

# Cell Phone Photography at Indian Trails Public Library



## **Class Outline:**

- 1) Evolution of the Cellphone Camera
- 2) Techniques for better pictures
- 3) Editing Apps
- 4) Questions, Answers and Review

## **Expected Outcomes:**

- 1) Ability to take a better picture with your cell phone
- 2) Understanding of how to choose editing software

## Cell Phones and Cameras

- Sharp Technologies released the very first cellular phone with a camera in 2000. The camera would use .35 megapixels and you had to connect it to your computer to get the pictures.
- November 2002 brought the camera phone to the US via Sprint technology. It was a flip phone.
- By the end of 2004, more than half of the cellphones on the market had cameras as a feature.
- Nokia introduced the first 5 MP phone in 2007...just a few short months before the iPhone and its 2MP camera came out. The iPhone beat out the higher capacity Nokia simply because of the ease of use and editing features.
- Flash forward to today: at \$567, the Nokia Lumia 1020 is a “niche device” that puts creative controls and editing at your finger tips. Features 41 megapixels; the iPhone 5s features 8.

# How Do I Take Better Pictures?

Move beyond your average point and shoot with your cellphone; a few simple techniques will help!

**1. Practice Makes Perfect:** Just like with any skill, taking lots of pictures is the sure fire way to make sure that you are at the top of your point and shoot game with your cell. Also, take more than one shot! You might get a real winner that you never expected to have. Deleting too quickly can cut down on some awesome, unexpected photos.



**2. Don't Zoom In; Get Closer:** Your cell camera will zoom in easily, but remember, this zoom is different than your regular camera! When you zoom in on something with your cellphone, you are simply stretching out the pixels, resulting in a distorted pic. Remember that you can also be TOO close and get a blurry product.

Get physically closer to your subject to get those up close and personal details!

**3. Shoot at Eye Level:** For a diverse type of shot, try shooting at eye level. When we shoot with a downward or upward angle, we get cool perspectives...but, we also block out lighting or create shadows. Getting down to eye level will give you a great picture and give our camera something specific to focus on.

Play the angles game, too! Try a new perspective for a unique shot.



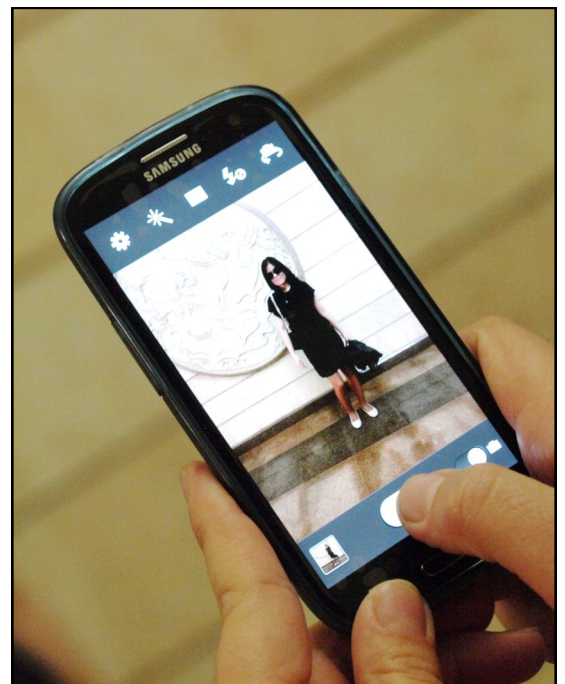
# Taking Better Cell Phone Pictures (Continued)

4. **Watch Your Light:** Your regular camera has a flash setting. So does your cellphone camera! Most cameras have settings to a neutral point—auto or off are common. If you are going to be in an area where you know it will be pretty dark, then you might want to turn your camera's flash settings to on. Low light pictures come out too dark and very grainy. If you want your camera to have the to decide whether or not you need the flash, try Auto.



5. **Background:** A plain background shows off your subject better. When you're shooting the picture, focus on the subject more than the background. Double check your placement, too! Is a basketball hoop apparently growing out of your child's shoulder? Try to do your best to fill the whole frame with the subject.

6. **Resolution:** Your camera will have more than one resolution setting. Setting the camera to the highest setting (even if only temporarily) will give you the best picture quality. Think about how you want to share these pictures. If you're going to email them or upload them to social media, they will look much different on a computer screen than they will on a cellphone screen. You may not see the difference on your phone, but you will in the future or during the editing process.





## Taking Better Pictures (Continued)

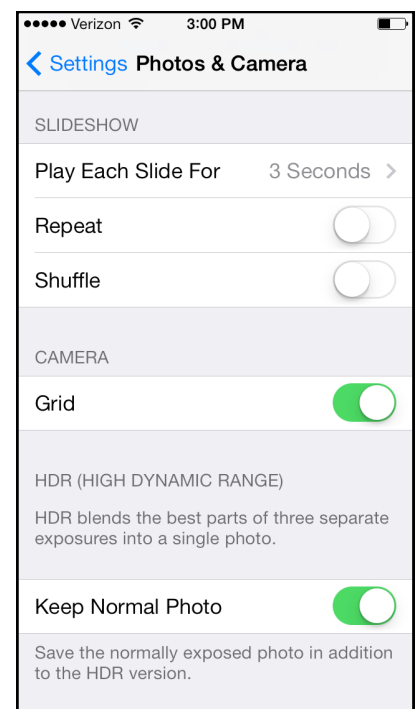
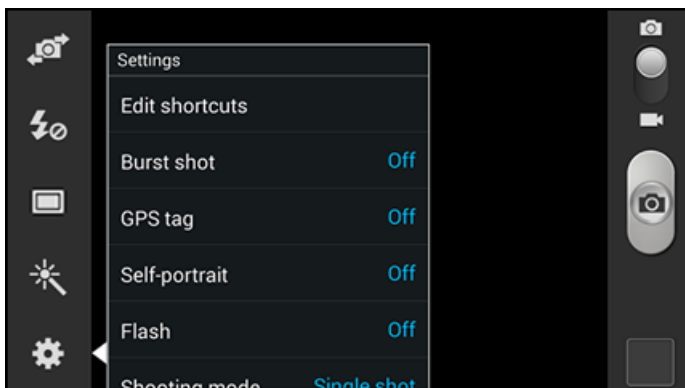
7. **Steady, Steady!:** Find a way to steady your hands while you're taking your pictures. This might mean bracing your arm against a table or using a cup to prop up your cell phone. Get creative with what's around you! Use two hands to take your picture.

You should also keep your hand steady for a few moments after pushing the shutter button. The picture is still processing, so keep it steady!



8. **Keep Your Lens Clean:** Just like many other things that fall into our pockets and purses, gunk and lint cling to your camera lens surface. Before taking a picture, use a lint-free cloth to wipe away any debris.

9. **Know Your Camera's Settings:** Your camera comes with some very diverse settings options. You can try them out...change them! You will always be able to change them back. You might find that the options that you are trying will give you a better photo. Here, we have Samsung and iPhone 5 menu examples. Your phone may vary, but trying them out is still a great idea.



# Great Photo Editing Apps...for FREE!

1. **Adobe Photoshop Express:** Designed for on-the-go photo editing, this is an entry-level photo editing app that offers a handful of features for quick edits and automatic fixes. Basic editing tools are included. You can also enhance photos using slide controls to adjust clarity, contrast, tint, exposure, temperature and more. The app also supports panoramic photo editing, has social media integration, and comes with frames, borders and more than 20 filters to add special effects.



2. **Snapseed:** Great app for polishing your photos! The Auto Correct feature enhances colors, exposure and contrast in a single tap. The Tune Image feature tweaks brightness, shadows, white balance, saturation and other effects, and the Selective Adjust feature also lets you highlight and focus specific objects or areas. Other features include frames, texture and tone adjustment, and sharing via email, Google+ and more. The app also comes with several filters and effects to give your photos a unique look and feel.

3. **Instagram:** This is the app that you kids use. Instagram is owned by Facebook and has grown to over 90 million users. The Instagram app available to download for all devices is not so much a photo editing app but more of a photo filter app and social network combined. The app automatically crops your photographs to a square and then you can choose a filter and/or borders. This creates Polaroid type photo's which are perfect for products and quick snaps. Although this app is not an advanced photo editor, its social nature is its main appeal.



4. **Aviary:** It's not as powerful as some of the other options here, but it does give you editing options that are powerful enough to get the job done in most cases, and get them done quickly and easily without risking the original photos. Aviary's one-tap auto-enhance is fantastic to use, and unlike other tools, it fixes more than it ruins. You can easily tweak color temperature, remove blur or fuzziness, adjust brightness and contrast, crop and rotate your shot, or straighten it if it's just a little off-kilter. It's simple, and if you don't have a lot of time to pore over a shot, it definitely pulls its weight.

5. **Picstitch:** The best thing about Pic Stitch is that you can edit all of these photos before you insert them into your frame. And even though Pic Stitch is first and foremost an app to create framed images, it doesn't skimp on its editing options. You can add filter effects, enhance color, add stickers, draw emphasis to certain aspects of your photo, add text, edit red eye and much, much more. And you'll see even more options available within all of these editing tools, but they'll cost ya. You can share your collages on social media or send them to print at Walgreen's.

