

Ambassador: Photography

By: Katherine Doan

Start: October 15th, 2024

End: March 14th, 2025

PLAN

[Badge Guide](#)



Step 1 - Explore the power of photography

Your goal in this badge is to tell a story important to you through photos. So before you delve into the technicalities of your camera and learn basic skills, use this step to explore the stories that photography can tell.

CHOICES - DO ONE:

- ☐ **Go to a photography exhibit.** Look at each photo without reading the accompanying text and see if you can "read" the story it tells. Note what makes at least 20 photos powerful, so you can try the techniques. If you can, gather reproductions of your favorites to keep for reference.
- ☒ **Create a photography timeline.** Make a timeline to show how photography has changed over the years, including at least 10 major moments in photography history. Then, find 10 or more photographs that are especially meaningful to you, research who took them and when, and add them to your timeline. Choose photos whose stories will help you develop ideas of your own.
- ☐ **Get into photo ethics.** What does it take to capture and tell a strong story of conflict, nature, or people? Find 20 photographs from newspapers or magazines and talk with others about the ethics involved in capturing, editing (do you think anything was altered?), and publishing them. Keep what you learn in mind as you take your own photos.

Step 2 - Focus on Composition: Shoot 5 Landscapes

Now, it's time to get into photo basics! Do a little research into the four elements of composition: the "rule of thirds," framing, depth, and lead lines. When you photograph your landscapes, keep the composition guidelines in mind.

CHOICES - DO ONE:

- ☒ **Capture a day in the life.** Shoot one scene at five intervals throughout one day. If there are people in the scene, how can you turn them into part of the landscape?
- ☐ **Photograph weather patterns.** Is a storm coming in? Take five photos at different stages before, during, and after the storm.
- ☐ **Take five photos from a different vantage point.** Try to shoot images from above, below, or at some other angle. You might capture the landscape in a 360-degree panorama.

Step 3 - Focus on Lighting: Shoot 5 portraits or still lifes

What features do you want to capture about a person: her fashion sense, her love of serenity? What features of an object do you want to showcase: a vase's smooth surface, a cactus's spiny texture? As you take five portraits or still-life scenes, experiment with light to see how it can help you emphasize the features you choose. Try flash, natural light, using a flash outdoors, or a light source you create.

CHOICES - DO ONE:

- ☐ **Invite friends to a shoot day.** Set it up with fun locations, wardrobe, and props, and play around with the placement of people and objects to create your five shots.
- ☐ **Capture the same person or object from five different perspectives.** You might play around with more than light: What about distance from the object(s), zoom, and angle? If you're taking portraits, experiment with posed and candid shots.
- ☒ **Grow your image.** Start small and photograph one person or item, then begin to add others, so your image "grows" in each of your five photos. See how the light affects its shadows and shapes, and how different textures and colors interact.

Tip: A black velvet background absorbs unwanted light and reflection. You might also try a white piece of paper as a background, but watch for shadows.

Step 4 - Focus on Motion: Shoot 5 Action Shots

Try to stop motion and retain a strong sense of movement by doing one of the choices below.

CHOICES - DO ONE:

- ☒ **Take photos of a group or an individual in motion.** A group could be a sports team, a dance company, or your friends running. Capture an individual in five stages: maybe a pole vaulter picking up her pole, running, taking off, going over the pole, and landing... or five quick shots at the top.
- ☐ **Take photos of faces in motion.** Capture five different faces in action, or the same person with five different active expressions-perhaps a growing smile, a nod, a wink, a blink, or a vigorous head shake.
- ☐ **Take photos of objects in motion.** Shoot five different objects, or one object in five different stages of motion-perhaps a basketball, a fast car, a falling leaf, or a festive spritz of bubbles.

Step 5 - Tell a story with photography

Use your new skills to tell a photographic story that means something to you. Do you want to show others a cause close to your heart, or create the story of you for a résumé or college application? Take your photographs, then share them in one of these ways.

CHOICES - DO ONE:

- ☐ **Stage a photo exhibit.** Show your photos at home, school, or at a community center.
- ☐ **Make a digital slide show.** Post your photographic story in a private online space for family and friends.
- ☒ **Create a photo album or scrapbook.** Share your creation with others.

Progress Planning

Date	Materials	Plan	Step
11/9/2024	Laptop	Make a timeline of major moments in photograph history. I will be researching the major moments when cameras were starting to be developed and ending with the last change in camera development. The second part of it is to add to the timeline of my favourite pictures taken by photographers, but I will be making a separate timeline so I can add a few pictures (But will be working on this on a later day)	1 (Part 1)
11/9/2024	Camera	I will go out of the house every 2 hours starting from 8 and ending at 6 pm to capture a day in life, a picture of the same area 5 times	2
1/26/2025	Camera	I was going out to practice for Tet performance so I decided to use it for this project, it was of people dancing for the choreo	4
2/22/2025	Camera + Laptop	This step was to take a picture and grow it out by adding more things to it, I decided to use my stuffed animals that I have a lot of, mostly small ones but a big one could help frame it out for the shadows of all the stuffed animals	3
3/1/2025	Laptop, camera, and phone	For this step I just decided to take a few pictures everyday for a week to show how my life is and what my photo album would look like with the activities I do for the week.	5
3/14/2025	Laptop	Add 10 more photos that are meaningful and add them to the timeline. For me, I love nature photography and animals because it shows just how fascinating an animal can thrive in the environment they live in. Most of the images I chose were effects of the causes that had impacted nature by mankind.	1 (Part 2)

Report

Step 1 - Summary

Working on the timeline for the major moments in photograph history, I looked through multiple websites, they showed a lot of the major changes but I decided on one website, rangefinderonline.com. The title of it says "10 Key Moments in the History of Photography". I liked this one as it summarised the events in less than a few sentences. It's been a while since I made a timeline, so I tried to summarise each event from each year of major moments. For my own timeline I chose to do photos throughout history where certain nature photographs have transcended being just images—they have sparked environmental movements, changed public perception, and influenced policy. These photographs serve as powerful reminders of our planet's beauty, fragility, and the urgent need for conservation.

TIMELINE

MEANINGFUL PHOTOGRAPHY: NATURE EDITION

1968 - "Earthrise" (NASA, Apollo 8)

1

The first-ever photograph of Earth rising over the Moon, taken by astronaut William Anders. It reshaped humanity's view of our planet and inspired the modern environmental movement.



2

1972 - "The Blue Marble" (NASA, Apollo 17)

This is a stunning full view of Earth from space emphasizing its fragility and beauty. It is one of the most reproduced images in history.



3

1985 - "Dead Bird" (Chris Jordan)

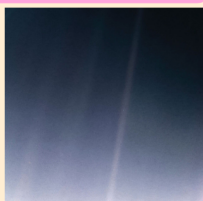
A stark image showing a seabird filled with plastic, highlighting the devastating effects of plastic pollution on wildlife.



4

1992 - "The Pale Blue Dot" (NASA, Voyager 1)

A distant view of Earth as a tiny speck in the vastness of space, captured by Voyager 1 at Carl Sagan's request. A humbling perspective on our place in the universe.



5

2004 - "The Lone Polar Bear" (Sebastião Salgado)

A heartbreaking image of a polar bear stranded on melting ice, symbolizing the crisis of climate change. It shows how much we need to change our ways to not kill off another species in the world.



TIMELINE

MEANINGFUL PHOTOGRAPHY: NATURE EDITION

6

2009 - "Frozen Coyote" (Sabine Cane)

The posture and condition of the animal suggest it has succumbed to the cold, becoming partially preserved by the freezing temperatures. Illustrates the harsh realities of wildlife survival, human impact on nature, or even climate change.



7

2017 - "Burning Amazon" (Cris Bouroncle)

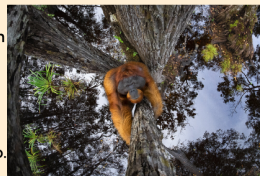
An aerial shot of massive Amazon deforestation, showing the urgency of protecting the world's largest rainforest.



8

2020 - "Orangutan" (THOMAS VIJAYAN)

Depicts on image of an orangutan climbing down a tree with its reflection starting up at it. It demonstrates the untouched parts of the world that humans strive to reach but are unable to.



9

2021 - "Leopard seal and Gentoo Penguin" (Amos nachoum)

The image portrays life's food cycle of the leopard seal chasing the gentoo penguin around until it becomes tired. It shows the nature of the world and having to hunt to survive.



10

2023 - "Orca Mother's Grief" (Paul Nicklen)

An orca mother carrying her dead calf for days, showcasing the emotional depth of marine animals and raising awareness of ocean pollution and declining fish populations.



TIMELINE

PHOTOGRAPH HISTORY: MAJOR MOMENTS

1

The first light-sensitive materials

1727

Silver salts, originally thought to be activated by heat, were proven to be sensitive to light

2

The Camera Obscura

1814

first photographic image using a camera obscura; the image required eight hours of light exposure and later faded

3

The first sun drawings.

1822-1827

The first time that light-sensitive materials were used in art was actually to copy a drawing, not preserve an image. Used the process to copy engravings

4

The term photography is first used

1833

The first person believed to call to process of recording an image as "photography" was Hercules Florence. He actually worked with silver salts to produce copies of drawings in 1833 but his work wasn't widely shared.

5

The Daguerreotype

1835-1837

Louis-Jacques-Mandé Daguerre created the first Daguerreotype in 1837, using iodized silver plates and mercury. Permanent images were created after removing silver iodide with salt solution.

6

Light sensitive drawings on paper.

1839

it wasn't until 1839 that Henry Fox Talbot was able to make the image more permanent using a suggestion by Sir John Herschel

7

Experimenting with different materials

1850'S

During this pivotal period in photography, various photographic processes such as wet plate, calotype, tin types, glass plates, and ambrotypes were developed to fix images onto various materials.

8

Ditching the portable darkroom

1870

The dry plate technique, developed by photographers like Charles Bennett, revolutionized photo-taking by eliminating the need for immediate image development in the darkroom.

9

The development of film

1889-1940'S

George Eastman developed rolled film in 1889, invented the Brownie, and introduced instant film in the late 1940s, making photography more accessible and affordable.

10

Photography goes digital

1975-2000'S

While digital didn't outsell film cameras until the early 2000s, the first digital still camera was created in 1975 by Kodak.

Step 2 - Summary

The step was to capture the day in photography of the same area. I did it and I can see that nothing in the photo of all 5 pictures has changed for objects, being cars. Something that changed was the shadows and the lighting of the vehicles. In the morning it was soft and bright, in the afternoon it was brighter and the shadows moved, and in the evening the sunset and the shadows moved more.



Step 3 - Summary

This step was to take a picture and grow it out by adding more things to it, I decided to use my stuffed animals that I have a lot of, mostly small ones but a big one could help frame it out for the shadows of all the stuffed animals.



Picture 1 is of a Tanuki, a Japanese trash panda, or raccoon. I won it during a trip to round 1 and wanted to use it for this image because it was big and looked so cute. You can see a thin oval shape over the Tanuki, which shows the shadow that the plushie cast because of where the lighting was, since it was big and nothing was around it, the shadow was spread out more.



Picture 2 is of Tanuki and 2 other plushies, a bear, and a cat. I chose those 2 because it would help contrast the size of the Tanuki. I changed to a white circle as it is easier to see than a black circle. These white circles show the shadows of each plushie. As you can see the angle had changed as a way to see what angle would make the shadow look smaller than it was supposed to be before. You can see most of Tanuki's shadow hiding the shadow of the bear, but it is still kind of there, and you can see the thin shadow of the cat's ears.



Picture 3 is of Tanuki, the bear, the cat, and 2 small hamburgers. I chose those 2 because it would help contrast the size of the plushies from the last picture. The angle changed again to help see the difference in angle and how much shadow there is (also it was because I forgot where I last took an image after sorting the other 2 plushies in... hahaha). The white circles have increased showing the ranges of shadows in the image. The 2 cat plushies' shadows are thinner/smaller/lighter than the other 3 as they are closer to the light source, the

yellow dot (rough estimate where the light is). The other 3 plushies' shadows are darker because they are facing away from the light source and are more in direct contact with it than the other 2.



Picture 4 is of Tanuki, the bear, the cat, 2 small hamburgers, and 2 new penguins. I honestly added these penguins because Rachael gave them to me and it would match the theme that I wanted for the image, just cute and cuddly. I took the image a bit further away to see if the shadows had increased or decreased as more is being added. I can see the shadows are growing a bit bigger but it isn't too visible b/c some of the shadows are being hidden by other plushies.



The last picture for this step is of Tanuki, the cat, the bear, 2 hamburgers, 2 penguins, and 3 squishmallows. I added them because they were mostly around the same size and I wanted to see the difference there is if I added them. This angle was not so good as most of the shadows were squished together. But we can see most of the shadows are deep/darker from on top as the light on the camera changes, making the shadows change with it.

Step 4 - Summary

This step was to capture a person in motion. This was on Sunday 1/26, during a practice day for our Tet performance, we were taking a break recently so I watched around as people went on their phones and a few people practiced the dance. Below are a few pictures of Emily practising the moves.

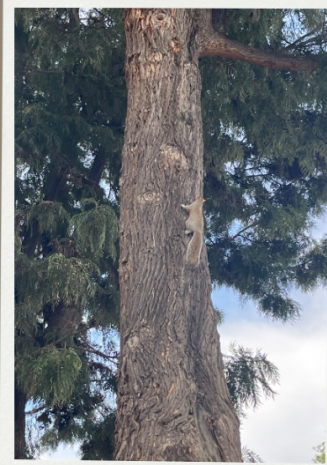
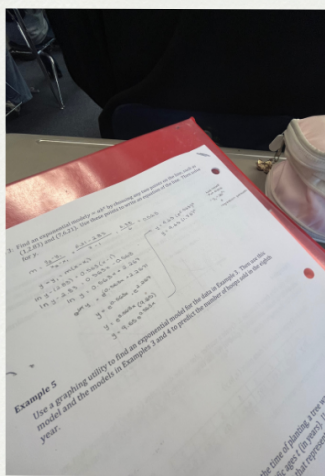
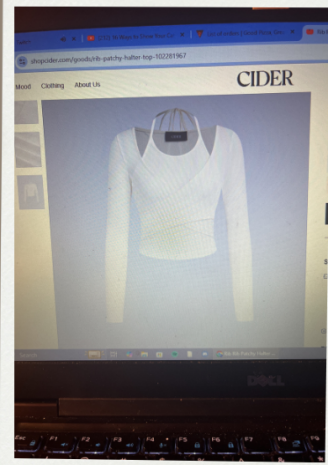
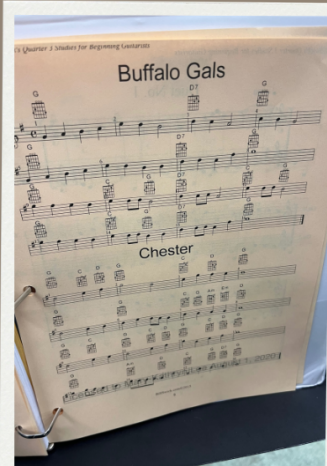
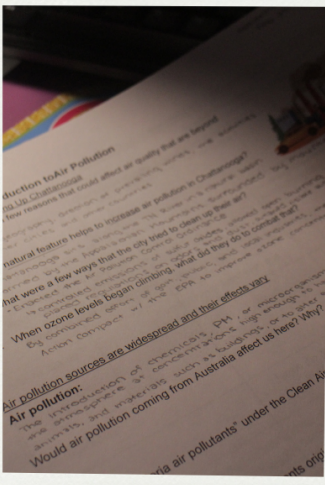


The practice made the images more fun and you could see the different movements of the dance. Honestly, these pictures were just taken when everyone was on break and some girls wanted to practice.

Step 5 - Summary

For step 5, I decided to take a few photos everyday to make my photo album of what my life is like in a week. There were many surprises but it was enjoyable and made great memories to learn of.

All the photos in the college are what I took over the week of 2/23/25 - 3/1/25. The first 3 were on 2/23/25 during scouting, I just took images of the girls in their patrol lines and another of them sitting about to start activities. The 3rd image was of an envelope for the people who volunteered for the voting ballots. The rest were throughout the week in the weekdays, an image of my APES assignment, one of my guitar songs, my math homework, an image on a drive to the DMV, and an image of just online shopping. The bottom 3



images were the week's more fun and exciting ones. The bottom left was of me passing my DMV driving licence test, I was so excited when I passed my first try. The bottom middle was of round 1 when I was wandering around to find certain plushies to get in the claw machines. The final image, bottom right, was of a squirrel crawling up on a tree. He was so cute and I just wanted a nature theme for my last image of the week.

Reflection

Throughout this badge experience, I explored various techniques for taking pictures using old cameras that belonged to my dad and grandpa. I also learned about the history of photographic cameras and how they evolved over time. One of the most interesting aspects was understanding how different lighting conditions affect images—whether it was using natural light outside with cars or experimenting with focused lighting on stuffed animals indoors. Additionally, I discovered that not all cameras capture movement the same way; some resulted in blurry images, while others designed for motion photography produced crisp and natural-looking shots.

Another key part of this journey was researching impactful photographs. I realized that many of the images I found compelling were famous because they touched people's hearts and inspired change. Seeing how photography could influence emotions and perspectives gave me a new appreciation for the power of an image.

My favorite part of this badge, of course, was taking photos. What better way to experience photography than by capturing moments in my daily life? I especially enjoyed documenting a particularly stressful week, as it allowed me to notice small details that I might have otherwise overlooked. I also loved how hands-on this experience was, teaching me how to adjust a camera's settings to focus on specific elements within a frame. Observing the way shadows shifted throughout the day—especially with moving cars—gave me a new understanding of how the sun's position affects lighting on Earth.

The most challenging part of this badge was creating timelines. While they weren't necessarily difficult, they felt time-consuming, especially since I had little experience making them. I had to go through multiple templates just to find one that worked for me, and when converting the timelines into images, I struggled with maintaining their quality. Oddly enough, I spent more time working on my timelines than actually taking photos! Despite my frustration, I recognize that the process was valuable and helped me learn a lot.

If I were to do this badge again, I would spend even more time taking pictures and exploring different techniques with old-fashioned cameras. The one change I would make is to the first step of the process. Instead of viewing photos on a screen, I would prefer to examine physical prints in a quiet space. That way, I could connect with the images on a deeper level—almost like a professional photographer analyzing their meaning—rather than just feeling like an observer looking at random pictures.