



Top Window Award

Photography Guidelines for Store Windows

Embedded into the architecture of every retail store are the vitrines dedicated to creating store window displays. These magical spaces house temporary works of art behind glass designed to entertain and delight shoppers with their presentation of wares. Shop keepers and visual artists spend countless hours planning promotions and display compositions using props, decorations and lighting techniques in the hope of attracting the shopper into the store.

Window displays can be challenging to capture with your phone or camera. Reflection, cars, or pedestrian traffic can interfere with your ability to get the best image. So what's the secret? Here are a few tips to get the best shot of your shop windows.

- Start with a clean lens.
- Use a tripod if possible.
- Photograph when pedestrian and local traffic are minimized.
- Windows are best photographed at night when the reflection is naturally reduced. Cloudy, overcast days can be optimal for photographing too.
- Observe precisely what reflects most in your store window (adjacent store signage, traffic lights) and try to eliminate or block the offending light sources.
- Try a technique used by professional photographers. Have two helpers stretch a large dark sheet of fabric behind you as you photograph in front of the window to eliminate the reflection of signs or passing cars. This method removes all reflection.
- If you are using a camera, a zoom lens can also reduce reflection. A wide-angle lens tends to increase reflection on the glass.
- When shooting detail shots, aesthetically compose focal or highlight areas of the window. Consider cropping unnecessary areas to create a strong composition.
- Start by photographing straight on if possible, next try angle shots from either side. Put the camera directly on the glass to capture the details. If the window is open back, can parts of the window be photographed from the back?
- Interior window lighting needs to be even without intense hotspots or dark voids.