

# HFHI PHOTO SERVICES PHOTOGRAPHY TRAINING PACKAGE

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Only 12% of the people who pick up a newspaper read a story on the front page if no picture accompanies the story. Add a photograph—any photograph—and the readership of that story zooms up to 42%.

Kenneth Kobre

*Photojournalism: The Professional's Approach*

## **Plan Your Photographic Shoot for Habitat:**

### *Prepare*

- If needed, brush up on your photo skills by reading the HFHI document "Easy Steps To Taking Better Photographs" or other helpful materials, books and websites including:

101 Essential Tips: Photography by DK press

Digital Photography Pocket Guide by Derrick Story

<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/photography/>

Kodak's learning center at <http://www.kodak.com/US/en/nav/takingPics.shtml>

- Familiarize yourself with your end goals for the shoot. Determine if you or someone else will photograph and with what equipment. What will happen to the images afterwards?

- Check on photo releases—is it an organized Habitat build for which participants have signed a volunteer release which includes a photo release?

The HFH volunteer application release statement reads:

#### PHOTOGRAPHIC RELEASE

Volunteer and Guardian do hereby grant and convey unto Habitat all right, title, and interest in any and all photographic images and video or audio recordings made by Habitat during the Volunteer's participation in \_\_\_\_\_, including, but not limited to, any royalties, proceeds, or other benefits derived from such photographs or recordings.

- Have your materials together:
  - Gather your equipment & clean it
  - Have film (Kodak, Fuji or Agfa in Europe) or digital storage media plus batteries needed
  - Have note taking material &/or an assistant to gather caption information
  - Have information on the location/event & how to get there
  - Think about the weather & have the right supplies to keep you & your equipment working

**What the eye doesn't see, doesn't move the heart.**

**HAITIAN PROVERB**

**Plan Your Photographic Shoot for Habitat:**  
*Go Photograph*

- Gather frame-by-frame caption information—who, what, when, where, why & how.
- Depending on the situation & event, keep in mind that Habitat generally benefits most from a set of images which include:

HFH Shot Request List

1. Homeowners in front of their Habitat house
2. Habitat house by itself in a full, straight on, catalog-like view
3. Habitat house next to needy/former house/housing
4. Habitat house interiors with homeowners &/or volunteers
5. Construction going on—especially with people working together and especially with people representing diversity (age, gender, race, etc.)
6. Construction going on with homeowners doing sweat equity
7. Construction going on—overall scene
8. House dedication with homeowner receiving keys &/or bible
9. Homeowners to-be/applicants in front of their current "needy" house
10. General shots of need—overall look of a whole area
11. General shots of need—specific people and details
12. Habitat staff & volunteers at routine work with applicants, homeowners, volunteers, etc.

13. Scenic shots of your area/country which might identify your location to the rest of the world e.g. signage, scenic overlook, famous historic site

- Think about capturing a set of photographs that tell a whole story with visual interest.
  
- In your photos, generally try to avoid:
  1. T-shirts and logos advertising anything other than Habitat or a Habitat sponsor
  2. Shirtless men, naked children, & other scant attire
  3. Unsafe practices & children on active construction sites
  4. Though it may sound simplistic, in a stand-alone photo, it does not work for Habitat homeowners to look sad or people in need to look happy—avoid it.

## So You Want to Take Pictures...

Transform the way you see.

A photograph is not the event you are witnessing, the people's excited activity, the emotion in the air. It is what it becomes as an image viewed on a piece of paper, a computer monitor, or a projection screen. It is a two dimensional framing, a juxtaposition of shapes and colors and sizes.

It is flat. Items are not near or far. They take up a lot of the frame or a little of the frame; they are right or left or up or down from each other. They intersect at certain points. An object in the original scene that was a mile away is going to sit right next to a hand twelve inches from the lens. Changes or similarities in color or density or shadow, highlight certain items or areas or cause others to be indistinct. Our brain is constantly assisting our interpretation of what our eyes see. In their environmental context we easily see as distinct a white soccer ball from a white uniform. Or a mother's tan face from the brown tree trunk behind her. To someone else's eyes, removed from environmental clues, the two dimensional view is different indeed. Items that stood out, stood out in your mind, but in the photograph they can blend in, losing clarity or appeal. Think flat!

And think frame! Photographs are also set off from reality in their edges. Photographs typically have four edges-- top, bottom, left, right. Our normal eye view has none. Know your edges. Run your eye along the perimeter of the frame in the camera's viewfinder. Make the edges meaningful. Don't cut off something important. Use your camera's rectangular window on the world to isolate your subject and make a statement. A picture of everything will be a picture of nothing. Know the point of your photograph and make it with your framing choice.

A photograph is not the event before you.

Sometimes I do get to places just when God's ready to have somebody click the shutter.

*Ansel Adams*

# EASY STEPS TO TAKING BETTER PHOTOGRAPHS:

## *KNOW YOUR EQUIPMENT*

### BE GOOD TO YOUR CAMERA AND YOUR FILM

- ❑ Do not allow your equipment and film to "bake" in a hot car or other place.
- ❑ Do not put your film in checked baggage for an airline flight-- put it in your carry-on which goes through less intense x-rays & ask for a hand check of film whenever possible. X-ray effects are cumulative.
- ❑ Keep your equipment and film clean and dry.
- ❑ Clean the lens with materials for lens cleaning.

### READ THE CAMERA'S DIRECTIONS

- ❑ Know how to turn the flash on.
- ❑ Know and observe the maximum flash range, probably about 15ft = 4.5m.
- ❑ Know and observe the minimum flash and focus distance.
- ❑ Know how to load your film, how to unload your film & what the mid-roll rewind button is.
- ❑ On a digital camera, know how to set your file size, compression and ISO.

### PAY ATTENTION TO YOUR CAMERA HANDLING

- ❑ Hold the camera steady as you press the shutter button.
- ❑ Keep your fingers away from the lens and flash.

### FORCE THE FLASH

- ❑ Most point and shoot cameras will have an automatic flash that will decide when it should flash and when it should not. Don't let it tell you what to do! Learn how to override the automatic feature and make the flash go off in EVERY picture you take. It will improve almost all of your photos.

### FOCUS, DEPRESS, RECOMPOSE

- ❑ Auto focus cameras will focus on the center of the frame. This will result in a blurry picture if your subject is not in the center or perhaps is a picture of two people standing side by side where the actual center of the photo is an object in the background. To correct for this, point the center of the viewfinder at the subject you want in focus, depress the shutter button half way, continue to partially hold down the shutter button, recompose your picture, and then take the picture by pressing the shutter button completely.

## **EASY STEPS TO TAKING BETTER PHOTOGRAPHS: *PAY ATTENTION TO THE LIGHT***

### PHOTOGRAPHY IS WRITING WITH LIGHT

Photography is all about the lighting. The camera sees things with a fixed iris or aperture. Generally shoot with the sun behind your shoulder. Change your position or the time of day you are photographing if you need to.

## **EASY STEPS TO TAKING BETTER PHOTOGRAPHS: *IMPROVE YOUR COMPOSITION***

### "IF IT'S NOT GOOD ENOUGH, YOU'RE NOT CLOSE ENOUGH" --Robert Capa

Though an overall photo is good, many photos suffer from trying to show too much. Don't be afraid to get in close to your subject or the action.

### BRING YOUR SUBJECT WITH YOU

For a good overall picture of a house build site or similar, have the person (homeowner, donor, etc.) stand close to you so that you see just their head and shoulders and they take up about one quarter of your viewfinder. Together, back away from the house until you can fit the whole house in the background of the shot behind, and possibly to the side of, the person.

### WATCH YOUR BACKGROUNDS AND FOREGROUNDS

Though we live in a 3 dimensional world, photos are flat, 2 dimensional objects and what was a far away background object—like a light pole or tree-- in real life will be immediately behind or beside your closer subject. Be sure this doesn't create a problem. Instead try to "layer" your photo so that both the foreground and background show something interesting e.g. a homeowner smiling in the foreground with volunteers doing construction on the house in the background.

### DO NOT BE "CENTER-DRIVEN", USE THE RULE OF THIRDS

Though there is nothing wrong with having your subject in the middle of the photo, it is so common that it can become boring. Envision your frame divided by lines horizontally and vertically into thirds. Try putting your subject at one of the intersection points.

### CAPTURE THE "DECISIVE MOMENT" --Henri Cartier-Bresson

In any activity or event, there is that moment when the look or the interaction is just right-- try to capture that— you may need to be patient and take several frames in quick succession to get just the right moment of the key being handed over at a house dedication, for example.

### HIGH, LOW, NEAR, FAR

Create visual interest by varying your position as you take the photo. Try kneeling or lying down, standing on top of something, moving in very close, or walking quite far away.

### SHOW ACTION & ACTIVITY

Don't just take pictures of people standing still looking into the camera. Those are fine, but also try to show individuals and groups engaged in action.

### MAKE PEOPLE PICTURES PORTRAITS WITH CONTEXT, GESTURES, AND PROPS

Enhance your people shots with visual aids—such as volunteers holding construction equipment, homeowner children holding a school certificate, or show people in the context of their homes and offices.

### NATURAL FRAMING DEVICES

Some times you can use a window frame or other object to create a frame within your picture.

### NOTICING PATTERN, TEXTURE, AND SHAPE

Interesting shapes and repetitions can create visual interest in a photograph. Look around for something like that, which may form a good foreground or background for your shot.

### CREATE A PHOTO STORY: OVERALL, MEDIUM, DETAIL, & PORTRAIT SHOTS

Create a nice package of photos by varying your distance and perspective on the subjects. Also develop a "shot request list" for yourself of all the different shots you would like to get in a given situation.

### SHOW PROGRESS

Try to get a series of shots that shows progress: take the "same" shot from the same place every day or week from the start to finish of a house build.

**To me, photography is an art of observation.  
It's about finding something interesting in  
an ordinary place....  
I've found it has little to do with the  
things you see and everything to do with  
the way you see them.**

Elliott Erwitt

## Plan Your Photographic Shoot for Habitat: *Process and Share the Images*

- ❑ If the shots are digital, download and save them; copy them on to a CD to save and distribute as planned.
- ❑ If shot on film, get film processed at a reputable lab; have a CD made at the same time if that is the best way for you to digitize images.
- ❑ Otherwise, scan desired images and copy to CD, ftp site, or other method to distribute.
- ❑ Write up caption information and include with photo distribution.
- ❑ Organize and store prints and negatives, if used.
- ❑ See guidelines on submission to PhotoNet/HFHI if appropriate.

### Submitting Images to Habitat's PhotoNet

*These instructions are directed toward Habitat offices that do NOT have Merlin software. (If you have Merlin software from HFHI Photo Services you will be provided separate instructions.)*

*This information is intended for Habitat staff only and should not be distributed further.*

*Habitat PhotoNet is the image bank of Habitat for Humanity International. You can access PhotoNet through PartnerNet at <http://partnet.habitat.org/>*

If you would like to put any of your images into HFHI's PhotoNet, please contact [photoeditor@hfhi.org](mailto:photoeditor@hfhi.org) or [kmacdonald@hfhi.org](mailto:kmacdonald@hfhi.org) to confirm submission details before sending any images to Habitat International.

Ideally submitted photos will be scanned or digital images of a minimum approximate size of 1.2MB when saved or shot as a maximum quality JPEG file; or they will be approx. 5MB in size when saved as a Photoshop (PSD) or Tiff (TIF) file. Generally, these sizes are too large to email and can be submitted via ftp site or CD. We also can utilize negatives, slides and prints—details on quality and turn around time if they need to be returned should be discussed on an individual basis. For images submitted via any means, please note the following and provide caption information as detailed below.

Please only submit images of excellent quality. Submission is no guarantee that images will appear in PhotoNet. Our photo staff will need to make that decision

based on their quality, the completeness of the accompanying information, the need for that type of photo, etc.

PLEASE NOTE THAT SUBMISSION OF A PHOTO(S) IMPLIES CONSENT BY THE PHOTOGRAPHER FOR THE IMAGE(S) TO BE USED BY HABITAT FOR HUMANITY INTERNATIONAL AND ALL ITS OFFICES AND AFFILIATES AND DESIGNATES AS IS SEEN FIT WITHOUT FURTHER CONSENT FROM THE PHOTOGRAPHER. SUBJECTS IN A PHOTO SHOULD ALSO BE ONLY PEOPLE ON HABITAT BUILD SITES WHO HAVE SIGNED IMAGE RELEASES OR PEOPLE IN PUBLIC PLACES WHOSE IMAGE WAS OBTAINED WITH THEIR CONSENT.

Also, you **MUST** include the following situation and caption information for each photo:

- ❑ Brief description of image or file name or number (so we can distinguish which photo is which)
- ❑ Date image was shot (month, day, year)
- ❑ Photographer's name
- ❑ Photographer's title (i.e. staff, volunteer, IP, freelance, etc.)
- ❑ Event (i.e. JCWP, GV team, Collegiate Challenge, etc.)
- ❑ Location (city, state, county)
- ❑ Caption information (what is happening in the image, who is in the image, with as much detail as possible). For example, a thorough caption might read:  
*Jayne Smith (left) and Peter Chung (right), volunteers from Hoseo University in Seoul, Korea, work together putting up vinyl siding on house E, which was sponsored by Samsung.*
- ❑ Size of image (in MB), if digitized and known.

How to submit images via ftp site—please **ONLY** do this if you have let photo editor Angela Murray at HFHI know you are doing so!

- ❑ the web address is: ftp://205.142.155.95
- ❑ user name: rickb
- ❑ password: rickb01
- ❑ open the pictures\_from\_remotes folder
- ❑ drag and drop your images from your computer onto the folder name for the area you are submitting from
- ❑ submit caption information via ftp or email to [photoeditor@hfhi.org](mailto:photoeditor@hfhi.org)

How to submit via CD—ship CD with images at highest resolution and with accompanying caption information to:

Angela Murray (or Kim MacDonald), Photo Services

Habitat for Humanity International  
121 Habitat Street  
Americus, Georgia, USA 31709

If shipping from another country, please indicate the value of the contents as "none" for Customs purposes.

If you have questions or concerns, please contact the photo editor at 1-800-HABITAT or 229-924-6935, ext. 2145 or email [photoeditor@hfhi.org](mailto:photoeditor@hfhi.org) or [amurray@hfhi.org](mailto:amurray@hfhi.org).

I really believe there are things  
Nobody would see if I didn't photograph them.

Diane Arbus

# Photographs, Computers and Publications

The following are guidelines for image size and resolution in different circumstances.

Generally save images as JPEG files following these guidelines:

- ❑ Each time you save an image as a jpeg, it compresses it by throwing away some data, so do NOT work some with an image, save as a jpeg, work some more with the same image and save again as a jpeg and again and again. Save your final as a maximum quality jpeg to take advantage of the smaller and familiar file format. Save in-process drafts as tiffs or psds. This can be done in Microsoft Photo Editor and in Photoshop as well as other imaging programs.
- ❑ Be CAREFUL—do not “blow up” your image to a greater file size than you already have—this will degrade your picture. Rescan the picture if needed. If it was originally shot with a digital camera at a small file size it may only be usable for websites and not for publication.

For additional information Kodak offers a helpful digital photography learning center on the web at: <http://www.kodak.com/US/en/digital/dlc/>

## Websites

- ❑ Your DPI (resolution) should be 100.
- ❑ Both the width and the height should generally be no larger than 6 inches. In pixels, figure: 640x420 at 100 dpi resolution saved as a jpeg for a total file size of about 800K.

## Email

- ❑ Unless you are emailing a high-resolution photo for reproduction purposes, your emailed pictures should have a resolution of 100 dpi and be about 4x6 inches or 640x420 pixels as above.

## Newsletters and Brochures

- ❑ The resolution of the photo should be between 200-300 dpi. Habitat uses 266dpi.
- ❑ The size should be determined by your need. Try to use your pictures at least 3-4 inches wide so that they have impact and are visually interesting.

## Newspapers and Magazines

- ❑ When providing a picture to a media outlet such as a magazine or newspaper, the image resolution must be about 300 dpi with an image size of 6-10 inches wide. Consult the photo department of the publication for specifics.
- ❑ If you cannot get details, a file of 6x9 inches at 300 dpi which open as a total file size of about 14MB should fit almost every need. Saved as a jpeg this size compresses to about 5MB and you could attach one of these to an email—though it would be at the upper limit of email range. If not saved as a jpeg or for multiple images at this size, use a CD.

## From Habitat's PhotoNet

- ❑ Most PhotoNet images at the size saved for PhotoNet will work for most publications. These images are about 1.2MB jpegs that open to about 5MB files equal to a 4x6 inch image at 266 dpi resolution (equivalent to about a 3x5 inch images at 300dpi). Email [photoeditor@hfhi.org](mailto:photoeditor@hfhi.org) if you need a larger file size.