

# Shoot! How to Improve Your Photos in 1 Minute

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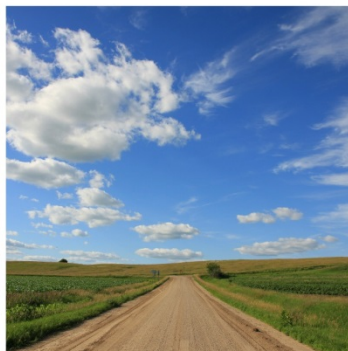
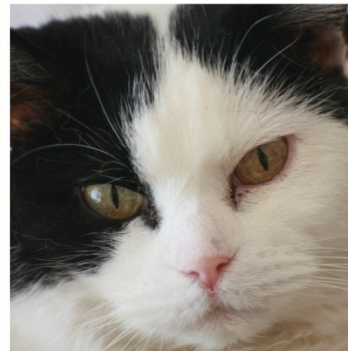
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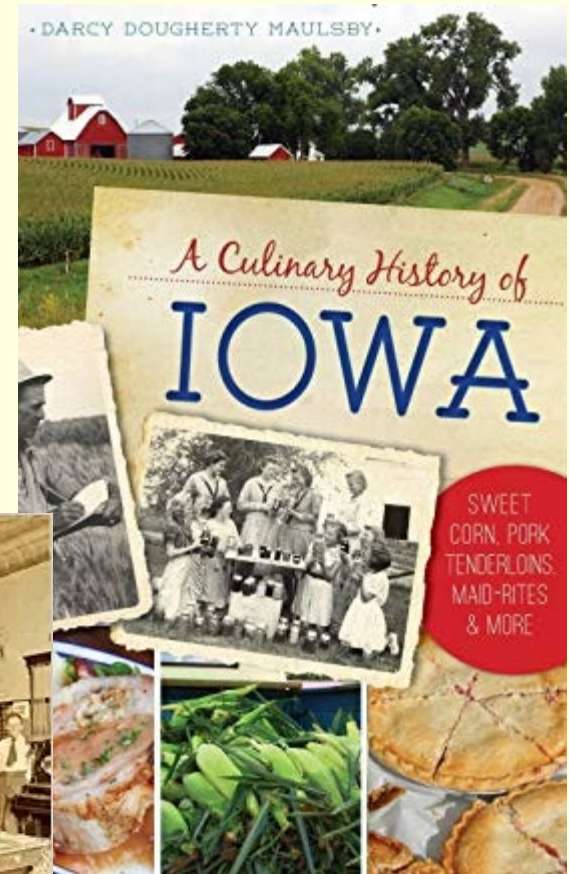
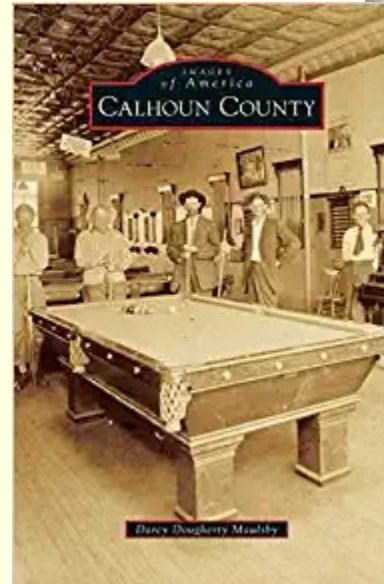
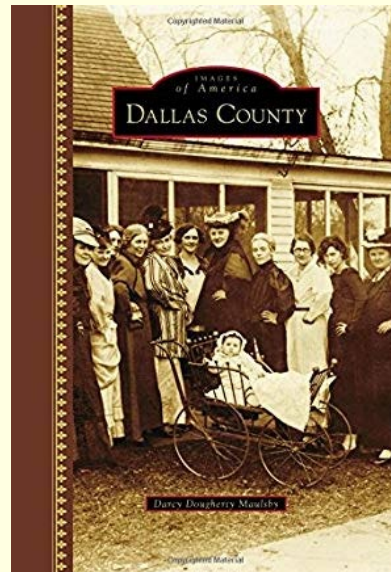
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# You don't take great photos; you make them.



# You never know where you may want to use your photos

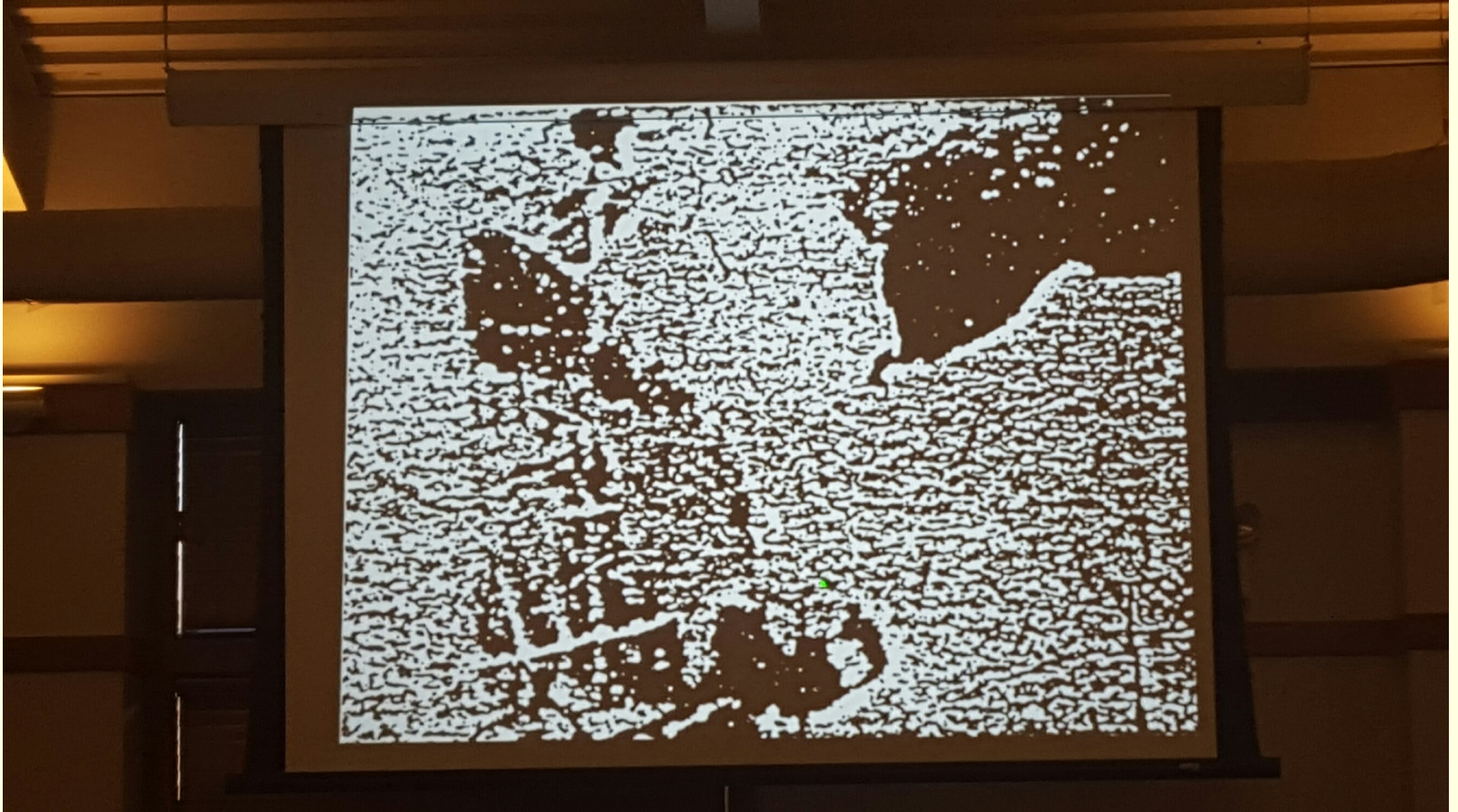
- Social media
- Blog posts
- Newspaper/magazine articles
- Promotional materials
- PowerPoints
- Books





# What do you see?

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# Take pictures with your heart.

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- What captured your interest in a scene?
- That's likely where the emotion lies.



# 1. Always watch the light.

- Lighting will make or break a picture. While you can't always change the lighting (or the position of some of your subjects, like this barn), don't give up.



Just moving this farmer a few feet to the south made all the difference.





# Get to know the lighting on your farm.

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Pay  
attention  
to details  
like  
shadows.

# Chase the light!

- It's almost hard to believe these photos were shot just minutes apart near Ft. Dodge one cold January day. I'm glad I drove down the road to chase the light.





# Headlights at sunset

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# Let clouds be your friend on a bright, sunny day

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# Iowa sunsets are the best!

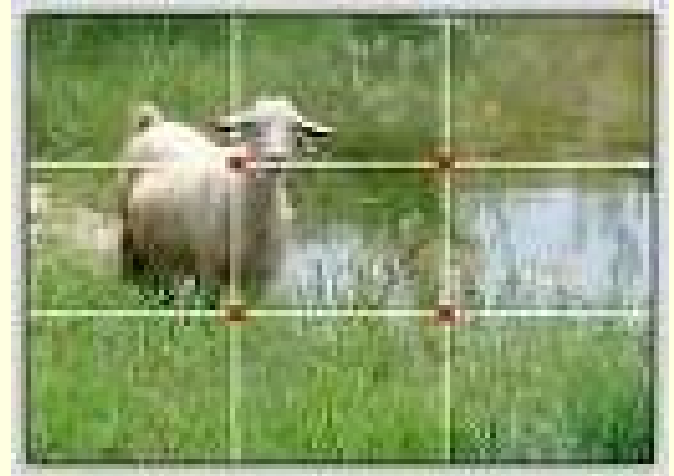
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## 2. Follow the rule of thirds.

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- Imaginary lines are drawn, dividing the image into thirds both horizontally and vertically. You place important elements of your composition where these lines intersect. Use this to add visual appeal to your images.



# Can you see the rule of thirds?

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Notice how the rule of thirds adds more visual interest

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# 3. Move in closer.

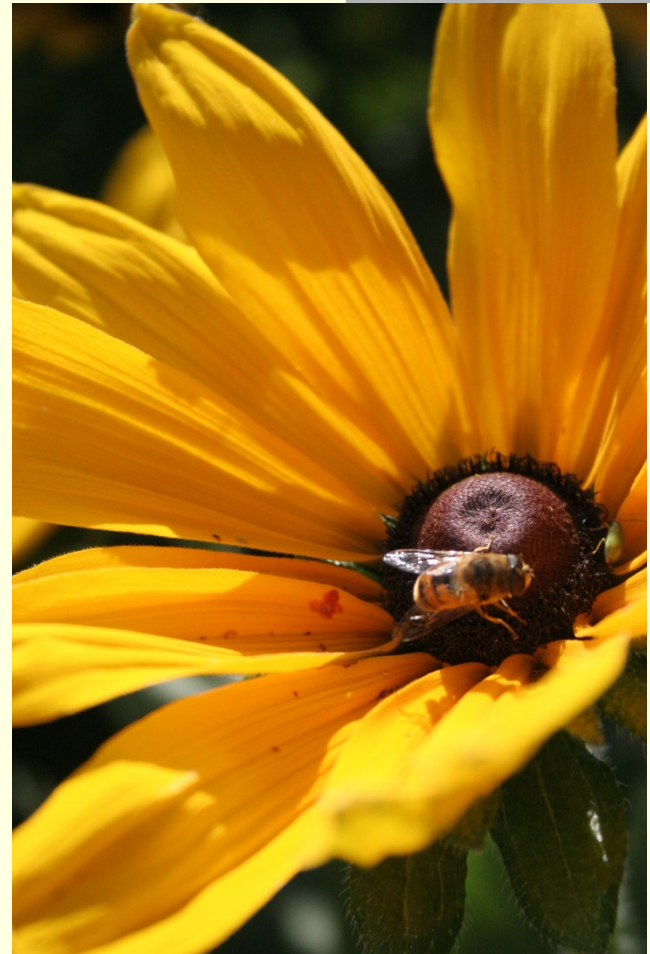
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Think you're close enough? Zoom with your feet, take another step or two closer to your subject, and you'll create a better photo.



See how the photo on the right commands your attention and keys in on details?

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## 4. Focus on the eyes.

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This is true for people,  
pets, insects, etc.



# Capture emotion

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## 5. Shoot during the “golden hours.”

Use the “golden hours” of the early morning (sunrise to 9 a.m.) and evening (4 p.m. to sunset in the winter and anytime after 7 p.m. in the summer) to get exceptional lighting. Avoid the harsh mid-day sun, if possible.





# Blah Corn vs. Golden Corn

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Same ear of corn shot just minutes apart, but with a different camera angle (and a different focus on the light).

The golden hour isn't always golden but can still make great photos: foggy sunrise at Lake City

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# Foggy December morning, Greene County, Iowa

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# Also take advantage of the “blue hours”

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# Evening shadows add interest

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## 6. Shoot year-round. Winter offers a great time for striking photos.

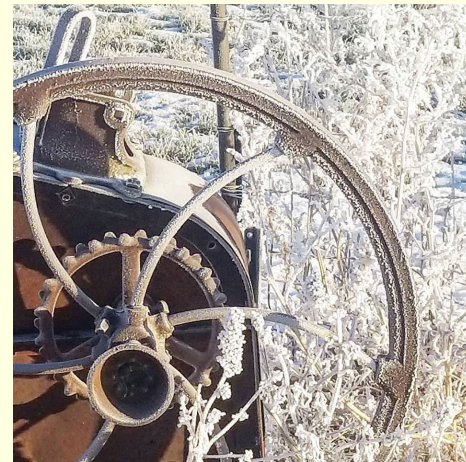
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# Frost makes for great photos

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# Fall colors are the best

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- Late afternoon sun
- Photo editing basics:
- Instagram or Lightroom
- Cropping, if needed
- Exposure/contrast, if needed
- Sharpening/structure
- Saturation/vibrance
- Experiment with filters



# Look for unique framing opportunities as you shoot year-round.

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## 7. Tell a story.

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If you're taking photos of people, create “environmental shots” that and portray more about the person's personality and interests.



This story is about young cattle producers--  
notice the cows and the pastures.

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# Hard at work!

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Tip: Position your subject correctly in front of big buildings.





# Corn chipping technology

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# German pigs eat beer and pretzels!



# Showcase your local community





## 8. Adjust your perspective.

Change your shooting angle (get up on a step stool or ladder, or squat down) to create more interesting images.



# Move around!

- Take lots of photos. Don't skimp. Digital makes it easy (and inexpensive) to experiment. Try horizontals and verticals. Also, don't trust the screen.



# Best of Show —close up

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The photo on the right shows an up-close view of corn in my dad's field by Yetter. See how a unique angle makes the viewer take a new look at a common sight. It won Best of Show at the 2009 Calhoun County Expo.





## 9. Notice the details.

- Watch the background (avoid distractions) and pay attention to the foreground—look for creative ways to frame your subject and tell the story.



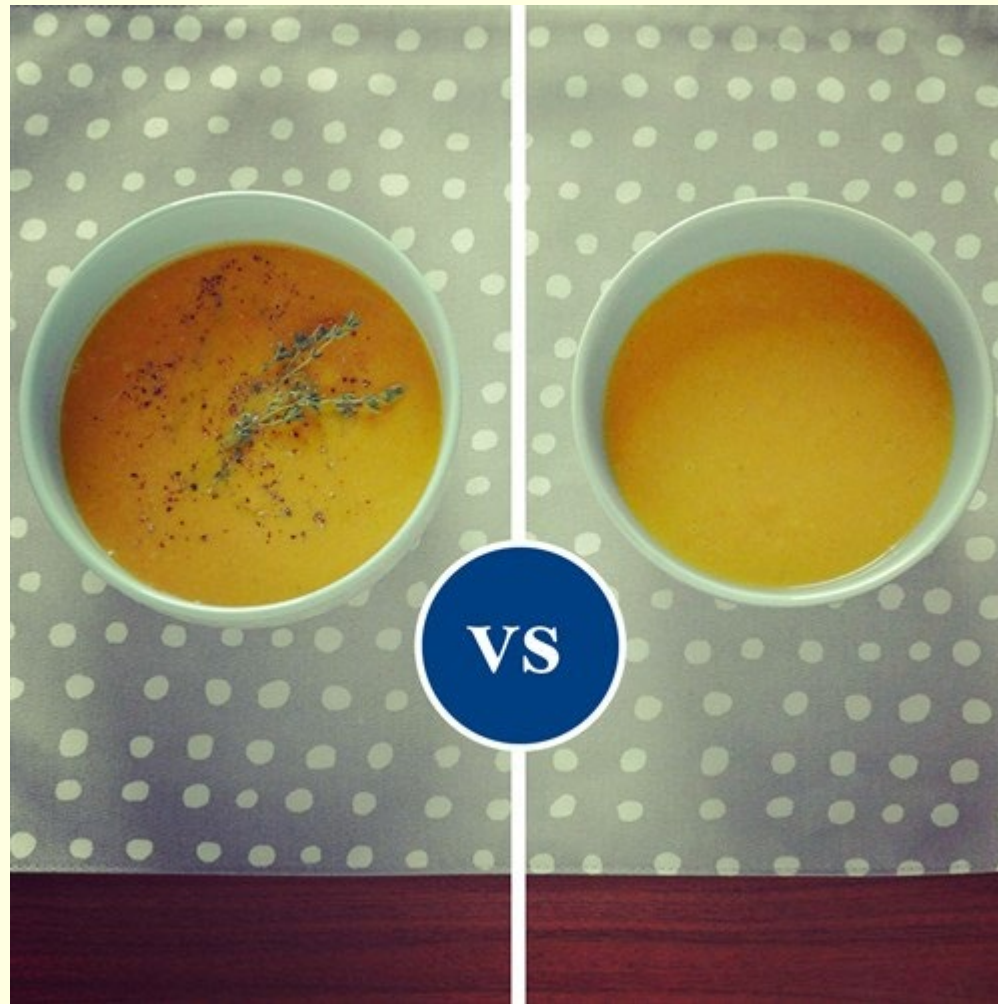
# Steaming pile at German dairy farm

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# Little details can make a big impact.

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**10. Look for leading lines and curves. They make a photo more dynamic and interesting.**

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# Leading lines also add a sense of motion and energy to a photo.

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This shot won a top prize at the 2014 Clay County Fair's conservation photo contest.



# Lines in food

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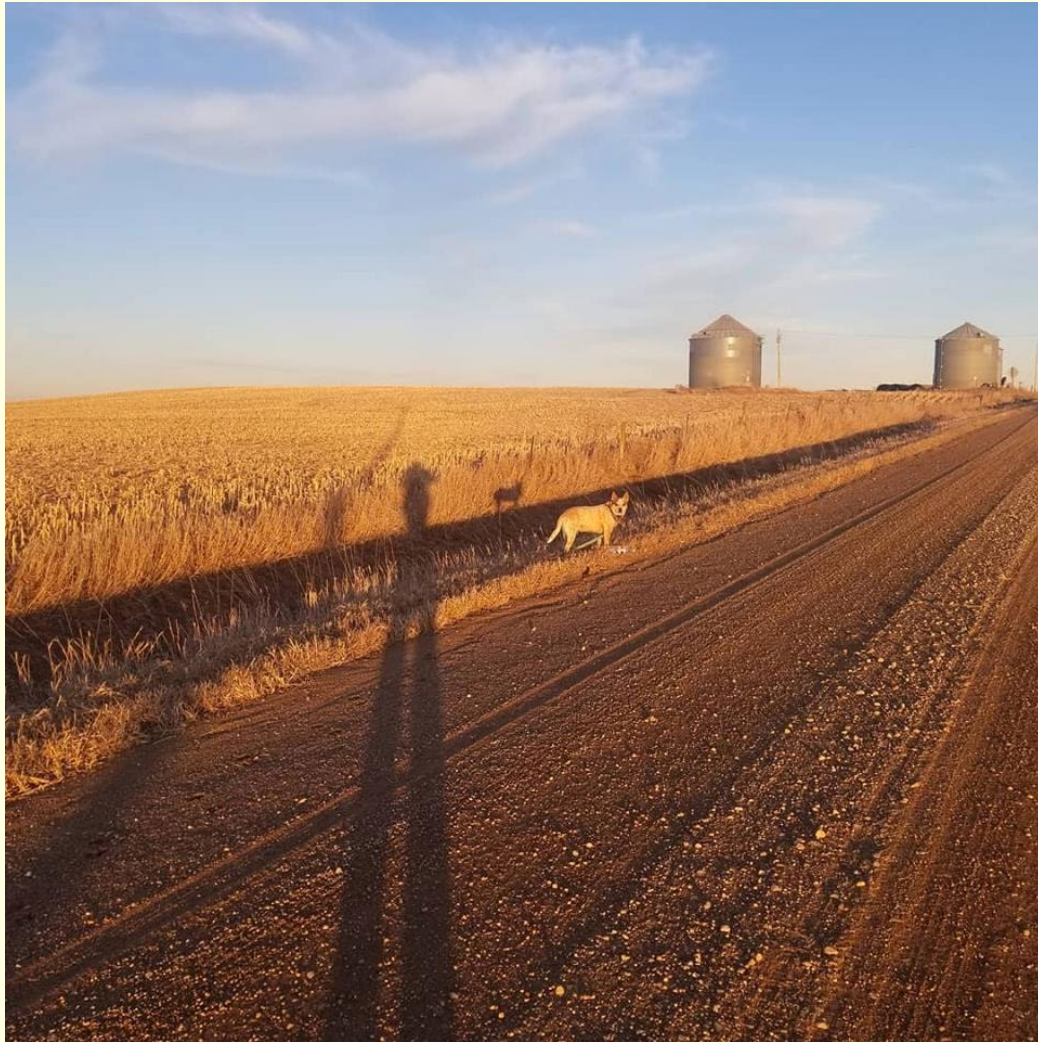
Christmas  
dinner!





# Have fun with lines and shadows

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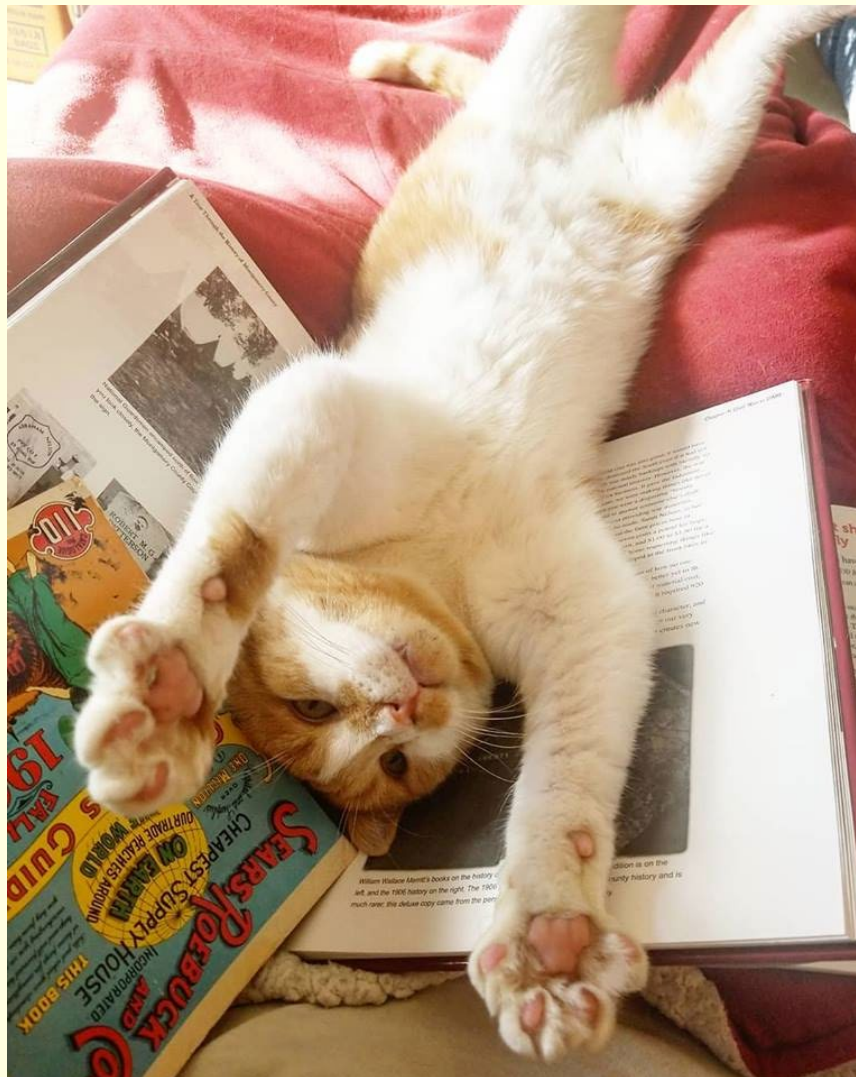


# Tilt the camera to add more interest.

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# “Fe-line” –Lieutenant Dan





# Also look for curves.

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Lead viewers down the path with curves and light.

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# Bonus tip: Prepare for the decisive moment.

- The decisive moment occurs when action is at its peak. You have to anticipate the decisive moment so you're ready to snap the picture. Think of when a child is opening a gift, or playing with a gift for the first time. The scene can change in a split second.





# Anticipate action—be patient.

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# Another bonus tip: Set the mood.

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Darcy Maulsby



# Try to capture emotion.

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# Look for connections—or create them!

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# Include hands.

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# Blend photos and words for emotional impact.

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# Yet another bonus tip: seek simplicity.

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Less is more.



# Look for uncluttered backgrounds.

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Try this! It's even possible with a cell phone.

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# Some final thoughts...

- \* **Be prepared.** Make sure you have at least one set of fully charged camera batteries and a large enough memory card. Set the camera to the highest quality and image resolution.

- \* **Have fun, and keep learning!**



# Can you relate??

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# Let's stay in touch!

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- **Remember, you don't take great photos; you make them.**

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