

Getting Started with Landscape Photography – 4 Easy Tips for Beginners

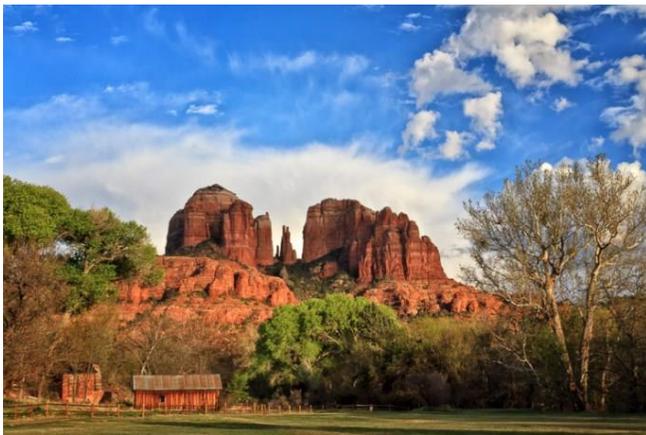
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One of the things I like most about photography is that there is always more to learn. It keeps the mind active and the creative juices flowing. But the wealth of information out there can be overwhelming for beginners in landscape photography. Where do you start?

There are a few easy things you can do that will have an immediate impact on your photography so you can start making better images right away. Let's focus on those and leave the more technical stuff for later.

1. Pay attention to the light

There is no such thing as bad light. The key is to understand what kinds of images are suitable under various lighting conditions.



During golden hour, the day's last light makes the rocks glow.

The Golden Hour

This is the time right after sunrise and right before sunset when the sun is low in the sky and casts beautiful golden light. Start here! It's [hard to go wrong with golden light](#), which is the most popular time of day for photography.



Bright Mid+ Light

The opposite of golden hour, the harsh direct light you find at midday can be the most difficult to work with – unless you photograph in the shade.

Just look for interesting subjects that are in the shade and leave the sky out of the frame. The even soft light is great for close-ups and [flower photography](#).

There are [more types of light](#) to work with and different times of day to photograph, but start with these for the quickest results.



2. Remove distractions

Pay attention to the [things in the background](#) of your images and try to simplify the background as much as possible. Sometimes there is an unwanted object, like a trash can for example, that you might not notice unless you are looking for it. These things can often be hidden behind your main subject simply by moving to one side, photographing from a higher or lower perspective, or getting closer.

Try to simplify your composition as much as possible with fewer items in your scene. Find a way to photograph your main subject on a clean background.



To make this image, I had to change my perspective to eliminate debris on the sand as well as other rocks and birds from the frame.

Beware of tree branches or other things that poke in to the edge of your frame. Before you take your shot, try to remember to do an “edge check”. Look around the edges of your frame and make sure it looks clean.

3. Look for one thing

Your photograph cannot be about everything. You need to decide what is [most interesting in your scene](#) and make your photograph about that. Get closer to it.

One exercise that will get you in this habit is to go on a photo walk with the purpose of looking for one particular element of design. You’ll find that when you set your mind on one thing, you’ll start to see it everywhere. Here are some ideas to get you started:

Textures and Patterns



Often beginning photographers will try to capture an entire vista in one photograph and don't notice the details. But the more you train your eye to notice the details, the more interesting your photographs will become.

The best thing about photographing textures and patterns is that you don't have to go far to find them. Your subject can be anything from rocks to grass or peeling paint. I'm sure you can find subjects with [wonderful textures](#) close to home. Try to fill your frame with the pattern.

Filling the frame with pattern of colorful rocks.

Lines

Look for horizontal lines, vertical lines or diagonal lines. Try to find [lines that lead the way](#) to some interesting subject.

Colors

Take a look at the color wheel and notice complementary colors. Those are the ones that are opposites on the wheel such as blue and orange, red and green, or yellow and purple. Any scene with [complementary colors](#) is always striking (which is why so many photographers carry around a red umbrella or a red jacket for their partner to wear in a grassy or forest scene).



Complementary colors plus diagonal lines.

4. Make time to practice

It doesn't take long to develop good habits and learn what makes an interesting photograph. But it can be hard to remember if you only go shooting once in a while. Try to make a habit of doing it every day, even if it's only for fifteen minutes. By doing this, you'll reinforce the habit and find yourself seeing the potential for great images all around you all the time.

Conclusion

There are more technical things that you'll want to start learning soon, but for now, these tips will get you on the right track so you are happy with your images right from the beginning. Have fun!