

# Three Steps Towards Making Authentic Photos

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## 1.) Ask yourself what's important to you

Is it clothes, cars, people, trees, plants, architecture, pets, books, tools, family, gardens, or travel? If travel - what part of traveling do you love to photograph? Do you feel passionate about something – or somewhere? Why?

Now find a way to translate that interest/passion into one subject that you can photograph. This can be challenging – but don't give up – it's crucial to moving ahead. Sometimes it saves time and energy to dig one deep hole rather than 50 shallow ones. Whatever you choose be sure it's something you can start working on soon, rather than a project that is out of reach for you and will cause you to stall or ponder. Make a start - make some photos of that subject with iPhone, DSLR or any other kind of camera. For instance, if food interests you, make a series about food – the images don't have to look like food ads. They can be about cooking itself, about ingredients or cooking utensils or cooks and chefs (all good subjects).

## 2.) Start Soon

Don't wait or make excuses. Just make some pictures of something that matters to you in some way. Maybe it matters because it's beautiful or unique. Go easy on yourself. Examine what it is you value – then photograph things that express it. For instance you could value strength, innocence, speed or simply the light, tones, colors and shadows in a place. Pick one of them and start doing photographic studies that work the subject. Remember the aphorism that "the best is the enemy of the good" or "perfection is the enemy of done" Perfectionism and the 'inner critic' can really jam you up and throw cold water on your creative fire.

## 3.) Know your camera

Understanding your equipment allows you to seize the moment – often it's exposure controls and focus that is the key. Familiarity with the camera enables us to move quickly if we have to. Practice, practice, practice. Try using a normal and/or medium wide *prime lens* – this can simplify your gear and technique so you don't fumble around in the middle of a shot. Be in the moment – look into the subject or scene - relax and enjoy!