

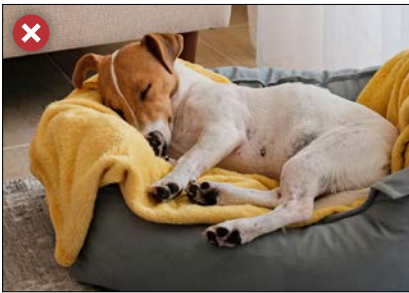
PET-OGRAPHY 101

TIPS FOR CAPTURING THE PURRFECT SHOT

While technology has simplified the act of taking a pet photo (*just point and click, right?*), taking a winning photo of your pet requires something more: *planning*. We've provided some tips to help you plan your pet masterpiece.

1 EMBRACE THE THEME

The photo contest theme is "**Play-It-SAFE**", which loosely means showing your pet at play. Our judges will look for how well you depict the theme in your photo.



Unconscious pets, while adorable, would be considered off-theme.



These cats are on-theme, even if one of them doesn't know it yet.



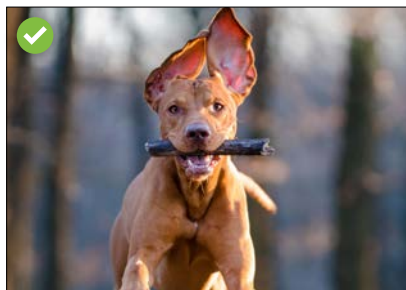
Let your creativity move you.

2 AVOID THE OBVIOUS

A head-on photo of your dog catching a frisbee is *technically* on theme. It's also expected. You could try catching an interesting angle or expression, or brainstorm something totally new. Creativity definitely counts!



Obvious interpretation of a pet at play from an expected angle.



Unexpected angle of the expected interpretation.



Unexpected interpretation of a pet at play.

3 LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION

Natural light is the best source of light. Choose a location in a well-lit area, where the natural light is soft and diffused (*sunrises and sunsets are excellent times*), and turn off the flash. For indoor shoots, consider a location near a large window or use house lamps to add additional light.



Bad lighting provides results that may be alarming.



Light from a nearby window makes all the difference.



Natural light provides the best opportunity for great results.

4 GET UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL

Avoid using the zoom feature on your camera. The closer you place the camera to your pet, the better you can capture the expressions, personality, and details that make the shot interesting. Try to stay within three to five feet from your subject.



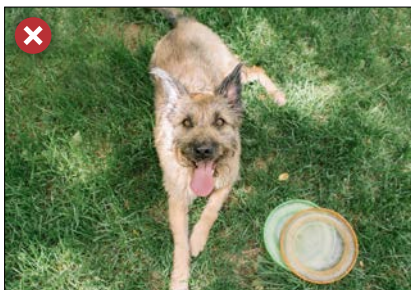
Cute puppy.



A closer shot reveals a fun expression, and creates a more engaging shot.

5 LEVEL THE PLAYING FIELD

Position the camera at eye-level to your pet. This will capture your pet's quirky facial expressions and unique personality.



Higher angles feel distant, and require your pet to look up at you.



Getting on their level gives you a better angle. Close enough to feel the love.



Any higher and you'd never know this guy was there.

6

IT'S ALL ABOUT THE FOCUS

Furry pets are much cuter than blurry ones. Make sure your pet's eyes are in focus to create a sharp and impactful photo.



This is the wrong kind of fuzzy.

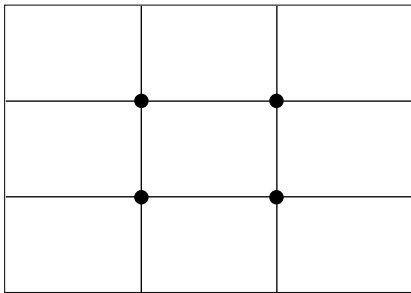


Make sure you're focusing on the right things.

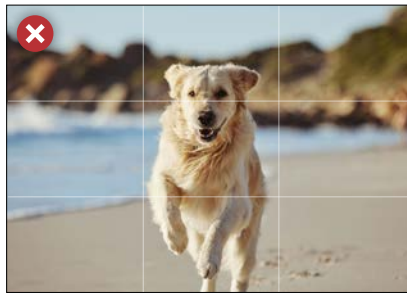
7

MAINTAIN YOUR COMPOSURE

Placing your pet in the center of the frame lacks visual interest. Instead, follow the rule of thirds by positioning your pet to the left or right of the frame to draw the viewer's eye across the image.



Place important elements at the intersection points of these lines, as shown in the above diagram.



There's nothing wrong with this picture, but it could be better.



Shifting the dog to the right creates a more dynamic layout.

MORE TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL SHOOT

PHONE A FRIEND

Ask a friend to help you get the shot. It will make your photo shoot easier, safer and a lot more fun! Your friend can hold props, make funny noises to get your pet's attention, or just serve as an extra set of hands.

BRIBE THE TALENT

To get your pet to look in the right direction use a treat or their favorite toy to grab their attention. Use your assistant to do this so you can focus on getting the perfect shot.

QUANTITY LEADS TO QUALITY

A missed ear twitch or eye blink can lead to disappointment later, so take lots of shots. Use burst mode to capture multiple images of the same scene so you don't miss the perfect shot.

ROLL WITH IT

Animals have their own personalities (and agendas). Being open to following their lead could result in a more authentic and spontaneous shot that may even take you by surprise.

GOOD LUCK AND HAPPY SHOOTING!