



Project 0: Becoming Friends with Your Camera

Shot with the default iPhone camera.

CS180/CS280A

Due Sep 2, 2025 at 11:59 PM

Mansoor Mamnoon

I wanted to see how much moving my feet changes a photo. Same phone. Same lens. Three small experiments and a few notes on what I noticed.

Part 1 – Selfie: Wrong vs Right

A – Close



When my friend stood very close, my nose and cheeks looked stretched out and uneven. It feels like the classic distorted selfie.

B – Stepped back



Then my friend stepped a few meters back and framed me so my face was the same size. The proportions relaxed and the glasses straightened out.

For the first shot my friend stood right in front of me, and the perspective pushed my features forward. For the second shot they walked back and zoomed slightly to keep me framed. That simple change fixed most of the distortions I saw in the first photo.

Part 2 – Architectural Perspective Compression

A – Farther spot



From farther back the stop sign hugs the building. Foreground and background squeeze together.

B – Closer spot



Moving forward stretches the sidewalk and pulls the sign away from the wall. Space feels deeper.

I kept the building about the same size in both frames and only changed where I stood. Watching the sign slide in relation to the facade showed me how perspective literally redraws relationships in the scene.

Part 3 – Dolly Zoom

Move back and keep the subject size



I walked backward step by step while zooming to keep the cartons the same size. The background seems to stretch and collapse even though the cartons barely move. Shooting it felt odd but seeing it play back made the link between distance and field of view feel very real.

Lessons Learned

- The distance from which an image is taken changes how objects relate to one another in the frame.
- For portraits, stepping back keeps features in proportion and avoids distortion.
- For scenes, where I stand decides whether elements stack tightly or open up into space.
- The dolly zoom showed me how movement plus framing can create effects you can't get from standing still.

Printed with URL in header as requested. The animated GIF in **Part 3 – Dolly Zoom** shows the stack of cups staying the same size while the wall and table behind it appear to shift and expand as I walk backward and zoom in. This happens because the perspective changes while I keep the subject size constant. The PDF only shows a still frame, so for the full effect please view the live site.