

Tips for Photographing Your Woodturning Creations



February 21, 2023

Why Bother to Photograph Your Work?

- Document your work and progress
- Communicate and show your work
- Market and sell you work
- Make a photo book for family and friends
- Create a portfolio

A Few Basic Suggestions and Guidelines for Better Photos

- Some part of the image or all of the image should be sharp (in focus).
- The subject should fill the frame (usually).
- Visual distractions should be eliminated or minimized.
- Lighting is critical.
- Familiarize yourself with your camera
- Practice to develop your visualization and composition skills
- Consider doing basic post processing, as needed

What Camera and Equipment is Needed for Good Photos?

- **Camera** - Use what you have. Modern phone cameras will do well, as well as more traditional DSLR's and mirrorless digital cameras. Even film cameras will work, if you are into that.
- **Other equipment for lighting and arranging** — many things that you may already own, such as lights, can be adapted for use.
- **Optional** - purchase a lightbox - \$65 on Amazon
- **Optional** - purchase a tripod to hold your phone or camera



Let's look at some photos taken from the WWW

- For this exercise, the quality of the woodturning is irrelevant.
- Do you like the image? Why? Why not?
- How could the image be improved?

Your rating of this photo - +, 0, -



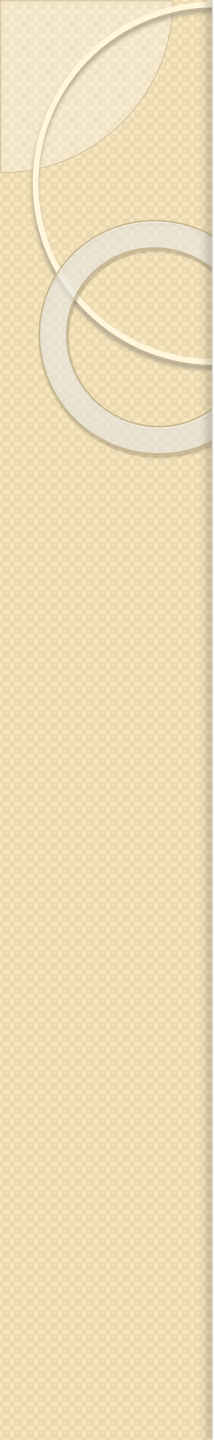












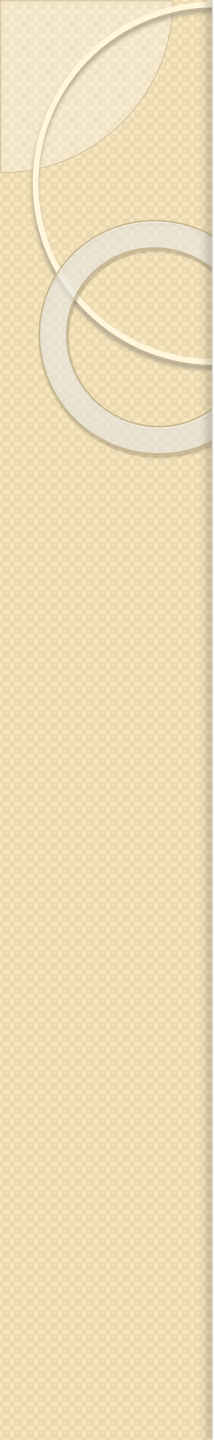
































Let's Review

- **Some part of the image or all of the image should be sharp (in focus).**
 - Hold the camera steady with two hands
 - Brace your hands/arms
 - Use the timer so you can hold the camera with two hands
 - Use a tripod
 - Select the focus point on you camera

Let's Review

- The subject (usually) should fill the frame.
 - Move closer to the subject to fill the frame
 - Don't cut off edges or parts of the object
 - Leave a bit of room around the subject for cropping later, if needed
 - Be aware of depth of field –the closer you get to the subject, the less the depth of field
 - If you get too close, the camera won't be able to focus

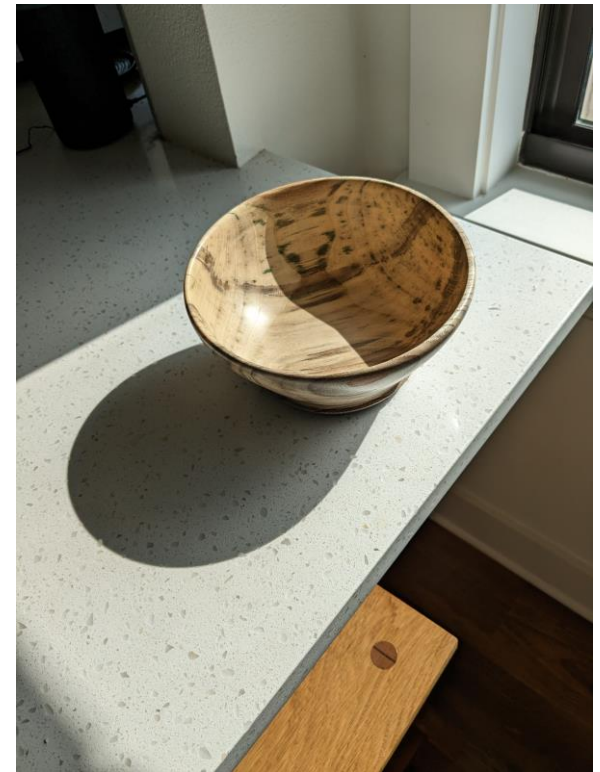
Let's Review

- Visual distractions (usually in the background) should be eliminated or minimized.
 - Select an uncluttered background
 - Blur the background (in camera or in post)
 - Provide a background
 - Use a lightbox

Let's review

- Lighting is critical.
 - Flat lighting is usually uninteresting; shadows can add interest and depth
 - Use natural ambient lighting to your advantage. Typically, this is lighting streaming in through a window.
 - Use directed artificial lighting - shop lights, flashlights
 - Use a lightbox or similar

Let's review – ambient side lighting with backdrop



Let's review – lighting, using what's in your shop (credit Woodworkers Guild)



Let's review – lighting, flashlights



Let's review – know your camera

- Learn how to set the timer
- Learn how to set the focus point
- Learn how to do basic post processing with your camera
 - Crop
 - Adjust
 - brightness, contrast, highlights, shadows, whites, blacks



Let's Practice

with a lightbox

**Review your photo; try again if it
can be improved**

Let's review - lighting



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