**Using Your Phone as a Camera**

**Rule of Thirds**

* “The basic principle behind the rule of thirds is to imagine breaking an image down into thirds (both horizontally and vertically) so that you have 9 parts.”
	+ <https://digital-photography-school.com/rule-of-thirds/>
* <https://www.photographymad.com/pages/view/10-top-photography-composition-rules>
* Think of this as creating a focal point for your photo, a way to draw the viewer’s eye. Remember, this does not mean your subject has to be front and center.

**Lighting**

* Artificial vs. Natural Light
* Both can impact the overall appearance of a photograph, effecting the temperature and contrast of shadows.
* Consider the direction of your light source. How does it influence shadows and how can you frame the subject of your photo to take advantage of the light.
* Most smartphone cameras will also give you an option to control the brightness of a photo prior to taking a photo.
* Using Flash
* Flash on smartphones can remove depth from a scene and can make taking a flattering photo tricky. Check out the resources below to get a better understanding of how flash works.
* <https://www.guidingtech.com/45810/using-flash-phone-photos/>
* “Better Low-Light and Night Photos” from Lynda.com’s “Mobile Photography Weekly”

**Zoom vs. Getting Closer**

* Using zoom often results in a less than ideal image, creating a more pixelated result. This is one of the limitations of smartphone cameras, which typically offer a digital zoom.
* [https://www.tomsguide.com/us/best-phone-camera-zoom,review-5938.html](https://www.tomsguide.com/us/best-phone-camera-zoom%2Creview-5938.html)
* <https://thedigitalcamera.net/smartphones-with-optical-zoom-this-is-the-trick-behind-them/>
* Getting closer to your subject allows you to take a sharper image, but every phone has a limit to the achievable clarity for macro photography.

**Apps**

*Editing*

* Depending on your photography goals, you might want to use filters to add interest to your images or you might prefer to take a light hand and make subtle changes.
* Snapseed is a great app when you’re starting to explore editing photos on your phone. You can fine tune with a variety of tools or add filters to create a custom image.
* There are a couple of dedicated episodes to this app in Lynda.com’s “Mobile Photography Weekly” including “Create Custom Looks in Snapseed” and “Snapseed: Beyond the Basics.” There’s also a dedicated course to this app called “Editing Images Using Snapseed.”
* Available for Apple and Android

*Sharing*

* Instagram allows you to share and perform basic editing of your images. Be aware that when uploading to Instagram it will default to a square photo which will crop your content.
* <https://www.instagram.com/>
* App available for Apple and Android
* Flickr allows you to upload and organize your photos without having to format them to fit a particular size like Instagram.
* <https://www.flickr.com/>
* App available for Apple and Android

**Resources**

*Lynda.com*

* Accessible through the Skokie Public Library website with a Skokie Public Library card.
* <https://skokielibrary.info/resources/online-training-tutorials/>
* “Mobile Photography Weekly with Seán Duggan”
* “Improve Your Mobile Photography Skills”

*Book Recommendations*

* Understanding Composition: The Complete Photographer’s Guide by Steve Mulligan
* Creative Photography Lab: 52 Fun Exercises for Developing Self-Expression with Your Camera by Steve Sonheim
* The Enthusiast’s Guide to iPhone Photography: 63 Photography Principles You Need to Know by Seán Duggan