**iPhone Photography Class**

**Summer 2025**

**iPhone camera basics:**

The iPhone has loads of features, in some ways our iPhones are actually more powerful than a DSLR camera.

The iPhone is the hardware

Our imagination and our brain are the software.
What is the best camera to use?

**Important tip #1:**  get into the habit of keeping your lenses clean by wiping them off with a microfiber cloth. A dirty lens will give you photographs that aren’t sharp, they may look foggy, and have low contrast. If you forget your microfiber cloth, a clean corner of your shirt will also do in a pinch. Don’t use paper napkins, Kleenex, toilet paper etc… as these may end up scratching the glass lenses.

**Open the camera by:**

1. Tap camera button on your home screen.
2. Swipe right to left on the lock screen.
3. Touch and hold the camera icon on your lock screen.
4. Open the Control Center and tap on the camera app.
5. Ask Siri to open the camera for you.
6. Program the Action Button on iPhone 15 and 15 Pro

**Take a photo by:**

1. Tapping the shutter button
2. Pressing either the up or down volume buttons on your iPhone.
3. Using the camera app on your Apple Watch

Switch between camera modes: Swipe left or right on the camera screen to access:

**Time Lapse:** Select Time-lapse mode in your camera settings and begin recording by touching the shutter button. This setting will allow you to make a video that speeds up slow motion. For example you could capture your pet turtle racing around the inside of his tank. Using a tripod will give you MUCH better results.

**Slo-motion:** Select Slo-mo mode in your camera settings and begin recording by touching the shutter or volume buttons. This is a way to capture a video that runs in slow motion. Results will only be seen during playback. Using a tripod will give you MUCH better results.

**Cinematic Mode:** The difference between Cinematic mode and normal video mode is that it applies a depth-of-field effect that keeps the subject of your video sharp while adding a blur effect to both the foreground and background.

**Video:** Open camera, then select video mode. To begin filming, either tap the record button or the volume button on the side of your iPhone. While recording a video you can also take a photograph by clicking on the white shutter button and zoom in or out by pinching the screen with two fingers or by sliding your finger across the zoom controls in the lower portion of your screen.

QuickTake video is a newer feature where you can do a long press on the shutter button in Photo mode and it will start a video recording session for as long as you’re pressing the shutter. On older iPhones (prior to iPhone 11, this will send you to “burst mode.”

Burst Mode on the newer iPhones can be accessed in Photo mode by pressing the shutter button and immediately sliding your finger to the left. Sliding the shutter to the right will activate Video Mode on your camera and will continue taking video until you press the stop button under the screen.

**Portrait:** The newer models of the iPhone have a “Portrait mode” Feature. This will allow you to make a photograph of a person, pet etc. that is in sharp focus while the background is blurred. This tends to highlight your subject and can form a very nice portrait. Open “Portrait mode. Drag the little yellow cube to choose your lighting mode.

Natural Light: The face is in sharp focus against a blurred background.

Studio Light: The face is brightly lit, and the photo has an overall clean look.

Contour Light: The face has dramatic shadows with highlights and lowlights.

Stage Light: The face is spotlit against a deep black background.

Stage Light Mono: The effect is similar to Stage Light, but the photo is in classic black and white.

High-Key Light Mono: Creates a grayscale subject on a white background.

Depth of field adjustment in Portrait mode can be done by clicking on the “*f”* (f-stop)and then moving the slider at the bottom of the screen. The *f* appears when the camera detects a person, a dog or a cat within the image. Depth of field is a term used by photographers that refers to how much is in focus in front of and behind your subject.

**Panoramic Mode:** Open the camera, scroll to “Pano-mode.” Click on the shutter and move your camera in the direction of the arrow, trying to keep the camera level and parallel to the horizon line. Tap the shutter a second time to stop the shot.
Tip: As tempting as it may be to shoot a really long pano, ie.180 degrees, the image won’t look good on your computer screen as it will be very wide and very short, causing your viewers to have to zoom in and scroll and scroll and scroll…

**Macro photos and video:** The camera in your iPhone should automatically switch to macro-mode when you get really close to a subject, from about 6 inches to roughly 2cm or about ¾ inches camera to subject distance. Macro will work in video, in slow-motion and time-lapse too.

**Optics:** Our cameras have the ability to zoom optically as well as digitally. Optical zoom allows you to make your subjects larger without a loss of detail. Digital zoom increases the size of the individual pixels and will make your subject larger, but with that there’s a loss of detail and sharpness. So, most photographers will tell you that the best way to zoom is with your feet. To access the optical zoom on your cameras, select the lens from the display on your screen. On the iPhone 14 Pro your choices are: .5, 1x, 2x and 3x. To access your digital zoom touch two fingers to the screen and either pinch or spread them out.

At this point, I want to show you a couple little things that you may already know. The first is to swipe down from the top right to the bottom left corner from your phone. This will give you access to several tools, and the one I want you to turn on is the screen auto rotate.

Next is going to your Settings and scroll down to Camera. In Camera, scroll down to Grid and turn it on. Just below that there’s the Level control, turn that on. These will help you to compose your images better, using the Rule of Thirds and keeping things vertical and level. I also keep Mirror Front Camera set to off so photographs shot with the front lens won’t appear reversed. settings set to off.

**Photo:**  This is the place where you’ll be making the majority of your photographs, whether they’re snapshots, or something more serious. It does a great job at helping you make great images nearly all the time. Holding your iPhone vertically will give you a photograph in what’s called “Portrait mode” and making a photograph horizontally is called “Landscape.”

The little icon at the bottom right of your screen that looks like this:  will switch your camera from the rear lens to the front lens for all those selfies that we so love to take. Make sure you clean the lens on the front of your iPhone is clean before taking a selfie too.

Below are some settings and adjustments while you’re using your iPhone in Photo Mode:


**Flash:** The iPhone flash settings are found in the top left corner of your screen. For the most part, keep your flash set to “off” as the flash barely works unless your subject is relatively close.



**Night Mode:** Night Mode is right next to the Flash icon. Use this when shooting in low-light situations. The number next to the half-moon icon tells you how long the exposure will be. Typically the exposure is only a few seconds, but you can manually adjust it on the slider that appears over the shutter button. Next to the Night Mode icon is the exposure icon: 0.0 click on that and you will find a slider appear just above the shutter. This will allow you to make the image you capture either darker or lighter. This feature is little short of amazing.



**Live Photo:** Live Photo is the icon at the top right corner of your screen. It captures about three seconds of video (and audio), from just before and just after you click the shutter.

Just like the rest of the icons, slash through the icon shows that Live Photo is off. You’ll probably want to leave this off unless you’re in an action situation as this will burn through memory and space on your iPhone.

To play back a Live Photo, simply touch the screen. To select a key photo or two from Live Photo, tap edit then touch the Live Photo at the bottom of the screen.
For special effects, after capture you can touch on the Live Photo icon at the top left of your screen to choose between Live, Loop, Bounce and Long Exposures.

**File types:**

Your iPhone normally comes set to save your images in HEIF format.

Keep in mind that HEIF (High Efficiency Image Format, HEIF images have a .heic file extension) allows for greater file compression, meaning each HEIF picture file takes up less storage space than a standard JPEG image, sometimes up to half the size per image. While JPEG images are larger, they’re also much more compatible without any conversion, and they might be easier to share for some users. Whether you want to use HEIF or JPEG for shooting iPhone pictures is up to you. That said, if you plan on using any Adobe product to manipulate your images post-capture, you’ll want to set your iPhone to capture in either .jpeg or RAW formats. RAW is basically an uncompressed image file that allows the most adjustments and manipulations after capture. However, this comes with a price, namely RAW files can be up to 48 MB in size!

Choose your preferred file type in Camera Settings.

**Format size:** A roughly normal format size (shape of your photograph) is 4:3, but you can change that to either a square format or 16:9 by clicking on the arrow at the top of the screen and seeing the pop-up options under the screen.

**Exposure adjustment:**


Tap the arrow at the top of your screen and you’ll see this icon at the bottom of your screen. Click on the icon then use the slider to adjust how dark or light the image will be.

**Self-timer:**



By clicking on the timer icon at the bottom of your screen you can set your camera to automatically take a photograph after either three or ten seconds.

**Filters:**



By clicking on the filters icon at the bottom of the screen you can change the color tones of your image, Vivid, vivid warm, vivid cool, etc. The last three are B&W modes that can make your images stand out from the crowd. I usually shoot with my filter set to “Original” as you can change this setting later in iPhoto.

**Photographic Styles:** Photographic styles are applied to portraits that you take in Photo mode. Your iPhone camera is automatically set to Standard—a balanced style that is true to life. To apply a different Photographic Style, do the following:

1. Open Camera , then tap the   icon at the top of your screen.
2. Tap , then swipe left to preview the different styles: Rich Contrast: Darker shadows, richer colors, and stronger contrast create a dramatic look. Vibrant: Wonderfully bright and vivid colors create a brilliant yet natural look. Warm: Golden undertones create a warmer look. Cool: Blue undertones create a cooler look. To change or adjust a Photographic Style that you set, tap  at the top of the screen. To stop using a Photographic Style, select Standard from the style choices. To customize a Photographic Style, tap the Tone and Warmth controls below the frame, then drag the slider left or right to adjust the value.
3. Tap  to apply the Photographic Style.
4. Tap  to reset the values. You can also change Photographic Styles in Settings: go to Settings  > Camera > Photographic Styles.

By default your iPhone photos will end up in your Photo’s app (how convenient). This is a searchable library for your images and also where you can edit them as well.

Here’s a demonstration on some of the adjustments that you can make in Photos:

Pull up an image,

Show how to crop, flip, and rotate a photo
Magic wand tool etc.
Run through the adjustments that are available.

Try some of the things that you learned in class and send them to me.

If you have any questions, please contact me and I’ll see what I can do to help..
Damascusnights@yahoo.com In the subject line add “Palatine Library” and please include your name and any questions in the body of your email.