

Through The Lens

*A guide to digital photography for computer enthusiasts.
After the click of your camera, you're only half done!*

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Hit the Streets!

by Lynda Buske

Wikipedia says street photography features subjects (usually people) in candid situations within public places. In fact, the image may exclude humans and be instead, an object that projects a human character or environment. For example, it may show the beauty of a flower stall or an interesting sign. Some photographers use street photography to make a social comment on issues such as homelessness or racism.

Street photography might require engaging in a conversation with a stranger in order to get the best shot. This can be daunting for anyone a bit introverted. Vendors are probably the most approachable if you are new to street photography and are certainly willing to pose or share details of their craft if you are actually buying something. So, if you are buying vegetables anyway in an outdoor market, choose a stall that may result in a nice photo.



Street musicians are another great place to start because they are happy to pose if you throw a bit of change into their hat.



You can also ask permission to take someone's photo as I did with this lady from Saskatoon. I gave her my card so she could write me if she wanted the photo of her relaxing afternoon in a Halifax Harbour hammock.



Canadian laws are not strict when it comes to photographing people in public but check when visiting a foreign country to know what is permissible. In Canada, it is perfectly legal to take someone's photograph while they are in public providing you are not harassing or stalking them and the photo is not for commercial purposes (if an identifiable person is the main subject). However, in order not to infringe on someone's privacy or make them uncomfortable (especially mothers with respect to their children), it never hurts to ask permission or be very quick. If I'm not getting permission, I will set up my shot while pointing in a slightly different direction and swing back only at the last minute to my intended target. A tip is to hold the camera at waist

level and shoot from there although this will take some practice to get know what will be captured from this angle. Another way is to shoot a wider angle than you need and straighten/crop after.

Cell phones are in some ways better than traditional cameras because they are less obvious and you can pretend you are actually taking a selfie! This is especially easy in high tourist areas where any number of people will have visible cameras and cell phones.

I am very careful with children in public as it can be very distressing for the parents to see someone take multiple photos of their child. I take a couple from far away and only post them if their faces are obscured. Never post a child's photo online taken with a cell phone (or camera with gps) that includes their name. A bad person can find the exact location and call the child over to their car by name....not good.

