

Macro Photography

In this lesson, we'll be taking a look at
Macro Photography.



If you see a magnifying glass at the bottom right corner of a photo, click on that photo to make it full screen.

Macro Photography

Macro photography is the art of getting close - really close - to your subject.

Phone cameras are actually quite good at macro shots - if you follow a few simple rules. You'll be able to get shots just a few centimetres away from the subject.

In this lesson, we'll look at some tips to help you get better close-up shots. Many of the examples and tips strictly speaking are not true macro - but we are using this term a little loosely to describe close up photography.



Macro Photography

First thing to determine - how close can you get? You can only get so close to a subject and keep it in focus. And that's essentially how you can tell - if it's in focus, great!

To work out what this is, you may need to move in close, and try and get a focus. If you can focus, move in a little closer and try again. If you can't, move out and try again. In both cases, you'll soon see just how close you can get.



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Ideally, for macro photography, you'd be using a tripod. When taking macro shots, the depth of field is very small - which means it will only focus on one narrow part of the subject. And if the camera moves at all, you are likely to lose the focus you are after. Phone cameras aren't really designed for tripods, but they are available.



Macro Photography



The narrow depth of field when taking macro shots is well illustrated here.

Macro Photography



Natural outdoor lighting was used in this case. We were lucky - there was no wind.

Macro Photography

Generally, macro photography will give you a small depth of field. This means that ANY movement in the camera, or the subject, may well result in blurred photos, or the wrong area in focus.

Tripods, of course, and fast shutter speeds will help reduce this. Picking a time where there is no wind will also help.



Macro Photography



Close-up of a coin.

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Macro Photography

For best results, you are probably going to have to do all your close-up photography indoors. This allows you to stop movement due to wind (wind can make macro shots impossible for some subjects), but also allows you to control the light a lot more.



This shot was taken indoors...no wind, and we control the lighting.

Macro Photography

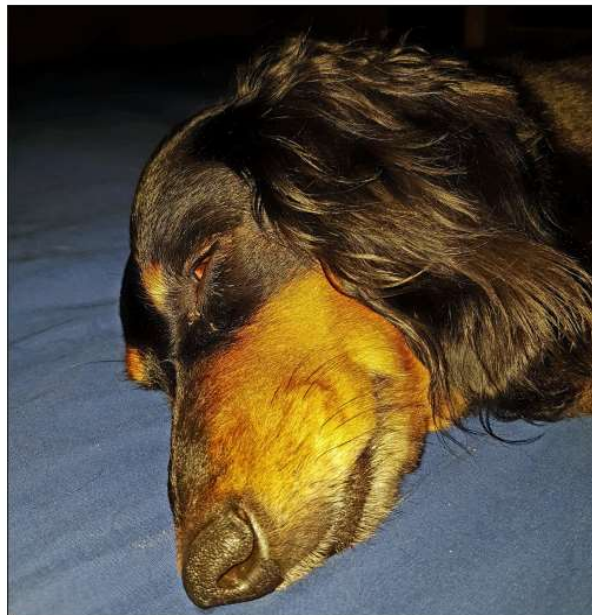
There are a couple of tricks phone cameras have up their sleeves to ensure a photo is taken with little movement.

Firstly, many phone camera software tools allow voice activation. This means you can say something like 'shoot' - and the photo is taken. It means you don't have to move your hands, and risk camera movement.



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Another trick is to use the camera timer - set it for five or ten seconds, hold the camera as still as possible, and once again, you don't have to move at all to take the photo.



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When photographing insects or other animals close up, remember that the focal point should be the eye. You must make sure the eye is in focus.

Because this can be such a subtle thing, once you've taken the photo, take a look at the photo - closely - in the camera. Zoom in on the photo in the camera.



On the left, we didn't quite get the eye in focus. We got it right, on the right.

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Focus on the eye...

Macro Photography

Another way to get a good macro shot - especially if your camera does not support macro photography - is to crop an image judiciously.



This was really a macro shot - in fact, it was taken from a few feet away. But by cropping, we can create the macro effect.

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On the left - the original shot - on the right, the new 'macro' shot.

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You can also purchase third party lenses that can attach to your phone - and a macro lens is one that is available, allowing you to get much closer than is possible with your phone itself.



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And here's a tip - the small lens on smart phones makes it easier to pop it in front of a microscope, telescope, or magnifying glass. On the following pages, you'll see how close we were able to get, simply by hold the magnifying glass below in front of the camera lens.



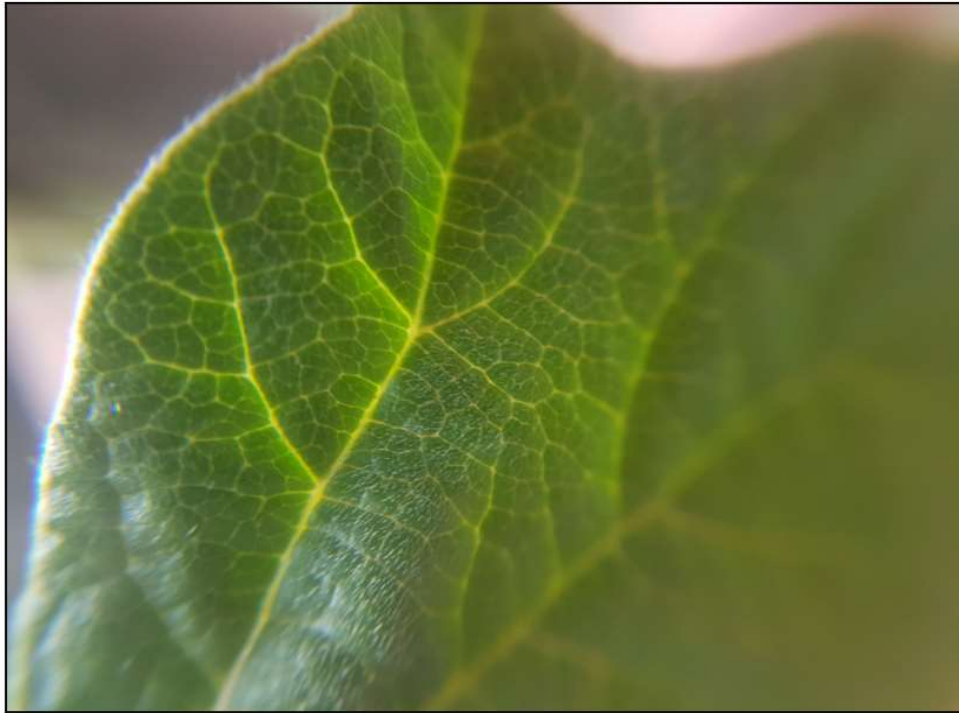
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You've now completed this lesson.

In this lesson, we took a look at **Macro Photography**.

