

WEEK 1 Challenge (due date): Self Portrait, 2017. Try to make the picture engaging by, as an example, putting something interesting in the background; tell the viewer visually what you are doing or where you are. If a selfie stick isn't your thing, learn to use your camera's timer function, your camera held at arm's length, a mirror or any other reflective surface.

Tip #1: For selfies, the easiest way to capture a good shot is to face your main source and take it from a higher angle than you would normally be inclined to use. The light will fill in dark spots, highlighting your features and the higher angle will help remove double chins.

WEEK 2 Challenge (due date): Snowscape. 'Tis the time of year; capture a crisp, white, snowy outdoor landscape.

Alternate (if you don't have snow): Fill your picture with white clouds, fog, white linen or even a bright sandy beach... but try not to over expose and remember to have something of interest in the shot.

Tip #2: Many point and shoot (P&S) cameras, SLR auto settings and light metres will often misread and over expose photographs that are predominantly white. Try to get light readings or auto focus on a neutral grey area, use manual settings to lower the exposure or ensure the scene selection (most P&S, smart phones and consumer SLR cameras have this) is set to Beach. Yes, this seems counter intuitive (beach vs snow), but this scene selection will assume bright light and will reduce the exposure so it doesn't blow out all of the texture in a snowy photo.

WEEK 3 Challenge (due date): Technology. Take a picture relating to your techno fetish. This can be anything from a macro shot of a transistor or lightbulb to a complex server room or even your office space filled with personal computers. Use your imagination, but try to use the basic rule of 3rds when composing your shot.

WEEK 4 Challenge (due date): Glass. This could be something to drink from, window reflection or coloured lights as an example.

Tip #3: Light reflection in glass (or any highly reflective surface) can draw the viewers eye by creating unwanted bright spots or refractions. Remove or diffuse direct light sources, unless of course this is your goal.

WEEK 5 Challenge (due date): Shadows. In celebration of Ground Hog Day on Feb 2nd, make the shadows tell the story in this photo.

Tip #4: Concentrating on shape and contrast can help define your subject without revealing the more obvious details. For example- place your subject between the setting sun and your lens for a stunning silhouette.

WEEK 6 Challenge (due date): Public Transportation. Trains, buses and tele porters; what do you prefer? Get out and take a shot of your local public transportation, related facilities or personnel.

WEEK 7 Challenge (due date): The colour red. Fill the photograph with red or play with some photo editing software to have that one red balloon stand out above everything else.

WEEK 8 Challenge (due date): The eyes have it. Make sure to draw the viewers attention to the eye(s) in the photograph. Use techniques like leading lines or rule of thirds and make absolutely certain the eyes are in perfect, tack sharp focus.

Tip #5: Shadows play a big part in how well you capture a subject's eye. If the main light source is behind or above your target (like the sun), deep shadows will often mask the eyes and make them indistinguishable. There are a number of ways to fix this such as using a flash or even having the subject look towards a lighted window.

WEEK 9 Challenge (due date): Outdoor fun. Skating on an outdoor canal or pond, eating a beavertail or building a snowman are all great examples of having fun in the outdoors this time of year.

Tip #6: To make this type of photograph more engaging, include people that are participating and clearly having fun. A viewer is more apt to relate if they can imagine themselves doing exactly what the people in the photograph are doing.

WEEK 10 Challenge (due date): Fruit. Someone eating fruit, fruit on a tree, still life or your cousin Eddy; whatever works for you.

WEEK 11 Challenge (due date): Learning. We can all relate to this topic - pick something that represents learning.

WEEK 12 Challenge (due date): Automotive. Capture a show car or an interesting automobile feature - just make sure it is obvious to the viewer what it is you have photographed.

Tip #7: Showroom photography requires a certain amount of patience. Do not be shy. Move around the subject to get the right lighting and making sure there is nothing distracting in the picture like a dangling purse off to the side.

**<encourage going to a local car show, provide a date and time if applicable>*

WEEK 13 Challenge (due date): Booked. Pick a subject and blur everything out in the background of the picture. This could be a portrait, a macro of a flower or just about anything that you want to keep the viewers attention on in a busy environment.

Tip #8: For those with a good point and shoot or SLR there will be an aperture priority

mode or manual setting that will allow you to set a wide aperture that will create interesting bokeh. Ideally, anything below F/5.6. Optionally, if you only have a scene select function, use the portrait or maybe macro setting on the camera. I would suggest trying a couple different shots.

WEEK 14 Challenge (due date): The colour green. Spring is well on its way - fill the photograph with green grass, leaves or ...well, something green.

WEEK 15 Challenge (due date): Simple portrait. No special lighting or studio props - just take a picture of someone that is happy to have their picture taken. Outdoors, indoors, it does not matter. What will make it easier is if the subject is holding or doing something they enjoy.

WEEK 16 Challenge (due date): Something that makes you happy. Throw out the same ol'... and capture something unique that really puts a smile on your face.

WEEK 17 Challenge (due date): Tell a secret. I am not going to give examples here - you decide on how this should work.

WEEK 18 Challenge (due date): Small is beautiful. Try your hand at macro/micro photography. Zoom in on a bug's eye, a flower, a shop tool or your big toe (gross, but you see where I am going here). Show off the details and imperfections in all the micro glory.

Tip #9: Ninty degree side lighting of your subject will help define texture and make the smallest of details pop out from your subject.

WEEK 19 Challenge (due date): Wildlife. Not everyone can get out and take shots of beaver herds or walrus parties, but you are sure to grab a good shot at a local animal refuge or even birds in your own backyard.

Tip #10: Birds are easiest to take pictures of in the late fall or early spring when the leaves are gone. Spend some time near a bird feeder or close to water and you are sure to get some good shots.

WEEK 20 Challenge (due date): In motion. Capture a moving object and be sure that the subject clearly looks to be moving.

Tip #11: Motion can be captured by having the subject or parts of the subject blurred - do not be afraid to use a slower shutter or setting your scene selector to portrait. A little harder to explain in words, but another option is to take your shot while swinging your camera with the subject - this should put your main subject into relatively good focus while blurring the background in an opposing direction of your subjects movement. One more means to capture movement and still have everything in crisp focus is to have your subject very obviously moving - ie. jumping in the air with nothing but sky under their feet.

WEEK 21 Challenge (due date): Historical. Take a picture that tells a story about history. This could be architecture, a rusty tractor, a monument or an ancient tree. Be creative, but make sure the viewer will understand the subject is without having to explain it.

WEEK 22 Challenge (due date): Stranger danger. Take a picture of a stranger - earn more points by asking permission and having them smile for you.

WEEK 23 Challenge (due date): Urban architecture. Go somewhere in a city that is not normally in your nature to go and take a picture of the local architecture. This could be a house, an alleyway, an abandoned building or a construction site to name a few options. Make a day of it.

WEEK 24 Challenge (due date): Hands. Know anyone that is cut out to be a hand fashion model? If not, that's ok. Try to get a hand holding something or maybe giving a thumbs up... take a picture of a hand or hands in action.

WEEK 25 Challenge (due date): Something mechanical. Gears, chains, levers, belts or construction machinery. The options are endless. For bonus points, capture a construction vehicle using HDR at sunset.

Tip#12: HDR affects can be digitally rendered with software on a single picture, but not always with ideal results. Some point and shoot cameras have this as an option built in, but is best managed using an SLR and photo editing software. Do some research based on the type of camera you have and you will find a variety of methods to get through this challenge.

WEEK 26 Challenge (due date): Canada, eh. What pictures did you capture on Canada Day?

WEEK 27 Challenge (due date): USA. Not to be left out, let's see some red, white and blue.

WEEK 28 Challenge (due date): Fireworks. In the last few days or months you likely have had an opportunity to see fireworks, hopefully you got a good picture. If not, buy a sparkler and have someone wave it around outside in the dark. There are other options for this - be creative.

Tip#13: Many point and shoot cameras have a fireworks scene selection that will work well. Portrait setting will give you a longer shutter time to get some interesting blur if this is what you are going for. SLR photographers have a range of things they can try from capturing crisp fireworks' light using a high ISO to blurring burning wooden brands whizzing around someone's head.

WEEK 29 Challenge (due date): City skyline at night. This can be done up close or from

a distance, but you will need a tripod or a very steady surface to setup your camera for a timed shot.

WEEK 30 Challenge (due date): Nature trail photo. Take a hike on one of the many trails in your area and capture the experience. Try to choose a trail or conservation area that you have never been to before (or haven't been to in a long time).

WEEK 31 Challenge (due date): The summer experience. Nothing says summer like a dock and a cold drink for many people. What defines your summer?

WEEK 32 Challenge (due date): The colour yellow. Make yellow grab the viewer's attention like red never could.

WEEK 33 Challenge (due date): Waterscape. Snap a pic of a great water backdrop. Ocean, lake or stream - make the colours and wonder of being there come out in your photograph.

WEEK 34 Challenge (due date): Waterfalls. You have had an entire summer of opportunities for this shot. This outdoor shot is a challenge for sure - try to get a picture of falls that doesn't look like all the other pictures of waterfalls.

Tip#14: To blur water and make it all fluffy use a long exposure. You will need a tripod and either a timer or remote shutter release. With an SLR you can adjust the manual settings accordingly or use a neutral density filter to reduce sunlight and allow for that long exposure. With a point and shoot you may have to take the shot just before sunrise or wait until just after sunset so your camera automatically reduces the shutter speed.

WEEK 35 Challenge (due date): Outdoor venue. Have you been to a concert or maybe a sporting event - try to capture the spirit of the event, including the crowds, in this shot.

WEEK 36 Challenge (due date): Farmer's market. Heaps of fresh produce and farmer's markets are found a-plenty this time of year. Try to get something with lots of colour and don't be shy about asking permission for the vendor to pose for you.

WEEK 37 Challenge (due date): Landscape. If farm fields are your thing or maybe rocky shores, mountains or trees - make sure the picture says, "Wow! I want to go there."

Tip#15: Landscape pictures are a dime a dozen; to make one pop you really need to spend time with rule of 3rds and in most cases lighting. Lighting for landscapes usually means time of day - early morning and you can get still wind and fog over most water bodies; sunset or sunrise will give you that stunning orange hue over many 'scapes. Mid day will often give you blue or green, clear water which is great for sandy beaches and rocky shorelines.

WEEK 38 Challenge (due date): Expose the night. Take a long exposure of a street scene

or maybe a camp site at night.

WEEK 39 Challenge (due date): Frame your subject. Put at least two sides of a window frame, as an example, in your shot and capture the scene on the other side.

Tip #16: Physically framing your subject is an easy way to manage the viewer's attention. It can also be done using a doorway, trees or any two perceived lines. To add interest, try this challenge while it is raining outside, look for something unique about the frame or try shooting in from outside.

WEEK 40 Challenge (due date): Minimalist. Place your subject in a large open area - like a horse running across a large open field of grass or a spider on a sheet of white paper.

Tip #17: Make sure to control your focus. Make the subject crisp and ensure there is nothing distracting in the foreground or background. Always centre your focus on the subjects eyes (assuming there are eyes to focus on).

WEEK 41 Challenge (due date): Family. Capture another family member or several.

WEEK 42 Challenge (due date): Fall colours. You have had a few weeks to capture something for this shot. Make sure it visually defines the season.

WEEK 43 Challenge (due date): Art appreciation. Go to a local gallery or visit an artsy friend and demonstrate your love of art. Collaborating with another photographer would be a good idea as well.

WEEK 44 Challenge (due date): Liquid courage. Take a picture of a fancy drink. Aside from just putting a swizzle stick in the drink, one can also apply coloured lights, reflective and transparent surfaces to make the drink stand out. Surf the web - there are lots of great examples out there.

WEEK 45 Challenge (due date): Rembrandt portrait. You have taken 44 challenge pictures and have likely learned new things about your camera and how to apply light to your subject. Use dramatic ninety degree lighting in this photograph.

Tip#18: It is easy to setup Rembrandt lighting - use a sharp ninety degree side light. This can be generated with the use of sun streaming through a window (shutter all but the one window), a remote triggered flash, a studio light or even a flashlight or lamp if you are creative. Use some fill light from another room if there is too much contrast. Be careful though - not all subjects do well with this type of lighting and can sometimes be unflattering. It accentuates lines - wrinkles, muscles, double chins, etc. Think of that before choosing your subject.

WEEK 46 Challenge (due date): Headless portrait. Take an action shot without including the subjects face.

WEEK 47 Challenge (due date): Bird's eye view. Doubtful you will manage to get a camera strapped to a bird, but you can take a shot from the top of a building or viewing platform.

WEEK 48 Challenge (due date): Late season natureescape. Leafless trees or farm fields harvested of all their produce makes for a challenging shot. Try to demonstrate the starkness of the upcoming winter season.

WEEK 49 Challenge (due date): Use a foreground. Concentrate on your distant subject while placing a foreground in the picture frame. The trick is to not have the foreground distract from your subject.

WEEK 50 Challenge (due date): Illustrate a song. Hopefully you have had plenty of time to think about this one.

WEEK 51 Challenge (due date): Black and white. Your choice of subject, but try to capture deep contrast in your image to help focus the viewer's attention.

WEEK 52 Challenge (due date): Year end, holiday celebration picture. This could be action shots around the Christmas tree, a family portrait of sorts or you enjoying your new camera.