

quality photographs

TIPS FOR TAKING GREAT PHOTOGRAPHS



Good photos are the essence of your book. Here are some tips on how to compose the best photos:

Plan your photo before actually taking it. Consider all the lighting, shadows, background and composition to ensure they work together. Fill the area of composition with your subject and avoid a lot of empty space.

When photographing special events at school, see if there is a dress rehearsal you can attend to take photos instead of the actual performance. This is less disruptive and can provide you with more relaxed poses.

Take lots of photos from every angle. Remember, it doesn't cost any more to take lots of photos if you're using a digital camera! Delete the bad pictures as you go so you don't have to sort those out later.

ALWAYS

- ...use flash for indoor photos. It fills in features and eliminates too-dark photos.
- ...be as close as possible to your subjects and "frame" them within the picture.
- ...make sure that group photos have adequate lighting on everyone.
- ...use 400-speed film, or the "Action" setting on your camera for sports and action photos as it prevents blurring.
- ...scan original photographs instead of making photocopies.
- ...use a digital camera with 3.0 megapixels or higher set on the best quality setting in order to get quality pictures for your book.

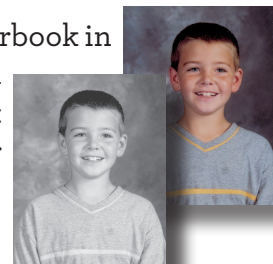
NEVER

- ...take photos if you are facing directly into the sun.
- ...take photos of people who are looking directly into the sun.
- ...take photos in the shade or in other low-light situations, such as gymnasiums, without a flash.
- ...let the background overwhelm the primary subject, like the soccer field dwarfing the soccer team.
- ...shoot group photos against dark or busy backgrounds. The color red is especially bad because hair and faces tend to disappear into the background.
- ...try to make a low resolution picture into a high one by changing the resolution of the picture. It will still be a poor quality picture.

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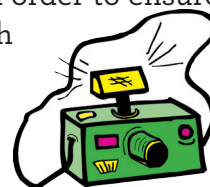
USE COLOR PHOTOGRAPHS

From your color photographs, we will produce your yearbook in either black and white or color depending on what you have purchased. If black and white photographs must be used, do not place them on the same page with color photos as it will affect the quality on the printed page.



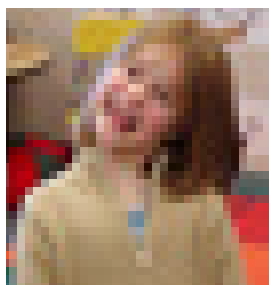
USE HIGH QUALITY DIGITAL PHOTOS

Digital photos should be taken at the highest possible quality and resolution setting that the camera allows in order to ensure good reproduction. We recommend a camera with a resolution of 3 megapixels or higher.



3

megapixels



Check your image quality.

If you print a picture on your printer for review and it is digitized or out of focus, it will appear that way, or worse, in your yearbook.

Do not use pictures cut from past yearbooks, newspapers, etc. Polaroids, digital photographs, and previously printed materials reproduce very poorly. If you have to use a digital print of a photograph, have it printed at a professional photo processing business. These will look better in the finished yearbook than a photograph printed from your home printer.

Do not use black images against red images



Red reproduces as black when processed for a black and white yearbook. Keep this in mind when taking group photos as well. Students wearing black in front of a red backdrop will blend into the background and not have detail to their photos.

Scanners

Scanners are a must when your photographers are using 35mm cameras to capture the memories of the year. They are also useful for incorporating hand-drawn artwork as a design feature, as well as preserving memorabilia. If your workflow requires a scanner, then here are some things to remember.

- Scanned photos are made up of microscopic squares called pixels and are measured by dots per inch (dpi). The dpi determines resolution. For optimal quality, your photographs should be 300 dpi; line art needs to be 600 dpi.
- Use the “preview scan” feature on your scanner. This will show a preview of your scanned image and also allows you to size the scan frame to the size of your picture. Change the scan frame to the actual size of the picture or the section of the picture you want to include in your yearbook. This will make the actual scan time of the image faster and keep your files smaller.

Digital Cameras

These common elements should be evaluated when choosing a digital camera. The most important element is resolution, measured in megapixels.

- **MEGAPIXELS.** The more, the better! Any camera at 3 megapixels or above should be adequate. “Pixel” is a made-up word meaning “picture element.” The higher the pixel count, the larger your digital picture can be in your yearbook and the better it will look if you choose to size it down.
- **MEMORY.** Get as much memory as you can on your memory sticks/cards! Think of it as having extra film on hand. Most cameras come with 16 MB Flashsticks or cartridges. We recommend 256 mb. to 1 gig. cards or memory sticks.
- **OPTICAL ZOOM.** Look at the optical zoom numbers rather than digital. Digital zoom is not “real.” It causes the image recording software to make up pixels based on the ones nearest to it, and that can make for a fuzzy end product.
- **BATTERIES.** How will you recharge your batteries? Will you be downloading your photos to just one computer? If so, you may want to consider a docking station, which connects to one computer and recharges your batteries while downloading photos. Consider your workflow when you are looking at accessories so that you can save time while working on your yearbook.
- **IMAGE TRANSFER.** If you don’t have a docking station that fits with your camera, consider purchasing a card reader that easily transfers your images from camera to computer.
- **FLASH MODES.** If possible, purchase a camera with red-eye reduction modes and fill flash. Fill flash eliminates shadows in backlit areas.

Identifying Your Photographs

Film photographs

Do not press hard when you mark your photos! Pressing hard can damage the front of your photograph. It is best not to use ink as it will rub off on the photo below it. These problems cannot be repaired by Memory Book Company.

Mark the back of the photo with a number or caption. This will ensure that if the photo is displaced in shipping we can match it back to its location and caption on your page.



Digital photographs

We accept both jpeg format and tiff format photographs. If you are producing a black and white yearbook, you can submit color photos and we will convert those to black and white for you. If you are producing a color yearbook, you can leave your pictures in RGB mode. When saving your digital camera photos and scans onto your hard drive, make sure that you name them descriptive names, but be careful not to use long names (over 18 characters) as some programs and formats will not consistently recognize files with long names. Also, do not use characters and spaces in the name of the file (Johnny/Emily--best) for the same reason. Instead use only letters in the name of your file. (JohnnyEmilybest.tiff) Anything after the period tells the computer what type of file it is trying to process.



Do not leave digital photo names as the numbers assigned by the digital camera. When you have more than one photo with the same name, in the process of finishing your yearbook, the program will only recognize one 001-560 photo of the little girl in pink and put her in every place that you had placed a photo with the same name throughout your yearbook.

