

Photography Tips

Photographs are a great way to document and share your club's activities with your school, local community, and other ACS ChemClubs. When planning photos to take during club activities and deciding which photos to share with the ACS ChemClub office, consider the following guidelines and tips.

Photo planning and selection

Action photos are eye-catching and attention-grabbing, compared to a posed group photo. Choose the pictures that best show the event/activity to submit with a story. Remove any images that are blurry, taken a far distance from the action, or are an inside joke.

Show good safety practices

If you are taking pictures in the lab, use the checklist of safety practices "Criteria for Submission of Images" found in this section.

Clean the lens

Materials such as lint, dust, and fingerprints, etc., can collect on the lens over time and create a blurred image. Clean as directed by your camera's instruction manual.

Use the highest resolution possible

Choose the highest resolution available on your camera/phone for a better photo.

Light your subject well

Shoot outside or turn on lights when shooting inside. If your camera doesn't have a flash, make sure the light source is in front of the subject, instead of behind, which creates a silhouette.

Stabilize your phone/camera

In low light, cameras slow the shutter speed to let in more light and have a longer opportunity to capture movement. Use a tripod or hold the phone/camera with both hands and brace your upper arms against your body to steady the shot.

Avoid using digital zoom

It might be tempting to zoom in on your subject when taking your picture, but it could decrease the quality of your shot and end up looking pixelated. Instead, edit your shot later using photo editing software on your computer.

Anticipate shutter lag

Get used to the timing of your phone/camera, so you'll have a good feel for when to press the shutter button to capture the moment.



Edit images later

While it can be fun to use effects, like Instagram on your phone, editing pictures later on your computer produces a much better quality image.

Take a lot of pictures and don't throw away "mistakes"

Digital photography offers the ability to shoot many pictures quickly, which means you can experiment with different modes and composition. The phone/camera screen may not be great, so keep even "mistakes" until you can see them on a computer screen.

Shoot at eye level

When taking a picture of someone, hold the camera at the person's eye level; for children, that means stooping to their level. Your subject doesn't have to stare at the camera—the eye level angle will create a personal and inviting feeling.

Use the rule of thirds

Imagine two horizontal lines and two vertical lines crossing like a tic-tac-toe grid on the screen (your phone/camera may have a grid option available). Place strong lines like the horizon on the gridlines and let elements of interest fall on the intersections.

Use a plain background

Study the area surrounding your subject. Make sure the safety shower isn't growing from the head of your subject or that no faucets extend from their ears. If the background is cluttered, fill the frame of your phone/camera by moving in closer to your subject.

References

Kodak – http://www.kodak.com/ek/US/en/Home_Main/Tips_Projects_Exchange/Learn/Photo_Tips.htm

National Geographic – <http://photography.nationalgeographic.com/photography/photo-tips/camera-phone-photos/>

Digital Photography School – <http://digital-photography-school.com/how-to-use-a-camera-phone>

