

DSLR CAMERA AND IPHONE EXERCISE WORKSHEET

The best way to improve your photography is with practice! Before beginning, set up a scene (either a final beauty shot for a DIY project, recipe, or product from your shop). Consider everything from backdrops to props like we discussed in previous chapters. You will be doing the following exercises with your camera and your phone, so have both charged up and ready!

DSLR

*To help you remember what settings you used, write out what you're changing on a notecard and take a photo of it before taking the test shots. That way when you upload your photos to your computer, you can go back and analyze what worked and what didn't.

1. Take a photo on AV mode with no adjustments. ISO on auto, exposure compensation at 0, auto white balance.
2. Leaving everything else the same, adjust the exposure compensation up one notch. Take photos. Then take a photos on each notch until you get to 1 exposure compensation and then to 2 and to 3. You should see your photo go from dark to overexposed.
3. With ISO on auto and exposure compensation on 0, adjust your aperture. The smaller the number (1.8) the more your subject will stand out and your background blur. Take the same photo at intervals from 1.8 to 11. Once you get to 11, you'll have a larger depth of field.
4. In your menu settings, adjust your white balance (might be called WB Shift/BKT). Move the dot all the way over to the right, then all the way up, and all the way down. You should see a change of tint in your photographs. This is a great tool for correcting that blue tint you might see on a sunny day.
5. Combination! Put everything together. Make adjustments to your aperture, exposure compensation, and white balance if need be. You can also play around with setting the ISO yourself (stay at 800 or below).

Continue playing around and making small adjustments with each of these settings. You'll have to make these small changes on every shoot since the light changes day to day. The more you practice and familiarize yourself with your camera, the more confident you'll become.

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Phone

Now use the camera app on your phone to shoot the same scene you shot with your DSLR. Move around to get a series of different angles at various heights. Upload your favorite snaps to VSCO.

1. Find your filter. You can download additional sets from the VSCO store in the app. My go-to is F2, on notch 3. Even though a filter might look like too much when you initially select it, be sure to drag the scale down to zero and back up to 12 again until you find the sweet spot. Do this with every filter in the pack until you find one that fits your brand. You might even find that no filter is your best filter. If that's the case, be sure to use the other editing tools to make sure that your photos really stand out.
2. Once you have your filter you can make other slight adjustments. Crop and rotate if you need. Then start with exposure. Drag the settings up a few notches to the extreme just to get a sense of how much you can edit. My photos will be anywhere from a 1-3 depending on the light I originally shot the photo in.
3. Add some contrast. Again, play around with the degree of contrast you're adding.
4. Make colors pop by adding saturation. Most likely you'll never need more than a 3, but play around until you find the colors that best fit your brand.
5. To lighten the darks play around with shadows and highlights.
6. Sharpen your image.
7. Play around with additional settings (like tint) for fun.