



I N S P I R A T I O N A P H Y

# Fantastic Still Life Photography Ideas To Inspire You



Bogdan Sandu |

🕒 15 min

Advertisement

**Still life photography** is the depiction of inanimate subject matter, most typically a small grouping of objects.

Still life photography, more so than other types of photography, such as landscape or portraiture, gives the photographer more leeway in the arrangement of design elements within a composition.

Still life photography is a part of the still life painting. It came out as a different category and it has become a professional specialization in the western painting over the 16th century.

Typical subjects for taking a still life photo incorporate natural objects such as food, flowers, rocks, plants, and so forth, or man-made items like glasses, tools, shoes, and so forth.

Tabletop photography is a section of still life photography which concentrates on capturing objects that can be put on a table. The most typical photographic themes of this style are product photography and food photography, i.e. capturing an item for commercial causes.

All the photos that you can find on e-commerce sites, or in newspaper advertisements and magazines, can be labeled as product photos.



**Click to download a PDF with 100 free fonts to help you create better designs.**

## **Learn from Still Life Compositions and Tabletop Photography**

Maybe you are not that interested in commercial photography, but you can still learn so much of still life photography.

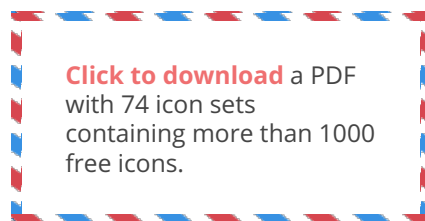
In case that you are interested in portrait, still life photography may help you to make better your lighting routine by taking advantage of the subject that doesn't get annoyed of waiting for you to complete your experimenting.

In case that you are a landscape artist, you can upgrade your production abilities and creativity by working and examining a still life setup, without bothering about a variation in weather or light.

You are ready to recognize how the diverse sorts of light will transform the scene. Are you informed that a light from a low light source is excellent to expose textures?

With still life photography, you are completely in control of all single looks of your photo. From framing the scene to firing the shade, it is all on you!

Notwithstanding the *commercial* type of tabletop photography, you are not restricted to shoot in the same way. You can, in any event, produce a delightful story.



## **Things You Need for Beginning with Your Still Life Pictures**

You can believe that your equipment is not very suitable to try still life photography.

Perhaps you are thinking you need some studio equipment like macro lenses, shift lenses and tilt, flashguns, continuous studio lights, triggers or light modifiers. Or maybe you are worried because you don't have a studio where you can start your projects.

Even if a professional can require a proper set-up and fancy equipment, you can always take astonishing still life photos with reasonably fundamental equipment, right in the corner of your front room.

Still life photography helps you to observe your subjects artistically.

Keep your expenses low by becoming creative and working DIY solutions and accessories as to make the shot that you desire.

Beneath, I have presented small lists of equipment and materials that I recommend you to start crafting your still life photography ideas.

Advertisement

### **Needed Equipment:**

- Any sort of camera; a digital camera would be better since it is more economical to buy and you may have an instant feedback, still nothing stops you from working with your film camera.
- Various elements as to form the floor and background for the scene.
- Small white and silver reflectors to leap the light back into the scene. Those can be quickly built using

cardboard and tinfoil.

- Visit a flea shop or look throughout your home for some cheap, interesting props to improve the scene.

### **Suggested Equipment:**

- One or more flashguns. Preferably, it can be utilized in standard mode and contain adjustable control. I work with a Metz 48 AF-1 digital. Additionally, you will need a fairly long E-TTL cord or wireless triggers as to put the flash off-camera.
- A softbox for the flashgun. I work with a Lastolite Ezybox Speedlite 22×22 cm, a wonderful, compact, and reasonably priced softbox.
- One or two tripods. The second tripod may be important if you need to support your flashgun rather than making that handheld.
- A fast normal and a telephoto lens. Preferably, a macro lens is needed, yet you can achieve that with a kit of close up lenses. As I don't have a macro lens, I normally work with a +2 – +3 close-up lens as to decrease the minimal center range of my lenses. Also, some old, manual lenses can be pretty useful and they are normally more economical.

### **Think Outside the Box**

What you photographs are about it is entirely up to you.

Research your house to see if you may discover anything simple but

attractive as to start with. You don't have to feel like you need to capture photos of flowers or fruits only because everybody else seems to do that. Think outside the box but don't be too ambitious.

If something catches your eyes when you are walking outside, take it with you or make a reminder of it as you can remember to photograph it as a still life setting.

Attempt to avoid contemplative surfaces like metal and glass and to begin with, because they will be remarkably difficult to work with regards to the lighting. When you master the single object shots, attempt to combine it up, mix things of contrasting color, shape, texture and examine what you can combine as to work with.

## **Still Life Photography Lighting**

Pro photographers normally are using a light box or a softbox for shooting their still life themes.

Albeit softboxes may help you out a lot, they aren't yet completely essential to get great results. Still, in case that you do desire one, you may get a softbox online or you may quickly make one following the instructions that you will find online. The idea of these light tools is to give equal light to the object.

You can likewise make a great quality of light by making your photo shoot outward. A high cloudy or bright sky can also produce a natural softbox outcome

without having some of the disturbing shadows.

## **Still Life Photography Tips about the Light and Lighting**

The lighting, while you shoot still photography themes, doesn't need to be very expensive.

If a set of studio lights aren't actually within your budget, you can use all the light that you can for your still life shoots and that usually means to use the sunlight.

You already know that you have full power over your shoot, therefore if you desire, find a place in which you may block out all the sunlight by utilizing curtains or shutters. In this way, you will have total control over the light upon your shooting object.

Using regular table lights can work remarkably well if you use them productively. Don't hesitate to try various positioning setups. Not all light must come from the front of the shooting object, so using some back and side lighting will add shadows, interest, and intensity to the shot.

Or instead of this, you can pick a room that is well illuminated by a window, and utilize this for your photo shoot. The sunlight from one side will totally light your shooting subject and you can complete this with a reflector or lamp.

## **Work on the Angles**

Contingent on the lighting situation, you shall or shall not need to utilize a shutter release and tripod.

I would suggest you use these because they will enable you to work with and observe your subject element. This will additionally enable you to utilize somewhat longer screen speeds than typical to assure a small aperture permitting the image to be in center front to back if you prefer so.

Nevertheless, don't allow the static camera to stifle your creativity, it instantly gets overlooked that the camera has been assembled in the identical position for the entire shoot. Don't forget to change the heights and the angles at which you shoot.

Otherwise, you'll have a full collection of shots all taken from the identical point with little or no variation before you know it. So, mix the things a little bit. Try to shoot at the same level of your subject or try the bird's eye viewpoint, watching down over the subject, yet be cautious not to add any shadows on the subject if you move around!

## **Make a Suitable Backdrop**

Having a proper backdrop for the subject matter is very important to the general success of the shots. It's beneficial to keep it simple and nice, so it doesn't impede with the subject. A large sheet of plain or



white colored paper or a plain painted wall would be perfect.

Think of how your selection of the background contrasts the matter, do you need a neutral background, or are there some tones that can help in complementing the shades within the subject.

For shooting smaller objects, maybe you won't need a backdrop as such, yet instead, you will need a surface as to place the objects on, something like black velvet would be excellent, as it absorbs the light and it seems like a good black surface.

## **Engage With Your Subject**

A compositional component of your still life job is an utterly important part of assuring that your work is unique and engaging.

Remember the A B C rule, how it can be implemented in your shoot to make a great composition. Be sure that there are no disturbances inside the frame, only the subject matter, and the backdrop.

Ensure to change the conception of the subject matter during the shoot and remember to think outside the box. Where are you directing the eye to the image? Are you using negative area or you might work and try to fill the frame?

Engage with your subject, and see what its defining highlights are? What are they utilized for? Are you capable of putting it into context

or is it works as a stand-alone subject?

## **Give Yourself Some Time**

I usually find that my intellect surrounding a shoot is depending on the idea for the shoot. In case that I am just taking photos for myself or for pleasure, I will be less strict with assuring that all the features of the shoot are as well performed as they can possibly be.

This is certainly a bad practice that is trying to shed; still, when we are talking about still life photography, there is absolutely no reason not to make it right. You have all the time that you need to perform a great job!

Opposite of a landscape shoot, the light isn't quickly changing and opposite a portrait, your subject is not going to become bored of staying still for prolonged periods of time. Learn something from this, arrange your subject, backdrop, lighting, and the camera, and try some shots, next move items around a little and take different shoots.

In case that you arrive at a point where you seem to notice that the things aren't working very good, you can simply leave everything for a moment, make yourself a cup of coffee or tea and come back to the shooting later when you are refreshed.

Another benefit is that there's no justification not to have sharp and

clean images, so take some time to get the focus and the lighting just right. In case that you can get some, a macro lens will definitely be perfect for this kind of work, nevertheless, in case that you cannot, try choosing macro mode on the camera as to get the best possibility of capturing the best details of your subject.

## **Get Motivation from Professionals**

In case that you are having some hard times with the lighting, creating or structuring your shots, then you must find some motivation, and where is better to search than to the initial still life classics from the previous years. Research online for renaissance still life masters and observe the details of the pieces.

Observing these pieces will definitely help you to think about the shades, form, and how the colors are combined together and will probably give you some ideas on how to shape your photography work as to form engaging and strong images.

## **Master the Basics for the Still Life Scenes**

Now it's probably time for you to have a try by yourself.

Find a peaceful day in your calendar and put aside few hours to practice. Try to set up your backdrop and camera by a pleasantly light place next to a windowpane and get to work!

Once you have learned the basics, try to get creative. Experiment with the lighting angles, camera angles, and some other light sources like lamps and candles. You could also try getting original with apertures and work with an f/1.8 prime lens to produce an ideal shallow focus.

Nevertheless, if you take one thing from these creative still life photography ideas, please let it be the following: still life photography doesn't all have to be just flowers and fruit! Discover some inspiring and unique subject matter that will excite you and make you start shooting!

## **Complete your post-construction method**

You should definitely work with your images after shooting so this should not appear like a chore. You should be enjoying it!

Photoshop operations are usually viewed as great time-savers, yet I think the most important advantage they provide is extremely repeatable workflow. Rather than working within all the parts from scratch, and work makes a collection of choices for you, then adjust to make the things excellent.

## **Produce a Flat Lay Still Life**

If you want to do something more different, a flat lay style is an excellent choice. This includes arranging your still life subjects

matters on a background of your decision and shooting directly from above.

Flat lay styles tend to be more up-to-date than a common still life style.

Decorating the scene with some flowers and fabric softens the structure and adds visible interest that helps to produce a particular mood.

Flat lay compositions are usually simpler to produce than common still life setups since you're shooting down on a single surface.

In this way is easier to create a pleasant and harmonious composition. You can simply move the objects nearby until you're satisfied with the outcome.

Subjects with solid shapes are excellent for flat lay compositions since they look so good when they are captured from above.

Circles are also great to operate with, for instance, bowls, plates, apples, cups, a slice of lemon, certain flowers, and so forth. But you can look out for some different geometric forms that you can also utilize in your compositions.

## **Choose a Good Background**

A solid background can really help to make an excellent still life photo.

Cardboard or paper, fabric, or an actual wall, are completely easy backdrops to find. For example, for

the picture of my meal, I utilized old vegetable sacks.

Just make sure that everything you use is not over misleading from the subject matter. Keep everything simple. In case that you're utilizing fabric, be sure to iron it first! Not many things are more bothersome than a twisted backdrop.

A busy backdrop or bright color can draw too much consideration away from the subject matter. Clear, neutral-toned backdrops are good as a starter, so start from there. You may be really amazed when you see what backdrop can make as to pop out the image.

You can likewise experiment with depth of field and focus, having the entire image perfectly sharp or some elements, like the background in smooth focus. A blurry background can also help out, in case that you don't have an iron handy and you need to knock back the wrinkled background.

## **You Can Make Enough for a Living with Still Life Photography**

There are many demands for still life photography, especially now that it is very easy for photographers to create images for stock photography archives. Once you've made some images, don't hesitate to share them online. So, every time you prepare to make a shoot, act like you are working on a given assignment because you never really know, your still life images can also bring you some money along the way.

Still life has a lot of subjects, and various photographers specialize in some sub-genres like product photography, food photography, catalog work and architectural photography.

## **Still life photography examples**

Still life photography is a demanding art, one in which the photographers are expected to be able to form their work with a refined sense of lighting, coupled with compositional skills. The still life photographer makes pictures rather than takes them. Knowing where to look for propping and surfaces also is a required skill.

In this article you will see fantastic still life photography ideas that I hope will inspire you in making your own top notch photos of still life.

### **Ancient large saxophone**

### **It's time**

### **Ransomes**

### **Fork**

### **Thinking**

### **Gift**

### **Pears**

### **Pure Colors**

### **Sweet dreams**

**Razor**

**Made for eternity**

**Impact**

**Candle light**

**Silent things**

**The car**

**The types**

**Love cherries**

**Love ends**

**Modest gift of autumn**

**Natural heart**

**After the concert**

**Rowanberry**

**Taijitu**

**A FLOWER GIFT FOR YOU**

**STILL LIFE**

**still-life**

**Memories of childhood**

**Forgotten sonnet**

**Tea Time**

**still life**



**Tea made Special**

**my left feet**

**still life**

**still life**

**Dust**

**Still Life**

**Gravity**

## **Conclusion**

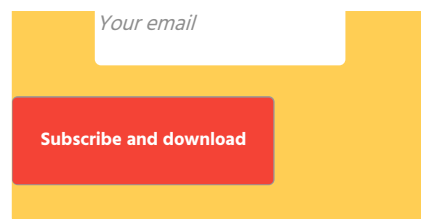
Unlike some different types of photography, when you are capturing a still life photo you can slow down, take the time you need and enjoy the whole process.

As you saw from my still life photography examples, you don't have to stay to the common still life photography. You may experiment with the subjects as much as you want, also with your editing and lighting. This way you get to show off your still life photographic creativity!

You can try still life photography right now! So, if you have any further tips on still life photography or want to share your images, you can do that in the comments section below.

#PHOTOGRAPHY

**Download 300 of the best  
free resources for designers**



**Bogdan Sandu**

Bogdan is a designer and editor at DesignYourWay. He's reading design books the same way a hamster eats carrots, and talks all the time about trends, best practices and design principles.

## Related posts

### Follow us



### Sponsors

## Recent articles

---



### **7 Tips That Can Make the Work of an Illustrator Easier**

By Bogdan Sandu



### **Best Free Screen Recorder Software**

By Bogdan Sandu



### **Monogram Logo Designs: How To Create A Monogram**

By Bogdan Sandu



### **A Guide To Usable Portfolio Websites For Digital Designers & Creatives**

By Jake Rocheleau



### **Layout Design for A Magazine Page and Printing Tips**

By Bogdan Sandu



### **4K Wallpapers for Your Desktop Background**

By Bogdan Sandu

## Advertisement

---

## Design your way

[CONTACT](#) [WRITE FOR US](#) [ADVERTISE](#)

This website uses cookies to ensure you get the best experience.

[Ok](#)

[Read more](#)