CHAPTER 6

Visual Storytelling With Photographs

Visual storytelling, documentary photography and even just the basic illustration of information used to be reserved for serious technicians only. The process of making photographs, with its chemicals and darkrooms, conjured a sort of black magic atmosphere and erected a significant barrier between those who could and those who could not. The value of high-level photography was, essentially, priceless.

"Back when print was the leading local news and information delivery method, publishers would convene studies to research all sorts of readership behaviors. One thing that was almost always proven: Photographs were the top entry point that would draw readers into a story," said Josh Trujillo, a longtime news photographer who is now senior manager of photo and video at Starbucks. "Now in our digital world, online metrics show similar trends. Visuals are engaging, can be powerful and are a strong element to draw a viewer into your content. There is significant value to that, and it should not be overlooked."

Journalism without photographs is like writing without verbs. Writers have long been told to "show, don't tell" with their words. Thanks to digital photography, a journalist can easily replace or support words with images, improving the experience for the audience and improving the efficiency of the journalist. But doing it well takes patience, practice and preparation.

"Photographs, moving pictures, natural sound and the spoken word are all critical elements of telling news stories," says Stokes Young, a former director of multimedia at msnbc.com and vice president at NBC News. "At the most basic level, they allow storytellers to convey facts through their viewers' senses. Not to take anything away from a great written yarn, but readers can 'only' read how a scene looked or what it sounded like. Viewers, though, have more receptors open: They can actually see and hear the broad sweep, compelling details and central characters of a story."

"Photography is all about moment," according to Colin Mulvany, a visual journalist at The Spokesman-Review in Spokane, Wash. "Being able to quickly capture fleeting moments is what separates the professional photojournalist from the amateur photographer."

Even if you do not have aspirations of becoming an artist with a camera, you should understand how digital photography works. At a minimum, you will handle digital photos and need to shoot a basic picture such as a mug shot. But once you experience the ease and power of digital photography, you will probably want to take it much further and explore the possibilities.

"You need to know the basics . . . composition, how to operate the camera, how to work with a subject so you can make them feel comfortable," says Deb Cram, director of photography and multimedia for Seacoast Media Group in New Hampshire. "Being a good photographer isn't just about the craft of making a good image but about knowing how to relate to people. You must be able to be a fly on the wall yet be able to talk with all levels of society, making them feel like you can be trusted. You form relationships, even though they are brief."

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"This image is a favorite of mine because it captures Obama in an honest and telling moment," says Val Hoeppner, former manager of multimedia education at the Freedom Forum Diversity Institute. "I think great photographs show you things you don't see every day. It isn't every day that you see a politician like Obama working, feet up and the soles of his shoes worn."

There is an ocean of information online for those who want to get serious about digital photography and photojournalism. Following is a starter course (with references to further instruction) to help anyone who wants to become proficient in the basics. This chapter provides an introduction to digital photography, with specific explanations of the following:

- How to capture solid photographs
- How to edit and manage digital photos on your computer
- How to publish photos, including compelling slideshows that really tell the story

This chapter is *not* about smartphone photography, which we touched on in Chapter 4 in the discussion of mobile journalism. It is important to distinguish one kind of photography from the other. It is also important to remember, as Young reminds us, to balance these skills with others that are required for today's journalists.

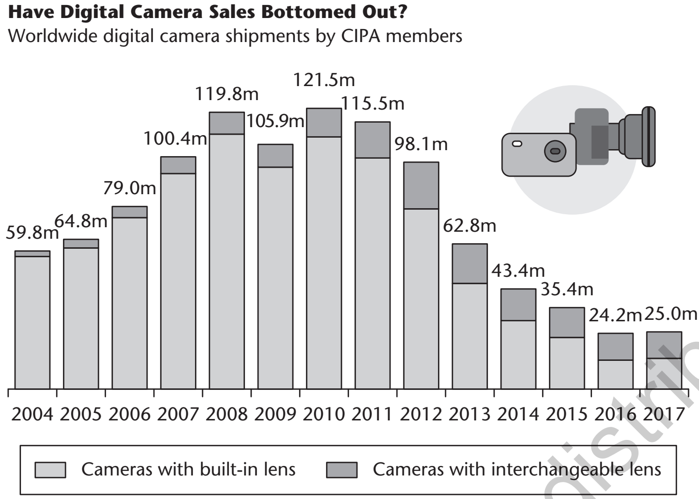
"It's hard for individual journalists to be really good at multiple things: research, reporting, interviewing for broadcast, shooting, recording, editing, writing for broadcast, tracking and, ultimately, producing (bringing those multiple elements together, on deadline, in a way that tells the story efficiently and well for the target audience). So, it's important for journalists to focus first and foremost on building expertise in their communities and beats and finding great stories, second on the specific areas of expertise they can bring to bear to tell those stories and finally on collaboration with others whose skills complement theirs," Young says.

What Is It? What's *Next?* Summary

DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY

Digital camera sales have plummeted as mobile phones improved their built-in cameras over the years. Finally, in 2017, digital camera sales saw growth from the first time since 2010 (see chart), and the ratio of DSLR cameras with interchangeable lenses now makes up about half of all camera sales compared with fixed lens cameras.

The convenience of smartphone cameras versus traditional digital cameras have led the practitioners of many professions, including police officers, firefighters, real estate and insurance agents, scientists, doctors and dentists, to make taking photographs part of their work routines.



Have Digital Camera Sales Bottomed Out?

Worldwide digital camera shipments by CIPA members

Camera & Imaging Products Association (CIPA) is an international industry association. Members include Olympus, Casio, Canon, Kodak, Sony and Nikon among others.

Source: Statista, StatistaCharts, "Have Digital Camera Sales Bottomed out?: Worldwide digital camera shipments by CIPA members," CIPA. https://www.statista.com/chart/5782/digital-camera-shipments/. Licensed under Creative Commons BY-ND 4.0 International License: https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nd/4.0/

The advantages of the amazing cameras built into today's smartphones makes the antiquated days of film, flash bulbs and darkrooms seem like a very long time ago. But the rise of digital photography has only been a recent phenomenon.

The key to understanding how to work with digital photographs is all in the pixels. "Pixel" is a mashed-up word meaning PICTure ELement, and a pixel is usually imagined as a tiny square on a matrix overlay on a computer image. A pixel is the visual representation of data in a digital image or graphic. To picture this in your mind, think of a photograph as a mosaic composed of hundreds or thousands of tiny squares.

Just a few short years ago, if you were shopping for a digital camera, the first measurement you would use to narrow your choices was the megapixel. Now, camera manufacturers have surpassed the megapixel capacity beyond the digital information (resolution) once captured on analog film.

A megapixel represents one million pixels. It is used to measure the power of digital cameras with some simple math. For example, if a digital camera is rated at 18 megapixels, that means the largest photographs it can capture are 5,184 pixels wide (horizontal) and 3,456 pixels tall (vertical). Know that manufacturers commonly round up the megapixel number for marketing purposes. If you used all the information in a 18-megapixel image, you could print a photograph that is roughly 16×20 inches.

This was more important when users needed to choose among cameras rated at 4, 6, 8 megapixels. Now that entry-level cameras—and many smartphone cameras and devices—commonly have cameras with a 12 megapixel or higher resolution, this is less of a factor.

A digital camera stores photographs as digital files on a memory card in formats including, from biggest to tiniest, Compact Flash to Secure Digital (SD) to Micro SD cards. The more pixels in a single photograph, the more megabytes or gigabytes are needed to store the picture on one of those cards. Cameras can be adjusted to lower the number of pixels captured to save space on the memory card, but now that large memory cards of 64GB and 132GB are relatively inexpensive for the storage capacity they provide, this is rarely necessary. Cloud storage systems such as Dropbox, Google and Microsoft's OneDrive have created additional options for photographers.

Now that you understand the basics of pixels, you can begin to get your head around resolution. When it pertains to the display of electronic data, resolution is a measurement of pixels that are available to the human eye. Computers have displays that can be adjusted to show more or less information on the screen. (A common display setting is 1,680×1,050.)

When it comes to photographs, resolution refers to the number of pixels in an image. Because all computer monitors display 72 pixels per inch (ppi), photographs on websites need a resolution of only 72 ppi. Photographs in printed newspapers are usually 200 ppi, and glossy magazines use images at 300 ppi.

A photograph will be much larger in bytes at 200 or 300 ppi, and therefore will eat up more computer processing time to upload or download. Yet it will not display any sharper on a 72-ppi screen. Therefore, there is no reason to make users wait longer to download the higher-resolution image. This becomes a problem when a newspaper reporter finds a photograph on a website and would like to include it with a story in print. The low-resolution image does not scale to 200 ppi and will look blurry, especially if it is enlarged.

Conversely, if you have a high-resolution image for publication on a website, it should be compressed for practical purposes. Compressing an image means using software to squeeze the image, omitting the pixels that are not necessary and making the file smaller (in bytes) without sacrificing the overall quality. This occurs in the SAVE FILE process of saving images in photo editing software. When in doubt, save a photo at the highest resolution first, such as in the HIGH setting and then work your way down the MEDIUM and SMALL settings. Note the file size of each of those versions of the same "compressed" photo and you can determine which setting suits your needs for optimal reproduction quality.

Ownership, copyright and fair use

While it is easy to publish photographs on a website, it is just as simple to download and copy photographs that others have published. But just because you can does not mean you should. And when it comes to "borrowing" others' photographs without permission, you definitely should NOT.

"In this day and age of photo manipulation, students new to photojournalism must understand and adhere to the ethics of not creating images that lie or are deceptive to the viewer," Colin Mulvany says.

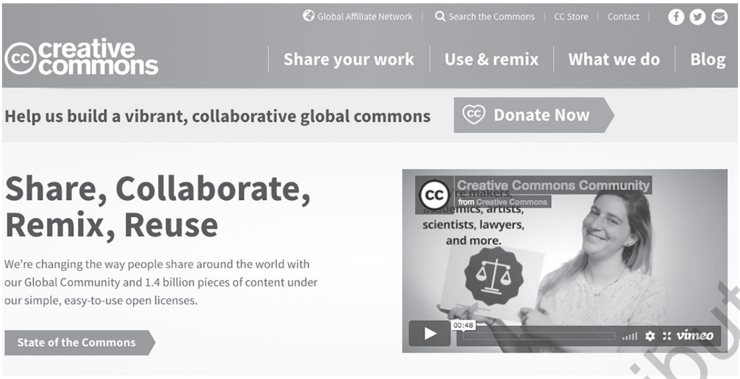
Before we go further with digital photography, it is important to recognize the potential ethical dilemmas involving ownership, copyright and fair use.

Do you remember the saying that everything you need to know you learned in kindergarten? It applies here.

Do not steal. If you want to use something that belongs to someone else, ask first.

This is a tricky new landscape, of course. Google, for example, has copies of billions of photographs on its servers that do not belong to the company. Google uses them to help people find photographs and websites through search by displaying thumbnail images (reduced versions about as big as your thumbnail). Google's offerings are protected by the fair use clause of the U.S. Copyright Law. Of course, this law applies only in the United States, and the Web extends globally. Much of this new world is governed by ethics and etiquette instead of laws and enforcement.

And because sharing is part of the culture of the Web, an effort called the Creative Commons project emerged in 2001. The project aims to provide legal protection to those who wish to share their work. Photographers, artists and others can mark their work with a Creative Commons license, which can range from "all rights reserved" to "some rights reserved," allowing others to use their work as long as they are given credit. By the end of 2018, more than 1.4 billion pieces of content were under one of the licenses.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Screenshot via CreativeCommons.org

> Creative Commons makes it easy to find open license images, graphics and video. <

Digital camera basics

Today, many different devices can capture digital photographs. Everything from mobile phones to video cameras to tablet computers—and even most laptop computers—can take still images, and the traditional forms of still cameras commonly have the ability to shoot video. Given this overlap, it can be difficult to focus on one form compared with another.

Two kinds of digital cameras

Following is a look at basic features and operation for standard point-and-shoot, consumer-grade cameras. Much of the information also applies to digital single-lens reflex (DSLR) cameras—cameras with detachable lenses—because they are often made by the same companies, so there is a bit of standardization among the features.

But first, let's look at the differences between the two primary types of cameras:

- A point-and-shoot, or all-in-one, camera is more compact, easier to use and more affordable. Its lens and flash are built in, and most are equipped with a video mode.
- A DSLR camera will capture better photographs because its large CMOS (Complementary Metal Oxide Semiconductor) is of superior capture resolution and quality than the point and shoot. But DSLRs are more complex to use and usually cost many times more than a point-and-shoot. Accessories such as lenses and a flash are extra, and

DSLR video modes vary by model (prices, ranging from consumer to "pro-sumer" to professional).

That said, camera manufacturers continue to improve the quality of point-and-shoot cameras, while they make DSLRs easier to use and more affordable. So what may be true today in this comparison might be less true tomorrow. Most DSLRs have an easy mode that turns all settings to automatic, allowing a user to take photos with the camera as if it were a point-and-shoot.

Understanding and using the automatic/semi-automatic settings is a good idea for anyone just getting started. Today's digital cameras are built with sophisticated automated settings including Program, Time Priority and Aperture Priority. All manufacturers have variations on these three "intuitive and user friendly settings." Try one, or all of these, first and see which settings work for the conditions you predominantly work in. If not, learn the basics about full manual time and aperture settings. Having that fundamental, mechanical operational knowledge will mean you understand your camera and know how to manually set it for capturing images under specific conditions.

▸▸ *Basic camera functions*

Camera modes: A dial on the top of the camera will control the shutter speed. Choose the icon that represents the moment you are trying to capture. Options usually include sports or action, portrait of a person or people, landscape photo and low-light or night photo.

Zoom: Most point-and-shoot cameras have two types of zoom: digital and optical. Be careful to use only the optical zoom. If you zoom beyond the range of the optical zoom, the digital zoom kicks in and basically just begins cropping the outside of the image to make it look like you are getting closer. This at the sake of losing "pixel information" on a photo's digital file. The superior optical zoom is provided by lens magnification and does not affect the digital file size (no cropping of pixels), thus retaining image quality.

Flash: A function with a lightning bolt icon, probably on the back of the camera, will allow you to toggle through several flash settings. Auto flash means the camera will determine whether flash will be used. You can also turn off the flash or "force" the flash, making the camera flash even when it does not think one is needed (this is helpful when bright backlighting leaves shadows on a subject's face). There is also a red-eye reduction mode for the flash, which will likely fire a preflash to compensate for the beam bouncing from the back of the subject's eyes into the camera lens. You can also try changing angles or having the subject look slightly to the side of the lens to avoid red eyes in photos.

View/delete: Find the function that changes your camera mode from shooting pictures to viewing pictures already captured. Every camera also has a trashcan icon for deleting images. Make a habit of viewing photographs on your camera as you shoot and deleting the ones that you are certain will not work. If you have ever worked with professional photographers, you have probably noticed them doing this constantly.

SHOOTING BETTER PHOTOS WITH A DIGITAL CAMERA

The greatest advantage a digital camera provides you is the ability to review the photo on the camera's screen immediately after you snap a picture. Use it! If something is wrong with the photo, try again. The more you shoot and the more adjustments you make based on what you are seeing in the camera, the more you will improve the chances that you will get the photo you want.

"Beyond moment, composition is high on my list," Mulvany says. "How you frame a photograph comes down to a decision of what not to show the viewer. Good composition cuts away the unimportant elements that distract the viewer from the message of the photograph."

Remember to consider several factors before hitting the button to take a photo. Nothing is more important than lighting. It is critical to account for the lighting in whatever situation you find yourself, and you can shoot a photo in, essentially, one of three ways:

1. With natural (or ambient) light only
2. With a flash as the primary light source (in a low-light situation)
3. With a mixture of flash and ambient light

The best photographs are shot in the first situation, when nature provides the correct light. But be careful not to shoot in harsh, bright sunlight, especially if you are photographing people. If the sun is in front of the subjects, it will create face shadows and make people squint. If the sun is behind the subjects, their faces will be dark.

You can compensate by forcing the flash in this situation, meaning you can use the flash setting on the camera to override the automatic function and make the camera use the flash.

Cloudy and partly sunny days actually provide the best light for outdoor photography.

Shooting mug shots

The mug shot is one of the most likely assignments for journalists who are not photographers. It is also a quick way to add a visual element to any story you happen to be working on because your audience will get to see the person you are writing about or quoting in your article.

Although it seems like this would be a no-brainer assignment, you need to consider several things when framing a head shot.

Use the right lighting. Try to avoid using a flash if possible; a flash can add shiny spots to the person's face. Move the person outside or near large windows to take advantage of natural light, and then make sure there are no weird shadows on the person's face.

- Avoid high-noon sunlight and strong backlight
- Try to photograph when the skies are overcast or try to photograph in a situation that replicates overcast skies
- Use a flash as a last resort
- Pick the right background; make sure it is as neutral as possible and simple, not busy; and darker is usually better than lighter
- Position the subject away from any walls; if you do not, you will end up with flash shadows behind the subject
- Make sure there is not anything like a lamp or pole "growing" out of the person's head

Val Hoeppner, director of the center for multimedia innovation at Middle Tennessee State University, says the biggest mistake amateurs and beginners make is that they do not get close enough to their subjects or to the action happening in front of them. During training sessions, Hoeppner uses a quote from photojournalist Robert Capa to reinforce her point: "If your pictures aren't good enough, you aren't close enough."

"I tell non-photojournalists that if they think they are close enough to a subject they should take 10 steps forward and then take the photo," Hoeppner says. "That might sound like an exaggeration, but filling the frame with all the information you want the viewer to see (and none that you don't) is one of the most important things you can do to improve your photography."

The second-biggest mistake that new photographers make, according to Hoeppner, is that they do not take enough photographs. Keep trying new

DRILLING DOWN

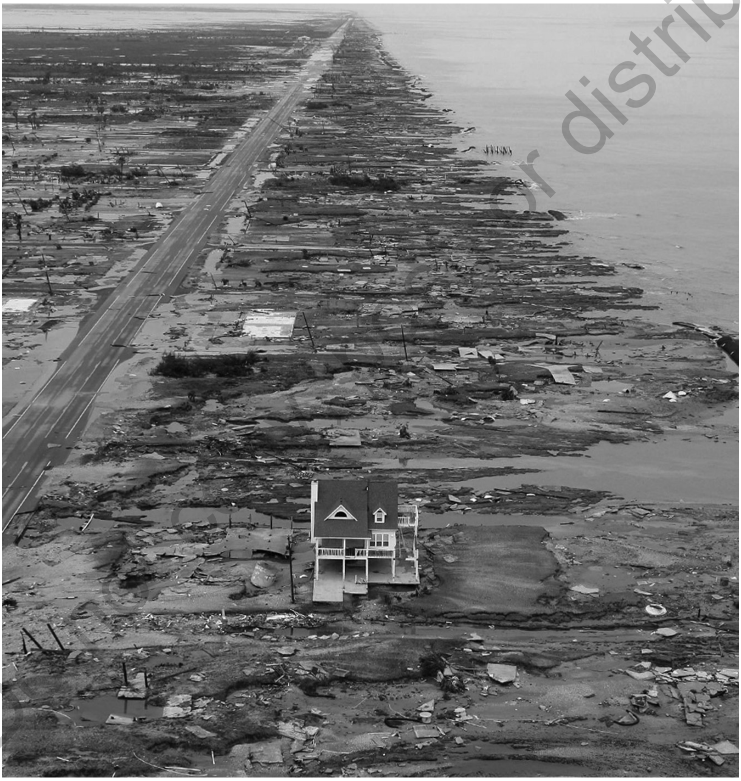
Take Better Photos: Here are some additional tips to help your shooting, courtesy of Craig Sailor, former photo editor at The Olympian and The News Tribune newspapers in Washington state:

- **Hold the camera steady:** Dig your elbows into your body or place them on something. Use two hands. Lean against a wall. Do anything you can to be still when shooting.
- **Fill the frame:** When photographing people, do not leave too much headroom, that space above their heads. The subject's face should be near the top of the picture, not in the middle.
- **Focus on one thing:** When shooting a person or group of people against a busy, complex background, focus on the person's eyes. The automatic focus function can focus on only one thing in the image, and a person's eyes will make the photo look the sharpest.
- **Get closer:** Most amateur photographers fail first by not changing their positions. They see something they want to capture in a photo and take out their camera and shoot without moving around. A professional photojournalist, in contrast, will move all over the place to get the right angle.
- **Go vertical:** If the subject is vertical, turn the camera into a vertical position to shoot it.
- **Shoot action:** Capture the moment whenever possible and avoid posing people. Find the setting on your camera that snaps the shutter at 1/500th of a second or faster to shoot anything really fast, such as sports action.

angles and moving around to new positions and locations. High, low, side-angle: what are other perspectives to consider and experiment with while capturing visual moments. Remember, there is not cost to shooting extra photos, except time, and the more you shoot the better your return on that investment will be.

More time leads to better photos

The goal of these instructions is to help journalists who are uncomfortable with cameras to start learning how to take better pictures. One of the most



David J. Phillip-Pool/Getty Images

"This is a great image because it gives the viewer a ton of information," Hoeppner says. "This is a simple image, with simple composition. Photographers often forget to change their point of view; getting high and looking down on this scene is the only way to show the expanse of this disaster."

important factors to consider is time, because it is difficult to capture great photographs in a hurry. If you want to improve your photography skills, your first step should be to find more time when you go out to shoot.

"The biggest mistake I see when non-photographers try to do documentary photography is that they are impatient," Colin Mulvany says. "The best documentary shooters let the events and moments they are photographing unfold in front of their camera lens. Doing this type of work takes an investment of time, but the difference between a real image and a manufactured one is huge."

Mulvany says that when he is working on a long-term project, his goal is intimacy in his photographs. A photographer cannot achieve this unless the subjects have formed a trust bond with the photographer. Be honest with your subjects about the story you are trying to tell.

Mulvany recalls photographing a middle school student for her entire year in seventh grade. He told her up front what he needed to see and shoot—both the good times and the bad moments. Knowing that he had "cut the deal" with her allowed him to feel comfortable with being around at awkward moments—like when she was kissing her boyfriend behind the gym after lunch.

In addition to spending more time with subjects or assignments, it is important to take more photographs. It is a simple numbers game: The more shots you take, the better chance you have to get the one you want.

"Shoot a lot, not just one or two," says Cram. "It makes things easier on the editing end plus increases your odds that you'll have a good image."

Once you become more comfortable with the mechanics of photography, you can begin to think of more advanced ways to tell your story with visuals.

"Something that has largely disappointed me about much of the photography I see in digital publications is that often it is static and kind of lifeless," Trujillo said. "If a story is about development, it will often include what I call a 'building mug shot.' If it is about a person, it will sometimes include a picture only to show what the person quoted looks like. But visual communication has so much more potential than that. People are drawn to faces, expressions, moments, irony and a unique look at their community. Much of journalism is contemplating humanity, so why not show people in action? Your images can simply be used to show the reader what a static object looks like, or they can be crafted to engage, fascinate and communicate on another level."

DRILLING DOWN

Capturing Audio and Images for a Slideshow: Val Hoeppner recommends doing the A-roll—the main audio interview—before shooting photographs. “The interview will put the subject at ease, and it will give the photographer ideas for images that will highlight good audio,” she says.

Here is the rest of her checklist:

- Make sure you know how to operate both the audio recorder and the camera before you go out on an assignment. Test both to make sure you are getting sound and images.
- Wear your headphones so you can hear what the microphone hears. Do not be afraid to stop an interview if there is too much background noise. Move to a quiet place and ask your question again.
- Shoot plenty of images; for every minute of audio you will need roughly 20 photographs.
- Listen closely during the interview and shoot photographs that will complement the audio.
- Shoot wide, medium and tight shots. You will need a variety of images to move your slideshow story along.
- Shoot plenty of detail shots; these tight shots will help you transition from one thought to another without confusing the viewers.
- Record plenty of natural sound; as you are making photographs you should be listening for natural-sound opportunities.
- Remember that you are telling a story. Multimedia is more than a buzzword; it is a powerful storytelling tool.

What Is It? | What’s *Next?* | Summary

WORKING WITH DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHS

Once you have captured images on a digital camera, you are ready to experience the real power of digital photography: editing on a computer. The ability to crop, tone and resize any photograph quickly and easily will significantly improve your chances of having the right photograph for your journalism.

But there can be too much of a good thing. Most photo-editing software is equipped with many more features than are necessary for everyday use. Naturally, some people get carried away with all the interesting things they can do to a photograph instead of limiting themselves to what they should do to a photograph to make it better. It used to be using filters in Photoshop and now it could be filters or graphics from social media platforms such as Instagram and Snapchat. It is fun to explore the possibilities of this cool technology, but converting documentary journalism into art is not the goal here.

In reality, before editing photographs you should submit yourself to that well-known precept of the physician's Hippocratic Oath: First, do no harm.

And remember to use your values and judgment when editing photographs digitally. Altering photographs by adding or removing objects is strictly forbidden in documentary journalism.

It is one of many important guidelines you should know before you begin publishing news photographs online. Because every piece of content has the potential to go viral these days, any mistakes or errors in judgment could be a career-damaging experience for any young journalist. (See the Code of Ethics from the National Press Photographers Association.)

DRILLING DOWN

Code of Ethics: The National Press Photographers Association published these guidelines for all digital journalists on its website (https://nppa.org/code-ethics):

1. Be accurate and comprehensive in the representation of subjects.
2. Resist being manipulated by staged photo opportunities.
3. Be complete and provide context when photographing or recording subjects. Avoid stereotyping individuals and groups. Recognize and work to avoid presenting one's own biases in the work.

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4. Treat all subjects with respect and dignity. Give special consideration to vulnerable subjects and compassion to victims of crime or tragedy. Intrude on private moments of grief only when the public has an overriding and justifiable need to see.
5. While photographing subjects do not intentionally contribute to, alter, or seek to alter or influence events.
6. Editing should maintain the integrity of the photographic images' content and context. Do not manipulate images or add or alter sound in any way that can mislead viewers or misrepresent subjects.
7. Do not pay sources or subjects or reward them materially for information or participation.
8. Do not accept gifts, favors, or compensation from those who might seek to influence coverage.
9. Do not intentionally sabotage the efforts of other journalists.
10. Do not engage in harassing behavior of colleagues, subordinates or subjects and maintain the highest standards of behavior in all professional interactions.

Edit your take

Because you will have taken more photographs than you can use, you will need to learn to select the best ones to edit and prepare for presentation. Similar to capturing compelling photographs, this is a skill that takes thoughtful consideration to master.

New digital tools have made it much easier not only to improve a photo but also to make it lie about reality. And because the audience knows that, it is more important than ever for anyone publishing a piece of photojournalism to make sure it reflects the scene accurately.

Mulvany says good photo editors help photographers separate themselves from the emotions that went into finding and capturing images. They view photographers' images strictly from a storytelling point of view. Photo editors always ask: "What image best illustrates the story? What image captures a moment that will best communicate the message of the story with clarity to the viewer?"

Photo editing is more than just picking one image out of a hundred taken, Mulvany says. It involves the ability to "see a picture within a picture," he adds. "Many times, when I have sat down with a photo editor, they have found crops or moments within pictures I've passed over in my own edit."

If you can, enlist someone else in your photo editing. A cold eye on your photos, with your description of the story, may yield surprising feedback. Or it may simply reinforce your own direction.

"Editing skills result in the end product, which should be clean and easy to read; not filled with clutter and confusion," Deb Cram says. "You only have the audience for a brief time, so if the image has impact—having emotion or an interesting graphic element—that helps."

Manage digital photos on your computer

Technology has changed the way we handle photos so much, so often, it is difficult to keep up. When digital photographer first went mainstream, it was as simple as learning how to move photographs from your camera to your computer and organizing them once they were there. And that was pretty much all you had to worry about.

The standard method of getting pictures off your camera is by connecting a USB cable from the camera to the computer. After you plug in the cable, any modern computer will recognize this new peripheral and automatically walk you through the process of downloading the images.

Organizing photographs is essential, especially if you plan to be a prolific photographer. There are, of course, software programs that will help you. If you are using a Mac, iPhoto Photo Library is already on your computer and is a good basic solution for both organizing and simple editing of photos. Microsoft Photos offers the same functionality if you are using a PC. Because both programs are free and already on your computer, they can be good places to start.

If you have been using either iPhoto or Microsoft Photos for a while and feel as though you are outgrowing their capabilities, consider Google Photos or Flickr for online photo storage and organization. Both offer free accounts with generous limits on the number of photographs you can upload, and both offer professional accounts with small annual fees if you need more storage.

If you are doing a project for school or work and do not want to mix work photos with your personal photos, you can create a master folder on your computer for those photos only. You can create subfolders within this master folder, too, but it is important to have one "home" for all your photos. Just be sure that is connected to a cloud service for storage so you will always have automatic backups of all your images. You can also manually backup your photos to an external hard drive, a USB flash drive or any cloud storage system such as Dropbox or Google Photos.

Next, determine your system for naming photos and folders. The obvious options are by time and by subject. If you follow the time format, you would create a subfolder for the year and then subfolders within the year for each month of the year. From there, you can create folders for specific subjects, which is a good idea if you consistently shoot photographs of the same things (hiking or sunsets, for example).

Photos coming off your digital camera will have file names such as IMG_0239.jpg. This, of course, tells you nothing. Most modern operating systems allow you to override these file names with something more intuitive as they are copied to your computer. You will find it easier to manage your photos if you take this opportunity to change the generic file names to something you will recognize. A combination of date and subject is usually the most powerful. For example, an IMG_0239 and the rest of the series of photographs taken on July 4, 2019, from Liberty Lake could be named 20190704_libertylake_0239.jpg. Notice that the date is written numerically, starting with the year (2019) and followed by the month (07) and day (04)—this method will help keep your photos in chronological order on your computer.

Spaces in file names used to limit a file's compatibility with some computers or operating systems, which is why it became standard practice to use underscores (like_this) or hyphens to separate words. It is not as necessary today with modern operating systems, but it is still a good idea. Some applications and computer scripts may not recognize spaces or will process your files differently when using spaces. Web browsers translate spaces and will render them as "%20" when used. For example, "File Name.doc" would appear online in the URL as "File%20Name.doc."

Of course, continuing advances in technology are making all this easier. iPhoto, Google Photos and Flickr have powerful tagging functions that make it easy to classify your photographs without messing with the file names. iPhoto has facial recognition tagging and geotagging, allowing you to search your photo collection according to the face of the person you are looking for or where the photo was taken.

Edit digital photos on your computer

There are many different ways to edit a photo on your computer. (See Table 5.1.) You can use free software that is already on your system, such as iPhoto or Microsoft Photos; a free online service, such as Ribbet, or a paid online service, such as PicMonkey or Pixlr; a photo-hosting solution such as Google Photos or Flickr; or the more traditional way, with a commercial editing program, such as Photoshop.

DRILLING DOWN

Advanced Photoshop Guidance: If you are comfortable with basic photo editing in Photoshop or Photoshop Elements and want to learn more advanced techniques, check out www.photoshopessentials.com/photo-editing. It is one of many quality sites online offering free Photoshop assistance.

Because so many options exist, and the basic features and tools are similar no matter which software platform you use, this lesson will offer a high-level overview of how to do some simple editing.

The basic photo-editing tasks outlined in this chapter with Photoshop will work similarly in other programs as well. For example, cropping a photo is the same whether you are in Photoshop or iPhoto or Picasa. The actual tool icon might look a little different from one program to another, but the basic function will be the same.

No matter which program you use, it is a good idea to follow a few simple steps when preparing an image for online publishing:

1. **Edit a copy of the photo—never the original:** When you open a photo in an editing program, do a **Save As** and change the file name by at least one character. This will give you an exact copy of the original, just in case your editing goes awry.
2. **Tone and color correct the picture:** Color correction is one of the most daunting processes for amateur photo editors. And the full version of Photoshop can be intimidating because it has much more power and many more features for color correction than most people will ever use. Photoshop Elements offers the best of both worlds: powerful software and an easy process.

On the right side of the screen is a tool window with three tabs on top: **Edit**, **Create** and **Share**. Click **Edit**, then select **Quick**. This will change the window (and the tools set on the left) so it is limited to just a few basic, essential functions. **Red-eye fix**, **Levels**, **Contrast**, **Color** and **Sharpen** are displayed, each with an **Auto** button providing one-click automated correction on each of the functions. (There are also precision controls for each function if you want to control the details.)

3. **Crop the photo:** Using the **Crop** tool, click and drag across the image to select the part you want to keep. Then hit **Enter** or click the green check mark to activate the crop.
4. **Resize the picture:** Under the **Image** menu, select **Resize**, then **Image Resize**. Enter the desired width in pixels, and the software will automatically calculate the height as long as the **Constrain Proportions** box is checked. It is helpful to know the optimal window size setting of your destination, online publication. A common dimension is 1920×1080.

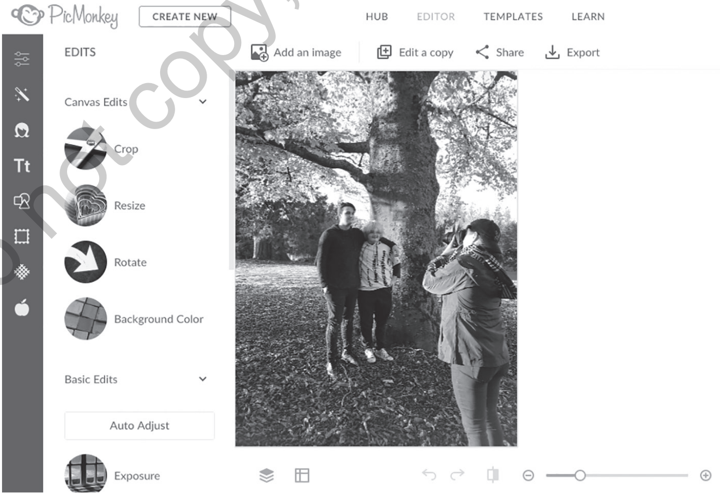
You can also reduce the resolution to 72 ppi, if necessary.

5. **Save a Web version:** One of the best features available in Photoshop is the **Save for Web** function under the **File** menu. This will launch a new window that displays the current version of the photo you are editing on the left and a new, compressed version on the right for easy comparison. Adjust the settings on the far right to minimize the file size (Small versus Medium, Large, Maximum), which can be viewed below the compressed image, while you maintain the same level of quality you see in the uncompressed image.
6. **Make it JPG:** For photographs, use the JPEG compression algorithm. Or you could also use PNG. If you are editing a graphic with text, then the GIF format is the best option.
7. **Keep it simple:** If all you need is to crop or resize a photo, try one of the online services such as Ribbet or Pixlr or FotoFlexer. It takes only a few moments to upload a photo and crop it down to the part you really need.

Of all the online photo-editing services PicMonkey is probably the easiest to use. The free version no longer exists (it now costs about $5 a month), but there is a free trial period if you want to give it a test drive. The functions are labeled clearly on the left of the editing screen, so if you want to crop a photo, you click **Crop**. It really could not be easier to use.

Table 6.1 QUICK GUIDE TO SOFTWARE AND ONLINE SERVICES TO USE FOR DIGITAL PHOTOS

On your computer	iPhoto, Microsoft Photos	Good for basic photo editing, especially when you do not have an internet connection
Online full-featured	Google Photos, Flickr, Pixlr, PicMonkey	Good for managing and organizing your photo collection, sharing your photos with others, basic editing functions
Online editing only	Ribbet, FotoFlexer	Good for quick and basic editing of photos, even on a smartphone
Mobile friendly	Photoshop Elements	Good for advanced photo editing on a mobile device
Professional	Photoshop	Good for serious photographers and Web designers who need all the functionality; used to cost $600, now done as a subscription for around $10 a month


PicMonkey
CREATE NEW
HUB
EDITOR
TEMPLATES
LEARN
EDITS
Add an image
Edit a copy
Share
Export
Canvas Edits
Crop
Resize
Rotate
Background Color
Basic Edits
Auto Adjust
Exposure

Screenshot via PicMonkey.com

> PicMonkey has a simple user interface for modifying images quickly. <

Advantages of using Photoshop

In addition to offering better image manipulation and photo management that is still easy to use, Photoshop also offers several functions that Web-based or standard image-editing programs do not.

Photoshop has been used as a graphics program since it first hit the market in 1990. Countless updates over the years have kept it at the forefront of image editing for professional and amateur photographers around the world.

What Is It? What's *Next?* Summary

PUBLISH YOUR PHOTOS ONLINE

After you have decided which photographs to publish and you have prepared those images for publishing, you are ready to consider another important step in the process: how to present those images for maximum impact.

Photographs published in newspapers and magazines receive serious thought by page designers, presentation editors, photography directors and other creative staff. Since you probably do not have that luxury, you will need to learn how to make a few basic decisions quickly that will maximize the impact of your photographs online.

"Presentation is all about first impressions. It tells the viewer what you are showing them is or isn't important," Mulvany says. "A photograph needs only simple presentation to be effective—especially in photojournalism. Clean design, proper image size and selection is all that is needed to give a photograph the showcase it deserves. Bad presentation just wastes the viewer's time."

Publish photos on a blog

Size matters, especially when you are publishing photos online. As you work through the primary steps for editing photographs outlined earlier, remember to select a size in pixels that will provide the most bang for your buck—or, in this case, power for your pixel.

It is important to discover the maximum possible width in pixels for display on your blog. If you do not know HTML well enough to view the source code and find the information, try uploading a test photo in several different widths until you find one that fits. Most blog designs accommodate images with a maximum width of 700 to 900 pixels.

After you know the maximum width you can use for a horizontal photograph, you know how wide to make your best horizontal photos and how tall to make your best vertical photos. Not all your photos, mind you. You will publish only the best 20 to 30 percent of the photos you take. You should reserve the largest display size for the images you hope will have the most impact. If you publish all your images the same size, your audience will become numb to the large format, and the photos will lose their impact.

Adding a photo to a blog post is simple with any modern publishing platform, such as WordPress. Simply place your cursor in the blog post where you want the image to go and click the icon or menu item that allows you to add an image. Then browse to the location on your computer where your Web-ready image is stored and select **OK.**

A few items to remember:

1. **Wrap text around the photo:** Use the **Align** function for any photo that does not span the entire column and set the photo to display on the right. The HTML code to make this happen is *align="right"*; this will wrap the text under the photo after it moves it to the right side of the column.
2. **Use intuitive alternate text:** Since search engines cannot read photos, the way that Google and Bing and others learn about a photo is through the alternate text you enter through the blog software when adding a photo. This also helps sight-impaired readers who rely on voice-powered browsers to read Web pages to them. So, in the alternate text, make it clear in a few words what the photograph is about. The HTML code for this is *alt="kids play in Lake Park."*
3. **Remember that it is only a link to a photo:** When adding a photo to a blog post, you are merely adding a link to the photo so that a Web browser knows where to find it. The browser will then make a copy and display it with your blog post. The photo has to be available on the internet—it cannot live only on your computer.

   Most modern blog software programs account for this by allowing you to upload your photos to their Web servers when you are adding photos. So you no longer have to use a third-party hosting service for photos like we did "back in the day."
4. **Use a screenshot and a link:** If you do not have a photo to use with your blog post and you are writing about another website, make a

screenshot of the website's home page and include a link to the site when uploading the image on your blog. This helps your audience get a feel for the site you are discussing and provides an easy way for them to click and visit that site.

Create and publish compelling slideshows

Photographs, and especially slideshows, can attract huge audiences online. Most news websites publish slideshows on a regular basis to attract, and keep, digital audiences.

Even if you are just starting out with digital photography, you should consider publishing slideshows and photo galleries when one or two photos just will not do justice to the subject.

Although there are not any hard-and-fast rules about how many images to use in a slideshow—it all depends on the subject and the quality of the images—a good rule of thumb is to create a slideshow if you have a minimum of six to 10 good-quality images. Many news sites create slideshows with dozens of photographs in each one, so realize how much shooting you will have to do to build a comprehensive slideshow—after you edit out the bad photos.

It is important to think about any slideshow as another version of the story you are trying to tell. Order the images so the show is both logical and compelling. Your best image should lead the series, even if it does not come first chronologically. It is considered the opening of the story and can be followed by the rest of the images in an order that builds the story from a beginning to an end.

DRILLING DOWN

How to Build a Good Audio Slideshow[1]

Limit the slideshow to two to three minutes in length: A slideshow longer than three minutes risks losing viewers' attention.

Use the right amount of photos: Too many photos crammed into one slideshow usually means each photo appears for only a second or two, barely enough time for viewers to take each one in. Too few photos means each photo remains on-screen way too long, making the slideshow feel drawn out and boring.

Match the photos to the audio: If the subject is discussing a cat, do not show a duck. Whenever possible, include a photo of the speaker at the beginning of the talk so the viewer knows who is speaking.

Use captions: Write a clear and concise caption for each photo, including the people, places or things being shown and the photographer's name; this takes the guesswork out of a slideshow.

Avoid awkward transitions: Some slideshow editors allow the user to adjust the length of time each slide is on the screen. If the slideshow has narration, tweak each slide to fade in or out during natural pauses and breaks to lessen the chance of awkward transitions.

Avoid using overpowering music: Many slideshow editors add royalty-free music to their projects to support the narration and heighten the drama. If they forget to adjust audio levels, however, the music may drown out the narrator or interviewee.

"Nowadays, in photojournalism for a newspaper, you can't just think of the still image," says Cram. "It's about multimedia storytelling using various tools to reach people."

Most blog software platforms make it easy to add a photo gallery. To create a slideshow, especially one with audio, additional software is needed. Adobe Spark, released in 2015 and named App of the Year by Apple in 2016, is an intuitive and powerful tool for building slideshows that is easy to use.

Of course, to create a compelling slideshow you need to begin planning it before you get to the publishing step. To present the most effective package, you will need to have been thinking about it while capturing the images.

A good rule to follow if you plan to create a slideshow is to take wide (far-away) and medium shots, plus lots of tight shots (close-ups).

It is critical to have all the shots you need when building a slideshow. Whether created with just photos or photos and audio, your slideshow should have all the elements of a good story:

- An attention-grabbing opening
- A logical progression that builds to a climax
- A walk-off or finish that provides a sense of summary
- Once you have determined which photos accomplish this for a particular story, create a new folder on your computer and move the edited photos you have chosen to it

▸▸ *Building a photo gallery in Adobe Spark*

Adobe Spark makes it easy to create a slideshow video, and it can also be used to create slick graphics and even simple Web pages. Start by going to https://spark.adobe.com/ and create a free account, then under "Start from Scratch" select "Create a Video." The Spark platform includes a bevy of templates and other projects for inspiration, but starting from scratch is the best way to fully understand how to construct an effective slideshow.

1. Once you arrive at the main editing screen, you will see a large blank image with a timeline below it. Click the rectangle with the plus sign to add images from your computer or a cloud service such as Google Photos. Continue to add all the photos you would like to include in your slideshow.
2. The right column of the editing screen contains all the options you need to customize your slideshow: Layout, Theme, Resize and Music.
   a. You can sample the options for Layout and Theme, but you will probably want to keep it basic, especially if you are doing a documentary slideshow of a news topic.
   b. The same applies to Music; Adobe Spark provides some basic options or you can upload your own track. (Just make sure you have rights to any music you plan to use.)

c. The Resize option makes it easy to turn your project into a square for optimum display on mobile phones or on social platforms such as Instagram.

DRILLING DOWN

The Big Picture: Veteran Web developer Alan Taylor launched a photojournalism blog called The Big Picture on The Boston Globe's website; see www.boston.com/bigpicture. It is a great resource for examples of quality news photography.

Other excellent resources are InFocus on The Atlantic's website (www.theatlantic.com/photo) and National Geographic (www.nationalgeographic.com/photography).

3. To build a slideshow, rearrange the thumbnail photos to the desired order by clicking and dragging. Then drag the bars that separate the thumbnails in the project bar below to line up the image transitions with the audio file, so the timing of the audio matches the visual from the images.
4. Click Preview to see your work. Once you are impressed with your creation, select Share or Download and publish your masterpiece.

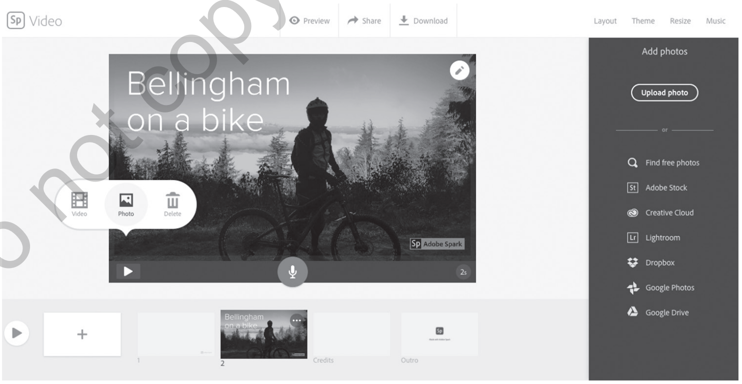

Sp Video
Preview
Share
Download
Layout
Theme
Resize
Music
Bellingham on a bike
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Photo
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Add photos
Upload photo
or
Find free photos
Adobe Stock
Creative Cloud
Lightroom
Dropbox
Google Photos
Google Drive
1
2
Credits
Outro

Screenshot via Adobe Spark

Adobe Spark is a powerful tool for creative multimedia stories that's easy to use.

NEWSROOM INNOVATOR

Courtesy of Richard Koci Hernandez

RICHARD HERNANDEZ

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR | UC Berkeley

START IN A DARKROOM

In the early 1990s, when I was studying journalism, I discovered a world I never knew existed. It was called the darkroom. It was a place where creative people met to magically develop photographs and share the secrets of their craft. I spent the rest of my waking hours and even hours when I should've been asleep in this new sanctuary.

Thinking back to my time in the darkroom reminds me just how much passion and dedication was needed to be successful in photography. It's time to return to the darkroom, so to speak, and recapture some of that passion and energy.

Let's take a deep breath and concentrate our creative energy on capturing photographic moments and building great online presentations.

I KNOW THE SECRET TO MAKING GREAT PHOTOGRAPHS

All the technical knowledge in the world is not what makes great photographs. Great images are constructed by those bold enough to be good, to be creative without fear. Oh, yeah—and it takes lots of practice.

PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE

Remember, we all start as beginners. The process of creating storytelling images is not about choosing the right f-stop or shutter speed, but about learning to create good habits. Did I mention that it takes LOTS of practice?

For example, make it easy to be creative and take great images by having a camera with you all the time.

The more you do, the better you get. In my experience, the more you practice, the easier it is to create, because you understand the process and the tool.

Now that you've made it easy to be creative by having your tools with you all the time, document your journey. I'm not talking about making a travel log of your big trip overseas. That's easy. I'm talking about recording a step in any direction.

How about a mini-movie about your morning routine? Examining a repetitive action helps you see it in new ways. Many stories you'll cover over your career will involve your subject repeating important actions. Learning to see these actions in new ways opens the door to more creative approaches.

PRACTICAL ADVICE

Start at the beginning. Break out the manual that came with your camera and actually read it. There is some sage advice in those pages about the mechanics of your camera that will help you understand the tool.

Look. The process of looking at photo books, watching films and going to museums helps educate your eye. Study images that inspire you. As you look, ask yourself . . . Where's the light source? Is it natural or artificial? What lens did they use?

Think. Tight, medium, wide. Did you snap a tight detail shot of your subject? How about a medium shot for visual variety? Or even a wide shot to put your subject into perspective?

(Continued)

(Continued)

Repetition. Photograph the same object, place or person once a day from a different angle for a week. Take a picture every day for one year. This can become a long-term storyboard of your life. Photographers have a long tradition of using this technique. I myself have done this for years and have gained valuable experience from this exercise. It forces you to see the world differently. It can help you find meaning and explain your world.

Share. Without exposure, nothing develops. Stop coveting your ideas and creativity. Go viral with your recent creations. Post your images to all your favorite Internet locations. Constructive feedback from the photographic community is good.

What Is It? What's *Next?* **Summary**

★ PHOTOGRAPHY IS A CRITICAL TOOL FOR JOURNALISTS

Taking good photographs is a matter of being in the right place at the right time. Often, reporters find themselves in the middle of something newsworthy or interesting, so basic photography skills are critical for anyone who considers him- or herself a journalist.

"The best photos happen when you least expect it," Colin Mulvany says. "Good documentary photographers understand this and are prepared to snap their shutters when the moment presents itself."

Because journalism is about providing readers and viewers with information, the addition of photographs is fundamentally just good journalism. Pictures are information, so if you are a reporter, you will

Make a list. Sometimes, before I start my day, I take a few minutes to make a list of random thoughts, ideas, colors and situations I'd like to find myself in. I then spend the rest of my day in a kind of urban scavenger hunt trying to find the things on my list and photograph them. This can some-times be extremely magical. Countless times things on my list have seemed unlikely to appear, but magically do.

FINALLY

Remember, the only reason anyone is a better photographer than you is that they've probably taken thousands more photos than you. Did I mention that it takes LOTS of practice to take great photos?

Source: Written by Richard Hernandez at the request of the author.

become a better one if you learn to take photos on assignment. At a minimum, you can supplement your work by adding mug shots and other basic photos to all the stories that currently do not have accompanying art.

Today's digital world offers tools for consuming media in a way that is more beautiful, powerful and portable than ever before. From high-resolution tablet computers to large-screen smart TVs to bigger and bigger smartphones—at their best, they can be immersive.

"We need the ambition to tell really great stories really well in order to stand out. Our best work needs to be great," Young says. "If we can combine the power of immersive experience with great stories, great storytelling skill and the distribution power of these devices, we can realize a potential for telling news stories that has never existed before."

GET GOING Checklist ✓

☐ Get your hands on a camera and practice shooting with different types of light: natural, flash and a mixture of both. What differences do you notice?

☐ Practice filling the frame in your photos by shooting close-ups. If you do not have a lens that zooms, you will have to move uncomfortably close to your subject.

☐ Create a slideshow from a series of photographs using Adobe Spark.

NOTE

1. Mark S. Luckie, "5 Common Photo Slideshow Mistakes," 10,000 Words, February 25, 2009. www.10000words.net/2009/02/5-common-photo-slideshow-mistakes.html