
SONJ PHOTO CONTEST:
WINTER 2021

SONJ Photo Contest: Winter 2021

How to make stronger photos, what to consider when taking photos with a cell phone, how to upload them to the contest page, and the reveal of the contest themes.

marco

Introduction

Cell phone photography

Some tips and tricks on how to make stronger photos

How to upload your images for the contest

The three categories for SONJ Photo Contest: Winter 2021!

Marco Catini

Professional photographer
- Weddings and events
- Fine art
- Corporate work

Special Olympics volunteer since 2015
- SONJ
- SOUSA
- SONA

“You don’t take
a photograph,
you make it.”

-Ansel Adams

Cell phone photography

“The best camera is the camera you have with you.”

Great equipment can help in challenging situations (light, weather, etc.), but it cannot replace vision and creativity.

Let’s look at some of the things we have be mindful of when using our cell phones for photography.

Cell phone photography

- **Clean the lens**

Clean the lens

Our cell phones spend a lot of time in places that aren't usually squeaky clean, like our pants pockets or purses. And we're not always overly careful when holding the phone in our hands, possibly smudging the lens with our fingers.

So, remember to clean the lens once in a while. Use a microfiber cloth, or a lens cleaning wipe. Don't use anything aggressive or pointy or scratchy.

And while you're at it: clean the whole phone.

Cell phone photography

- Clean the lens
- **Bright screen makes everything look shiny**

Bright screen makes everything look shiny

Your phone’s screen is backlit. That means that there is a source of light behind the screen, and that’s great! Everything looks bright and shiny.

But, this also means that your photos may not be as bright as they seem. Perhaps you noticed a difference in brightness when printing some of your photos.

Check your phone’s brightness level.

Cell phone photography

- Clean the lens
- Bright screen makes everything look shiny
- **Make yourself familiar with the functions (focus, brightness, burst mode, filters, etc.)**

Make yourself familiar with the functions

- Grid lines
- Burst mode
- HDR
- Camera modes (portrait, panoramic, slow motion, time lapse)
- Focus
- Brightness
- Filters (black and white and other presets)
- Flash

Tips and tricks on how to make stronger photos

Tips and tricks on how to make stronger photos

- **Which 1000 words do you want to say?**

Which 1000 words do you want to say?

Look at that building! It says Motown on its side! But too much sky in the image.

Which 1000 words do you want to say?

Ok, better. But that car to the left isn't helping.

Which 1000 words do you want to say?

Move a bit closer, and the car is gone. But I don’t have the whole building in the frame.

Which 1000 words do you want to say?

Much better, the car is out of the frame, we can see the whole building, and the street gives some depth. But those tree branches on the right are distracting.

Which 1000 words do you want to say?

A slightly different angle provides more depth, but the tree branches are still there.
And what happened to the horizon?

Which 1000 words do you want to say?

There we go, much better: straight horizon, no car on the left, and the whole building is in the frame.

Which 1000 words do you want to say?

Cell phone photography

- Clean the lens
- Bright screen makes everything look shiny
- Make yourself familiar with the functions (focus, brightness, burst mode, filters, etc.)
- **How does a cell phone camera zoom?**

How does a cell phone camera zoom?

There is optical zoom and digital zoom. Optical zoom is when the optical elements in a lens move in order to bring the subject closer.

Most cell phone cameras use digital zoom. This means that it does not really zoom into what's in front of you, but it enlarges the pixels it captures on the sensor. There are some exceptions to this, as some newer phones have optical zoom, too, and some use hybrid zoom, which combine the two technologies.

How does a cell phone camera zoom? (continued)

This means, that when using your cell phone, you should always try to zoom with your feet.

As in: Get as close as you safely can to take your photo.

How does a cell phone camera zoom? (continued)

From 100 yards away, zoom to the maximum

How does a cell phone camera zoom? (continued)

From 100 yards away, zoom at maximum, cropped

How does a cell phone camera zoom? (continued)

Zoom with your feet.

From 100 yards away, zoom at maximum, cropped

Standing in front of it.

Tips and tricks on how to make stronger photos

- Which 1000 words do you want to say?
- **What the camera sees vs. what you see**

What the camera sees vs. what you see.

When a camera sees something, then it is just that: It captures whatever it is pointed at.

A lot more is happening when you see something. Sure, your eyes see what they are pointed at, but your brain interprets it by applying memories, associations, likes and dislikes. It filters distracting elements and focuses on what you want it to.

What the camera sees vs. what you see.

I like the building, but the memorial in front is in the way of what I want to see.

What the camera sees vs. what you see.

Look at that, moving around the memorial revealed a fountain. But those orange pylons and chain are not pretty.

What the camera sees vs. what you see.

Moving closer to the railing puts the pylons and the chain out of the way.

What the camera sees vs. what you see.

Zooming in minimizes the foreground, making it a bit calmer. But it’s still not making me happy.

What the camera sees vs. what you see.

So I walk up to the building, and discover the intricate detail of the door.

What the camera sees vs. what you see.

Standing right at the building, I look up and I see something I find interesting: geometry lines, light and shadows.

What the camera sees vs. what you see.

Bonus image: don’t forget to turn around.

When you are done with your photo: turn around and see what’s behind you. It may be something interesting!

Cell phone photography

- Clean the lens
- Bright screen
- Make yourself familiar with the functions (focus, brightness, burst mode, filters, etc.)
- What is digital zoom?
- **Why does sensor size matter? And what is a sensor, anyway?**

Why does image sensor size matter? And what is an image sensor, anyway?

In very few words: The sensor is the where a digital camera captures the light coming in through the lens. The millions of pixels on the sensor do the work.

Why does image sensor size matter? And what is an image sensor, anyway?

In a few more words: The size of the pixels influences how well it can capture light and color.

Bigger pixels have advantages, some of them being sharpness and low light performance.

Smaller pixels and sensors are two of the main reasons cell phone images can be “noisy”, and combined with digital zoom, contribute to pixelated images.

Different sensor sizes

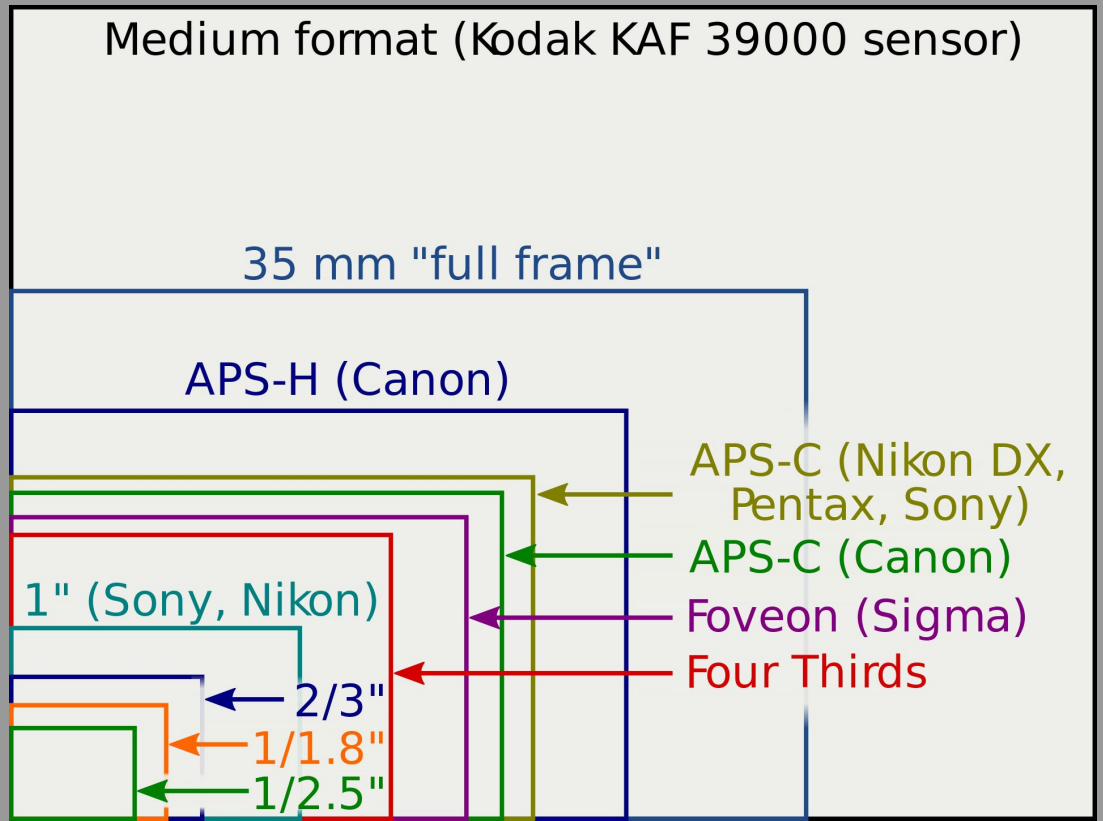


Image: Wikipedia

Why does image sensor size matter? And what is an image sensor, anyway?

In case you want more words, this is what Wikipedia says:

An image sensor or imager is a sensor that detects and conveys information used to make an image. It does so by converting the variable attenuation of light waves (as they pass through or reflect off objects) into signals, small bursts of current that convey the information. The waves can be light or other electromagnetic radiation. Image sensors are used in electronic imaging devices of both analog and digital types, which include digital cameras, camera modules, camera phones, optical mouse devices, medical imaging equipment, night vision equipment such as thermal imaging devices, radar, sonar, and others. As technology changes, electronic and digital imaging tends to replace chemical and analog imaging.

The two main types of electronic image sensors are the charge-coupled device (CCD) and the active-pixel sensor (CMOS sensor). Both CCD and CMOS sensors are based on metal–oxide–semiconductor (MOS) technology, with CCDs based on MOS capacitors and CMOS sensors based on MOSFET (MOS field-effect transistor) amplifiers. Analog sensors for invisible radiation tend to involve vacuum tubes of various kinds, while digital sensors include flat-panel detectors.

Cell phone photography

- Clean the lens
- Bright screen
- Make yourself familiar with the functions (focus, brightness, burst mode, filters, etc.)
- What is digital zoom?
- Why does sensor size matter? And what is a sensor, anyway?
- **Advantages**

Advantages of using cell phone cameras

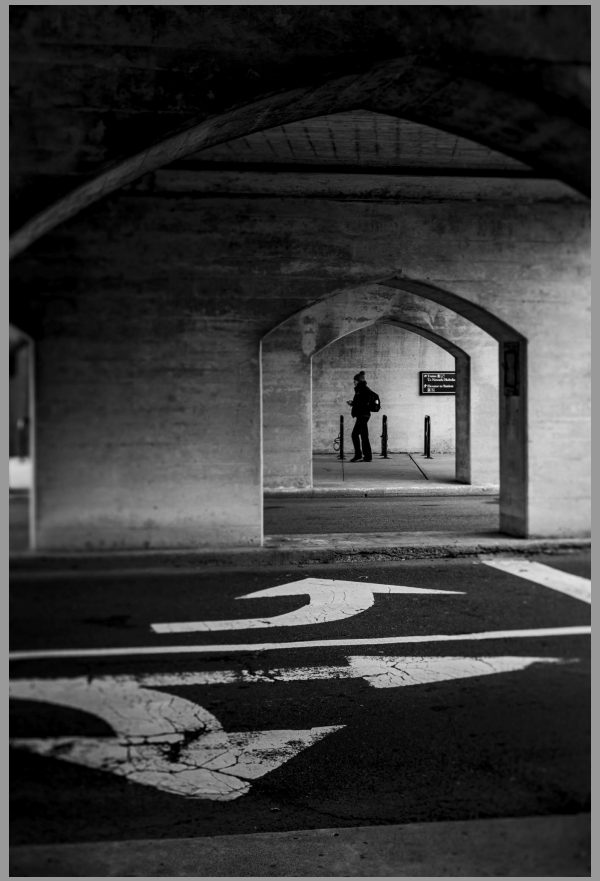
- Portability
- All in one: photos, videos, editing
- Ease of sharing
- No need to buy an expensive camera

Tips and tricks on how to make stronger photos

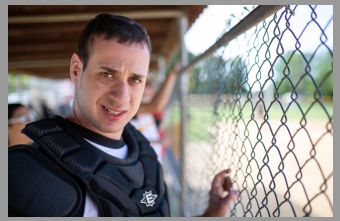
- Which 1000 words do you want to say?
- What the camera sees vs. what you see
- **Photograph what you like**

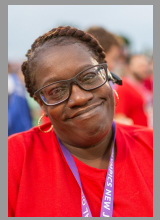
Photograph what you like

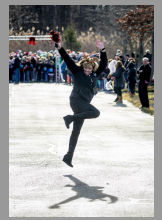
Photograph what you like

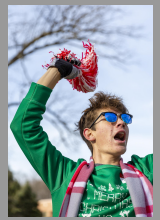


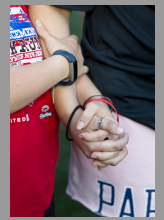
Photograph what you like

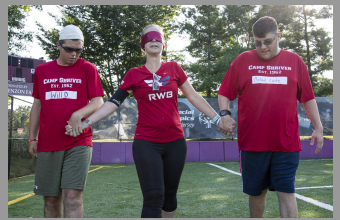




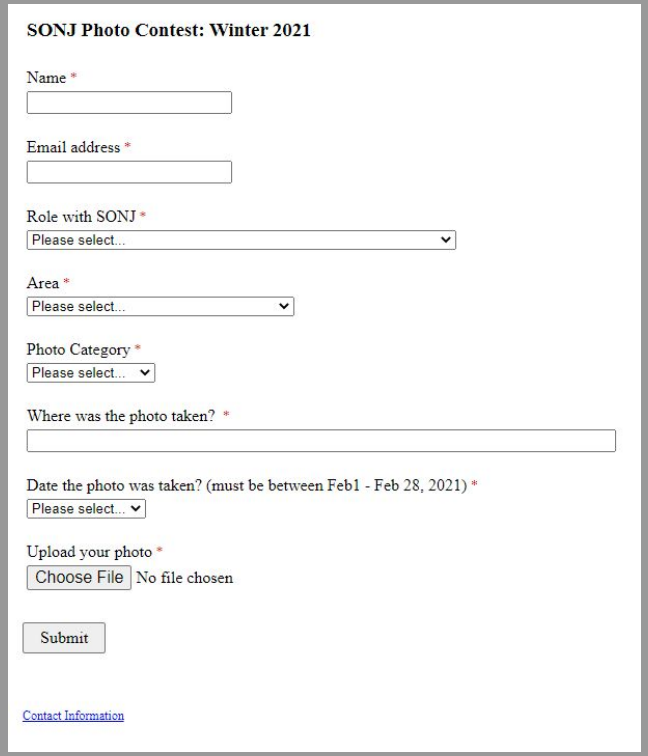








How to upload your images for the contest



SONJ Photo Contest: Winter 2021

Name *

Email address *

Role with SONJ *
Please select...

Area *
Please select...

Photo Category *
Please select...

Where was the photo taken? *

Date the photo was taken? (must be between Feb1 - Feb 28, 2021) *
Please select...

Upload your photo *
Choose File No file chosen

Submit

Contact Information

The categories for SONJ Photo Contest Winter 2021

This winter, SONJ wants you to get outside, stay active, and take photos.

1: My workout

What are you doing to stay active?

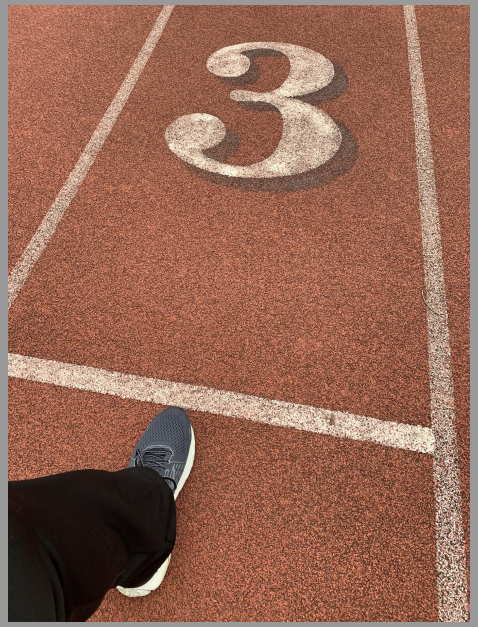
Virtual events, online workouts, running in the park, walking around your neighborhood?

We are all doing something different, so share a creative photo of you and your activities.

1: My workout


COURTS
FOR
TENNIS
ONLY
PROPER TENNIS
SHOES MUST
BE WORN AT
ALL TIMES
All Star

1: My workout

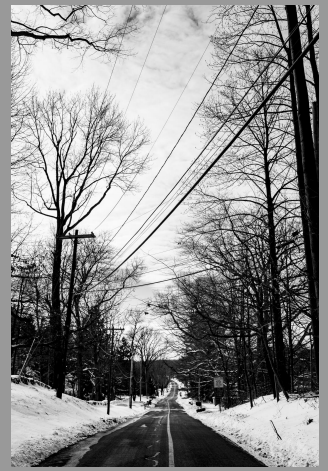


2: Winter Scene

Embrace the cold weather, get outside and show us your winter weather scenes.

What does winter mean? Snowmen, icicles, trees with no leaves, people bundled up, seeing your breath...

Winter Scene



3: My Town

We all live somewhere in New Jersey. Show us your town.

A famous landmark, the town sign, something that represents where you live.

My Town


tacoria


WELCOME TO MORRISTOWN HIGH SCHOOL
STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS
COLONIALS
VISITOR
DOWN
TO GO
QUARTER
BALL ON

Summary

Categories

1. My Workout
2. Winter Scene
3. My Town

Time frame

February 1 - February 28, 2021

Questions and answers

marco@catini.net
(write SONJ Photo Contest in the subject line)

Feel free to email me with any questions regarding this contest, or photography in general.

The art of Visual Storytelling
https://livestream.com/bheventspace/events/8978085

Thank you very much & have fun!

We are looking forward
to seeing your beautiful photos!