



HOW TO TAKE BETTER PHOTOS ON A SCHOOL TRIP

Think “people, places, things.”

The best travel photos think about all three of these. Get faculty and friends in the photo in front of or engaged in the place of interest, with a very specific thing that evokes the conditions or activity, and you have a great shot.

Get closer, be involved

The closer you get to your subject, the more detail and interest you can capture. One is to use a zoom lens, the other is to simply walk closer to your subject. Not everyone is comfortable doing this, but the person viewing the photo will appreciate it; despite how close a zoom lens makes things appear when viewing a photo the human eye can still sense the distance, and appreciates when an image has truly been taken up close. Be part of what is going on, and not standing apart from the action, get closer, get more intimate, engage in your photo.

Don't put your subject dead centre

If you put something right in the middle of the frame, the photo is about that thing. Place it off-center using the rule of thirds. An easy way to think about this is mentally to divide the frame into three sections (left, center and right), and put the main subject of the photo either entirely within the left or right section, or perhaps right on the line dividing two sections. Put it on the side that has the least background interest in the overall frame.

Position the light

When staring directly into the sun, you may be able to make out colors and people, but your camera is going to reproduce mostly shadows. The easiest way to flatter your subject is to put it in the best light. If you want your subjects' faces to shine, turn them so the sun is shining on their faces. If you want your photo of your cruise ship to look like the brochures, take the photo on the sunny side of the ship. Alternately, if you want to catch the glistening of light on the ocean, take the photo when the sun is low enough to bounce off the waves.

Consider time of day

There's no time like sunrise or sunset to take compelling, interesting and even stunning travel photos. Sunrise in particular can produce very striking images.

Don't forget the vertical

Turn the camera on its side to take a vertical shot is just not good composition, it is almost essential -- when taking a photo of towers and tall buildings. Vertical shots will enhance the interest of your overall photo collection considerably, adding geometrical variety.

Fill the frame

The interesting parts of the scene should start at the left edge of the viewfinder and end at the right edge. That is, the subject should absolutely fill the frame such that the edges of the photo will include as little off topic imagery and information as possible. Pay attention to the edges and corners, be sure to crop out bottles, dishes, pizza boxes, anything that takes away from your photo.

When taking a photo of fellow students

When taking photos of traveling companions, it is easy to prop them up in front of something interesting and then take the picture. If you go to some effort to get the attraction behind them, but cut off the top of someone's head, or include a sloppy untucked shirt, or cut the photo off at someone's socks, you have a good photo of the sight and a terrible photo of your friends. In this case, frame them first and then worry about the background.

Move

When taking photos, you have much more control over what you are doing and where you are standing than you do over the subject matter; move until you get the angle that you want.

Be creative

If you are photographing the Eiffel Tower, Big Ben, Mount Rushmore or any other known site, make the photo about something else -- a student's tourist style hat with the Eiffel Tower in the background, or the guard in front of the Houses of Parliament, or students reading a map in front of Mount Rushmore -- then you have a great photo.

Plan your shot

Before taking a photo, if you just take a quick look at your surroundings, and give yourself a second to think about anything interesting that might be happening, you will get a much higher percentage of interesting photos than if you simply pull your camera to your eye and snap without planning what you want to capture.



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