

CAPTURING THE RIGHT PHOTOS

A picture is worth a thousand likes! So, how can you make sure the photos you post on your social media accounts stand out from the crowd? The good news is, you no longer need an expensive camera to produce beautiful images. Most smartphones have impressive cameras that allow you to take stunning photos.

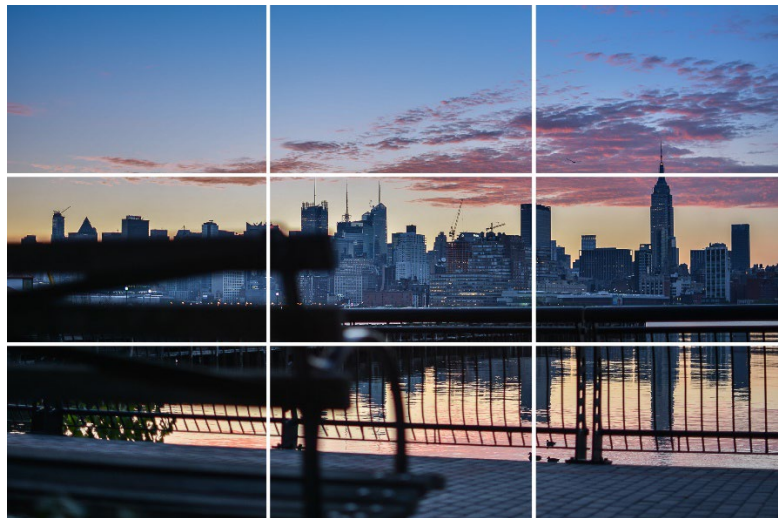
Here are a few tips to help you snap quality photos for your social media accounts:

1. Clean your camera lens. - This is especially true if you're using a phone. Smudges can distort your photo and decrease the overall quality.

2. Check your lighting - Whether you're using a smartphone or an expensive camera, lighting makes all the difference. If possible, take your photos near natural light. Going outside is a great option, but if you need to take the pictures inside, shoot near a window. It's not a good idea to use the flash. The flash in your smartphone can cast a yellow light or shadows over your subject and make them less appealing.

3. Use the rule of thirds. - Using the rule of thirds will improve the composition of your photos and create balanced and visually appealing images. Your smartphone allows you to enable grid lines when you take a photo, and those lines make it easier for you to follow the rule of thirds.

The grid is two vertical and two horizontal lines spaced equally apart. Professional photographers know not to centre everything on the screen because it's not visually appealing. So, if you want to take your photos to the next level, use the rule of thirds and position your subject where those lines intersect. You'll create a more professional and attractive image.



4. Take photos horizontally not vertically. - Make sure your social media photography is landscape rather than portrait. It's much easier to crop these images and ensure they display properly on all social media platforms.

5. Don't zoom. - It's better to get closer to your subject than it is to zoom, especially if you're using a smartphone. Zooming can cause the picture to look blurry or grainy. You also want to leave room for things to be cropped out if necessary.

6. Tap on your subject. - After you frame your shot, before you touch the shutter button and take the picture, tap on your subject. This tells your phone where to focus so the image comes out sharp.

7. Shoot from different angles. Play around with different perspectives and angles, so you have some flexibility when you choose a picture to post. Make sure the subject of the image and all faces can be seen.

8. Use a simple but creative background. - The background matters when you're taking a photo. Intersections created by doors and windows can distract from the subject and ruin the composition of the picture. Here are some background ideas to keep in mind:

- Find a colourful or bright background outside

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- Shoot in front of a coloured wall or building with brick, stone or rock
- Place products on interesting floors or wooden tables

9. Take candid shots. - Don't just post pictures of your homes. People make great subjects, and photos with faces are proven to get more likes and comments. Your subjects don't always need to pose, though. Candid shots add a human element to your brand. One of the best ways to capture an interesting candid shot is to have fun and take a lot of pictures.

10. Use editing tools. - There are many great editing tools available that are free and easy to use (like Canva). You want to enhance the lighting and colour of the photo, but don't overedit and make it look unrealistic.

What Kinds of Photos to Post on Social Media

The quality of the photos you post is important, but so is the quantity. To keep engagement up, you should post consistently (but not more than once a day on each platform). So, you need enough images to keep your audience engaged, and you also need diversity in the kinds of photos you post.

Let's look at 6 types of social media marketing images you can include in your posts:

1. User-Generated Content Images - One of the most powerful types of content you can use on any social media marketing platform is user-generated content (UGC). Because it's created and shared by your customers, your audience will automatically view it as more authentic and trustworthy than other marketing messages. There's also not much you need to do except encourage your customers to share their photos of your product and tag you in them. Then thank them publicly and ask permission to use the image. This may also encourage other customers to do the same so their photos will get noticed, too.

2. Product Images - You don't want your social media content to only be product promotion, but you do want to share interesting and beautiful images of your builds as well as the products you use. Here are some options to keep in mind:

- Show the build in stages in use so people can see how you work
- Use arrows and text to point out special features, or show the name of the products used
- Show the product photo on a seasonal or interesting background image or pattern

3. Photos of Your Team - Your customers enjoy getting to know the people who run the businesses they work with or purchase from. You can spotlight one or two employees at a time and share fun facts or information about them. This allows your audience to feel like they know your team...and that can make a big impact.

4. Behind-the-Scenes Photos - Behind-the-scenes pictures make your customers feel like they're getting an exclusive insight into what your business is doing. Use a simple image with text overlay to explain exactly what your audience is seeing.

5. Brand Announcements - Social media is a great place to share brand announcements like upcoming events, new builds, hand-overs to happy customer local events you're involved in, or that you're hiring. Whatever announcement you make, remember that images make a stronger impression than text alone and will dramatically increase the visibility of your post.

6. This-or-That Pictures - This-or-that pictures give your audience two different options and ask them to choose which one they like better. These images are a fun and creative way to promote your business and increase engagement quickly. They can also act as basic market research.

When it comes to content remember whether it is photos, carousel posts, reels, long form video or 20 second stories it must be either:

- Educational content - Creating value-driven educational content is a great way to get started on reels—especially since people are encouraged to share and save reels. Here are some examples of educational content: Five things to do before you start to build, layout ideas or plans, and top three things to look for in a good builder. Think of tips and advice that your audience wants and needs.

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- Products or services - Reels are primarily seen by non-followers, which means this a great way to promote your business to new people. Share how-to's, before and afters, vlog-style videos with your products—anything to catch people's attention.
- BTS (Behind the Scenes) - People want to see more relatable and raw content on social media. BTS videos are a great way to be more personable and to build rapport with people. Share things like your business story, a day in the life at your company, or funny, relatable clips of you and your team.

The goal is to connect with them through your imagery:

- Provide value through education, humour, or inspiration.
- Build trust through customer reviews or user-generated content.
- Encourage interaction so users will save, share, and like your posts.