



7 TIPS TO INSTA AWESOME PIX

LEARN HOW TO CAPTURE BEAUTIFUL
& CONSISTENT PHOTOS FOR INSTAGRAM

A GUIDE BY:

CAMERAS + CUPCAKES
WWW.CAMERASANDCUPCAKES.COM

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN



Instagram can be a highly-targeted, visual advertising channel for your brand & the best way to up your game is to curate your feed, posting less while sharing high quality images.

This means being picky about what you are posting & selecting only the photos that tell your brand's story.

Sounds great, except; your photos look nothing like the ones you love on social media, you can't figure out how to make them look pretty & you can't hire a photographer to take every single photo! Well, let me help...

THIS GUIDE WILL SHOW YOU HOW TO:

- Have a consistent look & feel in all your photos whether it's the product you are selling, the recipes you are passionately cooking or the books you are reading.
- Take bright & bold pictures.
- Compose beautiful images that tell your brand's story with your phone or camera.



HELLO

NICE TO MEET YOU

Before we dive in, I'd like to quickly introduce myself!

My name is Maha, a colour obsessed cupcake lover and a Toronto based "Food & Lifestyle" Photographer passionate about finding Joy in the everyday, capturing it & then spreading it around, one click at a time!

When I first started taking photos I was extremely frustrated because what I was seeing, was completely different than what my camera was capturing! Today, I am on a mission helping others create the beautiful photos they have always imagined.

I believe you've got what it takes & I want to help you get there!

FEW OF MY FAVOURITE THINGS



CAMERAS



CUPCAKES



COFFEE

LET'S GET STARTED

TIP #1 - LIGHTING

Lighting is key, it is important to have good lighting, like any form of photography, no amount of filtering or app-editing will save a photo that's blown out, over exposed or poorly lit.

Whenever possible, shoot in natural light, but not direct sunlight. Walk around your house & take few test shots to help you decide where the best lighting is. I have a north facing window and it's perfect for most of my photo needs.

If shadows are a big issue for you, shoot on a cloudy day. It's like having a huge softbox which helps diffuse the shadows and create fewer of them!



In this photo, the window is to my left side & I have used white foam board to fill in the shadows from the right side.

TIP #2 - COMPOSITION

Second to lighting, composition can easily elevate your photos by following some simple rules!
Composition refers to the way the different elements are arranged within the frame

Two great starting points are:

1. Rule of Thirds



When shooting with your phone or DSLR, turn the grid on to aid your composition & align your photos properly

2. Rule of Odds



TIP #2 - COMPOSITION

Rule of Thirds

The rule of thirds is pretty simple.

You divide the frame into 9 equal rectangles/squares, 3 across and 3 down. Most camera & Phone manufacturers have included the capability to turn this grid on while shooting.

The idea is to place the most important element(s) of the scene along one or more of the lines or where the lines intersect. This is your main focus and what you want viewers to notice first.



TIP #2 - COMPOSITION



Rule of Odds

The Rule of Odds states that images are more visually pleasing when there is an odd number of subjects. The theory proposes that an even number of elements in a scene is distracting as the viewer is not sure which one to focus his/her attention on.

An odd number of elements is seen as more natural and easier on the eye!

TIP #3 - BACKGROUNDS



Negative (Empty) space, oftentimes referred to as white space, is a concept that's been used in art, design & architecture for many years. It's equally useful in photography, and can be used to turn an average photo into a great one. The white space will bring chicness to your Instagram feed & make it look less busy and cluttered.

This can be easily achieved using simple white backgrounds for your photos, be it a white table, a table cloth, wrapping paper or even plain foam board that you can find at the dollar store!

That being said, don't be afraid of breaking the rules every once in a while by placing a white object on top of a busy background which adds interest & variety to your feed.

TIP #4 - STORYTELLING

Every story has a hero or a main subject, and every photo you take should tell a story; your story, your brand or the product you are trying to sell.

Like any good story there is a beginning, middle & end, and while not every post will be part of a mini series, taking your followers on a journey with you revealing bits & pieces of an exciting event be it a product launch, an impromptu trip or a family weekend is always interesting and engaging; for instance, this is part of a series taken on a Strawberry picking trip starting at the farm & ending on the kitchen table.



For Instagram purposes, think of your story in three, six or nine photos

TIP #5 - PROPS

Experiment with different props and observe the way they enrich your story

You've heard it over and over again, a visually pleasing Instagram feed is one that has a consistent look and feel which you totally agree with but not sure how to achieve! One way to do that, is with your props; but wait, what do you mean by props?

Photo props are the items beside your main subject that add to the story and dimension of the photo. For example, plants, spoons, plates, napkins...etc. Think of them as an accessory complementing the main subject of your photo.



Selecting props that match your brand's colour palette and mood will help you achieve a consistent look & get people to recognize your photos right away, this is not to be confused by using the exact same props in every picture, but more like using different combinations of props with a specific colour and texture throughout your feed.

TIP #6 - FRAMING

(when in doubt, shoot overhead)

If you are just starting out, shooting overhead photos or flatlays is a great place to start especially if you are only using your phone and not a DSLR. Flatlays are very popular on Instagram & frequently used by businesses featuring their products, foodies showing off their recipes & lifestyle bloggers showcasing their latest finds.

Flatlays are simple, chic and a creative way to display many objects at once.



TIP #7 – BREAK THE RULES

There are no hard rules in composition, and while it certainly helps to know the tips in this guide, you should always trust your gut! So don't be afraid to think outside the box, have fun & break some rules when it feels right to you.



LET'S RECAP

1. **Lighting:** Lighting is key, it is important to have good lighting, like any form of photography, no amount of filtering or app-editing will save a photo that's blown out, over exposed or poorly lit.
2. **Composition:** Second to lighting, composition can easily elevate your photos by following some simple rules! Composition refers to the way the different elements are arranged within the frame
Two great starting points are:
1) Rule of Thirds **2) Rule of Odds**
3. **Backgrounds:** Negative (Empty) space, oftentimes referred to as white space, is a concept that's been used in art, design & architecture for many years. It's equally useful in photography, and can be used to turn an average photo into a great one.
4. **Storytelling :** Every story has a hero or a main subject, and every photo you take should tell a story, the story of you, your brand or the product you are trying to sell. Taking your followers on a journey revealing bits & pieces of an exciting event be it a product launch or an impromptu trip is always interesting and engaging.
5. **Props:** Experiment with different objects and observe the way they enrich what your photo is trying to convey.
6. **Framing** (when in doubt, shoot overhead)
7. **Break the rules:** There are no hard rules in composition, and while it certainly helps to know the tips in this guide, you should always trust your gut! So don't be afraid to think outside the box, have fun & break some rules when it feels right.

NOW IT'S YOUR TURN!



Taking better Instagram photos means practicing all the time. Simply knowing these tips will not get you to where you want to without going out there, taking pictures, experimenting, playing around and having fun with your phone or camera!

So here is a little challenge for you:

1. Experiment with these tips & take as many pictures as you like, feel free to get creative and break some rules ;)
2. Post your favourite picture on Instagram
3. Use **#instaawesomepix** and tag **@camerasncupcakes** by letting me know what worked and/or what didn't work!
4. I'll be checking all the photos and giving feedback :)

I hope this guide inspires you to pick up your phone or camera, try something new & surprise yourself!

If you have any feedback or comments find me on [Instagram](#) or [Facebook](#), I'd love to connect & keep an eye on **"The Photo Lounge"** for weekly updates & free resources ♡📷