

Digital Media Photo Assignments

You must submit 20 different assignments photos for your portfolio

ACTION SHOTS (ASSIGNMENT #1) Mandatory

(You need to submit TWO different action shots in your portfolio)

There are three different types of action shots you can take. They are Freeze, Blurred, and a Panned shot.

FREEZE SHOT- When freezing an object, remember that the faster the object is moving, the faster your shutter speed must be. If depth of field is of no concern, then use the fastest shutter speed you have on your camera—this will typically give you a shallow depth of field. If you want a greater depth of field then you will have to experiment with your shutter speed and aperture and bracket the shot. Get in close and eliminate all distractions both in the foreground and in the background.

BLURRED SHOT- One of the important things to remember here is that typically the entire object shouldn't be blurred. In other words, if a guy is running, his legs and possibly his arms could be blurred while the rest of the subject is in focus and relatively clear. This is not always the case, but it is a good place to start. Again, it is imperative that you bracket your shots. Crop out all unnecessary elements that may distract from the photograph and get in close. Be creative; try different subjects or objects. Remember that whatever you choose for your subject doesn't have to move fast for a blurred shot.

PANNED SHOT- In order to get a good panned shot you must remember to pivot at the waist and follow your subject as you depress the shutter release button. This is necessary to get a

good image of the subject and not a bunch of blur. Shutter speed will depend upon the speed of the subject. The faster the subject is moving the faster the shutter speed must be. However, a Tv of 30 or 60 is usually a good place to start. Try to get it so the subject is relatively clear, while at the same time keeping the background blurred.

ANIMAL(S) (ASSIGNMENT #2)

Tell a story. Get in close—If safe—and let the animal's character come out. Don't worry if you don't have a zebra in your backyard. A cow, gerbil, horse, pig, dog, cat, brother, or any other animal will do. If you take your shot outside you may want the morning or late afternoon sun. Be patient. If you wait long enough something will happen and you'll get the shot you want. Try to avoid as much distracting background and foreground as possible. Think of this picture as a portrait of the animal. Don't just take a snapshot, but take a photograph that says something about the animal, its environment, etc.

ARCHITECTURE (ASSIGNMENT #3)

This assignment is similar to the Landscape/Water assignment (#12). However, this shot must have some type of manufactured structure or part of a structure in it. As before, walk around and get in close. Don't settle for the first shot. How does the structure relate to its surroundings? Take different shots at different angles and camera settings. Experiment.

BICYCLE /MOTORCYCLE (ASSIGNMENT #4)

The main subject in this assignment must be a bicycle or motorbike. Not necessarily the entire bike. The main subject could be the seat, wheel, pedal or chain. Or maybe it could be a group of bikes. The bikes could be new, or they could be in a junkyard. Change your point of view, the lighting if possible, and look for reflections and shadows. Above all, compose your photograph and use an appropriate depth of field.

BREAD/BREAD SLICES (ASSIGNMENT #5)

This assignment is an exercise in composition. Chances are, you won't just find the perfect bread arrangement, but will have to make your own. Try different backgrounds and lighting sources. You may want to take the picture outside in sunlight or inside with very controlled light. The shot can have things other than bread in it, but the main object should be bread. Experiment: you can use white bread, brown bread, pita bread, sour dough bread, French bread, sliced bread, whole loaves, or whatever. Be creative and don't settle for the first shot that comes to mind.

CHILDREN/PLAYGROUND (ASSIGNMENT #6)

Have fun with this one. Kids are a laugh a minute. Try to get them in their natural state. If you must have them pose, don't have them doing things that aren't normal for children. Keep in mind that your shot doesn't have to have children in it. It could be a shot of a swing or a slide, or other playground equipment. Look around and take different shots. Watch out for distracting backgrounds and foregrounds. If taking a picture without children in it, pay special attention to the composition of the elements in the photograph.

CIRCLES OR OVALS (ASSIGNMENT #7)

Your assignment this time is to shoot only circles or ovals. If there are any other shapes or objects in the picture they should be secondary. When shooting circles and ovals keep in mind that they are everywhere, but you must look for them. Experiment with arranging your own shots using things around the house or farm. Don't be happy with the first arrangement you find or make; try some shots of several different arrangements. Again, it is often best to shoot in the sunlight. Remember to get in close and crop out the distracting foreground and background. Remember to use dynamics when composing your photograph.

DETAIL PORTRAIT (ASSIGNMENT #8)

The major difference between this assignment and the Portrait assignment is that in this assignment you do not include the subject's face. You can include a portion of their face if you want, but do not include it all. Find a detail that will say something about the person and crop in on it. The portion of the person that is showing should tell something about the person. Don't just take a portrait with a person's head cut off.

ELDERLY PEOPLE (ASSIGNMENT #9)

Elderly people have a life's worth of experiences that can show through in their expressions, skin, etc. As you take this photograph, make an effort to capture the subject's feelings, thoughts and passions. Experiment with different lighting and props. Often side lighting works best because it shows the texture of their skin and highlights their features. Get in close and avoid as much unnecessary background and foreground as possible. Avoid obviously posed shots that detract from the expressions of the person. You don't have to have the person's entire body or face in the shot. Experiment, and try to get the

subject relaxed and natural. If possible, it is a good idea to get permission of the individual before taking their photograph. Whatever you do, DON'T just walk up to your grandma and snap off a couple of shots as she's watching TV. Compose the photograph. Take your time and put some effort into it.

FEET (ASSIGNMENT #10)

Get in close. The feet can have shoes on or off. Try your own feet, someone else's, a group of feet, footprints in the sand, mud or snow, animal feet, etc. Shoot the photo from up high, down on the ground, or from the side. In other words, try different point of views. Try different lighting conditions. Use natural light or artificial light.

HANDS (ASSIGNMENT #11)

Hands talk. They may not speak verbally, but they can tell a lot about an individual just in the way they look. Are they rough, callused, clean, aged, young? Try to get in close and exclude all that's not necessary. Have the hands tell us something about the person. They can be doing something or just resting in a lap. Avoid obviously posed pictures and pictures with distracting backgrounds.

LANDSCAPE/WATERSCAPE (#12)

The environment around us sometimes goes unnoticed. People tend to look at human accomplishments rather than nature's. This assignment will force you to look at nature and NATURE ONLY. Avoid buildings, cars, etc., in your shot. Be careful when positioning the horizon—If you have one. Avoid positioning the horizon in the centre of the photograph. Remember the 1/3 2/3 Rule (Rule of Thirds). Keep the horizon in its natural position. In addition, remember that a blue, cloudless sky will usually appear "white" when you change the picture to black and white. To avoid this, try and take your picture when there are some interesting clouds in the sky. If you are including water in your shot, or if your shot is all water, look for reflections, or things of interest that

will keep the viewer's eye in your photo. In addition, you usually need to overexpose your shot if there is light reflecting off the water. Be creative and look around.

LITTER/TRASH (ASSIGNMENT #13)

Look around. Don't take a cluttered picture; look for some litter with interest. The litter doesn't have to be in a pile or a trash can. It can be in the gutter, a car, the school, the store or anywhere. It can be a single item or a bunch of stuff, a bag or a can. Composition is important in this assignment to ensure interest. Remember to have a main emphasis and not a cluttered picture full of garbage. As with most of your assignments, sunlight is the best source of light. Look for litter that tells a story. It may be in conflict with its surroundings such as a cigarette pack in a rose bush or in harmony with its surroundings, such as a pop can inside a recycling container.

NATURE (ASSIGNMENT #14)

This assignment is very similar to the landscape assignment (#12). However, the nature assignment allows you to have a bit more flexibility. Your photo might be of a flower, a tree, a bush, group of wild flowers, etc.

NIGHT SHOT AND/OR SILHOUETTE (#15)

For your night shot try different things. Take a shot of a sunset, sunrise, during a lightning storm, try a silhouette, use a flash outside, try a regular setting on your camera or use the bulb setting and experiment. Remember to always use a tripod or set your camera on some solid object when using a shutter speed setting less than 60 (30). You may find that when you use the bulb setting on your camera and keep the shutter open for a few seconds or a minute that your Av (f/stop) may have to be closed down to a setting of 22 in order to prevent overexposure. (This would be true for lightening shots, etc.

AN OBJECT AND/OR SHADOW (#16)

When composing this photograph, keep in mind that neither the entire object nor the entire shadow has to be in the photo. Parts of either are acceptable. However, you should also keep in mind that a person looking at the photo shouldn't be left guessing what it is a photo of. In other words either the object or the shadow should be somewhat identifiable. To get the best shadows this shot should be taken either in the morning or in the late afternoon. Try different points of views. Get down low, up high, walk around and find out where the best shadows are.

OLD THINGS (ASSIGNMENT #17)

This is a very broad area, so use it to your advantage. Don't just look for something old; look for things with character, things that have been exposed to the elements of nature, objects with shadows or contrasting light patterns, anything that catches your eye. This isn't an assignment in just photographing old cars and junkyards, although that might do. This is an assignment to use your imagination and your eyes, and look for, or create, a visually pleasing photograph. Get in close and crop out all unwanted and unnecessary elements.

PATTERN (ASSIGNMENT #18)

Try and fill the frame—if possible—with the pattern, and have nothing else but the pattern in the photograph. Remember, there are four different types of lines; vertical, horizontal, oblique, and s-shaped. Use as many different lines as you want or just use one, but make sure you have an interesting pattern. Remember the basic rules of composition, and follow these rules as possible. Don't forget your main subject or emphasis. You will usually get the best result if you shoot outside in the sunlight.

PORTRAIT (ASSIGNMENT #19)

For this assignment you can shoot either indoors or outdoors. When shooting indoors, be sure to have adequate lighting. Try variations with the lighting. Try side-lighting, backlighting, low-lighting with shadows, or direct lighting. If

you choose to shoot outside, avoid having the person face directly into the sun. Direct lighting from the sun causes the person to squint, washes out detail and is harsh. You may want to shoot the photograph with a small Av of 1.8 or 2 to ensure that the background is blurred and does not interfere with the portrait. Get in close to your subject and crop out anything that is unnecessary or distracting. Avoid including too much of the subject in the photograph; try photographing their head and shoulders only.

PRODUCE/FOOD (ASSIGNMENT #20)

Your assignment is to photograph food/produce. It could be in the grocery store, on a cutting board, in a pot on the stove, on the dinner table, in the garden, at a restaurant or open food market. It could be cooked or raw or anywhere in between. The important thing is that the photograph is centered on the food. Use light and shadows to enhance the food. You should always ask for permission when shooting inside a private business or store.

REFLECTION (ASSIGNMENT #21)

Look for how a reflection intertwines or isolates itself from its surroundings. The reflection could be from a lake, a mirror, car mirror, store window, office tower, sunglasses, hubcap, puddle, or a hundred other objects. Be creative. Don't take a reflection shot of nothing. There must be a main subject, something that will keep an observers attention. Use dynamics and positioning to add interest to your photograph. Avoid a cluttered photograph. Keep it clean, clear, and composed.

SIGNS AND/OR SYMBOLS (#22)

Be different. Be innovative. This photograph shouldn't be a SNAPSHOT of a sign, but it must have a sign or symbol in it. The sign or symbol should obviously be the main subject. Try different lighting techniques—fill flash, silhouette. Remember that symbols such as tulips, crocus, thumbs-up, etc. can be used as well.

STILL LIFE (ASSIGNMENT #23)

This is an exercise in the composition of a variety of INANIMATE OBJECTS. Inanimate objects are non-living things such as fruit, flowers, etc. You must arrange the objects. It is imperative that you choose your background and foreground carefully. A shallow depth of field is often desirable to isolate the composition from the background and foreground. Use a low Av (f/stop). Play with the lighting and shadows to create the desired mood. Keep it simple and uncluttered. Watch the negative space.

TEXTURE (ASSIGNMENT #24)

This assignment requires you to photograph objects with texture. A good place to start looking is in nature. Look for as many different types of surfaces as you can find. As you look for your perfect texture shot, keep in mind that the textured shots can be in the gutter, on the road, in a bush, up high, down low, or anywhere else. Since light makes a big difference when shooting texture, it is best to shoot when the sun is low—or at an angle—to the object. Keep in close and use the negative space wisely.

VEHICLE HUB- GRILL- BUMPER... (#25)

The restriction in this assignment is that the photograph CANNOT contain the entire vehicle. Get in close and fill the frame with some detail of the vehicle. Look for different shapes and patterns, shadows and reflections, and try to combine these patterns into an interesting photograph. Don't take a picture of an entire wheel, for example, but rather, get in close and focus on some detail or combine the wheel with a fender to give the picture interest. Look for things like rust, mud, water droplets, icicles, reflections, etc.

Yearbook Assignment

Take a photo of a significant school event. It might be a sporting event or a school celebration or even a mundane event like hot lunch. The key is to capture an interesting moment that depicts life at OLA. It still needs to be a well composed and properly exposed photograph.

STUDENT CHOICE—FREEBIE (#26)

This assignment is here because there always seems to be an awesome photo that just doesn't quite fit into one of the assignments. So have fun, and be creative.