

iPhone

LANDSCAPE PHOTOGRAPHY

Discover How To Take Incredible Landscape Photos With Your iPhone

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iPhone Landscape Photography: Discover How To Take Incredible Landscape Photos With Your iPhone

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FOREWORD

Have you ever taken a photo of a magnificent view, only to find out that the image doesn't look as good as the real landscape? I think all of us have had that experience at some point.

On the other hand, even a boring view can result in an extraordinary landscape photo. And you don't need to travel to exotic locations to take outstanding landscape photos with your iPhone.

Our goal was to find out what makes the difference between a lifeless, flat landscape photo and an extraordinary masterpiece - and how anyone could apply this knowledge to greatly enhance the quality of their own iPhone landscape photos. That's how the idea for this eBook was born.

But rather than trying to figure it all out ourselves, we approached one of the most extraordinary iPhone landscape photographers in the world, asking if he'd be willing to share his techniques.

Andrew Hector, the author of this eBook, shot and edited all the photos you'll find here using his iPhone.

In the following pages he distills everything there is to know about taking incredible iPhone landscape photos. His extraordinary photos are proof that these techniques work.

Your iPhone is the perfect camera for landscape photography. With its portability, advanced camera controls and ease of use, your iPhone already has everything you need to take world-class landscape photos. The only missing piece is knowing how to use it to take such photos.

And that's what you're going to discover in this excellent eBook.

Emil Pakarklis

Founder of iPhone Photography School



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Andrew Hector

Andrew has been sharing his iPhone photography since 2012 and he's particularly interested in shooting landscapes and sharing his images of National Parks.

Since Andrew started shooting with his iPhone, he's helped thousands of people to share their personal travels and experiences through mobile photography.

While he works with brands as a content creator and has had his images featured in various magazines, Andrew's main goal is to encourage everyone to visit their National Parks. His aim is to help people improve and share their mobile photography from these amazing landscapes.

He believes that through the power of mobile photography we can bring awareness and help conserve the unique landscapes this planet has to offer.

Andrew currently resides in Orlando, Florida USA, but travels often and is available for guided mobile photography tours all over the U.S.

All landscape photos in this eBook were shot and edited by Andrew using his iPhone.



Photo by Jacklyn Joyce @candidcaptured



INTRODUCTION

The world-famous landscape photographer Ansel Adams once said, “You don’t take a photograph, you make it.”

And this is certainly true. Anyone can point their iPhone at a beautiful landscape and take a picture, but it takes a more skilled photographer to craft a truly incredible landscape photo, bringing together all of the elements that make it a success.

So what are these important elements? In order to take great landscape photos you must understand the effect of different types of light on your location, take control of focus and exposure, and implement some essential composition techniques to create a stronger sense of depth, balance and scale.

And that’s exactly what you’re going to learn in this iPhone Landscape Photography eBook.

The tips, techniques and photos in this eBook will empower, inspire and motivate you to take stunning landscape photos with that small mobile device that’s always with you - your iPhone!

This book is an essential tool if you’re just starting out with iPhone landscape photography, but it’s also a valuable resource if you’re a more experienced iPhone photographer wanting to regain your creative spark and inspiration for this wonderful genre.

Finally, keep in mind that you don’t have to live in an area of outstanding natural beauty to take great landscape photos.

No matter where you are in the world, the tips and techniques in this eBook will provide you with the knowledge and practical skills that you need for creating beautiful landscape photos with your iPhone, even in the most ordinary of landscapes.

A silhouette of a person wearing a hat and riding a bicycle on a beach. The person is positioned on the left side of the frame. The background features a sunset sky with large, dramatic clouds. A tall, thin signpost with a square sign at the top is visible in the center. The sign has the words "NO DIVING" on it. To the right of the signpost, there is a splash of water on the beach. The entire scene is reflected in the wet sand in the foreground.

CHAPTER 1

UNDERSTANDING LIGHT

In this chapter you'll discover how to capture the best possible landscape photos in different kinds of light and weather. By the end of Chapter 1 you'll have the knowledge and skills to create beautifully lit landscape photos with excellent exposure, even in challenging light conditions.

1.1 DEVELOP AN EYE FOR LIGHT

Light is the key to great landscape photography. Developing a good eye for light is essential if you want to capture the landscape at its best.

The same landscape will look completely different depending on the type of light that you're shooting in.

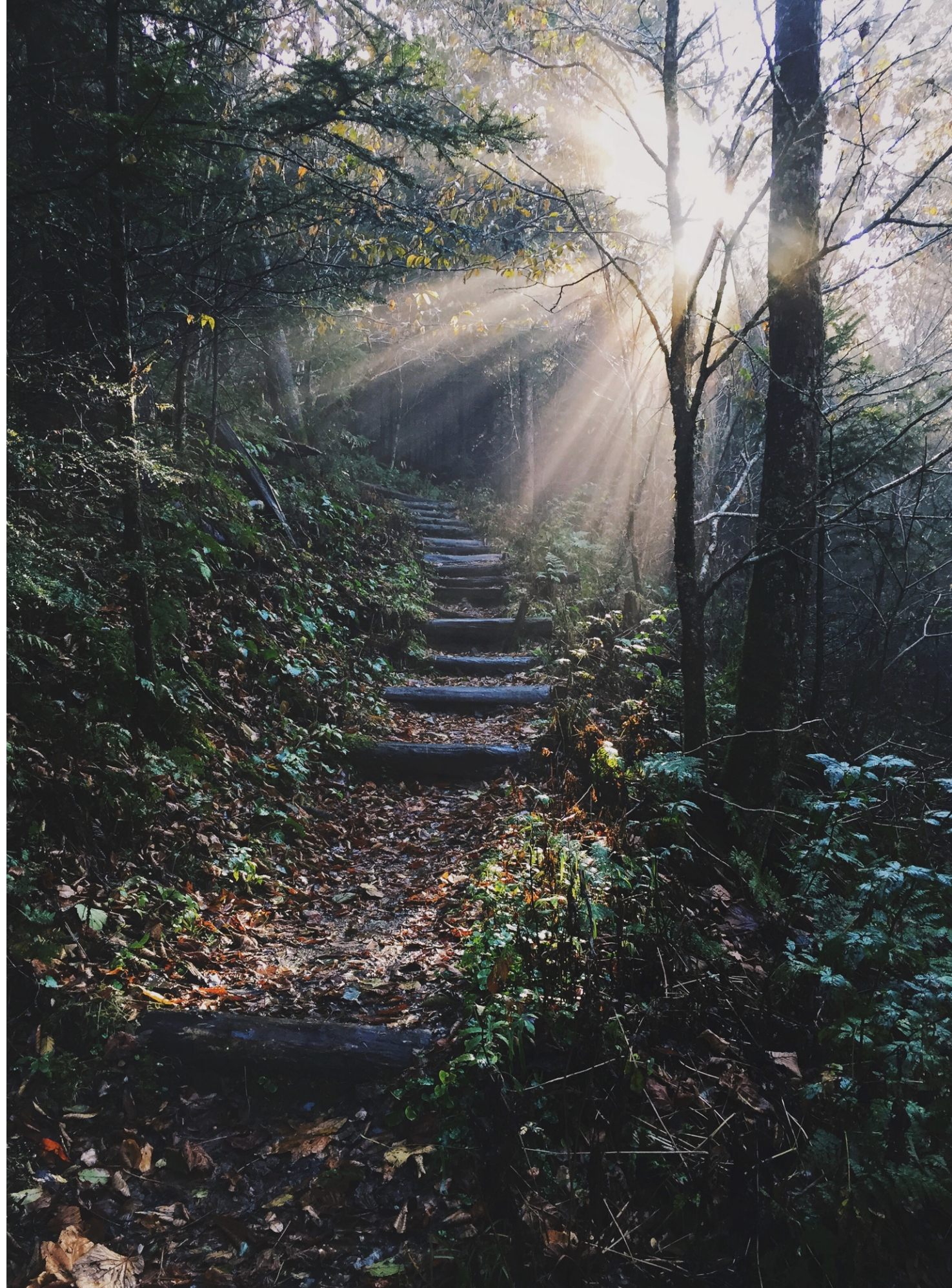
Certain types of light are better than others for photography, and in this chapter you'll discover how different kinds of light will affect your landscape photos in different ways.

Learning about light is essential for improving your iPhone photography, but the best way to understand light is to get out in the landscape and practice taking photos.

Shoot as much as you can in different types of light, at different times of the day and in different weather conditions. Then look at your photos and observe how the various lighting conditions help or hurt your image.

Only through practice and careful analysis of your photos will you begin to develop a better eye for light.

Once you've mastered this, you'll intuitively know whether the current lighting conditions will allow you to create a beautiful photographic masterpiece, or not.





1.2 UNDERSTAND EXPOSURE

Exposure refers to the brightness of your image. In other words, how light or dark the photo appears when you take the shot.

Getting the exposure level right when you take the photo is very important. Even if the lighting conditions are perfect, if your image is too bright you'll lose detail in the highlights (the lighter areas of the image). And if the image is too dark you won't be able to see any detail in the shadows (the darker areas of the image).

Your iPhone will automatically set the exposure level based on the focus point. So when you tap the screen to set focus on a particular area of the landscape, the exposure will be set to ensure that area of the scene is correctly exposed (not too bright and not too dark). But this may not result in the best exposure for the entire scene.

Luckily the iPhone's Camera app makes it easy to adjust exposure. Simply tap the screen to set focus where you want it, then swipe up to increase exposure (making the image brighter) or swipe down to decrease exposure (making the image darker).

In Chapter 2 you'll learn a lot more about focus and exposure, but at this point just make sure you can adjust exposure manually by swiping up or down on the screen after setting the focus point.

When adjusting exposure, watch carefully how the adjustment affects all parts of your image. Try to ensure that you don't lose detail in the highlights or the shadows, unless you want to do this for creative effect.



1.3 HOW TIME OF DAY AFFECTS LIGHT

There are several factors that influence the type and quality of light in your scene, but time of day is the most obvious one.

The position of the sun in the sky determines how much light reaches your scene and from what direction. Both of these are important factors to consider when shooting with your iPhone.

In landscape photography, the time of day that you shoot at can make a huge difference to how your photos turn out. If you shoot a scene at sunrise and then shoot it again at midday, the photos will look very different.

In most cases, shooting when the sun is lower in the sky creates softer and more beautiful lighting in your landscapes. So the hours around sunrise and sunset tend to be the best times to shoot.

In certain situations, shooting when the sun is high in the sky can work well, such as when you're photographing ravines and canyons that require direct light from above to avoid large parts of the landscape being in shadow.

But in general, midday sun doesn't result in good landscape photos as it usually creates harsh shadows and too much contrast.



Shoot At Blue Hour For Calm Cool Tones

Blue hour occurs during the hour before sunrise and the hour after sunset. When the sun is just below the horizon, a beautiful cool blue light will be cast over your landscape.

Blue hour light creates a wonderfully serene and tranquil mood in your iPhone photos. It's definitely worth getting up early to capture your landscapes during blue hour.

Due to the lack of any bright light in the scene, it's advisable to use a tripod to avoid camera shake. You'll learn more about how to shoot landscapes in low light at the end of this chapter.



Shoot At Golden Hour For Rich Warm Tones

Golden hour occurs during the hour after sunrise and the hour before sunset. When the sun is low in the sky but still above the horizon, the scene will be lit up with warm yellows, oranges and reds.

Golden hour creates a more dramatic mood, and this is often the best time of day for shooting landscapes. When the sun is at a low angle, you'll often find wonderful long shadows being cast across your scene.

While golden hour is brighter than blue hour, there's still not that much light in the scene compared to full daylight. Therefore, a tripod is recommended in order to capture the sharpest photos possible.

Sunrise and sunset are the best times of day to photograph large bodies of water such as lakes and oceans. The stunning golden light casts beautiful orange reflections on the water, creating an almost painterly effect if there are ripples on the surface.



1.4 EXPERIMENT WITH DIRECTION OF LIGHT

When shooting landscapes, the direction of light will have a big influence on how your image turns out. By paying careful attention to both the direction that the sunlight is coming from and the direction in which you're shooting, you'll be able to harness the light to create the photo you envisioned.

In the next few pages you'll discover how to create different lighting effects in your photos, simply by changing your shooting position in relation to the sun.

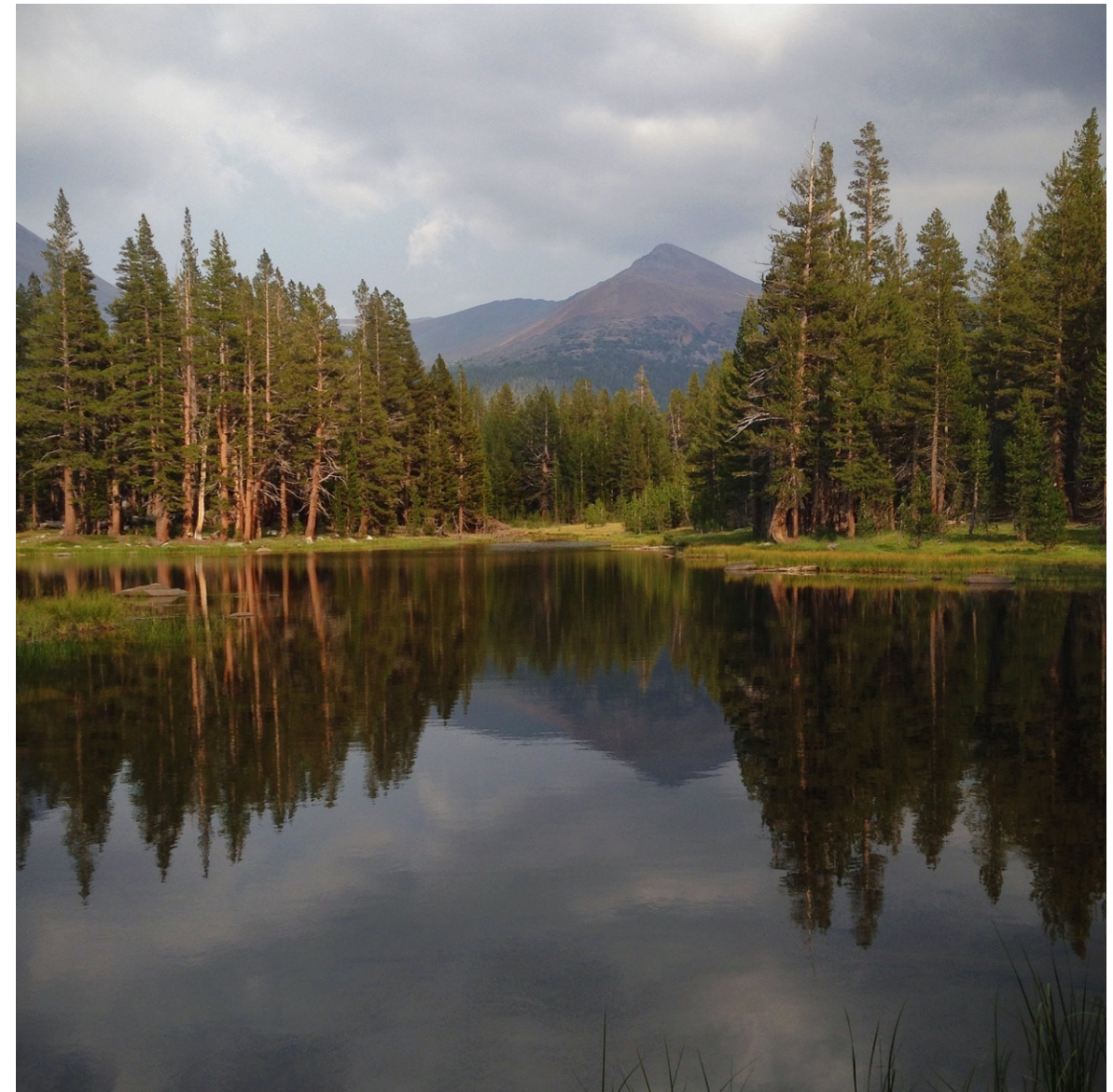
Shoot Away From The Sun For A Well-Lit Scene

To create a well-lit scene with even lighting on your subjects, shoot with the sun behind you. This ensures that plenty of light is shining onto the scene in front of you, illuminating everything that you want to capture.

Shooting when the sun is lower in the sky makes it easier to position the sun directly behind you.

Depending on the direction you need to face to capture your chosen scene, you'll need to work out whether it's best to shoot a particular location in the morning or the evening.

The sun rises in the east and sets in the west. So if you need to face east to take your shot, it's best to shoot later in the day when the sun is behind you in the west. If you need to face west to take your shot, it's best to shoot earlier in the day when the sun is behind you in the east.



Notice how this scene is well lit with even lighting on the front of the trees and the mountain in the distance.

This was achieved by shooting with the sun behind me so that the light was shining directly onto the scene in front of me.

Use Side-Lighting To Create Shadows

Shooting with the sun to one side of you can produce more interesting images in certain situations. If you find that shooting with the sun behind you leaves your image looking a little flat and lifeless, try shooting with the sun to one side of you.

This side-lighting will illuminate your subjects from only one side, creating shadows on the other side. This can create a more visually interesting image due to the variations in light and shade.

Long shadows are great for adding visual interest to a scene. Bear in mind that shadows will be longer when the sun is lower in the sky.

The photo on the right was shot with the sun to the left and slightly behind me. This resulted in shadows appearing on the ground to the right of the person at the front of the photo, as well as the lampposts, vehicles and road signs.

You'll also notice that the buildings in the distance are lit from the front and the left, but the right-hand sides of the buildings are in shadow.

When shooting your landscapes, experiment with different viewpoints so that you can get the sun just where you want it.





Shoot Into The Sun To Create Silhouettes

Shooting towards the light will result in a completely different kind of image from shooting with the sun behind you or to one side.

If you shoot towards the sun, you can create dark and dramatic silhouettes while retaining stunning color and detail in the sky.

A silhouette is a dark shape or outline that appears against a brighter background. Silhouettes work well when you have a strong shape in the landscape such as a person, tree, boat or building.

Silhouettes are very powerful because they act as a strong focal point that instantly catches the viewer's eye. The lack of detail in the dark subject creates a wonderful sense of mystery, intrigue and drama.

To create a silhouette, the light source has to be behind the subject, so you need to shoot towards the sun.

When you've composed your shot, tap to set focus, then swipe down on the screen to reduce exposure so that the subject appears completely black.

The best time to create silhouettes is during sunrise and sunset. When the sun is low in the sky, you can easily position your subject in front of the bright light.

Sunrise and sunset are the best times of day for creating silhouettes because the low sun can be used to backlight your subjects. Simply shoot towards the sun, reducing the camera's exposure to ensure your subjects appear as dark silhouettes against the brighter background.



Shoot Into The Sun To Capture Rays Of Light

If you're shooting towards the sun, you might be able to capture flares or rays of light in your image. Sometimes this can ruin a photo, but if you get it right these shafts of light can add a beautiful element to your landscape shots.

The best time to capture these rays of light is when the sun is fairly low in the sky. Having something in the foreground, such as trees or a rock, will help to hide the brightest part of the sun, leaving you with just the beautiful rays of light shining through your image.



Whenever you're exploring the landscape, look out for dramatic rays of light that you might be able to capture with your iPhone.

If you spot an interesting shaft of sunlight, adjust the camera's exposure so that your iPhone captures the beams of light in all their glory.

You'll probably need to experiment with your shooting angle until the rays of light appear just where you want them.

Use An App To Track The Sun's Position

So far we've looked at how the position of the sun and the direction that the light is coming from can have a dramatic effect on your landscape photos.

But how do you know exactly when the sun will rise and set at your location?

And how do you know which direction the sunlight will be coming from at different times of the day?

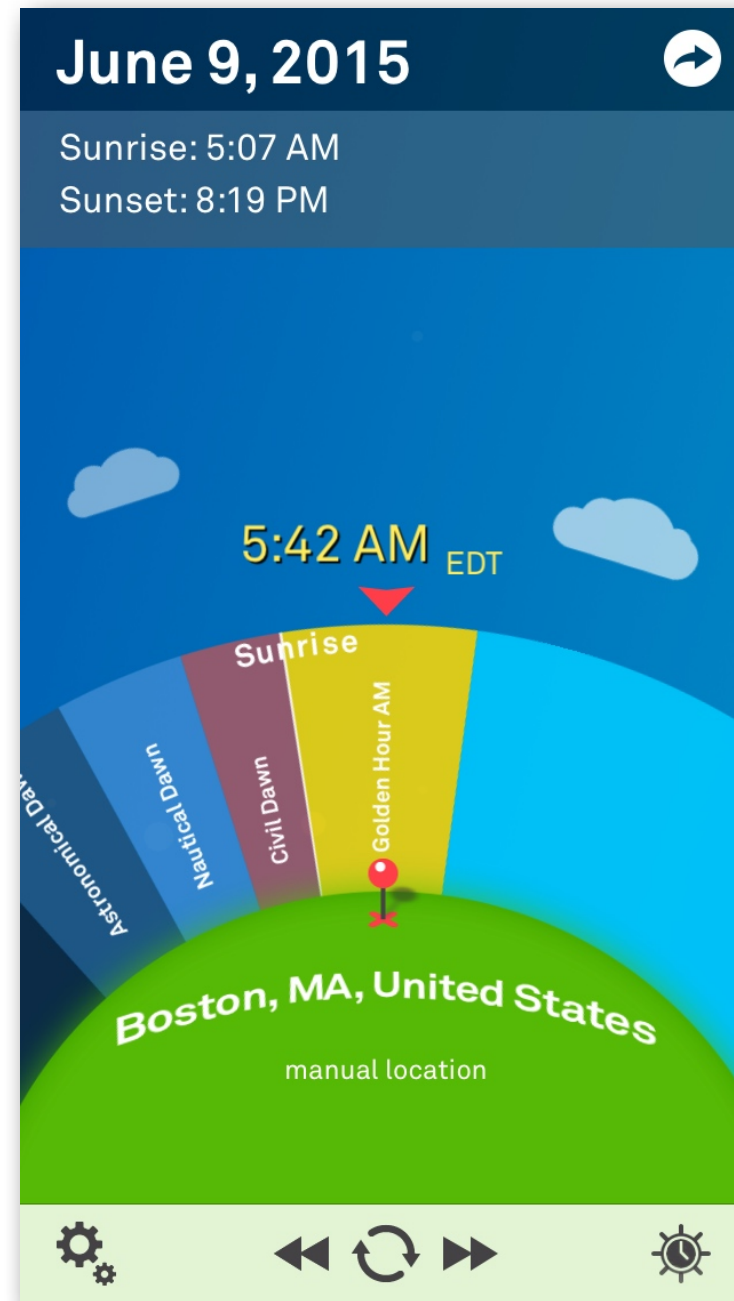
An easy way to find out is to download a sun-tracker app such as *Sol* or *Sun Surveyor* from the App Store.

These apps make it easy to find out the exact position of the sun in any location and at any time of the day.

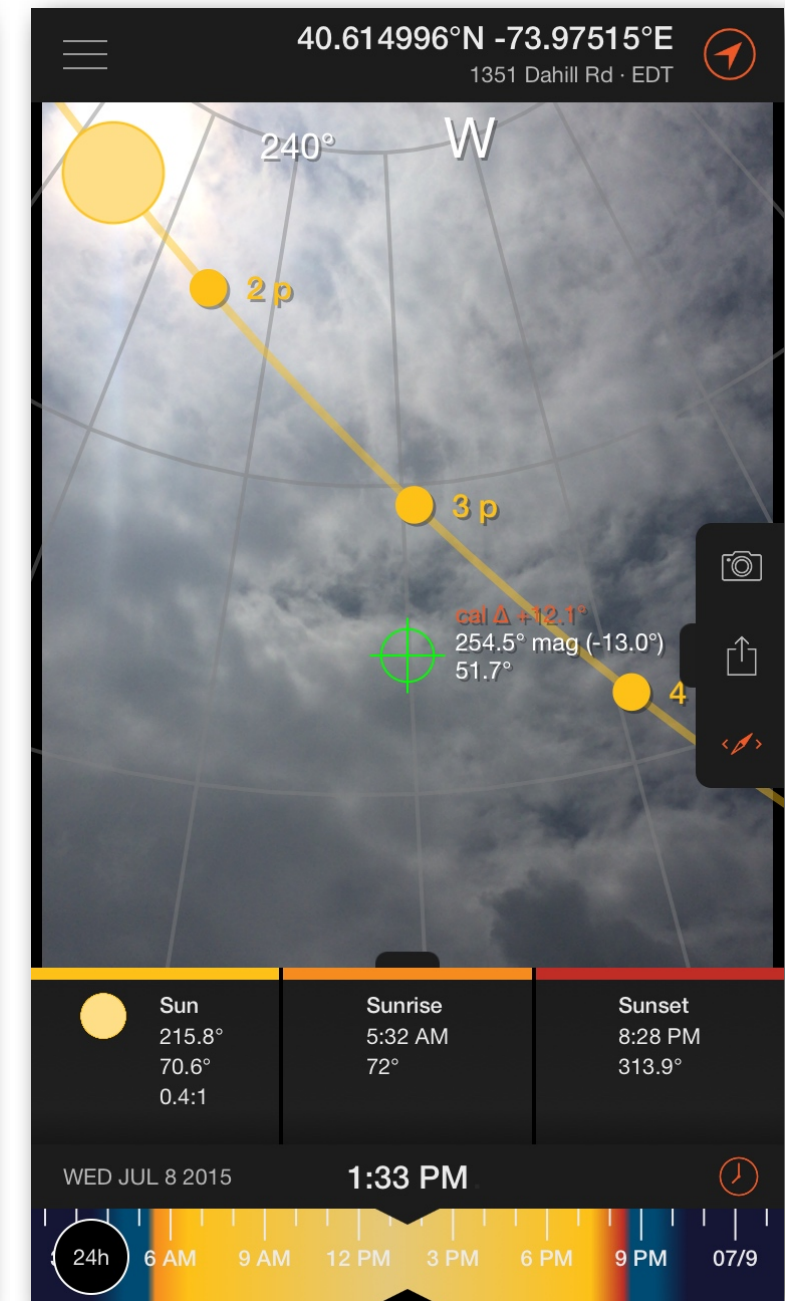
Sun-tracker apps are great for checking exactly when golden hour and blue hour will occur at your location.

They're also useful for determining which direction the light will be coming from, and how high the sun will be in the sky at various points throughout the day.

Using a sun-tracker app will help you to plan your shoot around the sun, allowing you to capture your chosen landscape in the best possible light.



Sol App



Sun Surveyor App

1.5 HOW THE WEATHER AFFECTS LIGHT

Since landscapes are illuminated by natural sunlight, the weather has a dramatic effect on the strength and consistency of the light.

Be Wary Of Strong Sunlight

On a bright sunny day the light will be at its strongest. When there are no clouds in the sky to diffuse the strong sunlight, shooting during the brightest part of the day can be challenging. The bright light can cause problems with exposure, and it's likely to create harsh shadows and strong contrast between the dark and light areas of the scene.

Sometimes contrast and shadows can add visual interest to the scene and help direct the eye to a certain part of the landscape. However, this type of harsh light often results in undesirable landscape photos that aren't pleasing to the eye.

If you're shooting on a sunny day, adjust the exposure to ensure that the bright parts of the scene still have some detail in them. Explore the location for a viewpoint where the shadows don't overpower the image. If possible, use the shadows to add visual interest to your composition.

If your only option is to take the shot in bright sunlight, be sure to take the photo as it may turn out great. But if you have the opportunity, wait until the sun dips a little lower in the sky as the results are likely to be much better.



Notice the dark shadows on the rocks and person in the foreground of this image. You can also see shadows of the hills in the distance. In strong sunlight you'll almost always end up with shadows somewhere in your scene.



Use Overcast Skies For A Soft Diffused Light

Overcast skies allow for more balanced lighting in your landscape. The clouds act as a natural diffuser, softening the light and eliminating the harsh shadows that occur in direct sunlight.

Overcast days are often better than bright sunny days for shooting landscapes. So if the weather doesn't look great, don't be put off by gray skies - they're actually perfect for landscape photography!

It will be much easier to take good landscape photos on a cloudy day. You don't have to worry about the exposure problems, harsh contrast or dark shadows that you get in strong sunlight.



Shoot In Stormy Weather To Create Drama

Stormy weather creates the most dramatic kind of light for shooting landscapes. Many people avoid going out to shoot landscapes in bad weather, but the best photographers embrace the opportunity.

During a storm the light can change very quickly. The sky will be a wonderful mix of dark, bright and balanced light. And the shadows will constantly move as the clouds change position in the sky.

Shooting in this kind of weather can be challenging due to the changing conditions, but it's definitely worth it for the dramatic shots that you'll be able to capture.

1.6 USE LIGHT & WEATHER TO CREATE MOOD

Light and weather play a big part in the mood that your landscape photos convey. The story that a photo tells will vary depending on how the light affects the colors in the scene and how the sky appears in different kinds of weather. In general, the darker the colors the darker the mood. And the brighter the colors the more uplifting it will feel.



The bright blue sky, fluffy white clouds and warm color tones of this landscape create a feeling of life and energy. They tell the story of a fun adventure on a carefree summer's day.



This photo has a completely different feel, with a dark and ominous mood. The dark monochrome colors and thick fog create a sense of mystery and tension that might make you slightly uncomfortable.

Thick fog creates a sense of mystery and intrigue, making the viewer wonder what lies beyond the wall of fog. Fog is excellent weather for woodland photography as it creates a sense of depth with the trees gradually fading into the distance. Reducing exposure in this kind of weather ensures that the fog doesn't appear too bright and helps add to the dark and mysterious mood of the photo.





1.7 HOW TO SHOOT LANDSCAPES IN LOW LIGHT

Shooting in full sun isn't typically a good time for landscape photography due to the adverse effects of the strong light. But shooting when the sun is low in the sky, on heavily overcast days or in other dark conditions can have its challenges too.

In low light there's not as much available light to illuminate your scene. This is especially true if you're shooting during blue hour when the sun has dipped below the horizon, or if you're in dense forest where little natural light passes through the trees.

To compensate for this lack of light your iPhone will use a slower shutter speed. This keeps the camera's shutter open for longer, allowing more light to enter the lens and hit the camera's sensor.

But slow shutter speeds can result in blurry photos, exposure problems and digital noise (grain) that degrades the image quality. Luckily, there are some simple techniques, equipment and apps that will help you take sharper and better exposed landscape photos in low light situations.



Keep Your iPhone Steady

In low light the iPhone uses a slower shutter speed to allow enough light to reach the sensor to create a good exposure.

The problem is that if you move your iPhone when taking the photo, the image will appear blurred due to camera shake.

The best solution is to use a tripod to hold your iPhone still. This will ensure that you get a perfectly sharp shot, even if the camera needs to use a slow shutter speed.

If you don't have a tripod, there are some other methods you could use to keep your iPhone as steady as possible.

You could place it on a solid object such as a wall, fence post or rock. Or lean against something sturdy like a tree trunk or large boulder.

If there's nothing to lean on, hold your iPhone with your arms close to your body and stand with your legs apart. This kind of stance is more likely to keep your iPhone still while you shoot.

When hand-holding the iPhone in low light, hold your breath while you take the shot. This will minimize the chances of your body moving while you're taking the photo.

When you press the shutter button, tap it very gently so that you don't move the phone as you take the shot. Even better, plug your iPhone's earbuds in and use the volume buttons as a remote shutter so that you don't have to tap the screen at all.



Reduce The Exposure

In low light it might seem counterintuitive to reduce the exposure to make the image darker. However, it's actually a really useful technique that will solve a lot of the problems of shooting in low light.

Remember, in low light the iPhone will need to use a slower shutter speed to allow enough light in to correctly expose the image. But this often results in the darker areas appearing brighter than you would like, as well as ugly specks of grain in these areas.

If you reduce the exposure level by swiping down on the screen after tapping to set focus, you're essentially telling the camera that you don't want to let as much light in. And as a result the shutter speed will be faster.

A faster shutter speed means less chance of camera shake and less grain. As long as reducing the exposure doesn't make the image too dark, this is a great technique to use in low light.

Use Long Exposure Apps

Typically the iPhone's native Camera app doesn't perform well in low light. You've probably noticed that photos taken in dark conditions often end up with unsightly grain that ruins the quality of the image.

But long exposure apps like *Cortex Camera*, *Slow Shutter Cam*, *Average Camera Pro* and *AvgNite Cam* can handle low light really well.

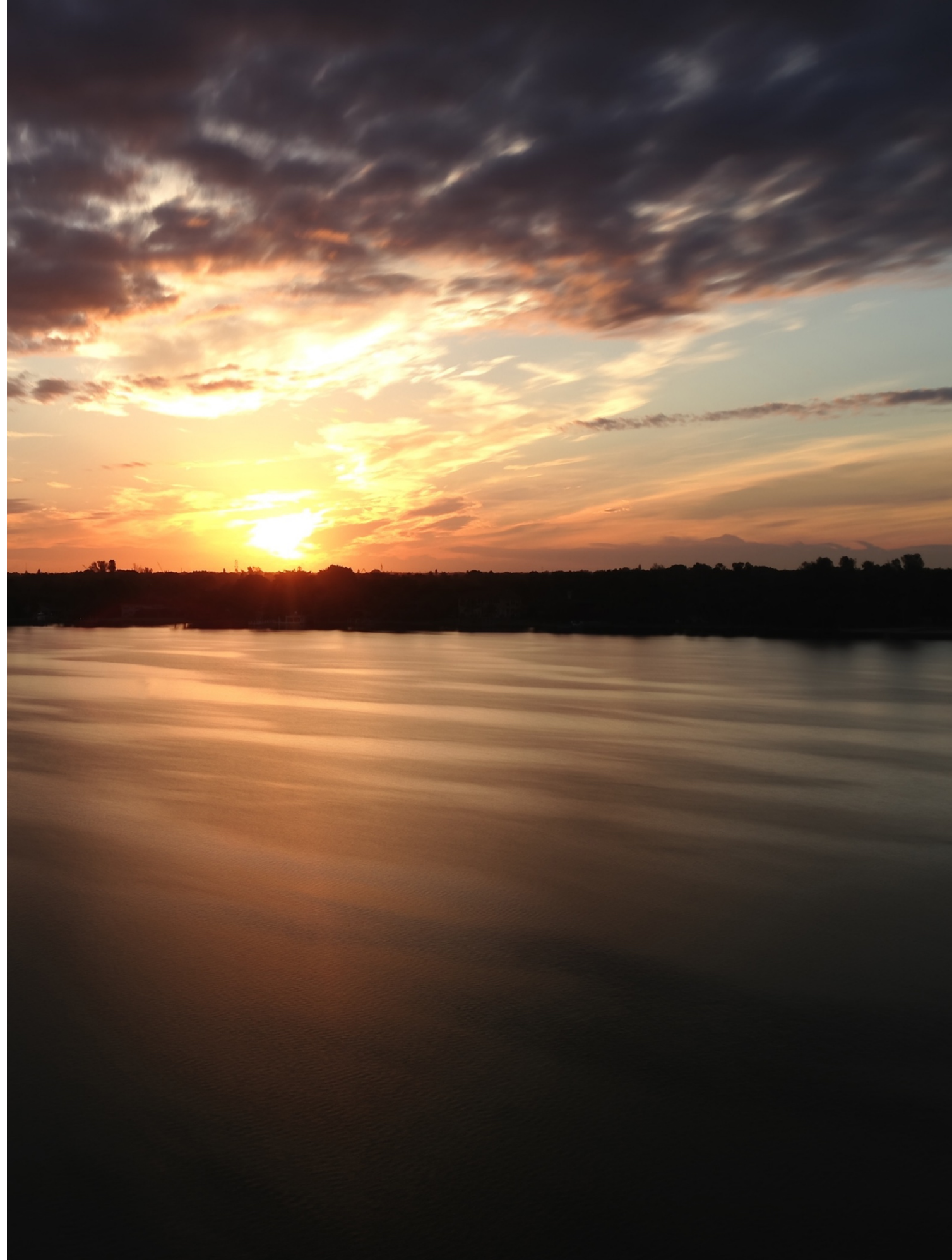
These apps work by combining multiple exposures into a single image, creating a smoother photo with less grain.

When using long exposure apps the camera has to be kept perfectly still while it shoots the multiple exposures, otherwise the combined image will be blurred.

This means that you should ideally use a tripod to keep your iPhone steady. It's actually possible to get decent hand-held shots with Cortex Cam but it still performs better with a tripod.

A side-effect of long exposure images is that any movement within the scene will be captured as motion blur.

This isn't so good if your main subject is moving as they'll appear as a blurred streak, but in certain situations it can create more beautiful images. Flowing water will appear with a lovely smooth veiling effect, and moving clouds will convey a dynamic sense of motion in your scene.





Use long exposure apps to capture better photos in low light. Flowing water will appear beautifully smooth, and moving clouds will add a dynamic motion effect to your images. For perfectly sharp shots, use a tripod to avoid camera shake.



CHAPTER 1 - UNDERSTANDING LIGHT

SUMMARY & TOP TIPS

1. Develop a better eye for light by shooting in different types of light and analyzing how the variations in light affect your photos.
2. Adjust exposure by swiping up or down on the screen to alter the image brightness.
3. Take photos around the hours of sunrise and sunset to capture your landscape in softer light with more beautiful colors.
4. Shoot away from the sun for a well-lit scene with even lighting throughout.
5. Shoot with the sun to one side to create long shadows and variations in light and shade.
6. To create a silhouette, shoot towards the sun with the light behind the subject. Reduce exposure until the subject appears as a dark outline against the brighter background.
7. Shoot towards the sun to capture rays of sunlight. Vary your shooting angle until the light rays appear, and adjust exposure if necessary. Position an object such as a tree or rock partially in front of the sun to block out the strongest part of the light.
8. Use a sun-tracker app such as *Sol* or *Sun Surveyor* to work out where the sun will be in the sky at different times of the day.
9. Be wary of shooting in strong sunlight. It's likely to cause harsh shadows and strong contrast in your photos.
10. Shoot on overcast days for more even lighting on your scene. The clouds will act as a natural diffuser, creating a softer light in your landscape.
11. Shoot in stormy weather to create dramatic photos with interesting light and cloud formations.
12. Use different types of light and weather to create different moods in your landscape photos. A bright blue sky with white fluffy clouds will produce a completely different mood to a dark, foggy scene.
13. When shooting in low light, keep your iPhone steady to avoid blurry photos caused by camera shake. A tripod is ideal, but if you don't have one use other methods to keep your body and iPhone as still as possible.
14. In low light, try reducing exposure to force the camera to use a faster shutter speed. This will help prevent camera shake and unsightly grain that can degrade the image quality.
15. Try using long exposure apps in low light to create smoother images with less grain.



CHAPTER 2

FOCUS & EXPOSURE

In this chapter you'll learn how to take full control of focus and exposure on your iPhone. By the end of Chapter 2 you'll be able to create incredible landscape photos that are sharply focussed and correctly exposed, even in challenging situations such as high contrast scenes or when your subjects are moving.

2.1 THE IMPORTANCE OF FOCUS & EXPOSURE

Once you've found an interesting landscape in great light, it's tempting to just point your iPhone's camera at the scene and take the shot.

But before you press the shutter button, there are two very important things you need to do within your Camera app.

The first step is to set focus on the most important part of the scene. The second step is to adjust the exposure to ensure the image brightness is as perfect as you can get it.

Luckily, focus and exposure are very easy to set within the iPhone's native Camera app.

In Chapter 1 you discovered how useful the exposure control can be, but in this chapter you'll learn how to take full control of focus and exposure. This will ensure that you always take the best possible shot every time you press the shutter.

And if the lighting in the scene is challenging, you'll discover some great apps that you can use to create a more balanced exposure in your landscape photos.



2.2 SET THE FOCUS POINT

When you're shooting with the iPhone you need to keep in mind that you might not get the entire scene from front to back in sharp focus. This is especially true when you have foreground objects close to the camera.

When someone looks at your photo, they'll automatically focus their attention on the sharpest area of the scene. Therefore, it's very important to set focus on the main subject or focal point to ensure that area of the frame is as sharp as possible.

Tap To Set Focus

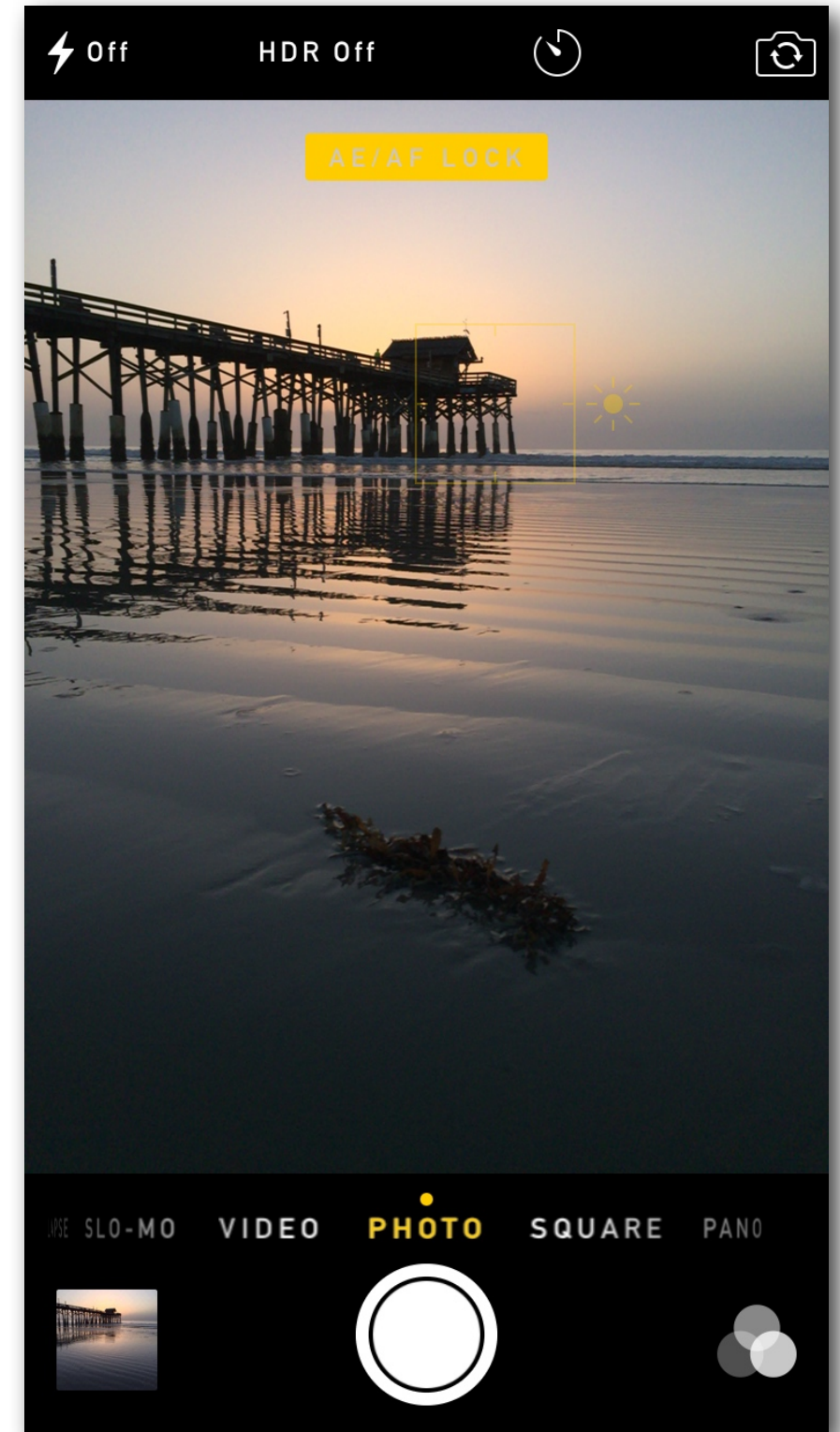
The iPhone's camera will automatically focus on the center of the scene. If you hold your iPhone up to the landscape you'll see a yellow square indicating the focus point.

But you might not always want the focus to be set on the area in the center of the frame. To ensure the camera focuses exactly where you want, you'll need to set the focus manually.

To set focus in the native Camera app, simply tap the screen on the area you want in sharp focus. In most cases this would be your main subject or point of interest.

A yellow square with a sun icon will appear on the screen to indicate the new focus point. Anything in front of or behind that focus point may not appear perfectly sharp in your photo.

If the scene has several points of interest at different distances from the camera, tapping somewhere in the middle distance of the scene will create the most balanced focus.





Lock Focus

If there's any movement in your scene, such as people or animals walking through the landscape, your focus point can be affected. If you tap to set focus and then something in the scene moves, the focus point might automatically reset to focus on the moving subject. In situations like this, you need to lock the focus so that it remains on your desired point, even if there's movement in the scene.

To lock focus, simply tap and hold where you want to set focus until you see AE/AF LOCK in a yellow box at the top of the screen. AE stands for Auto Exposure and AF stands for Auto Focus. You can unlock the focus point at any time by tapping the screen again so that AE/AF LOCK disappears.

2.3 CONTROL DEPTH OF FIELD

Depth of field refers to how much of the image is in sharp focus from front to back of the scene.

A large depth of field means that all or most of the scene is in focus from the foreground right into the distance. A shallow depth of field means that only a small portion of the scene is in focus with everything else appearing blurred.

The factor that controls depth of field on the iPhone is how close the lens is to objects in the foreground. In most landscape photos you don't have anything positioned close to the lens. This results in a large depth of field where everything is in focus.

In most situations this is desirable as you want to convey as much detail as possible throughout the scene. But in certain situations a shallow depth of field can make for an interesting photo as it allows you to emphasize just a certain aspect of the landscape such as small details in the foreground.

To create a shallow depth of field, hold your iPhone close to a foreground object, then tap the part of the scene that you want in sharp focus. Areas in front of or behind that focus point should appear blurred.

If you're not getting a shallow depth of field, move closer to your subject. The closer the camera is to the subject, the shallower the depth of field will be.



Set Focus Carefully For Close-Up Subjects



Not all landscape photography is about wide open scenery. Sometimes you'll want to capture the smaller details and textures that you find.

Capturing small details as well as the wider landscape helps to tell a more complete story of the environment that you experienced.

When shooting close-up subjects such as flowers, leaves, insects, shells or any other small objects, it's vital that you set your focus very carefully.

Remember, when you have a subject close to the lens of your iPhone the depth of field will be shallow.

This means that only a small portion of the image will be in focus, while anything in front of or behind that area will appear blurred.

Once you've composed your close-up shot, set the focus point on the subject that you want in sharp focus by tapping that area of the screen.

If your subject appears blurred you've either tapped the wrong area of the screen or you're holding the iPhone too close for it to focus.

2.4 HOW FOCUS AFFECTS EXPOSURE

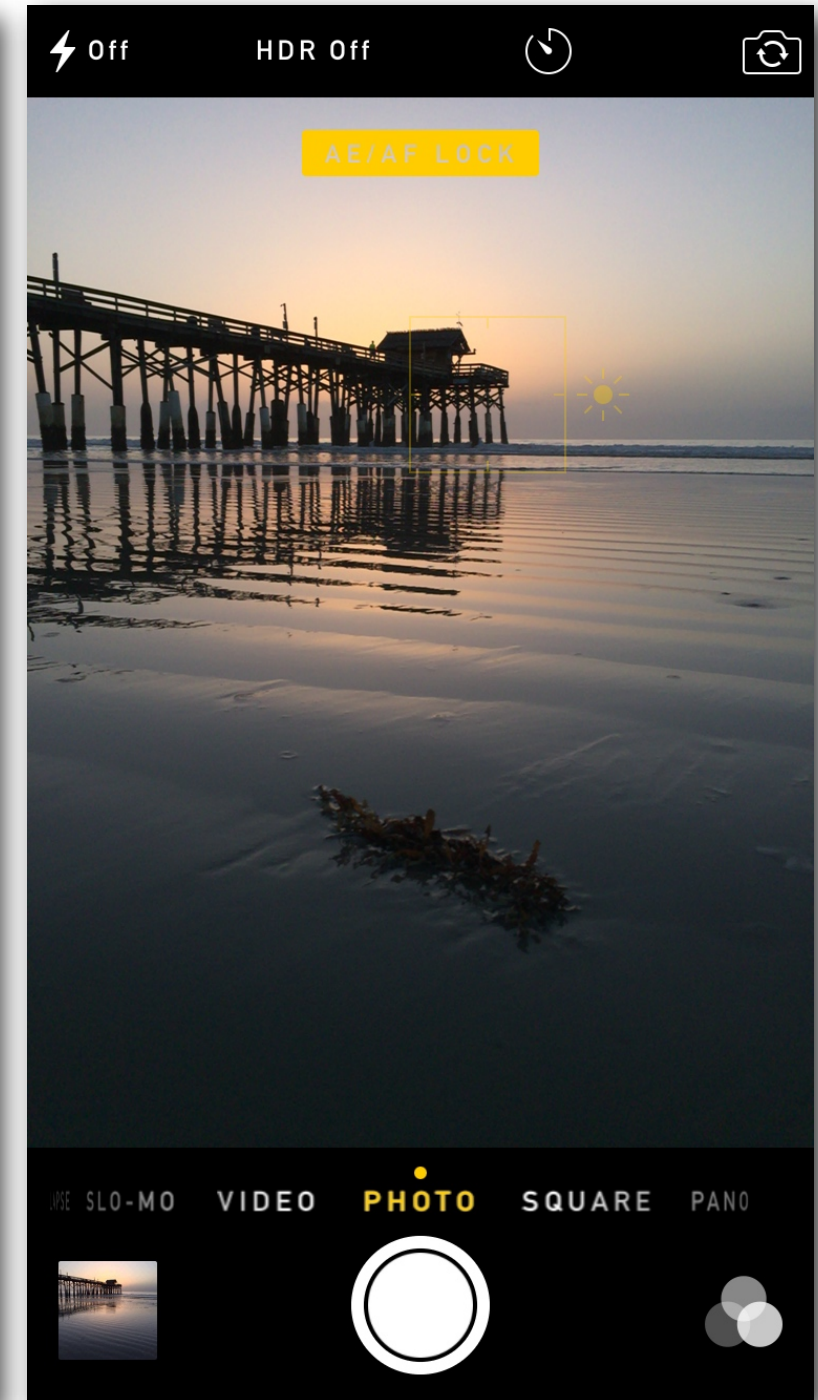
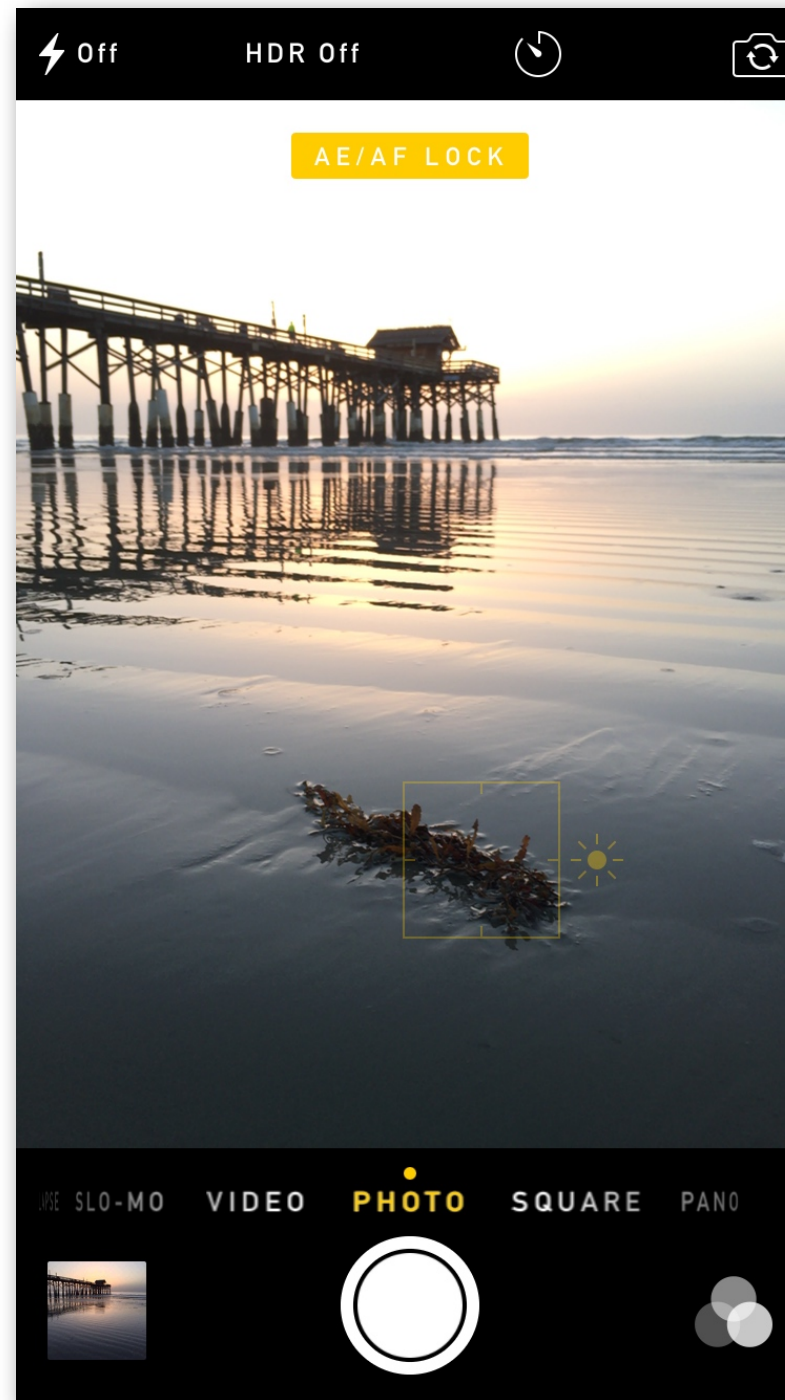
Exposure refers to the brightness of an image. In other words, how light or dark the photo appears when you take the shot.

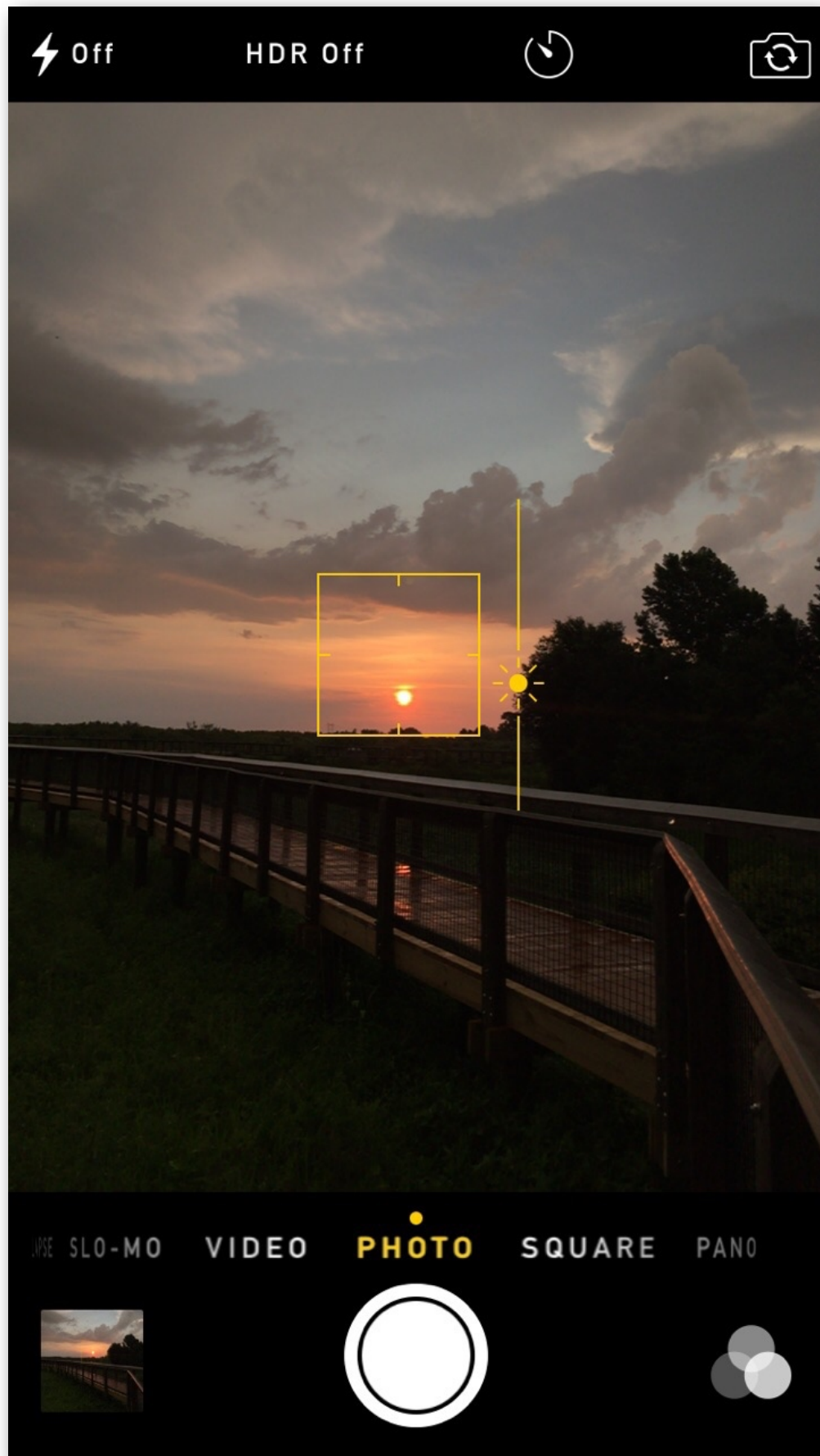
The iPhone automatically sets the exposure level based on the focus point. So when you tap to set focus, the exposure will be adjusted to ensure that part of the image is correctly exposed.

In these screenshots you can see that tapping to set focus on the seaweed in the foreground sets the exposure correctly for this area of the scene, but you end up with an over-exposed sky.

Tapping to set focus on the area in the distance results in a change of exposure. Now the sky is correctly exposed but the foreground is darker. In this case, the second image looks better in terms of exposure as the sky is full of color and detail.

However, there will be many times when you want to set the focus for one area (such as an object in the foreground) but expose for a different area (such as the sky). In such cases you need to manually adjust the exposure to fine-tune the image brightness before you take the shot.





2.5 ADJUST IMAGE EXPOSURE

After tapping to set focus, you can easily adjust the camera's exposure to make the image brighter or darker.

Start by tapping to set focus on your main subject or focal point, or lock the focus if necessary using tap-and-hold.

You can now access the exposure slider by swiping your finger up or down on the screen. Swipe up to increase exposure, making the image brighter. Or swipe down to decrease exposure, making the image darker.

As you adjust exposure, check carefully to see how it affects the different areas of your image. If a dark foreground is correctly exposed, the sky might appear over-exposed (too bright). If a bright sky is correctly exposed, the dark foreground might be under-exposed (too dark).

In photography you often have to make some kind of trade-off with exposure, especially in high contrast scenes that have very bright and very dark areas. This is because digital cameras aren't capable of capturing detail in very dark shadows and very bright highlights at the same time.

The trick is to try and create a balanced exposure while attempting to keep the most important part of the scene correctly exposed. When shooting landscapes it's advisable to take a few shots of the same scene at slightly different exposures so you have several options to choose from.

Many photographers choose to shoot slightly under-exposed. This is because the shadows (dark areas) can usually be brightened effectively in post-processing, but areas that are completely over-exposed normally can't be recovered afterwards.



Under-Expose To Keep Detail In The Sky

When you have an interesting sky such as a sunset with pretty clouds, it's usually best to set exposure so that the sky is correctly exposed, even if this results in the darker foreground being under-exposed.

This kind of exposure will bring attention to the sky, which in this kind of shot is the most important part of the scene. You should be able to brighten up the darker areas in post-processing if you wish.



Over-Expose To Reveal Detail In Dark Foregrounds

When a subject in the foreground is the strongest part of the scene, you may choose to set exposure for this area, even if the sky ends up over-exposed.

This choice of exposure will bring attention to the foreground, but bear in mind that you're unlikely to be able to recover detail in pure white areas of the sky during post-processing.



Always check and adjust exposure before pressing the shutter button. Aim for a balanced exposure with some visible detail in both shadows and highlights. If in doubt, slightly under-expose your photo as it's easier to recover detail from the shadows than the highlights when editing.



2.6 USE MULTIPLE EXPOSURE APPS

Sometimes it's impossible to get a decent exposure in landscape photography, especially in high contrast scenes where you have a bright sky and dark foreground. Exposing for the highlights will make the shadows too dark, and exposing for the shadows will make the highlights too bright.

Of course, waiting for better light is the best option, but sometimes this isn't practical. In such cases there are a number of apps that you can use to combine multiple images in order to create a perfectly exposed landscape photo. This isn't cheating - it's just using the tools available to create the best image possible!

Use HDR Apps To Create More Balanced Exposures

HDR stands for High Dynamic Range. Creating an HDR image allows you to increase the dynamic range of your photo, which essentially means that you'll be able to capture more color and detail in both shadows and highlights.

HDR photos are created by combining several different exposures of the same scene. For example, one normal exposure photo, one over-exposed photo and one under-exposed photo.

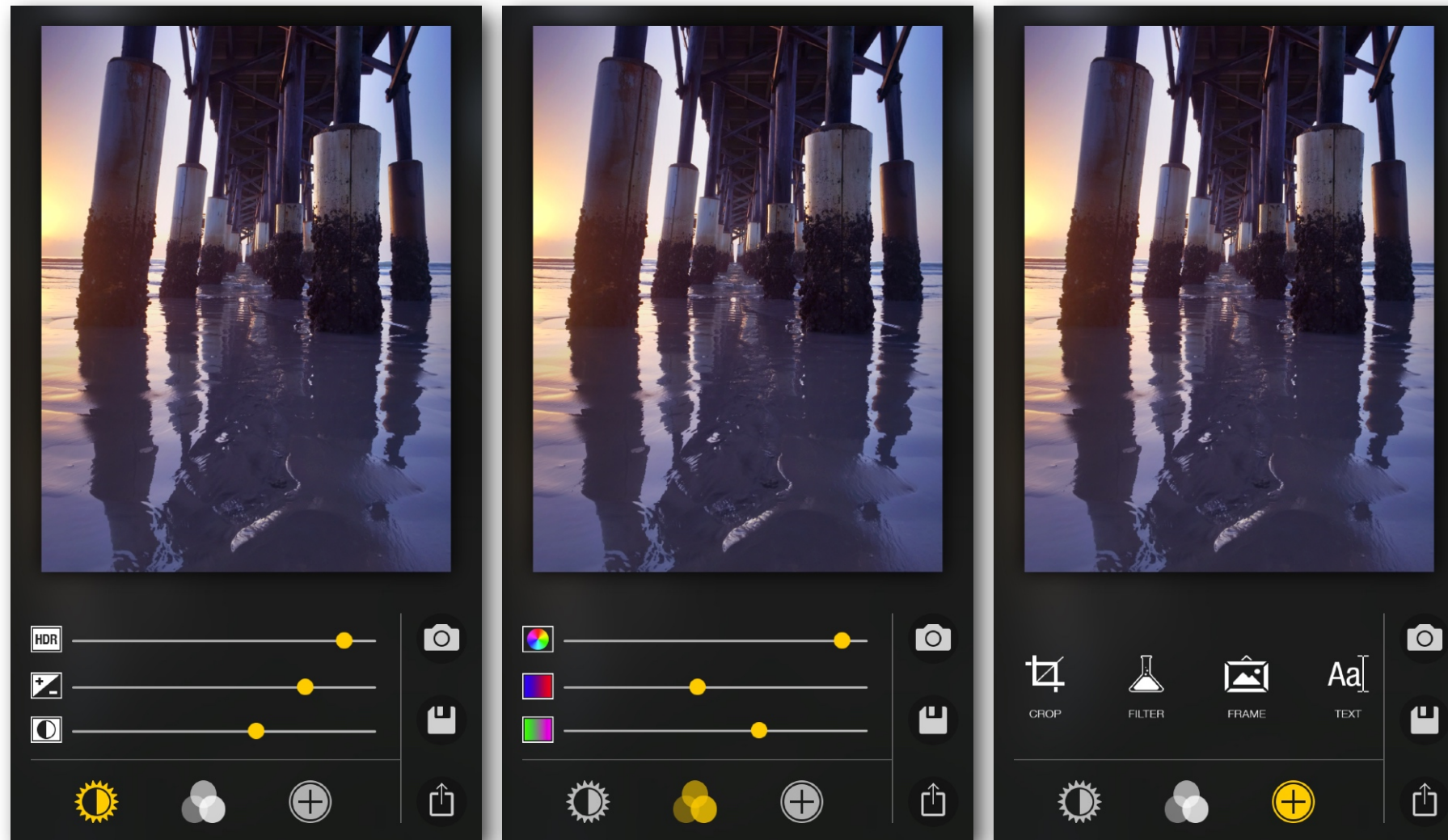
When the three images are combined, the result will be a photo that's correctly exposed throughout the entire scene.

HDR photos can easily be created using apps on your iPhone. The native Camera app allows you to shoot in HDR mode (just tap the HDR option and select "On"). However, the effect isn't very strong and you don't have any control over the HDR settings.

For a more intense HDR effect with control over exposure, color and other settings, use a dedicated HDR app such as *Pro HDR X* as shown in these screenshots.

When using HDR apps it's very easy to apply the effect at too high a strength. This will create grainy and unrealistic-looking photos, so always dial back the HDR strength to create a balanced exposure that still looks natural.

When shooting HDR photos, keep the camera perfectly still while the app takes several exposures of the scene. If the camera moves, your photo will be blurred. Mount your iPhone on a tripod if possible, or use another method to steady your iPhone when taking the shot.

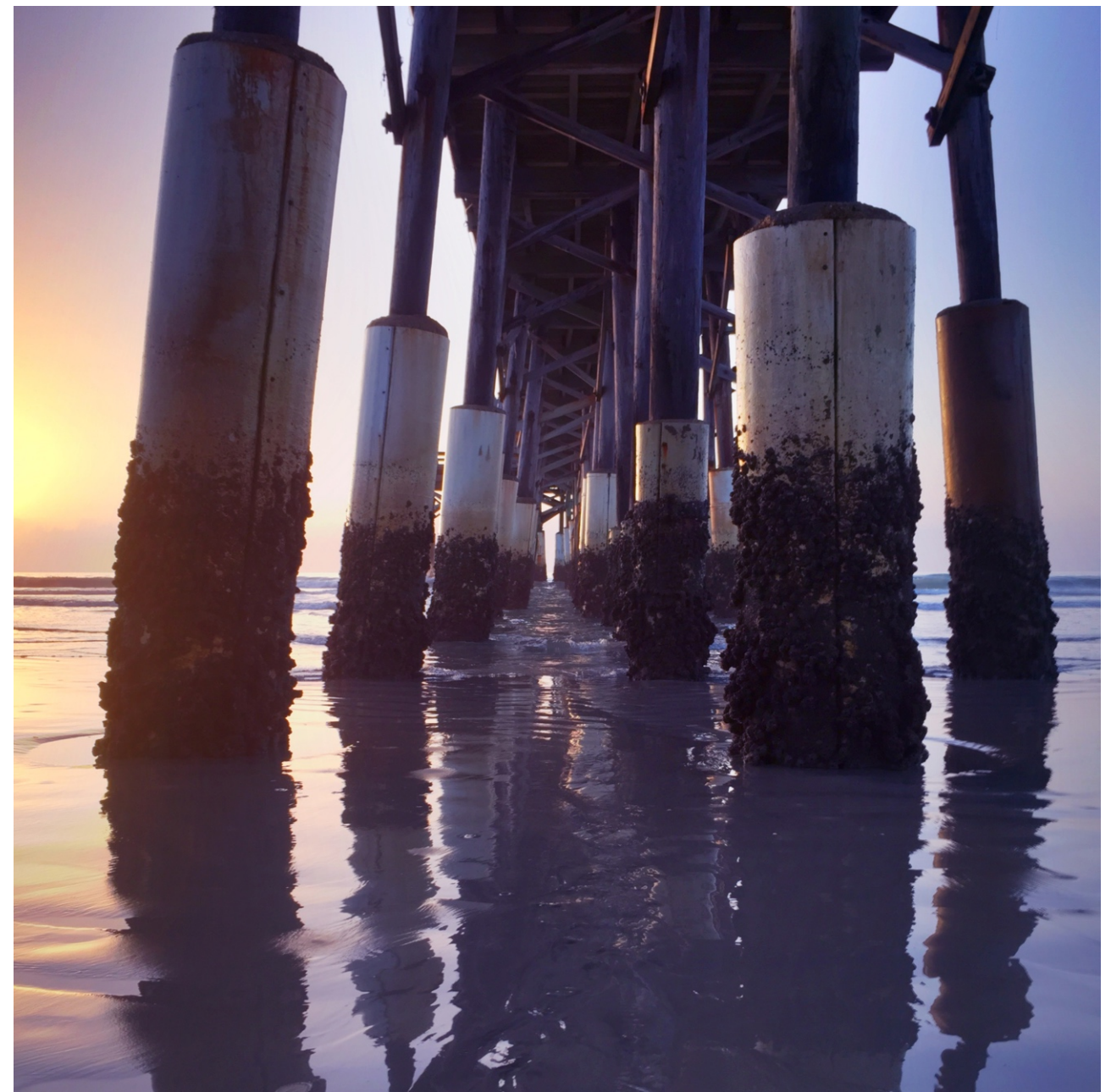




Normal Exposure

This photo was taken using the native Camera app without any HDR effect applied.

Exposure was adjusted to correctly expose for the dark foreground, but this resulted in the sky appearing completely over-exposed with no color or detail at all.



HDR Exposure

This photo was taken using the Pro HDR X app. The app combines three images taken at different exposure levels to create a photo with perfect exposure throughout.

HDR apps allow you to easily capture color and detail in both the dark and bright areas of the scene.

Use Layering Apps To Replace The Sky



If you're not keen on the effect created by HDR apps, or you only realize later that your photo has exposure problems, you could use a layering app such as *Superimpose* to combine two or more photos together.

For example, you could replace an over-exposed sky with the sky from a different photo.

You simply layer the original image on top of another photo that has a better sky. The photo here was created in this way.

The process is fairly straightforward. You import both photos into the Superimpose app and then use the Mask tool to select which parts of the bottom layer show through.

The aim is to erase the sky area from the original photo so that the sky from the other photo appears in its place.

For a realistic look and feel, it may take some time to carefully erase the edges and blend in the new sky. But the results are worth the effort if it means you can rescue a great photo that was only ruined by an over-exposed sky.



CHAPTER 2 - FOCUS & EXPOSURE

SUMMARY & TOP TIPS

1. Before pressing the shutter button to take your photo, always set focus and exposure manually.
2. To set focus in the Camera app, simply tap the area on the screen that you want in sharp focus. This would normally be your main subject or point of interest.
3. If there's movement in your scene, tap and hold to lock the focus point. This prevents the camera from re-focussing when a subject moves. When focus is locked you'll see AE/AF LOCK at the top of the screen.
4. To create a shallow depth of field where only a small part of the scene is in focus, position the camera close to a subject in the foreground.
5. When shooting close-up subjects, ensure you tap to set focus on the subject, otherwise it might appear out of focus.
6. Exposure refers to the brightness of the photo. An image that appears too dark is said to be under-exposed, and an image that's too bright is over-exposed.
7. When you tap to set focus, exposure is calculated based on the focus point. But you can fine-tune exposure by swiping up to make the image brighter or down to make it darker.
8. To capture color and detail in the sky, you might need to slightly under-expose the image. You can always brighten up the darker areas a bit in post-processing.
9. To reveal details in a dark foreground, you might need to slightly over-expose the image. However, this can result in a loss of color and detail in the sky which may not be possible to recover in post-processing.
10. In challenging lighting situations you can use apps to create a more balanced exposure throughout the entire image.
11. HDR apps such as *Pro HDR X* combine multiple exposures (dark, normal and bright) to capture more color and detail throughout the dark, bright and medium tones in the image.
12. If you have a great landscape photo but the sky is over-exposed with little or no detail, try using a layering app such as Superimpose to add a sky from a different photo.



CHAPTER 3

COMPOSITION

In this chapter you'll learn how to use a variety of composition techniques to create a stronger sense of depth, balance and scale. By the end of Chapter 3 you'll be able to create stunning iPhone landscape photos that instantly catch the viewer's eye, drawing them deep into the scene and giving them a true sense of the beautiful landscape that you experienced.



3.1 THE IMPORTANCE OF COMPOSITION

Composition is the key to getting your iPhone landscape photos noticed. Without good composition your images are unlikely to catch or hold the viewer's attention.

As one of the great masters of landscape photography, Ansel Adams, famously said, "You don't take a photograph, you make it."

Anyone can point a camera at a landscape and take a photo, but it takes a more skilled photographer to compose a balanced shot that effectively conveys the depth and scale within the scene.

In this chapter you'll discover a range of composition techniques for creating amazing photos, even in the most ordinary landscapes.

What Is Composition?

Composition is simply the way you arrange the key elements or subjects within a scene.

A good photographer can create amazing photos from even the bleakest of landscapes, simply by employing good composition techniques.

The position and angle that you shoot from determines where particular elements appear within the frame and how much emphasis is placed upon them. It also affects how depth and scale are perceived.

With each photo that you take, you should ask yourself the following questions:

- How can I draw attention to the main subject or focal point?
- How can I lead the viewer's eye into and around the image to create a stronger sense of depth?
- How can I create a balanced composition that's pleasing to the eye?

With these questions in mind, you can then begin to build your photograph using a number of highly effective composition techniques that you'll discover in this chapter.





3.2 CHOOSE AN ORIENTATION

When shooting landscapes, which orientation should you use? Horizontal (landscape) or vertical (portrait) orientation?

There's no right or wrong answer, and choosing which orientation to shoot in is often dictated by the landscape itself.

This tall vertical gorge naturally suits portrait orientation because more of its height can be captured in the photo, and the rocks in the foreground can be included too.

A wide mountain range would likely be better captured in landscape orientation to ensure you fit as much of the scene as possible into the frame.

The best option is to shoot the same scene in both orientations and then choose the format that leaves the least amount of empty or uninteresting space.

Depending on how you intend to share your work, keep in mind that you might want to crop your image into square format later on.

You could shoot in square format to start with, but you'll have more options if you shoot in rectangular format and then crop later.



Landscape Orientation

This vast mountain range naturally suits landscape orientation as it allows more of the scene to be captured within the frame. Horizontal format is perfect for conveying the huge scale of a wide landscape.

Horizontal landscape photos can sometimes lack depth, so a good tip is to include some interesting detail in the foreground that will help create a stronger sense of depth in the scene.



Portrait Orientation

Vertical format is well suited to tall subjects, but it's also useful in situations where you want to include more foreground interest to help create a greater feeling of depth.

Square Format

Of course, with the iPhone's native Camera app you also have the option to shoot in square format.

With millions of people sharing their photos on Instagram (which only allows you to upload square images) the square format photo has become extremely popular.

While you might not automatically opt for square mode when shooting landscapes, I would recommend doing so from time to time.

Some landscapes seem impossible to fit within a square frame, but experimenting with different compositions and changing your shooting distance will help you to create wonderful square images.

If you intend sharing your iPhone photos on Instagram you should definitely develop a good eye for square compositions.

You can either shoot in square format to start with, or shoot in standard rectangular format and then crop to a square in post-processing.





3.3 INCLUDE A FOCAL POINT

Including a main subject or focal point is the key to creating great landscape photos. A landscape without a focal point won't be very interesting to look at and the viewer will quickly move on. This is especially true in vast empty landscapes such as the one above.

Imagine this photo without the inclusion of the jetty and the person on the right-hand side. While the sky, reflections and colors are all beautiful, the photo would be rather bland without the main point of interest on the right.

The Importance Of A Focal Point

A focal point catches the viewer's attention and provides a place for their eye to rest once they've looked around the scene.

Without a focal point it will be difficult to create a strong composition. The focal point gives you a starting point to build your composition around.

An interesting main subject also gives meaning to your image, helping you to tell a more compelling story through your photography.

Typical subjects that you could use as a focal point in your landscape photos are a lone tree in a field, a wooden cabin in a forest, a large rock on a beach, a boat on the ocean, a jetty on a lake, a person looking over the landscape or an animal enjoying its natural habitat.

Before you take a photo, always scan the landscape for interesting subjects that could be used as a focal point.

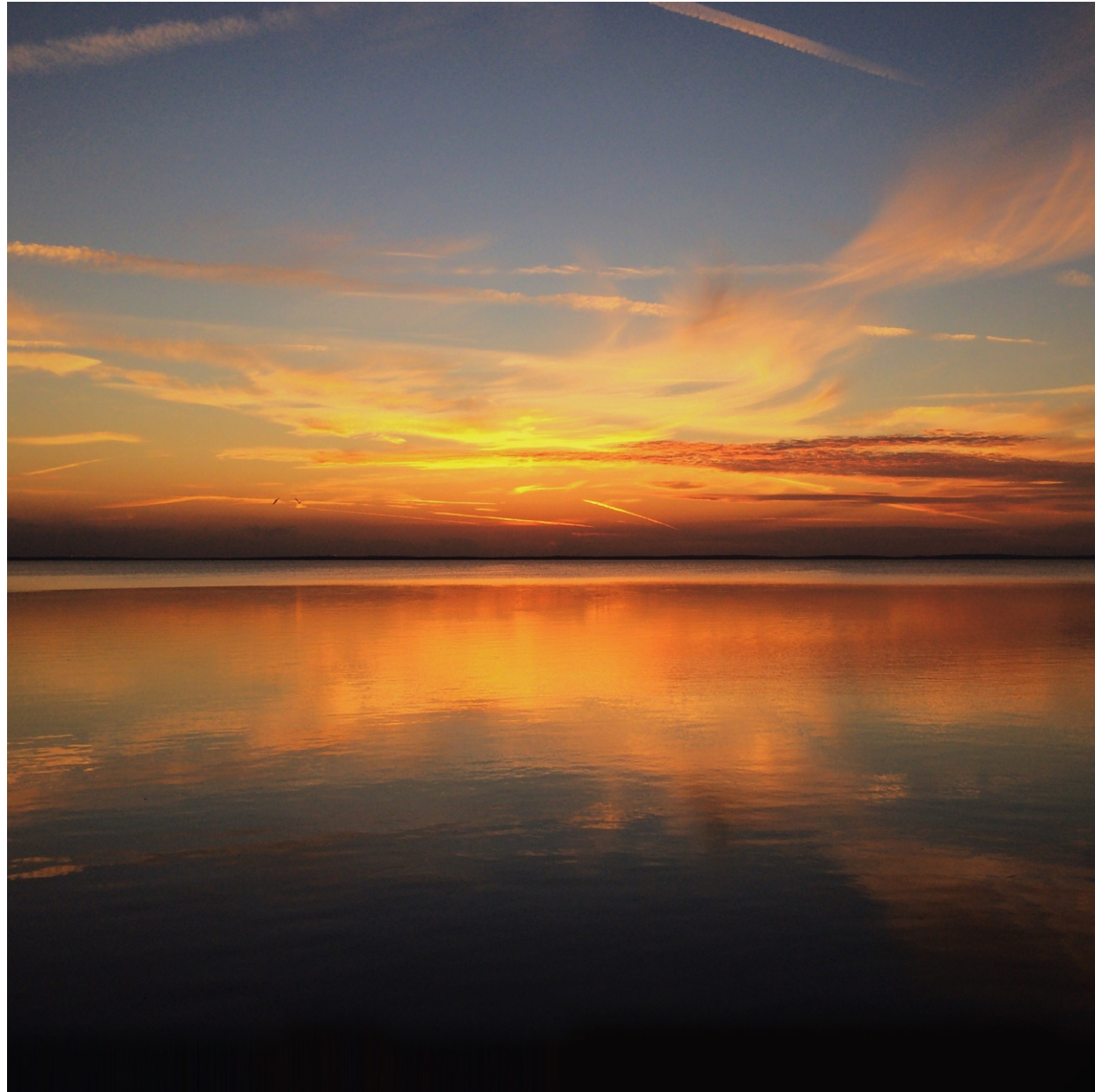
Then use the composition techniques in the rest of this chapter to build that subject into your photo to create the most visually pleasing image.



Use Clouds Or The Sun As A Focal Point In Empty Landscapes

Empty landscapes such as a lake or desert are often overlooked because they don't have any obvious features or main points of interest.

But if you shoot in beautiful light and wait until the sky has some interesting cloud formations that can act as a focal point, even an empty landscape can be transformed into a stunning photo.



If the sun is rising or setting over your landscape, you could use the sun as your focal point.

Just make sure you reduce the exposure so that the bright sun doesn't ruin the photo. Having some clouds in front of the sun will help to create a focal point that isn't too bright or over-bearing.

Include A Human Element

Including a person as the focal point is a great way to make your landscape photos more interesting. A landscape photo that includes a human element will create a strong connection with your audience.

Looking at another person in the photo makes it easier for the viewer to imagine that it was them standing in that beautiful landscape admiring the view.

With landscape photography it's often difficult to convey size and scale. Including a person in your photo is the perfect way to create a better sense of scale.

The person provides the viewer with a reference point. Knowing the size of a typical person makes it easy to work out the size of the surrounding objects.

Including a person in your composition also adds a storytelling element to your image, making the viewer wonder about the story behind that moment you captured with your iPhone.

If you're out in the landscape alone, you can always use yourself as the subject. Mount your iPhone on a tripod or other solid surface, then use the timer in the Camera app to set a delay so that you can run into the frame before the shot is taken.



Including a human element in your landscape photos will bring the scenery to life. Capturing a person within the landscape creates a strong focal point, a better sense of scale and a wonderful storytelling element in your photography.





3.4 ELIMINATE DISTRACTIONS

To place maximum emphasis on the main subjects within your landscape, ensure you don't include any unnecessary or distracting objects in the frame.

Explore the location and find a viewpoint that allows you to eliminate unwanted distractions from your composition.

Try shooting from different angles. You'll be amazed at how a change in angle alters what is and isn't included in the frame.

Simplicity is very powerful in photography. Including a lot of negative (empty) space will help draw attention to the subjects in your photos, especially if those subjects are small in comparison to their surroundings.

You might think that landscape photography isn't well suited to minimalist photography, but composing your shot with a large expanse of sky is an easy way of simplifying the scene and focusing attention on a small subject.

If you really can't avoid including an unwanted element within the frame, you could always remove it in post-processing using an app like *TouchRetouch*.

Bear in mind that distractions are easier to remove in post-processing when they're surrounded by empty space such as plain blue sky or a field.



Sometimes you need to be patient and wait for the right moment to take the shot. This location was full of people before and after taking this photo, but waiting for a moment when the space was empty resulted in a clean and pure image with no distractions.



3.5 CONVEY A SENSE OF DEPTH

One of the classic problems with landscape photography is that while you might see and experience an amazing landscape in real life, when you capture it in a photo it doesn't look that impressive.

This is usually because the photo doesn't convey any sense of depth or distance. Depth is one of the most important aspects of landscape photography and without it your scenery will look flat and uninteresting.

To become a good landscape photographer you must learn some essential composition techniques that will help to draw the viewer's eye deeper into the scene.

In the next few pages you'll discover three simple yet highly effective composition techniques for creating a stronger sense of depth in your landscape photos.



3.6 INCLUDE FOREGROUND INTEREST

Including objects in the foreground of your frame is a surefire way of creating depth in your landscape photos. It makes the viewer look all the way from the front to the back of your picture.

Foreground interest emphasizes the feeling of distance in the scene and adds a sense of scale, both of which help to show how far away the tiny distant objects must be.



Include Objects In The Foreground

When you spot a landscape that you want to photograph, explore the location for any objects that you could include in the foreground. You could use rocks, pebbles, fallen trees or flowers. Even shadows and reflections can make great foreground interest.

Compose your shot so the objects appear in the bottom half of your frame with the distant scene visible beyond. Shooting from a low angle often helps to get both the foreground and the background into the frame.

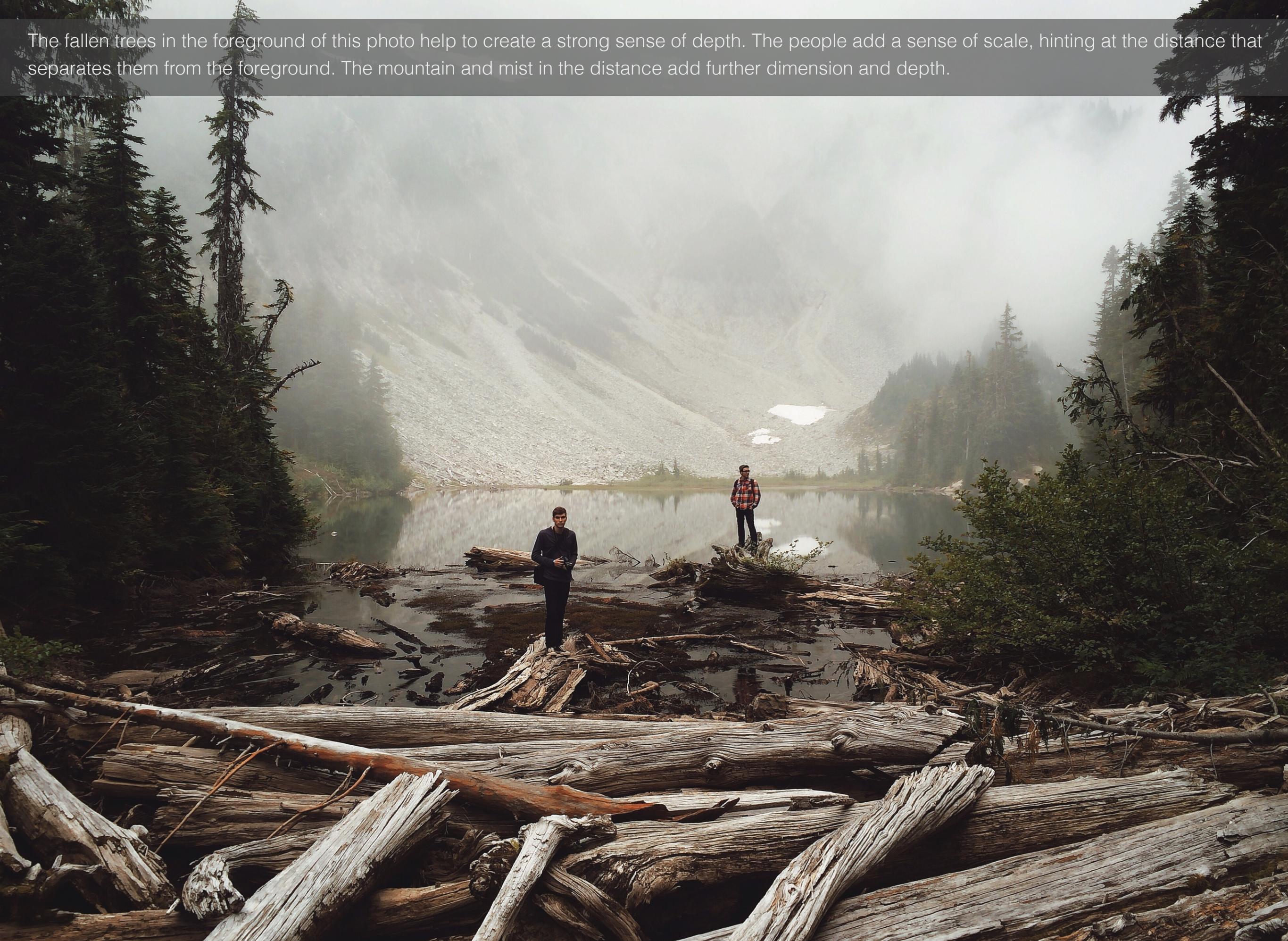


Layer Objects Throughout The Scene

To create the strongest sense of depth, find a viewpoint that allows you to create “layers” of objects at different distances. This will lead the viewer’s eye through every part of the photo from front to middle to back, creating an engaging image full of depth.

The aim is to have objects in the foreground such as the fallen trees in the photo above. Then some other objects in the middle distance such as a person and trees. And finally, something in the far distance such as some large mountains.

The fallen trees in the foreground of this photo help to create a strong sense of depth. The people add a sense of scale, hinting at the distance that separates them from the foreground. The mountain and mist in the distance add further dimension and depth.





3.7 USE LEADING LINES

Leading lines are an extremely powerful way of creating a strong sense of depth in your landscape photos. A leading line is a line that you use in your composition to lead the viewer's eye into and around the scene.

Roads, paths, train tracks, rivers, fences, piers and rows of trees are all common landscape elements that you could use as leading lines. The lines could be straight, curved, S-shaped, parallel or converging.

The way the lines gradually lead into the distance will draw your audience deep into the landscape. Your eye can't help but follow the line!

Choosing your viewpoint is of particular importance as this impacts where the line starts. Always aim to shoot from a perspective where the line starts in the foreground and leads into the distance.



Use Straight Lines For A Strong Impact

Parallel lines that converge into the distance have the most powerful visual impact. They create a strong graphical element in your image that instantly catches the viewer's attention.

Because the lines converge the further away they get, this tells your brain that you must be looking at a scene that covers quite some distance, and so you get a strong sense of depth in the landscape.

With scenes like this, shoot from a perspective where the lines start at the bottom of the frame or emerge from the bottom corners. Shooting from a low angle often helps to achieve this.



Use Curved Lines For A Softer Impact

Curved lines that sweep gracefully through the landscape have a more gentle visual impact than straight converging lines. They still create a sense of depth and distance in your photo, but in a slightly more subtle way.

Look out for roads and rivers that curve gently through the landscape, and use them to enhance your composition.

To create a sense of depth, aim to have the line starting somewhere in the foreground so that it leads the viewer's eye through the scene from front to the back.



Use S-Shaped Lines To Lead The Eye Around The Scene

S-shaped lines, such as a hairpin bend in a road or a river that winds through the landscape, can be difficult to find. So when you spot one, be sure to stop and shoot!

They create wonderful flowing lines that weave their way around the image, taking the viewer on a visual journey all the way through the landscape.

This combination of leading lines and foreground interest creates an incredibly strong sense of depth. Your eye is drawn from the person at very front of the scene right into the distance where the railway tracks converge.



3.8 FRAME YOUR SCENE WITH FOREGROUND OBJECTS



Because landscapes are so vast, sometimes it's difficult to lead the viewer's eye towards your main subject or focal point.

A useful composition technique for drawing attention to the most important part of the scene is to frame that area of the photo with something from the foreground.

Tree branches, gateways, boulders, and even the sky or water are all elements found in landscapes that can be used to frame your subject.

If you find an abandoned building or barn, you could shoot your landscape from inside the building. Shoot through an open window, door or archway, using these elements to frame the scene outside.

Sometimes you might find an interesting natural frame that would make a great photo in itself. The amazing rock formation in this photo is one such object.

Positioning your main subject within the natural frame will really bring the photo to life.

Frame Your Sunsets

Sunsets look stunning in real life but it's often difficult to convey that magnificence in a photo.

While the beautiful colors are visually pleasing, the setting sun isn't necessarily a strong focal point.

To help focus the viewer's eye directly on the sunset, try using objects in the foreground to frame the important area of the scene.

A frame doesn't have to go around all four edges of the picture. In this photo the two jetties were used to frame the left and right sides of the setting sun.

The overhanging tree branches at the top right add another framing element. Even the bright clouds at the top of the photo seem to create a frame around the setting sun.

These framing elements help to draw the eye directly towards the sun on the horizon.

Including these objects in the foreground has the added benefit of creating a stronger sense of depth in the scene.





Create Silhouetted Frames

Silhouetted tree branches make wonderful frames for your sunset photos. Their intricate and delicate shapes add beautiful detail to your pictures.

In this photo, the trees and bushes create a stunning silhouetted frame around the setting sun. It has the effect of drawing your eye directly through the frame towards the sunset in the distance.

To create this kind of photo, simply tap to set focus, then swipe down on the screen to reduce the exposure until the objects in the foreground appear completely black.



Use Frames To Add Context

Using foreground objects to frame the scene can help to add context to your photo. It gives the viewer a clue to where you took the shot from and how you interacted with the landscape.

I used some large boulders as a frame along the top and bottom of this photo for several reasons. Firstly, they help focus the viewer's attention on the middle distance which is the most important part of this scene.

They also create a more unique viewpoint of this well-photographed landscape. And finally they allowed me to better convey my interaction with this vast landscape.



3.9 BALANCE YOUR COMPOSITION

Balance is at the heart of every landscape composition. It determines whether the photo is perceived as harmonious and pleasing to the eye, or unresolved and maybe slightly uncomfortable to look at.

In most cases you'll probably want a harmonious composition where the main elements are balanced across the scene.

But experimenting with unbalanced compositions and unusual subject placement can result in more interesting photos that create dynamic tension within the landscape.

It all depends what message you want to convey and what emotions you want to evoke in the viewer.

The Importance Of Balance

Balance in photography isn't an exact science. It can be very subjective and will be perceived differently by different people.

However, it's important that you learn how to use balance in your photography as it can have a big impact on the visual appeal of your image.

Creating balance in your compositions is all about how you arrange the main elements within the frame.

Once you've mastered the use of balance, you'll be able to create incredible landscape photos that are always pleasing to the eye.

There are several composition techniques that can be used to create balance in your landscape photos, including the rule of thirds, diagonal balance and symmetry.

In the next few pages you'll discover how each of these composition principles can be used to create better balance in your iPhone landscape photos.



3.10 USE DIAGONAL BALANCE



If your photo looks unbalanced, it's probably because the dominating element isn't balanced by another smaller element within the scene.

In this photo the large mountain and reflection dominates the top left of the photo.

Without the person at the bottom right, this photo would look top-heavy and unbalanced.

Including a smaller subject diagonally opposite from the dominant subject is a great way to create natural balance within the composition.

When composing your photos, imagine a line from one corner of the frame to the opposite diagonal corner. This will train your eye to find better balance in your landscape photos.

3.11 USE THE RULE OF THIRDS

The rule of thirds is one of the most fundamental composition principles in photography. Learning how to use this rule (which is really just a guideline!) will help you create natural balance in your landscape photos.

The rule of thirds states that an image will look more naturally balanced and pleasing to the eye if the most important elements are positioned off-center rather than in the middle of the frame.

In particular, you should imagine your frame divided into nine equal parts and then compose your shot so that the main elements line up with these gridlines.

For example, you should position the horizon along one of the horizontal lines, place tall subjects along one of the vertical lines, or place your main subject at one of the intersections where two lines join.

To help you line up the elements in your composition according to the rule of thirds, switch on the gridlines in the Camera app (Settings > Photos & Camera > Grid).

The rule of thirds might seem counter-intuitive at first. Many beginner photographers assume that a photo will be more balanced with the horizon or main subject positioned centrally.

But once you start using the rule of thirds you'll discover that in many cases an off-center composition creates the most natural and harmonious balance within your image.





3.12 BREAK THE RULE!

Of course, rules are meant to be broken! And breaking the rule of thirds can create drama and dynamic tension in your photos.

For example, positioning your main subject perfectly central at the very bottom of the frame can make them feel small and insignificant compared to the vast landscape looming above them.

Breaking the rule of thirds and experimenting with central and edge subject placement can often result in more dramatic and powerful photos. These techniques can work particularly well in square compositions.

However, in order to be able to break the rule of thirds with intent, you must first learn to use the rule! So learn how to use the rule of thirds and understand why it's so effective.

Then once you're comfortable with this technique, experiment with centered subjects, minimal compositions with very low horizons and other unconventional compositions that play around with balance.

3.13 CREATE SYMMETRY

Symmetrical compositions are incredibly powerful because their natural mirror-image creates a perfectly balanced photo, albeit in a different way to the off-centre balance created using the rule of thirds.



Still bodies of water are perfect for creating symmetry in your landscape photos. Their smooth reflective surface allows you to capture stunning symmetrical reflections.

Whenever you stumble across water in a landscape, whether it's a large lake, a small pool or even a tiny puddle, check to see if there's anything interesting reflected in the water.

Large mountains, a lone tree or even a few flowers will all look stunning when captured in a reflection.

To create a perfectly symmetrical composition, ensure the line of symmetry is located centrally across the middle of the frame.

When shooting reflections, it usually works best if you compose the shot from a low angle.

So get your iPhone nice and close to the water, then experiment with the shooting angle until you achieve perfect symmetry.

Create Near-Symmetry

Symmetrical photos don't have to be a perfect mirror-image. Near-symmetry is also very effective.

When you're shooting landscapes, look out for any natural or man-made features that have a general symmetrical quality.



Roads, lines of trees, and even natural rock formations and rivers can act as near-symmetrical subjects in your landscape photos.

Just make sure you shoot from a central perspective so that one side of the image mirrors the other side as much as possible.

Break The Symmetry

While perfectly symmetrical compositions are stunning, sometimes breaking the symmetry with careful placement of a subject can create a more dynamic and engaging image.

When you're shooting symmetrical reflections or other scenes with symmetry, ask yourself whether the image would be more stimulating if you included a subject that broke up the symmetry.



Adding a person as your main subject is a great option for creating a visual break in a symmetrical scene.

They'll create a strong focal point that adds an extra dimension and storytelling element to your symmetrical landscape.

But you could also use other subjects to break the symmetry such as a tree, rock, building, etc.

Experiment with positioning the subject in different areas of the scene until you're happy with the balance.

Your aim is to use the subject to break the symmetry, but in a visually pleasing way that adds to the composition.

Symmetrical compositions have a very strong impact, and still bodies of water are the perfect place to capture beautiful symmetry in reflections. Whenever you find water such as a lake, a small pool or even a puddle, check to see if there are any interesting reflections to photograph.



3.14 CREATE A SENSE OF SCALE

When you're out shooting a landscape you get an appreciation of how large and vast that space is. But it's often difficult to convey this in your photos.

Including an object of a known size in your landscape photos is a good way of creating a sense of scale.

For example, having a person in the scene creates a reference point which the viewer can use to gauge the size of the other objects in the scene.

Without a human element in this photo it would be difficult to get a sense of how big the rock in the foreground really is.

But the person standing on the rock allows you to easily work out its size. You can tell that the rock is very big because it dwarfs the person standing on it.

Without the person in this photo it would be difficult to tell how far away the rock is from the camera and therefore how large it is.

If possible, always try to include some kind of subject in your landscape photos that will help you to convey a better sense of scale.





3.15 VARY YOUR SHOOTING PERSPECTIVE

The perspective that you shoot from can completely change an image. It's easy to take photos from standing height while looking

straight ahead at the landscape, but you'll often get better results if you shoot from a low or high perspective.

Shoot From A High Perspective

When you're photographing landscapes, always look around to see if there are any high vantage points you could shoot from. Capturing the scene from a high perspective is great when you have lots of interesting features on the ground such as rocks, flowers, water or people.



It's also useful in situations where you want to eliminate a sky that's too bright or just uninteresting. Taking photos from high up also tends to exaggerate the sense of scale in a scene, making your subjects look tiny in comparison to the vast landscape around them.

Shoot From A Low Perspective

Taking photos from a low perspective is often a necessity if you want to include a lot of detail in the foreground.

Crouching down will make a huge difference to your composition. It allows you to capture detail that you wouldn't get from standing height.



A low shooting angle is also perfect for situations where the background is ugly or distracting as it allows you to include more sky behind your subject.

If you're shooting silhouettes, a low angle is usually the best option as your silhouette will show up much better against the bright sky.



Use A Creative Perspective

Finally, if you want to get really creative with your landscape photography, you could start to explore other perspectives that will produce a unique take on your scene.

Here I took a shot of a landscape on the screen of a Hasselblad camera that's set on the ground.

This allows you to see the landscape from a completely new perspective - as seen through the lens of another camera!

It's unique and quirky, and this kind of shot will really show off your creative streak.

Another fun technique is to use mirrors in your landscapes. Carry a small mirror with you and use it to capture shots that contain reflections of the scene behind you.

With a little bit of imagination, creativity and experimentation, you'll be able to create truly unique perspectives in your landscape photography.



CHAPTER 3 - COMPOSITION

SUMMARY & TOP TIPS

1. Composition is the way you arrange the key elements or subjects within a scene. You can create amazing photos from even the bleakest of landscapes, simply by employing good composition techniques.
2. Select an orientation that suits the scene you're shooting. Horizontal landscape orientation is great for wide open landscapes, and vertical portrait orientation suits tall subjects. Don't forget to try shooting in square format too, especially if you post your images to Instagram.
3. Always include a main subject within the landscape to create a strong focal point.
4. Include people in your landscapes to add a storytelling element and create a stronger connection with the viewer.
5. Place maximum emphasis on your main subjects by keeping the scene simple. Eliminate any distractions by shooting from a different angle or viewpoint.
6. Include objects in the foreground to create a stronger sense of depth in the landscape.
7. Use leading lines such as roads, rivers or railway tracks to lead the eye deeper into the scene.
8. Use objects in the foreground to create a frame around your focal point. This will add context and depth, as well as draw the eye towards the main subject.
9. Balance your image diagonally by positioning elements in opposite corners of the frame.
10. Use the rule of thirds to position your main subject or horizon off-centre. Use the gridlines to help you arrange the elements.
11. Once you've learned the rule of thirds, try breaking the rule to make a bold statement. For example, place your subject in the centre or right at the edge of the frame.
12. Use symmetry to create a perfectly balanced mirror-image. You could also try breaking the symmetry by positioning a subject off-centre.
13. Create a sense of scale by including an object of a known size such a person or bicycle. This will give the viewer a point of reference, allowing them to get a better idea of the scale.
14. Vary your shooting perspective to capture your scene from more interesting angles. Try shooting from high up or low down. Or look for other creative perspectives that will make your landscape photos more unique.

USEFUL IPHONE CAMERA ACCESSORIES

The beauty of the iPhone is that it's so compact and lightweight, which is perfect for landscape photography as you don't have to carry heavy equipment on long treks. However, there are some very useful iPhone camera accessories that you might want to consider using in order to improve your shooting experience and expand your creative options.

Tripod & Remote Shutter

A tripod is essential for sharp landscape shots, especially in low light or when shooting long exposures.

If possible take a full-sized expandable tripod such as the *Lollipop* to keep your iPhone perfectly still when shooting.

A smaller tripod with flexible legs such as the *Joby Gorillapod* will allow you to attach your iPhone to objects such as fences, gate posts and tree branches.

If you're using a tripod, a remote shutter release such as the *Muku Shuttr* is a handy accessory to have. It will allow you to mount the iPhone on a tripod and then release the shutter button remotely.

This is great for avoiding camera shake, and also for situations when you want to appear in the landscape photo yourself.

Add-On Lenses

The iPhone's built-in lens is excellent for landscape photography due to its fairly wide angle which lets you capture a good amount of the scene.

But if you're struggling to get everything you want into the frame, an add-on wide angle lens will help.

You may also want to consider a telephoto lens so that you can zoom in closer to a distant subject.

If you like to capture close-up details of small subjects in the landscape such as flowers, leaves, insects and textures, you should definitely invest in a macro lens.

Buy the best lenses you can afford to ensure the highest image quality. *Moment* and *Oloclip* lenses are both very popular, but Moment have a better reputation for quality.

External Battery

External battery cases such as the *Mophie Juice Pack* are a really great accessory that you should consider adding to your collection.

You might be shooting all day long and the last thing you want is to run out of battery halfway through the day.

This is especially important in colder climates since the battery drains faster in these conditions.

Making sure your iPhone is fully charged before you set off might not be enough, so it's definitely worth investing in extra battery power.

When purchasing an external battery, find out how much extra shooting time it will provide and make sure you buy one that gives you enough battery life for your needs.



CLOSING WORDS

We truly hope this book has given you the inspiration and motivation to develop and improve your iPhone landscape photography.

Having a better understanding of light, exposure, focus and composition is guaranteed to bring you success when it comes to shooting landscapes. Once you've mastered these essential skills, you'll begin to see new creative opportunities everywhere you look.

With your vision and skills you'll soon be creating unique landscape masterpieces with your iPhone that you never thought possible!

Explore, enjoy and capture the beautiful landscapes all around you!

If you'd like to learn more about iPhone Photography School and how to improve other aspects of your iPhone photography, we invite you to connect with us using the links on the next page.

We wish you all the best on your iPhone photography journey, and look forward to seeing you again soon!

Team of iPhone Photography School

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If you'd like to find out more about iPhone Photography School and continue learning how to take incredible photos with your iPhone, join our online community using the links below.

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