

/r/photography Reddit AMA guide

This is a guide to being a guest in an question and answer session on [Reddit's /r/photography](#), a community of over 250,000 subscribers who are passionate about photography. This is known as an Ask Me Anything or AMA.

In the following sections, we've provided an overview of what Reddit and /r/photography is, how a typical AMA works, and outlined some tips on how to make the most of your AMA. Please take a few minutes to read through this document, and if you have any questions, you can reach us at ama@redditphotography.com.

What is Reddit?

Reddit is a discussion forum for things new and popular on the web. Users can post content in the form of "links" or make a "text post" that people can then discuss by leaving comments.

Everything is voted on. Content and comments can all be upvoted or downvoted. Content that receives community approval bubble up towards #1, so the front page is constantly in motion and (hopefully) filled with fresh, interesting posts.

Question and Answer sessions (AMAs) are especially good on Reddit compared to interviews on other websites because the vote-sorted nature of the questions allows the best questions to rise to the top of your AMA and because Reddit's high traffic gives it a very good position on Google, doing an AMA with link-backs to your own website and work will continue to promote your online brand long after the AMA is over.

What is /r/photography?

/r/photography is a "subreddit", a board controlled by moderators, a team of volunteers. Unless the moderators are breaking Reddit's rules, the moderators have authority over anything posted in their own subreddit. One of these moderators will be your point of contact and work with you to make sure your AMA runs smoothly.

In addition to allowing user-generated content on /r/photography, we also have a number of regular "Official Threads" and act as a hub to our smaller sister subreddits. Official threads include: "Newbie Questions", "Album Critique", "How was this photo taken?", "Featured Photographer Friday", "Saturday Chill Out", "RAW editing contest", "Share your website", "Instagram follow-for-follow thread", "Show off your gear", "Photo Inspiration", "Monthly Photo Assignment", etc.

Before the day of your AMA

1) Reddit account setup

Typically, we will setup your account for you so that all of the permissions and account flair is set up properly. Then we will email you the login information. This also allows us to post the threads on the day in the correct format and at the correct time.

However, if you are already experienced with Reddit, you can use your existing account for your AMA. Just let us know what your account name is and we can add flair to that account.

2) Preparing the AMA

The AMA will be posted as a thread in our subreddit, /r/photography.

[Here is an example AMA](#) by Benjamin Von Wong on /r/photography.

Having a good title, description and bios are very important because these are the things people will read first, before deciding whether or not to look at the rest of your interview.

There are 3 things that you will need to prepare ahead of time:

2.1) Title

- Your title should contain "AMA" or "Ask Me Anything!"
- It is a good idea to be descriptive with your title and use your real name for SEO purposes - Reddit AMAs are often the very highly ranked in terms of Google hits and it would be a good idea to name your AMA with a naive/non-expert audience in mind.

Examples of good titles:

- Hey guys, I'm Renee Robyn, photographer and digital artist! AMA!
- I am an award winning travel and fine art photographer who has been traveling and shooting in Cuba for the last 18 years. AMA
- I am a camera and lens repair technician, AMA.
- IAmA Alex Buisse, professional adventure photographer, climber, paragliding pilot, longtime redditor and phototoclass creator. AMA

2.2) Description

- Your introductory statement should be about 1 paragraph. Again, you can look through [past AMAs](#) for inspiration. Read through some to get an idea of what your post should look like. It is a good idea to include links to your work, website and profile in your description... however you should not post "direct links to points of sale" e.g. Amazon, B&N, eBay, etc. These are not only against the rules but also might disengage your audience.
- Links to your website or blog, Facebook, Twitter, your publisher, etc. are all great!

- It is important to include “proof” in your AMA, so people know that it’s really you answering questions on Reddit and not just someone pretending to be you. Proof is often just a tweet [like this](#).

2.3) Bio

You should include a bio of each person participating in the AMA. This part can be copy and pasted from your website or other place, but it would be better to tailor your bio to the Reddit audience, i.e., more naive readers who may not know anything about your field.

3) Spend some time exploring Reddit and getting used to the site

It is a good idea to spend some time on [/r/photography](#) to get familiar with the website before the day of the AMA.

On the day of your AMA

1) Create your AMA post about 3 hours before your scheduled start time

If we have your username and password, we will create your AMA for you and email you the link when it is up, however if you wish to do it yourself, do the following:

To do that, you will go here: <https://www.reddit.com/r/photography/submit?selftext=true>

Your post title will go in the first box and your introductory statement goes in the second box. If you have your title and statement ready, just copy and paste them in.

It's important to have your post up about 3 hours before your AMA start time because it gives people a chance to get questions in before it's time for you to start answering. It's okay to start answering early, but it's important to still be online answering during your scheduled time.

Once your post is up, the moderators of /r/photography will mark it as official. You can log off and take a break until it's time to start answering.

2) When you're ready to start answering questions

Log into your account and click your username in the upper right corner. You'll see your userpage and a listing of all your posts and comments. Click your post title to get your AMA. Each question or comment will have a small "reply" button under it. Click that button and

you'll get a box to type your answer in. Once you're done typing, hit the "submit" button under the box. Your answer will appear under the question.

If someone asks a question you'd rather not answer, just skip it. If anyone is being mean or inappropriate, hit "report" under their comment and the moderators will handle it.

3) If you have any last-minute questions

Please email us at ama@redditphotography.com

Tips for having a great AMA

1. **Start off right.**

The title of your AMA will be the most important factor when a user is deciding whether to read the rest of your post. This title will have far reach on the internet, so it needs to entice people into coming in for the main story.

The next things to get right are the description and your personal bio. If you need help, a moderator will help edit your text and make sure it works well to put you in the best light.

2. **Upvotes.**

Be careful not to do "unfair vote manipulation". It is against Reddit rules to ask for upvotes.

e.g., tweeting "I'm doing an AMA on Reddit, please upvote this post!" is against the rules, but tweeting "I'm doing an AMA on Reddit, come take a look!" is okay.

Creating multiple accounts to upvote your own posts is bad and Reddit tracks IP addresses to prevent this type of vote manipulation. If you get your account banned by the system we can manually approve each of your posts, but it is a lot of work and the posts will not be visible straight away.

3. **Proof of your identity needs to be clear from the onset.**

See [Morgan Freeman's AMA](#) for this issue: users did not believe it was actually him. The best proof (for a celebrity or recognizable figure) is a picture, holding a handwritten sign, that says their username and time/date of their AMA. Also, if someone is typing for you, make it clear that they are writing but you are answering.

4. **Time your AMA.**

At /r/photography we post our AMAs 3 hours before the scheduled answering time. This allows a number of questions to be asked and voted on, pushing the questions that people are most interested in to the top of webpage for you to answer. You can start reading and answering questions ahead of time, but make sure to stay around for the scheduled time of your AMA.

5. **Choose questions to answer based on votes.**

Don't hunt for questions that you want to answer, because that comes off as promotional. It's fine to choose some other questions that are lower down the list, as long as you're not ignoring the questions that people clearly want to see answered.

6. **Aim for a few sentences on each answer.**

One word answers are generally bad, and paragraphs-long answers will take too long to write.

7. **Personalize your text and your answers.**

Don't give stock answers, because that is obvious. Make sure that you're actually thinking about the question and writing out a fresh answer for it.

8. **Prepare for controversial questions.**

Many people have some behavior in the past that Redditors disagree with, and they love to ask these and try and corner the OP. This is tough, because you can either (1) ignore it, and look bad, (2) answer it with a diplomatic answer, which looks like dodging, or (3) answer it bluntly with whatever the truth is, and get downvoted. 3 is

still the best option though, because it won't spill over to other questions and users will likely appreciate you tackling the tough question. [Here is a good example](#). And when you do confront the question, do it clearly and in detail. Compare the reaction [here](#) and the reaction [here](#). One gave a detailed explanation and admitted the issue. The other just kind of brushed it off with a short answer.

9. **Don't just answer top-level questions; reply to follow-ups.**

Really engage the community. And not just to questions; feel free to engage in all of the jokes and other banter. Redditors are there for a mix of information and entertainment, so balance the two as best you can. (Depending on topic, of course.)

10. **Refresh the page regularly** so you can see whether comments have risen or if anything is gaining momentum. You'd be surprised how many of the "Bet they don't answer this!" type questions come up later and get a number of votes because it looks like the OP is trying to avoid answering. It isn't that the OP doesn't want to answer it, it's that the OP hasn't seen it.

11. **Roll with the punches.** Although you can try to come with an agenda of what you want to talk about, be prepared to change topics and just let it happen naturally. This is likely why politicians have such a hard time with AMAs, because their position requires things to be scripted and tested for appeal to the audience, whereas someone like an actor or entertainer is much better at interfacing and improvising. Science based AMAs typically stay on topic though.