



Product Photography

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Types of Product Photography

Promotional

Product

Website

Photography used for marketing products online requires multiple perspectives.

- **Promotional photography** must grab a viewer's attention and provoke them to want to see more. (For email campaigns, Facebook posts, etc.)
- **Product page photography** must be clear of distractions and provide the details so that the user feels confident he/she knows what she is buying.
- **Website layout photographs** must be of a certain dimension and scale.

Promotional photography should evoke a positive emotional response or feeling.



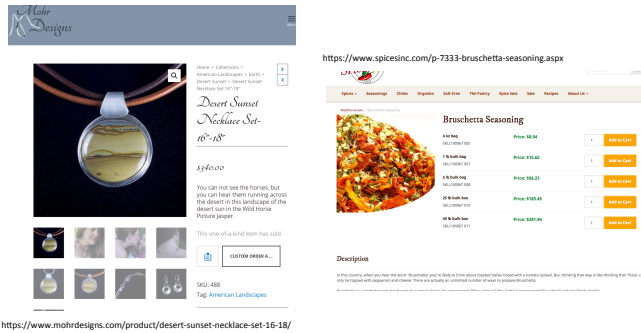
This macro photo of moving water promotes the FLOW collection and evokes a sense of "awe" and feeling of movement. Use the camera to provide a perspective not typically available to the eye.

Promotional photography should tell a story.



This photo tells the story of dinner by the seaside. The reflection of the sun and grill lines let us know it is a warm summer day. The waves in the underlying cloth complement the ocean theme.

Photography used to sell a product needs to provide clear detail.



Website headers and thumbnails must be manipulated to size dynamically.



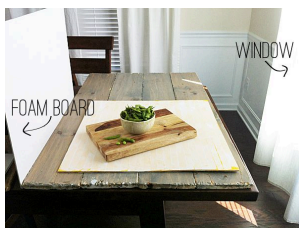
Photography used for marketing products online requires multiple perspectives.

- **Promotional photography** must grab a viewer's attention and provoke them to want to see more.
 - Tells a story or evokes a feeling
 - Requires Staging or Styling
- **Product page photography** must be clear of distractions and provide the details so that the user feels confident he/she knows what she is buying.
 - Show texture, color, and details
 - Be on a white background (in general)
 - Show multiple perspectives (front, back, side view, what it looks like on a model)
- **Website layout photographs** must be of a certain dimension and scale.
 - Headers usually have a wide aspect ratio, e.g. 1600 x 400 when in full screen
 - Must scale with page and be meaningful if cut off
 - Thumbnails need closeup so it is clear what the user will see if clicked

Product Photography Setup

Staging or Styling
Technical Setup (lighting & camera)

Staging and Styling



Props, backgrounds, textiles and garnishes help define your 'voice' and tell the story.

The setup does not to be expensive or elaborate. Find a window that has good natural light.



The basic setup for most products is simple...but jewelry and food are difficult!



Setup Requirements:

- Diffused natural or studio light (not both)
- Fill cards
- Lightbox or light from under transparent table for product shots

Camera Requirements:

- Basic camera (Canon Rebel)
- Macro or closeup lenses (optional)
- Tripod with extension arm
- Remote shutter release
- Tethered computer

Technical issues with food photography are....

- **Controlling the light** – Natural vs Studio light / diffused light.
- **Flash** – Never use the on-camera flash. Too harsh, makes food appear flat.
- **Styling** – Make food look appetizing with plating, props & garnishes. Keep food looking fresh.
- **White Balance** – proper white balance setting so food retains an accurate color. Nobody likes 'blue' meat.
- **Quality of the product** – Color, richness, detail needs to reflect in the image so the customer knows what they are buying.

Challenges Specific to Food Photography are....

- **Color contamination** – when the image picks up colors from outside the set. Reflections in glass from a window or ambient light from the room. Use a white sheet to cover a window and diffuse the light to prevent reflections. Make sure all overhead and room lights are off.
- **Cooked food can have a very short life.** Stage the shot with 'dummy' props before adding food to the set. Pick through the food to find pieces that will photograph well (heroes) and position them on the plate with tweezers.
- **Cooked food can look bland** – add garnishes such as parsley, basil, or lemon slices to convey freshness.
- **Stimulating the taste buds**—Garnishes or props can also be added to indicate flavor profiles. Blueberries, lemon zest, chile peppers etc.

Product photo samples



Product is hard to see, lacks detail. Shot with a 35mm lens (kit lens). Background doesn't add any visual interest. Focus is off.



Product is isolated on a white background. Shot with a macro lens. Much better detail.

Jewelry photography is like trying to take a photo of a mirror with no reflections in it.



The soft box enclosure: the silver and stones reflect the white fabric and its texture.



Soft Lights: the silver and stones reflect the edges of the lights.

Metals and Stone Reflect EVERYTHING... Especially Curved items.



\$\$\$ doesn't solve the problem



When using a model, keeping the focus on the jewelry is a challenge due to scale and model "flaws."



Original



Edited

- Zoomed to highlight Jewelry
- Eliminate armpits/lines
- Remove blemishes
- Straighten eyes and necklace.

Gemstones need special lighting. They need to be brilliant and not show a reflection.



Workflow

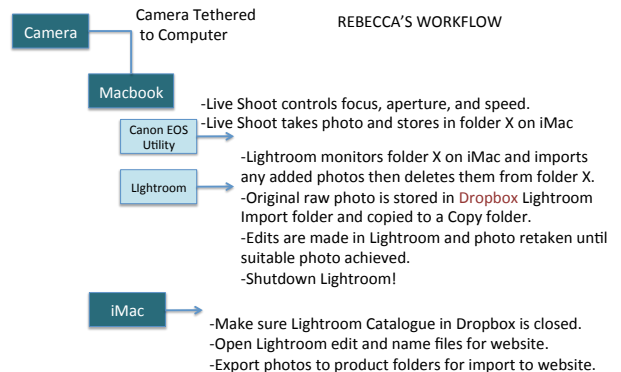
Tethering
File management
Lightroom/Photoshop

Tethering

- Lightroom has a tethering feature but does not show image on computer.
- Canon rebel software EOS Utility allows you to see live image, adjust focus and all camera settings.

NOTE: Be sure to check compatibility of EOS utility before upgrading operating systems.

Workflow is KEY to sustainable file management during photography shoots.



Workflow is KEY to sustainable promotional photography shoots.



- **Books & Courses**
 - Lynda.com
 - Creativelive.com
 - Foodphotographyclub.com \$250/yr membership
 - The Art and Style of Product Photography – Dennis Thomas (Amazon)
 - Food Photography From Snapshots to Great Shots – Nicole S. Young (Amazon)
 - Food Styling – Delores Custer (Amazon)
 - Cookbooks/Catalogs/Websites – look for inspiration
- **Experience**
 - Build a portfolio – Flickr, Instagram, Website
 - Become an apprentice for a photographer
 - Start shooting and keep shooting – use community sites for feedback and critique.
- **Career Opportunities**
 - Restaurants, Chefs, Caterers
 - Websites, blogs
 - Ad agencies
 - <https://petapixel.com/2016/02/26/much-photographers-charge-2016/>
- **Interest in Specific Workshops?**