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About the Author

Archie Beale has been taking pictures ever since his parents gave him a basic camera before they went on a trip during his school holidays.

“My dad was a good amateur photographer and he gave me every encouragement. I built on what I learned from him and other photographers, both amateur and professional.

Archie said that his favorite subjects are people and animals. “I really enjoy watching people with their pets – they seem more natural then.”

“Many people have asked me for tips to help them improve the pictures they get of their pets. It can be very disappointing when you see a perfect picture opportunity but the image you get is nowhere near what you hoped.”

“People love to store the pictures of their pets and most enjoy looking at them years later to remembering the great times they shared.”

“But, we only get one chance at the photos and some of the best are lost because of our mistakes or simple lack of knowledge.”

Archie said, “I wrote this book to share what I’ve learned so that readers can improve their pictures. I’ve kept everything very simple, just as if I was talking to a friend who wants to improve their pictures.”

Archie has included many ideas for getting better use with simple cameras as well as some basic information about using the more advanced types.

Archie said, “taking pictures of animals is always interesting and very enjoyable when they are your own special friends.”

Archie knows how to work with nervous animals and how photographers can keep their own nerves under control.

“I can’t guarantee all your pictures will be perfect but your confidence will improve. That will ensure that you get more great pictures which you can share with your family in the years to come.

I’ll also give you ideas to improve your photos on your computer and you won’t need Photoshop®!

Introduction

Taking pictures of your favorite pets by themselves and in special moments with your family is great.

But, it is not always as easy as we might wish. What should be a wonderful experience can become a frustrating disaster.

If it goes really bad, it may put us off trying for better pictures another time. Or, we might find that our pet scurries away to hide when it hears the word, "camera".

Some people do forget that the pet need to be treated well so it looks forward to more clicking cameras or it will get harder, instead of easier, each time.

I wrote this book to help readers to have a great time whenever they take pictures.

These tips will help you all to get better results which you will be happy to share with your family and friends.

The fastest way to improve is to read through the book to get a general idea of the material and then grab a couple of ideas to try out as soon as possible.

I've kept everything simple because that's how I learn best. You will get explanations of any special terms in the text but I have only used those which you really need to understand.

I won't break your bank either. I want you to get the best effects you can from whatever type of camera you already have.

I will also explain the possible advantages which a more advanced type of camera might give you. But, you won't have to throw out what you have to get better results.

I will also cover as many of the problems which might occur when you photograph your pets.

Thanks for buying my book. I know your pets would thank you!

Archie Beale

What Camera?

I have not recommended a type of camera or particular brands because the requirements of different readers will vary widely and I have only used a few different models and brands since digital cameras started to become readily available and affordable.

Most manufacturers release a few new models each year which have better features and (mostly) higher prices than the ones we were dreaming about just a couple of weeks before.

Instead of filling pages with information and opinions about models which are probably superseded, I'll focus the technical suggestions on general topics which will help most readers for a longer time.

Use the Cameras You Have

Most people can improve the results they get with their camera in a few days! It's no big secret that few actually read the manual when they get a new camera. They just pick the points which most interest them and intend to read the other parts later.

I'll admit that some manuals are not easy to read or understand, but the time and effort is worth it.

If you can't find your manual, check to see if there is an electronic version on the disc which usually comes with them. You can probably download an electronic copy from the manufacturer's web site if you can't find the original disc.

A few hours practice will give you more confidence in using the camera and better pictures than you will ever get just from trial and error.

You may find that the results you can get from your current camera are good enough for you to put off the day when you need to invest in a new one.

This book is not intended as a full guide for setting up a pet photography business. However, some of the tips have come to me from professional photographers who do pet work.

Film Cameras

Film cameras can produce great pictures but the increasing cost of getting pictures processed and buying new film is seeing them used less each year. Some people really like the particular "look" of "real film" pictures but that effect can be duplicated to some extent with some editing programs.

Point and Shoot Cameras

Almost every family could have some kind of point and shoot digital camera. It's probable that a lot have more than one when you include those in phones and tablets as well as each family member probably having at least a cheap personal camera.

The results you can get with the more expensive point and shoot cameras are quite good. But, even an average camera will give you pictures that can look good when enlarged to 6" by 4" or even 8" by 10".

I suggest that you see what you can do with the ones you have before you decide to buy something more powerful. If you haven't actually studied the manual, like maybe 80% of amateur camera users, there may be some things your cheap camera can do which will surprise you!

It's important to realize that the best camera is the one you have with you when a photo opportunity happens.

The expensive camera you have still locked in your desk at home is worth nothing.

Single Lens Reflex Cameras

These are the ones which many serious amateurs start with. They have advantages over the amateur units I've already described which can justify the price charged for them.

They are worth getting if you are interested in creating better photographs but are not sure if you want to invest the serious money needed to get a Digital Lens Reflex Camera and even the most basic kit for it.

Digital Lens Reflex Camera

If you are considering doing professional work, you will need to get the DSLR sooner rather than later.

You will be competing with photographers who are using them every day and the more experience you have with this format the better.

You can reduce some of the costs during your learning period if you rent some of the lenses and other equipment from rental companies. You will soon find which ones you must buy and those which you probably don't need or put off until later.

Getting Great Pictures

My first suggestion to improve your pictures of your pets is to take more pictures.

When you look at the portfolios or books of pictures by professionals in the pet photography field, you may think that they can guarantee a near-perfect picture every time. But, they probably take far more every day than most of us might do in a month!

A session might only produce one or two pictures worth putting in the portfolio out of the hundreds they clicked.

This is much easier with digital cameras. Any pictures you don't want can be erased to give you room for more pictures on the memory card.

You'll have to review them all to find those you want to keep, but take a few extra minutes to see if there are any obvious ways you can avoid mistakes which showed up that day.

You probably think you know your pets really well but you may still be disappointed by the interaction between you when you take their photos.

Please don't worry, because that's very common. I have many tips to help you start getting better results.

If you or the pet is very nervous, it will take longer. But, the results will be worth the effort.

Settings on Simple Cameras

Simple point and shoot cameras try to make everything as simple as possible to ensure the user gets at least usable pictures.

Almost all offer three modes:

Portrait gives you a sharp focus on the subject with a shallow depth of field. It gets this with a large aperture and a low F-Stop.

This is good when your pet is still.

But, you can also use this Portrait mode if your pet is very active. Move the lens in line with the pet's movement to get a panning effect.

You probably will get only a few good shots each time, but they can be very strong visuals.

Experiment with any other modes which your camera offers but don't use any which automatically fire the inbuilt flash unless you are sure that your pet is okay with it.

A **Macro** mode is designed for subjects like flowers, insects or jewelry, but can sometimes give better results than the "Portrait" mode on some cameras for close-ups.

Landscape uses a higher F-Stop which keeps more area in focus.

Check that you have sufficient light at that time to compensate for the small aperture.

A **Sport** or **Action** mode uses a fast shutter speed to keep the subject focused.

If your camera has a number of setting options, you may find some can be very useful for situations other than what they are obviously designed for.

If you keep a record of the settings you used for each photo in a couple of sessions, you may start to get a lot more possible ways to set up your photos without buying any extra equipment.

Lighting Tips and Traps

How you handle the available light is one of the most important factors affecting the success you can have with any type of photography.

Lighting is something we may overlook because we don't think very much about how the camera will react to light conditions. It can be very different to how we think about it.

Backlighting can be great for dramatic effects but it will obscure the details in our pictures unless we compensate for it. Many outdoor photographs are spoiled because the photographer puts the subject under a shady tree to compensate for the bright sunlight and the details of the pet or person are washed out in the pictures.

Usually, you might want to avoid taking photographs around noon on bright days because the sun being almost overhead emphasizes the highlights and shadows too much.

On cloudy days, the softening effect of the clouds may compensate for that. You will probably find that you get a higher number of usable shots on cloudy days.

Side lighting can be good but a strong light source at one side may cause deep shadows on parts of the pet's body and face.

Front lighting gives great definition, but try to avoid having mostly pictures where the subject is in front and center in every one.

Bright natural light is great when it is available.

Flash

Flash should only be used for pet photographs when the animals are known to be comfortable with it or they are in the care of people they trust, especially the photographer.

Avoid using the inbuilt flash on your camera for pet photographs unless you want to get red-eye effects.

Simple Ways to Better Pictures

There are many ways to improve the results you get with any camera.

Rule of Thirds

The common term, “point and shoot” for simple cameras probably encourages people to do just that – take a picture where the subject is right in the center of the picture.

That can be nice, but off-setting the subject to either side of the picture can make for a more interesting result.

Imagine the picture you see through your viewfinder or on your LCD screen is divided into nine sections, like a tic-tac-toe board.

Adjust the view so that your pet is at the top, bottom or on one side of the picture. That probably is a little more interesting, isn't it?

Before you click the shutter, quickly check that there is nothing which will take attention from your pet on the screen.

That method uses the photographer's “Rule of Thirds” which you will see is very common in professionals' photographs in all kinds of media.

If you can get the pet's eyes where one of the vertical sidelines crosses a horizontal line, you will get the most attention from the viewers because those points are “convergence points” which our eyes are naturally drawn to.

Putting the pet on the left side will also get more attention from people in Western countries because we read from left to right.

Check the Background

When you are taking photos, always check for those areas which could be good backgrounds.

You don't want to have anyone or anything in the background of a picture which takes the viewer's attention from the subject.

Keeping Control

Planning a successful picture session is not much different to planning any important event.

There are a lot of details which we need to stay on top of.

It's fun but it is also demanding.

You need to plan everything to make it work out well.

Taking notes about what happens at those first few sessions might seem a drag, but that small extra effort will pay dividends for you long afterward.

Use a pocket diary, tape recorder or tablet to record details about the settings for each picture (or group of pictures) you take.

Some cameras let you store notes in them which can save you this step.

Those details will let you use the same settings for future sessions or work out why some pictures are not as good as you expected.

What were the weather conditions that day?

A check list will save you from forgetting some small but important item like the pet's favorite toy or buying the new pack of treats before the session.

Each time you take some photos, you will find new ideas pop into your head.

If they can't be used that day, put them down and use them to start more ideas for the future.

Health Matters!

Most people say that their pets have a good effect on their general health. They might get exercise by walking their pet or feel more relaxed because of the quiet time they share with it. Patting a pet, whether it's a rabbit, cat or horse is a very soothing thing for both you and your pet.

I find that pets encourage me to keep myself healthy so that I can get maximum enjoyment from the time with them. Looking after them puts demands on my energy levels.

You will only get great pictures if you are fit enough to control your pets through their sessions.

Thinking about new picture ideas and how to keep your pet active and alert is probably more mentally beneficial than doing crosswords.

Whatever type of pet you have, sharing your home with it will keep you more active and alert.

Safety First!



When you are busy setting up and taking pictures with an active model needing constant attention, it can be easy to have an accident which ruins the whole day.

Remember that you need to be very careful at all times, whether you are in the supposed sanctuary of your home or in a park or other public area.

Assistance Required

You need to have someone helping you. That person should be known and trusted by the pet.

There are so many factors which need attention through the period, and you literally will have your hands full with the camera and other equipment as well as deciding on the details of each shot.

They can watch for any potential problems, control the animal, get its attention so that not every picture has it looking toward you, feed it treats and clean up any mess or take the pet out to its toilet area while you reload and check your gear.

Emergency Kit

You need everything which you, your assistant or the pet might want.

A couple of its favorite toys will probably be enough. Cut its usual treats into small pieces. If you give it a full-sized reward each time, you will soon have an overweight pet and a thin wallet. After a while, the pet will begin to ignore the treats and stop cooperating as willingly for them.

Session Length

Keep the sessions short so that both you and the pet stay interested and alert. Accidents usually happen because of inattention.

Get Your Pet Comfortable with Your Camera



To get the best possible pictures of your pet now and in the future, you must get over its natural caution.

One unhappy experience might be enough to make future sessions very difficult for you and your pet.

The first challenge is when you introduce it to your camera.

They don't have any experience of cameras. It's natural for them to become tense when they see a device with one large eye that is pointed straight at them. A direct stare represents a challenge to dogs and many other animals. You could show it your camera some time before you intend to take pictures. Have a “dry run” with the gear in place just to get the pet used to what happens.

Get on the pet's level and even let it inspect the camera.

A cheap filter which fits in front of your expensive lens could be good insurance if your dog is likely to lick the camera during its examination.

That's less risky than just wiping the lens afterward.

Always give your pet a rest if it appears uncomfortable.

Your Attitude

Don't start or continue a session if you are not feeling your best. You need to be in control the whole time and also giving encouragement to your pet.

If it sees you are not well or starting to feel unhappy, it will not respond as easily to your instructions for a while.

So, either take a short break or finish that session.

Group Shots

If you are starting to realize that photographing your pet can be frustrating, think about situations when you have more than just that pet in the picture!

This section will give you some tips about getting great results when you want to take pictures of more than one pet or pets and people together.

Using a digital camera gives you more leeway than people used to have when they were using film with just 12 or 24 frames on each roll.

Family Pictures

Family group shots which include the pet are fairly easy because the pet knows them all and is probably comfortable about them crowding around it.

Arrange the people so they are comfortable and you can see all of them clearly.

Then, put the pet into the picture and give one person the responsibility of controlling it.

Group of Pets



This can be harder than getting a picture of a group of children. If you have parents and their off-spring, it will be fairly easy because the older animals will keep order.

It can be much trickier if they are not closely related or when there are a variety of animals in the group. Always take account of the relative power each one has within the group. Make sure that the dominant pet has the prime position. Get that one in place first so that you

can watch its mood and be ready for any reaction when each of the others are placed in their position for the picture.

Try to have enough enthusiastic assistants to wrangle the animals – you cannot be expected to do that as well as look after all the details of the

photography.

You will probably have to try a couple of shots to check that they are all clearly visible and in focus. You probably won't have a lot of time, so a camera which can take several shots in a burst is a good option for this situation.

Don't put your camera away too soon after the shoot or in the breaks. You can often get better pictures from the interaction between the animals and people when they are not “posing for the camera”.

They are likely to be more relaxed and natural then.

Picture Problems

There are many reasons for pictures not turning out as good as you thought they would be when you pressed the button.

I'll share some tips about the most common ones. I can't guarantee that I will be able to stop you ever having any of your pictures spoiled. Murphy's Law applies to photographing pets too.

I suggest that you take plenty of pictures when you have the opportunity. That increases your chance of getting more great ones.

Always use a tripod, monopod or anything handy which will remove any shake you might put on the camera.

R-E-L-A-X Always take a slow, deep breath just before you click the button to ensure the best result. If you appear relaxed, your pets will respond better to you and look forward to more photo sessions.

Moving Targets

Many people have difficulty getting good pictures when their pets are moving.

Moving pets will need shutter speed above 1/100th second. If your camera has only limited options, you might try to gently swing the camera parallel to the direction the pet is traveling to help compensate for its movement.

Black or White Pets are Hard to Photograph



When your pet is a solid black, your camera may not be able to show the details without some help from you.

Your exposure meter will give you a reading which is likely to show the fur as an unattractive and unrealistic grey because the camera

takes the reading to mean that the image is dark and increases the exposure

for that shot.

Use a light meter on the fur and use reduce the exposure by an F-stop.

Setting the dark animal in full sunlight will always give the same sort of problem, look for the shade of a large tree or light-colored wall to give you better results.

A similar problem occurs when photographing very light-colored pets.

The camera cuts the exposure level and you will have to increase it to compensate.

Alien Eyes

If your photos show your pets with a green wash in their eyes, similar to the red-eye effect you see in pictures of people, the cause is probably your camera’s flash firing straight at them.

The best fix is to not use the inbuilt flash. You can use a wide aperture to compensate for the low light and an external diffused flash if you have one.

Otherwise, you can get a diffuser for some cameras which will reduce the effect fairly well.

Another possibility is to use photo-editing program to fix the red-eye on the images when they are transferred to your computer.

Photographing Different Types of Pets

This section gives you some ideas for photographing particular types of pets.

Before you start taking pictures of your pet, ask yourself, “What makes this pet so unique and wonderful?”

Think about those things which you particularly like about your pet. Try to show those traits or habits in some of your photos.



A friend takes a lot of pictures of their dog. One just shows a blanket on a pet bed with two large ears sticking up at the far end. The picture would never win an award but they treasure it because that dog has extremely large ears for its size.

Look at pictures of other people’s pets for inspiration. It’s not important how much you paid for your camera, it’s how much enjoyment you and your pet get from your time together. Photos that show your affection for your pet are worth more than almost any others.

Cats



Some people find it hard to get pictures of their cats because they are much more active than their owners. They need to take some photos when the cat is just starting to go around in the morning or soon after it has had some food because it will be less active but still have some energy at those times.

Avoid using flash where possible. Never use it when your camera is pointed at the cat’s face. It will affect its vision for a short time (at least), cause the eyes to be discolored in the picture and make the cat nervous whenever it sees the camera.

Try to get down to the cat’s level. You can also get unusual but interesting

pictures by taking them from odd positions around your home.

Never put the cat in a situation where it is not comfortable. That can affect its trust in you and cause problems in the future.

Use toys rather than food to keep their attention. It’s cheaper and keeps their weight down.

Using a noise to attract a pet’s attention will work several times with most animals but cats will usually only look toward the source once. When they know the noise is not an indication of something important to them, you will need some other way to attract their attention after that.

Let the cat decide when the session should finish. But, don’t hurry away to look at your pictures, give it some time to relax with you and maybe an extra treat.

That will help to make the next session more successful and reinforce your bond with the cat.

Dogs



Dogs are still the most popular type of pet. When you take pictures, think about what makes your dog special to you and your family?

Setting a slow shutter speed and panning through the same line that your dog is moving can give you some great photos.

Use a shutter speed of at least 125/second for dogs.

Focus on the dog and what it’s doing.

Think about taking your dog’s photo in places it likes.

Avoid the traditional photo with the dog sitting front and center of the picture. Unless you are lucky, the dog’s head will be enlarged when you print the picture.

Try to get down, put your camera right on the floor and focus on the dog when it is also laying down on the floor.

A picture from floor level when your dog is sitting up can be quite good too.

Get someone to stand well back from the dog.

You stand at its side, also well back.

Be ready to take a picture or even a few, when your assistant calls the dog or makes a noise to attract its attention.

This angle, with the dog’s head almost looking straight back along its own body will usually give you a very nice picture.

Stand in front of your dog and point your camera down toward it. Snap a picture when the dog looks up for a nice in-proportion head-shot that people will probably ask how you did it!

Instead of taking a single shot and stopping, make it your practice to take a couple of extra shots. Because you are dealing with a lively, intelligent creature some of the extra pictures may turn out better than the original one you so carefully set up!

Horses



Horses are great subjects but they are not easy to get good photos of. You need to practise which just means taking lots of pictures when you are with your horse!

You might want someone with you to help keep the horse’s attention or to make sure that neither you nor your pet get into a difficult situation.

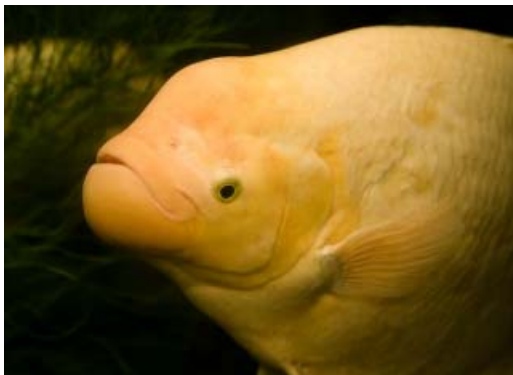
If you are photographing someone else’s horse and it doesn’t know you, it may be very wary. Always get the owner to introduce you and show you how to approach the animal.

Pets in Cages



The bars on a bird cage or a bunny cage can make it hard to get good pictures. The best pictures are done if you can get them out of the cage **only if it is very safe**. Or, you can get close to the cage and use a wider aperture to put the bars out of focus.

Fish



Most people like to watch fish swimming about. One of the most successful promotions ever on American television was a video of fish swimming about in a large aquarium.

Several people produced their own versions of that original idea and there were even some which were realistic animations. But, they were not as popular as those with real fish.

There are some challenges when you want to take pictures of your fish in their tanks.

The most common is getting pictures which are not spoiled because they are over-exposed by the effect of your flash or distortion of the images because of the glass tank.

Avoid setting yourself parallel with the side of the tank. That can be a major factor when the side of the tank affects the quality of your picture.

It's best not to use the built-in flash on your camera. If you must use it, turn down the exposure to give some compensation for it.

Try turning at different angles from the tank and take a few test shots so that you can see whether the problem still occurs.

You may have to make less than a quarter turn to improve your pictures.

Give your tanks a thorough spring-clean one or two days before you take your pictures. That will minimize any potential problems within the tank.

Always give your fish and other specimens at least twenty-four hours to settle down after the cleaning.

Check if your filter needs cleaning or upgrading. Changing your filter could give better clarity to the water, so you get better pictures and make your fish healthier over time.

Use a tripod or some other support to ensure that your camera is rock-steady for your fish pictures.

As mentioned in another section, the macro or close-up mode will get you great close-ups in most circumstances.

Check the background behind the tank you are photographing. If it is not pretty, put a poster of an underwater scene across the back of the tank. Your pictures will probably look better and the fish may prefer it too.

If you are going to use any kind of flash or some noisy equipment, try it out in the room with the fish before the day of the shoot so that they are not confronted with it for the first time when you try to get the photos.

If you get tired, stop taking photos. By the time you need a rest, the fish are probably starting to stress. You can always come back for another session but apparently healthy fish can die from stress alone.

You probably spend a lot of time with your fish, so bring your camera with you every time. Often you will get one-off picture opportunities when you are least expecting them. The extra practice when everything is not specially prepared and the lessons you get from reviewing those casual pictures will make you a better photographer.

The best time for a photo session is just before the time you usually feed the fish. They will be active and less likely to hide from the camera and extra lights when they know that food is probably arriving soon.

Dark clothing will help prevent your image showing in the pictures.

Anticipate where the fish will be and focus your camera on that spot rather

than trying to follow the fish through the water.

If your pump agitates the water, turn it off just while you take the pictures. Turn it back on as soon as possible and check that it continues to operate for a few minutes before leaving to check your pictures.

Tech Tips

This section is a brief guide to some ideas for improving the pictures you take and finding more ideas for new pictures.

What Picture Format

With digital cameras, you can usually save your pictures in three main formats.

JPG (or jpeg)

This is the usual format which cheaper digital cameras store your pictures in. There are three types of .jpg files, low, medium and high quality.

This format allows a lot of information for displaying the picture to be compressed into a small file size. More pictures can be stored on a memory card in .jpg format than any other kind.

The downside is that each time you copy a .jpg file and make a copy from the copy, that picture is lower quality than the first .jpg file. This continues through each generation of copies. This is reduced if you use an editing program which can deal with this problem,

Your .jpg files are good to transfer to other people and display on web sites.

.gif, .tiff and .RAW

The **.gif** file format is only good for pictures with a small range of colors.

.tiff files are great for editing and for producing large prints. They can hold almost as much information as .RAW files

.RAW files are the professionals' choice. They hold the most detailed information, so they are able to be manipulated to a greater degree than any of the other formats. They cannot be printed but provide the best “negatives” (source files) for whatever type of project you might want.

They're not Human

Although many people tend to believe that their pet has many human characteristics and even thinks like their human owners do, it's essential that we remember they are not human.

That's why they are so special!



They share and improve our lives in ways that our human friends and even our families cannot.

To get the best results for us and our pets from the special relationship, we must keep in mind that they think differently to us and make allowances for that.

Each species has its own special history which has conditioned us in different ways.

But, they all have special qualities which suit their physical make-up and way of living.

For instance, a dog's field of vision is very different to a human's or a horse's or a cat.

Each has adapted well to the demands of their way of life.

A dog is a good companion animal. Most have a desire to please the humans they associate with. They can't speak but they have some very good ways of communicating with humans if we watch as well as listen.

If we want the best results of our interaction with our dog, we have to understand how we can get it to do what we want.

Dogs want to be accepted into our family (pack), and are willing to do your bidding (as long as you maintain your prime position over it) and be rewarded by you.

It likes to play, especially with the pack leader.

Making the photo session a sort of game is one good way to get its enthusiastic cooperation.

The worst way is, of course, by threats and violence.

Be aware that dogs will accept your leadership but most will continue to test it to some degree through the length of your relationship.

Rewards are important but many of us use them poorly. We either give them to the pet without requiring them to do something for it or we delay the reward and start the dog thinking that there is no connection between the task they did and the reward.

Of course, every animal has its own unique set of conditioned responses. Cats and dogs will react differently. And, yes, each animal’s particular reactions will be affected by their own background and experiences.

All this is good theory but don’t worry, you probably have enough experience to know what are the best ways to interact with your pet.

If you aren’t sure, watch them closely and they will teach you better than any human can!

Bonus Tips

- 1)** Read the manual. For your camera.
- 2)** Keep all your backgrounds simple and in colors that will make your pet stand out but not clash.
- 3)** A simple way to diffuse your flash is to tape some tissue paper over it.
- 4)** If you are not getting good shots, play with your pet play for a while so that you both relax.
- 5)** Then, get your assistant call the pet or have someone ring the doorbell or phone. That will get the animal's attention and you can get a great photo.
- 6)** Experiment with the special settings on your camera in different ways. For instance, the macro or close-up setting can get great shots of your pet's face or special features.
- 7)** Patience is a necessity when you try to get great pet pictures. You must remain calm throughout everything, whatever happens.
- 8)** Whatever happens, always praise the pet and give it rewards for making an effort, not just when you get the sort of photo you are after. Remember that they do everything with much less understanding than you have about the situation and all that gear.
- 9)** They trust you and are trying to please you. Remain in control but always show you love them.
- 10)** Taking photos just after it's had it's breakfast or after a play session could be a good timing, depending on how alert or rested you want them to look in the photos.
- 11)** Keep sessions short so that you both stay interested and bright. If the pet seems tense, call off the session for another day.
- 12)** Don't waste any time during the shoot on sorting through the pictures you got. Have a quick look to ensure there are no problems with the camera. Leave the close scrutiny until the session is over.

After the Session is Over

When you have taken your pictures and played for a while with your pet, you can start to review the results of the work which you and your pet put in.

I hope you took plenty of pictures. Some professionals will take about 200 in a 2 hour session, but others will take even more than that!

If your pictures are all in .jpg format, your ability to make changes to them is more limited than if they were in .tif or .RAW format.

But, a well-shot .jpg will let you produce an eight by ten inch print or a picture for your web site or to use for a craft project.

So will a .tiff graphic, but you have more options with .tiffs.

Gone but not Forgotten

I hope that you will continue to improve your picture taking and enjoy looking at the results for many years to come.

The pictures you take will be great memories for your family to share through those years even after your pet has left your side.

Although you will probably have several pets through the years, they are all individual in so many ways.

I've included on the next page a classic essay which was written to someone that wrote to a magazine, asking about his dog. I believe that it will strike a chord with every reader because it is a fitting tribute, not just to our dogs, but to all of our pets and the special times and friendship they share with us.

The following editorial originally appeared in The Oregonian in 1926 and later was included in the author's book of essays and poems, "How Could I Be Forgetting." Thursday March 25, 1999

By Ben Hur Lampman

A subscriber of the Ontario Argus has written to the editor of that fine weekly, propounding a certain question, which, so far as we know, yet remains unanswered. The question is this -- "Where shall I bury my dog?" It is asked in advance of death.

The Oregonian trusts the Argus will not be offended if this newspaper undertakes an answer, for surely such a question merits a reply, since the man who asked it, on the evidence of his letter, loves the dog. It distresses him to think of his favorite as dishonored in death, mere carrion in the winter rains. Within that sloping, canine skull, he must reflect when the dog is dead, were thoughts that dignified the dog and honored the master. The hand of the master and of the friend stroked often in affection this rough, pathetic husk that was a dog.

We would say to the Ontario man that there are various places in which a dog may be buried. We are thinking now of a setter, whose coat was flame in the sunshine, and who, so far as we are aware, never entertained a mean or an unworthy thought. This setter is buried beneath a cherry tree, under four feet of garden loam, and at its proper season the cherry strews petals on the green lawn of his grave. Beneath a cherry tree, or an apple, or any flowering shrub of the garden, is an excellent place to bury a good dog.

Beneath such trees, such shrubs, he slept in the drowsy summer, or gnawed at a flavorful bone, or lifted head to challenge some strange intruder. These are good places, in life or in death. Yet it is a small matter, and it touches sentiment more than anything else. For if the dog be well remembered, if sometimes he leaps through your dreams actual as in life, eyes kindling, questing, asking, laughing, begging, it

matters not at all where that dog sleeps at long and at last.

On a hill where the wind is unrebuked, and the trees are roaring, or beside a stream he knew in puppyhood, or somewhere in the flatness of a pasture land, where most exhilarating cattle graze. It is all one to the dog, and all one to you, and nothing is gained, and nothing lost -- if memory lives. But there is one best place to bury a dog.

One place that is best of all.

If you bury him in this spot, the secret of which you must already have, he will come to you when you call -- come to you over the grim, dim frontiers of death, and down the well-remembered path, and to your side again. And though you call a dozen living dogs to heel they shall not growl at him, nor resent his coming, for he is yours and he belongs there. People may scoff at you, who see no lightest blade of grass bent by his footfall, who hear no whimper pitched too fine for mere audition, people who may never really have had a dog. Smile at them then, for you shall know something that is hidden from them, and which is well worth the knowing. The one best place to bury a good dog is in the heart of its master.

Photo Editing Programs

You probably got a picture editing program with your camera. If that one doesn't appeal to you, there are many free or low cost ones to fix your photos.

Here is some information about some for both Windows and Macintosh systems. These have been around for a number of years. They should be available even if you read and use this book some time after it is published.

The paid programs (including Photoshop) usually have a trial version which you can download and use for thirty days. Some suppliers limit the features which can be used in the trial period but many let you use almost everything.

Use the trial to work out if you need the features enough to justify the cost. Check out the free programs as some have almost as much power as some of the paid programs.

**The programs and web sites are not mine
so you use them entirely at your own risk.**

Programs for Windows® Computers

Paid Programs

The default standard of photo-editing programs is Photoshop from [Adobe](#). It is very powerful and well-supported.

Most photographers do not need that much power.

To be able to really use the power involves a significant investment of time and practise so that you can do things without frequent reference to the manual or online tutorials.

Other programs with significant power are offered by [Corel](#). They have their Corel range and Paint Shop Pro X4.

[Serif.com](#) have their desktop publishing and graphic editing programs.

Free Programs

Photoscape from <http://photoscape.org> This free editor is being updated

and supported. This has some unique ideas in its set-up.

I noticed this program can convert .RAW images to jpeg's. That could be useful **if** your camera can produce images in .RAW format.

Paint.net from <http://www.getpaint.net> This was based on Microsoft®'s Paint program supplied free with various versions of Microsoft®'s Windows® operating system. It is supported by a group of enthusiastic and experienced volunteers.

Picasa is from Google <http://www.picasa.google.com/>

Gimp from <http://www.gimp.org/> is a more complicated and very powerful program with features and a learning curve similar in some respects to Photoshop®.

Programs for Macintosh® Computers

Free Programs

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Picasa is from Google <http://www.picasa.google.com/>

Paid Programs

Pixelmator is a great program from <http://www.pixelmator.com/>

Compositor from <http://artlythere.com/>

FX Photo Studio Pro from <http://www.macphun.com/> Another great program.

[Macphun](http://www.macphun.com/) also produce **Snapheal** which is great for complex photo touch-ups and removing unwanted objects from photos very simply!

Important Terms

Aperture: The adjustable gap behind the lens which lets light onto the sensor to create your picture. The size of the aperture is in f-stops. It can be confusing because the larger the f-stop, the less light is allowed in.

Crop Factor: Professional photographers usually use what are called "full frame" Digital single-lens reflex cameras DSLR with sensors the same size as were used in 35mm film cameras. The sensors in most other digital cameras are smaller.

When you take a photo with a camera which has a smaller sensor and use the same size lens to capture the same scene with a full frame DSLR, the smaller camera captures a smaller area of the scene.

Then, if you print the two pictures in the same size, objects in the picture from the smaller camera may seem larger because the image has been expanded further than the image from the professional camera.

The ratio of that increase will be higher for a camera with a smaller sensor than for one which is closer in size to the 35mm standard.

Common Crop factors are between 1.3 and 2.0.

Depth of Field: This refers to the area which is in focus when you take your picture.

Setting a shallow depth of field means the subject is sharply focused on while anything back from it is less well-defined. This helps to concentrate the eye of someone looking at the photo on your subject.

A deep depth of field increases the area which is in focus around the focal point which you have selected for that photo.

Digital Zoom: This is a way of increasing the size of objects in a picture by using computer software in the camera. It is a way to get larger images on digital cameras which don't have interchangeable or zoom lenses. But, it reduces the sharpness of the image you get.

Exposure: This is the amount of light which you, or the settings on your automatic camera, allow onto the sensor to record the picture. You need to

be aware of the effect of the amount of light around you which may cause unexpected results with your picture if you don't take it into consideration.

Flash: The electronic device which provides extra light to compensate in low-light situations. This needs practise so that you see the effects of using your flash. A flash device which is not part of the camera gives you much better control.

You can bounce your flash off a reflective surface for some very nice results.

Focus: When you focus on something which you see through the camera's lens, that object will be sharp in the photo.

Simpler cameras have an **autofocus system** which makes them easier to use but gives the photographer less control of the resulting pictures. It can help less experienced people but will probably not be sufficient to give equally good results when the subjects are moving or not all at the same distance from the camera.

Mid-level and professional cameras have **manual settings** which you can adjust to set the focus as you want it. This needs practise.

Some cameras at the higher end have **continuous auto-focus**. You set the focus on the object or person you want to photograph and the camera keeps the focus on that object even as it moves about, as long as you keep it within the area which the camera has on its sensor!

ISO: This is a rating of the light sensitivity of camera film (called the “speed” of the film). In digital photography, the speed is imitated by software. With film, you had to change to a different film if you wanted to use a different ISO. Digital cameras have automatic or manual methods for changing it.

Some digital cameras can provide very high ISO settings but there is usually an amount of digital “noise” seen on the pictures. This problem is being overcome a little better with each generation of high-end cameras.

Optical Zoom: This is the term for adjusting the focal length on the zoom lens to get sharper pictures of objects which are at a distance from the photographer.

Shutter Speed: The time that the shutter is open enough for the sensor to absorb light. A common shutter speed is 1/500th of a second.

Slow shutter speeds allow more light in. Sometimes, the photo will be blurred because the camera moved during that longer period. Use a tripod wherever possible.

White Balance: An adjustment which sets the camera sensitivity for a white surface in the current lighting conditions.

Our brain adjusts for any tinge of color which affects white objects so that we know they are white. If we take a picture, that item may be recorded as if it was slightly green if there is a green tinge in the light which illuminates the item.

If your camera has a White Balance button, just point it at something white (like a whiteboard or a sheet of paper) and press the button. The camera will use that setting as a point of reference and your item will show as white in the photo.

Remember that you might have to reset the point of reference if the light changes in hue.

Take More Photos – have More Fun

I hope that you will use the information and suggestions here to have fun and create lasting memories in pictures which you can pass on to your children and other family members to also enjoy!

Archie Beale

[Another eBookWholesaler Publication](#)