



HOW TO PHOTOGRAPH YOUR 3D ARTWORK

STEP 1: POSITION YOUR ART

- Place the art on a flat surface with a neutral background.
- If you don't have white or light gray walls, buy a roll of seamless paper and set up a sweep. What is a sweep? It is a smooth and continuous backdrop formed by paper in an arc shape. To form an arc with the paper, tape it to the edge of the table/flat surface and sweep it to a vertical point behind the table/flat surface.
- Don't place the art too close to the background; give it some space. If using a sweep, don't place the artwork where it starts to sweep up.

STEP 2: EQUIPMENT

1. Cell or tablet camera

- There are mobile apps that can assist in photo editing if this is the equipment that you will be using: Adobe Lightroom Mobile (for iPhone), Adobe Photoshop Express, Afterlight, Apple Photos, Google Photos, PicsArt Photo Studio (for Android), Pixlr, Polarr, Polish, Snapseed, VSCO (this list is subject to change).

2. DSLR Camera

- If you don't own one, your Art teacher might have access to one you may borrow.

STEP 2: LIGHT THE ART

- If you want even, diffused light, position two lights 45 degrees away from the art. If you want contrast and shadows, use two lights and play with moving one of the lights around (adjust distance and angle from object). Avoid competing shadows that will make it hard for the viewer to focus on the work itself.
- Add a third light if you need more dimensionality.
- If photographing ceramics, it is recommended to use only one light, and to place it directly over the subject so the light shines down onto it. This creates a shadow under the bottom edge and grounds the object. An overcast day with neutral (brick, concrete, white poster board w/ sweep) background will work also.
- Adjust the softness of the light by raising or lowering the light. The closer the light is to the subject, the larger and softer the light will be. Soft light lessens the harsh edges of shadows and creates smooth gradations of tone and color.
- Use a diffuser. A diffuser is made of translucent material and is placed between the object and light source to soften the light and shadows.
- Shape the light with cardboard. Place the cardboard between the work and the light and play with angling it to create preferred gradients.
- **Tip:** Strong shadows create a sense of weight to a piece, which allows a potential buyer to imagine how it would feel to be held.

STEP 3: ADJUST YOUR CAMERA SETTINGS (DSLR CAMERA)

- Set the camera to shoot in RAW so you get the most digital information in your image.
- Be sure to set the ISO to 100 to reduce the "noise" in the image.
- Set the camera to Aperture Priority and set the aperture to f/8 or higher to get your entire work in focus (if you want it in sharp detail). You want a larger depth of field when shooting a work up close – more depth means more details.
- Set your white balance. If you want to set a custom white balance to get your whites absolutely white in challenging light situations, we recommend using a gray card.

STEP 4: POSITION YOUR CAMERA

- Place your camera on a tripod or a secure platform like a shelf to avoid camera shake and blurry photos.
- Play with angling the camera to capture different perspectives of the work – shoot straight on or from above.
- Place the tripod so that the art fills almost the entire frame. Avoid distortions by zooming.

STEP 5: PHOTOGRAPH YOUR WORK

- Make sure to photograph your work from multiple angles.
- If you're not using a tripod, use your camera's timer so that your pressing of the shutter does not create camera shake – it doesn't take much!
- Shooting an installation? Use a wide-angle lens to capture the entirety of the work. Wide-angle lenses allow you to get more in the frame.

STEP 6: EDIT YOUR PHOTOS

- Crop the image.
- Adjust color, focus, and contrast if necessary.
- Save as a JPEG or TIFF. You can make derivative JPEGs from your TIFF to match upload requirements.