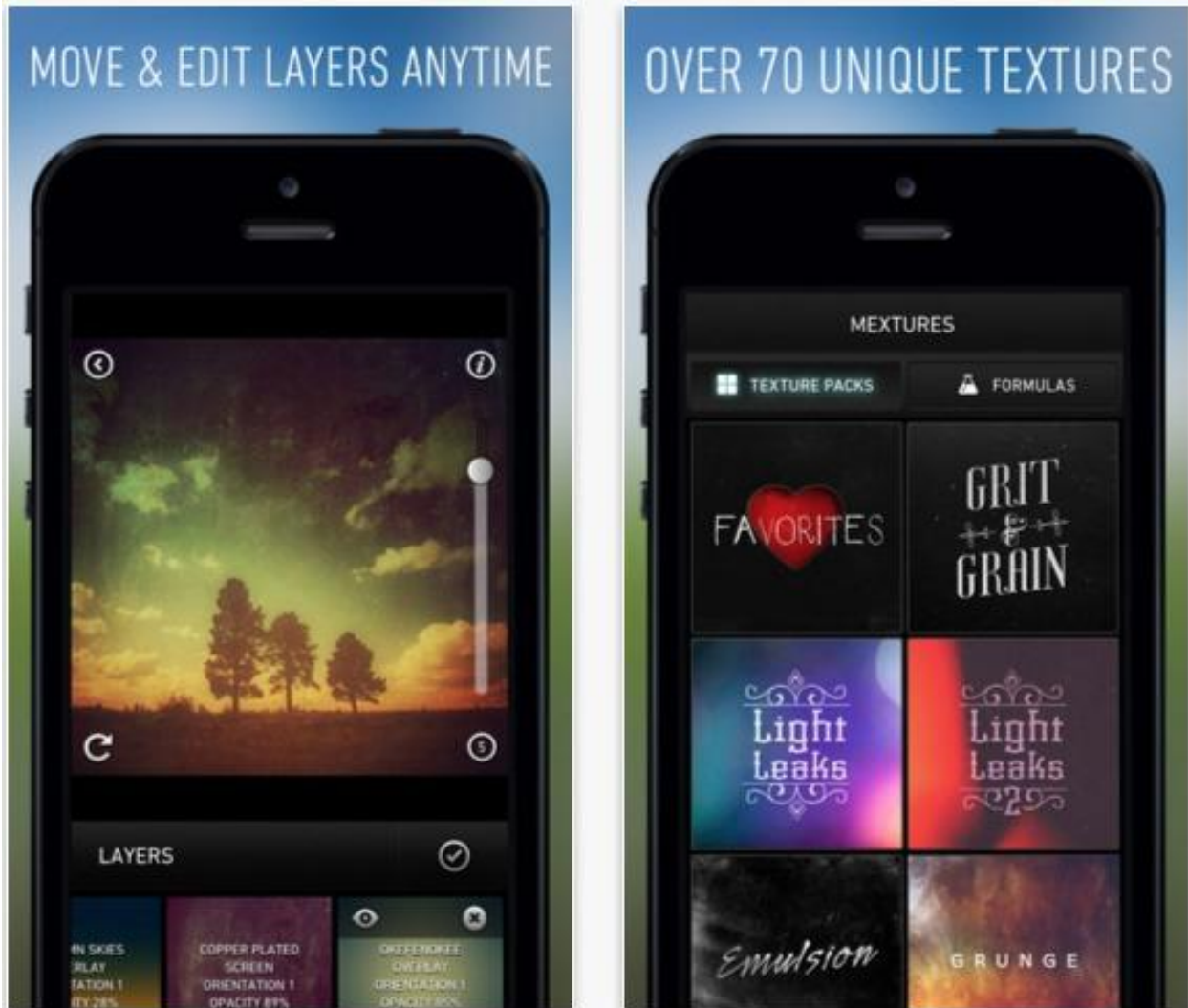
The main focus of this app is selective color and it does it well, giving you lots of control over how you apply the effect. The original image is shown to you in black and white, you just go back in and paint the color in. This is easiest with a stylus but still doable with just your finger.



You also have some preset filters available like dreamy, which looks sort of like HDR, and each preset and parameter is adjustable with a simple user interface.

Mextures

This app provides over 70 textures that you can apply to your pictures, giving them a very unique look. The fun part is you can apply multiple layers and play with the parameters of each one.



This app gives you a number of installed package choices like light leaks, grit and grain, and grunge to make your image have that vintage film look. You can go for a really beat up, worn down look or just a pleasing subtle look. Within each preset pack are multiple filters, all finely adjustable. There are so many possibilities with this app and the looks you can get from it, that the best thing to do is just experiment.

Also available through Mextures are things like landscape enhancement, to improve the punch of your photos, as well as a camera app that gives you basic functions for snapping photos.

Chapter 10: Social Media and Image Sharing

Social media and image sharing sites are where photographers go online to share their images. There are a lot of platforms to choose from, and I'm sure you're aware of most of them, such as Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, Pinterest, Flickr and 500px to name a few.



you want to gain a following on these sites and receive feedback, the best way to get there is by participating in the community. You're going to want to view other people's work, comment, and tell them what you think. Tell them what you like about their work. Follow those whose work you enjoy and like photos that you enjoy. Lots of people will notice that and check your stuff out, possibly choosing to like your work, comment on it, and follow you. That's how you start a connection with someone; you engage them. This is how you begin to build a following.

One way to gain exposure and get eyes on your work with these sites and apps is to use hashtags that relate to your work. This lets people easily find your photos.

Try to post pictures as often as you can, every day even, and make sure you only share your best pictures. The more often people see your pictures, the more familiar with you they will become and the more they will remember you. Typically, those who post more on social media have a larger following.

It's important to know that this should be a pursuit of internal happiness. You don't want to spread yourself thin chasing attention on a number of different social media sites. Most photographers participate on just one or two, maybe three, and find all the feedback and community they need that way.

Final Words

I hope this short guide to smartphone photography has been helpful for you and widened your ability to think outside the box when it comes to taking pictures. We live in exciting times for photographers and people who want to just take cool pictures to share with their friends and family. More technology is available than ever before and the creative boundaries are endless. So, go out there and see the world with a new eye.



See what kind of unique and interesting pictures you can create.