

LET'S TAKE GREAT PHOTOS of your quilts and quilt projects.

Source: Michelle Bartholomew and Kitty Wilkin, Advanced Quilt Photography Class, 2018

1. LIGHTING

Lighting is the most important.

--Find open SHADE. Example: An area blocked off by the sun.

--Shoot EARLY morning or early evening.

--**Overcast day**—this is the best option!

Troubleshooting:

--Bright Sun-- Shoot with backlight, meaning the sun is at your back.

--Edit it in your software

--Use poster board or large sheet to block the light

2. BACKGROUND

Background depends on the purpose of your photo. Are you taking photos for a quilt show? Social Media? Magazine? Website? Scrapbook?

For quilt show photos, the background cannot dominate the photo. The photo should take up the entire screen and you may need to erase the background in software depending on the rules of the quilt show.



Couch to 5K, photo entry submitted to QuiltCon, full view,

Otherwise, you can be super creative with your choices. Remember, however, that the quilt should be the star of the photo, not the awesome background.

Tips:

Keep your horizon level.

Create your own backgrounds such as a sheet or plywood

You can get someone to hold the quilt for you and that gives you space between you, the quilt and the background.

3. COMPOSITION

There are lots of composition rules. The Rule of Thirds is the most useful. This gives your quilt some air to breathe. Think of putting your quilt in the two-thirds of the left side of the photo with the background taking up about one-third.



OR, put the quilt on the right and the one-third on the left.



OR, drape the quilt on the right side with something cool in the left side and some foreground in the other third.



4. FOCUS

Most of the time you want to have focused quilts.

- Use auto-focus
- Use a tri-pod
- Use a higher number Shutter Speed
- Use a higher number Aperture

5. TAKE LOTS OF DIFFERENT PHOTO SHOTS

List of shots:

1. Flat
2. Corner flipped
3. Closeup
4. Binding
5. Folded
6. Draped
7. Behind the scenes
8. Fun, fun, fun



6. LAST THOUGHTS

If you want to improve your ability to control light exposure, you need to learn to operate your digital camera in the MANUAL MODE. In Manual, you can control the light by controlling the Shutter Speed, Aperture, and ISO.

On my Canon, the auto settings are 50 Shutter Speed, 4.5 Aperture and 200 ISO. With the manual settings, I can look in the In-Camera Meter and adjust the exposure so that it isn't too dark or too bright.

Using the Manual Mode takes time and practice. Because it's digital, you can experiment and see what happens when you change any one of these settings. For example, if you set the aperture on 22, you will get a sharper background. If the Shutter Speed is 1/1000, you will freeze motion. If you use 100 ISO, you will get a less grainy photo.

Editing software can also help fix problems with your photos such as cropping or correcting color.

YOUR SMART PHONE CAN TAKE GREAT PHOTOS. IT HAS EDITING TOOLS AND YOU CAN CONTROL EXPOSURE.

RESOURCES:

Quilt Photography: 5 Tips to Improve by Christopher Thompson, Modern Quilt Guild Resources

[Quilt Photography: 5 Tips to Improve | MQG Community \(themodernquiltguild.com\)](#)

Taking Quality Photos for Quilt Show Entry by Colleen Molen, Modern Quilt Guild Resources

[Taking Quality Photos for Quilt Show Entry | MQG Community \(themodernquiltguild.com\)](#)

Easy, Inexpensive Way for Great Quilt Pictures by Cheryl Brickey

[Meadow Mist Designs: Easy, Inexpensive Way for Great Quilt Pictures](#)

Follow these Quilt Designers on Instagram:

Kitty Wilkin, [Kitty Wilkin \(@nightquilter\) • Instagram photos and videos](#)

Michelle Bartholomew, [Michelle Bartholomew \(@michellebartholomew\) • Instagram photos and videos](#)