

Actually Taking Photographs

It may seem like a lot of steps at first, but soon you will find you don't even think about doing some things.

Step 1. Make sure there is no film already in the camera.

Step 2. Loading the Film

- a. Go to a place with subdued light, such as the shade or inside. Changing your film under bright sunlight often results in the first part of the roll being fogged.
- b. Open camera back. Sometimes there is a lever on the side that needs to be pushed up or down. Most older manual cameras have a big round thing on the left side, and this is the film rewind knob. Pull this up with gently pressure, and the back should pop open. Refer to your manual for specifics on your model.
- c. Put film cartridge in camera on left side.
 - a. Newer cameras let the film just pop right in.
 - b. With older cameras you may need to lift up the rewind knob and turn it slightly to get it to sit correctly. The rewind button needs to be back in normal position, so make sure that you fiddle with getting it aligned with the film cartridge at this time.
- d. Pull leader out of film cartridge enough to reach other side of camera.
 - a. With newer cameras, all you have to do it pull the end over the right side of the little bar and close the back. Turn the camera on, and it should sound like it is sucking the film up, then show a number in the LCD panel. If the LCD panel is blinking, and no numbers are showing, you need to pull the film over a bit farther.
 - b. Older cameras require a bit more work. You have to pull the film over to the far right side of the bar, then make sure the sprockets (the holes on the edge of the film) are caught up by the little sprocket pullers. Or, you may need to stick the end of your film through a little slot on the bar. Advance the film a little to make sure it is secured before closing the back. If you can't advance the film, you may need to press the expose button (THE button) once or twice. After closing the back, make two pretend exposures to advance the exposed film. Forgetting to do this means that your two exposures will not turn out.

Step 3. Set the ISO/ASA.

- a. Each camera does this differently. Newer cameras read the barcode electronically, and you can ignore this step. Older manual cameras have a little dial by the shutter speed that you may need to pull up and turn to switch. You should be shooting ISO 400 speed film, so make sure it says 400.

Step 4. Find something/someone to photograph.

- a. I want to see something new, or something important to you. If you are interested the subject of your own photograph, chances are everyone else will be, too, so if it bores you, it'll bore us!

- Step 5. Make sure the lighting accentuates the subject.
- Where do the shadows fall? If you are looking into the sun, you are looking into shadow, and this is not good lighting. A good rule of thumb is to have the sun at your back.
 - What time of day is it? Would the shot look better with light coming from the East in the morning, perhaps?
- Step 6. Compose the image; pre-visualize the print.
- What you see in the viewfinder is what you get. Make sure you are using the whole frame, filling it with the subject or including the environment. Don't forget the edges – is something showing you don't want to include?
 - Don't forget to change vantage points. Move yourself around the subject, closer and farther and higher and lower. The best shot is most often not the one made from eye level.
- Step 7. Meter the light.
- Go up close to the subject and meter a darker area of the scene. Or, if you can't get close, meter something in the same light. One thing that always gives accurate exposures is to meter green grass, cement (the lighter stuff, not the really black pavement) or African American skin tone. Don't get carried away and meter something that is a shadow of a shadow; this will over expose your film and make it useless!
 - Think about how much light you are shooting in, and set the aperture.
 - Fill the viewfinder up with what you are metering, don't bother to focus. Just press THE button down lightly, no more than halfway.
 - Adjust the shutter speed until your camera indicates that your exposure is correct.
- Step 8. Without changing the settings you just figured, recompose your image. Refocus, too!
- Step 9. Make the exposue.
- Step 10. Bracket. See *Bracketting* handout.
- Step 11. Use entire roll.
- DO NOT force film advance levers on older cameras; when it stops, you are out of film. Forcing it will break the camera as well as ripping the film out of the canister so you cannot advance it. If you think you have ripped the film out (ie, the picture number is over 40) DO NOT OPEN THE CAMERA IN DAYLIGHT! Bring it to class and let me help you save the film.
- Step 12. Take film out.
- Newer cameras, all you have to do is take the film out and store it in a darkish place until you are ready to process it.
 - Older cameras, turn upside down and press the tiny button on the bottom. Failure to do this will result in the camera being broken and your film being destroyed! This tiny button should stay pressed in by itself, you do not have to hold it. Then, unfold the crank from the round button on the left and turn until you feel the tightness turn into slack, and the crank turns easily. Then, take film out and store in a darkish place until ready to process.