



McClanahan Camera

Tips On Photographing Family & Friends

— based on Tamron Industries, Inc., “Tips On Photographing Family & Friends”

We take photos of our family and friends to keep a record of events, family history, and to capture happy memories. Holidays and special events are very popular picture taking times. Keep your camera handy so you won't miss out on these great opportunities!

GETTING STARTED

The key to capturing those great moments is to be prepared.

- Keep your camera accessible and loaded with fresh film and batteries. Use fresh film and a good processing lab to avoid disappointing results. Expired film can cause pictures to have unpleasant color shifts, and poor developing can result in dark photos or inaccurate color.

- Your lens choice is the next most important consideration. Picture-taking situations can vary greatly from close-quarter rooms to wide open parks, from low-light churches to bright sunny beaches, from action sports to lazy strolls. An SLR camera with a zoom lens is the ideal choice for excellent quality and versatility.

GROUP SHOTS

The key to taking interesting and fun group shots is to make them interesting and fun.

- Avoid taking the same type of shots year after year. Look for different ways or different angles to capture

your group.

- Try using a telephoto lens, or a close-up using a wide angle lens.
- And if your subjects aren't having fun, give them something fun to do.

Photo Tip

If you have willing subjects, you can try taking more formal pictures.

- Pose your subjects in a well planned group, rather than standing in a line. Seat two or three people and have the others stand around them with their hands on the seated subjects shoulders. Keep your subjects close to avoid large open areas. For large groups, you can fill in spots with people kneeling in front. Arrange the group like a pyramid-filling in the center with faces.

- When photographing a small family group, have the parents sit on the ground with their legs bent and facing towards the outside of the frame. Pose one child behind and between the parents while the other child sits in front of one parents legs. For more children, keep the pyramid rule in mind.

Photo Tip

Some of the best pictures can be taken using the self-timer feature.

- Pose your group and make a spot for yourself. Mount your camera on a table-top tripod and set it on a sturdy surface. (A full size tripod is even better.) A large bean bag or rolled up sweat shirt will prop-up your camera.

- Set your camera to the self-timer mode, frame the picture, press the shutter and run to your spot. Do something silly, or try a group hug.

- Self-timers are great for family gatherings like Christmas or birthday parties. Arrange your family in a

semi-formal pose, and take your position in the shot. These memories will become very valuable to you and your family in the years to come.

HOLIDAYS & SPECIAL EVENTS

When shooting on holidays and special events, you should include items that clearly identify the event.

- Place identifying objects, such as a birthday cake, or holiday presents, etc. in the foreground or make them part of the activity. Use a wide angle setting (28mm or 24mm) and shoot with a small aperture (f/16 or f/22) to keep everything in sharp focus.

- Shoot from a high angle to get interesting shots that can tell the whole story. Stand on a chair and shoot while everyone opens their holiday gifts. Include the pile of wrapping paper in the foreground and the tree in the background. Get above the crowd and shoot downward to get some interesting and unusual shots.

- Get below your subject to tell the story from a whole new angle. Have your friends stand above you while you shoot upward. Fill the sky or ceiling with objects like party balloons, Christmas lights, fire works, mountains, etc. A wide angle lens setting works best for these situations.

- Capture emotions to make ordinary photos special photos. Take family and friends as they greet each other, capture their happy faces, and the hugs and kisses. Capture special looks, and expressions, and don't forget to shoot the expressions of those who are watching what's going on.

CANDID PORTRAITS

Every get-together is an ideal time to take pictures of those often camera-shy friends and relatives.

- Stand back from the crowd and use a long telephoto zoom lens like the 70-210mm or 70-300mm to get in tight on an unsuspecting face. Try filling the frame with your subject's face - even if you cut off part of their head. Wait for the right expression and shoot.

Photo Tip

Sometimes when you shoot outdoors, your subject can have unflattering shadows from strong overhead sunlight, or from trees or other nearby objects. Or your camera's meter can be fooled by the sunlight reflecting from sand or water, causing your subject to be underexposed. These distracting shadows can be eliminated by using fill-flash.

- Fill-flash is a technique used by many pro's, but most of today's cameras make it very simple for anyone to do. Simply set the fill-flash mode and your camera does the rest. It automatically calculates the right amount

of flash to eliminate shadows on your subject while still maintaining a well exposed background. It will make the colors more vibrant and create a depth in your photos.

EVERYDAY SHOTS

The greatest thing about photography is that you can do it anytime and anywhere.

Photo Tip

When photographing people, shoot in a vertical format whenever you can, which will fill the frame better.

- Avoid cutting off your subjects right at the knees (or other joints.) Cutting them off at mid-thigh or mid-calf will make a more pleasant photo.

- When shooting pictures that involve water, use high shutter speeds to stop the water droplets. Or, try using a slow shutter speed, such as 1/60 sec., to blur the water, but make sure you hold your camera steady. If shooting at 1/30 sec. or less, you should use a tripod.

- You can also use a slow shutter speed to emphasize the motion when your subject is raking leaves or vacuuming the house.

Photo Tip

Be just as aware of your background as you are of your subject.

- Avoid objects such as trees or poles that seem to be "growing out" of your subjects head.

- If the background is very distracting, use a large f-stop (f/4 or f/2.8) to keep the background out of focus.

- Look for color or patterns to add interest to your group shots or candid portraits.

- Use props that will involve your subjects and add some color and excitement to your shots.

- Just remember whatever you do, don't forget your camera!

Photo Tip

Everyday is special when you spend it with those you care about.

- Recording these events will help you create a photo album.

- Include actual ticket stubs, invitations, business cards, etc. These items will help recreate the memories that you captured on film.

- Keep all your negatives and slides well organized and protected in "archival" quality film sheets.

- Enlargements make great gifts for special occasions.