

A GUIDE TO: TO TAKING SMARTPHONE PICTURES

Great pictures help to capture a moment or mood that words cannot always do justice.

Striking images from protests, conferences and other events not only help to document and promote the work of the union, but can also help bring newsletters, articles and social media posts to life.

Taking pictures on the go have become easier with the rise of smartphones, but just how do you ensure you take pictures that are print ready?

Clean your lens

When phones are stored in pockets or bags, the lens can often pick up grease, dust and fingerprints or can get scratched by keys or coins.

Give the lens a quick wipe with a lint free cloth to avoid blurry pictures.

Light makes all the difference

The key to taking a good picture is getting the lighting right. Natural lighting is always best, but can be a challenge when shooting indoors.

If you are inside, try and get your subject (the person or object you are shooting) to stand near a window with the light coming towards them.

When shooting outside, be aware that facing the sun may cause your pictures to be darker than you expected or to be distorted by glare.

Forget about flash

It's tempting to use flash when the lighting is less than ideal, but it can make pictures look flat and create red eye. Try using the lighting tips above or adjusting the brightness of the picture with your phone's built in editing software afterwards.

If using flash cannot be avoided try not to stand too close to your subject so they do not get startled by the light.

Hold it steady

Camera shake is a major contributor to blurry pictures. For sharper, crisper images hold your phone with both hands to keep it steady.

When in camera mode, the volume buttons of your phone can be used to take pictures. This feature can be particularly useful when taking selfies and also helps reduce camera shake.

Get closer, don't zoom

Some smartphone cameras boast the ability to zoom at incredible distances, and you may be tempted to use it instead of getting closer.

The problem is that pictures taken with a smartphone's digital zoom look mediocre when viewed on the phone and even worse when printed.

Try to get as close to the action as possible. Or try taking the picture with minimal zoom, and then crop out what you don't want afterwards.

No filter

Using filters have become very popular, particularly when posting on social media.

However, taking a picture with filters and effects can limit what you are able to do with the photo afterwards.

If you really must use a filter, apply it after you have taken the picture so that you have the original available to re-edit as you need.

Explore the settings

Smartphones vary in terms of what their cameras have to offer. Some are literally point and shoot where as others have a whole range of settings that you may find on a professional DSLR camera.

Explore what your smartphone can do, and download additional apps if required to get the most out of your pictures.