

Photographers photograph people, landscapes, merchandise, or other subjects, using digital or film cameras and equipment. May develop negatives or use computer software to produce finished images and prints. Includes scientific photographers, aerial photographers, and photojournalists.

DUTIES

A person in this career:

- Uses traditional or digital cameras, along with a variety of equipment, such as tripods, filters, and flash attachments.
- Determines desired images and picture composition, selecting and adjusting subjects, equipment, and lighting to achieve desired effects.
- Adjusts apertures, shutter speeds, and camera focus according to a combination of factors, such as lighting, field depth, subject motion, film type, and film speed.
- Creates artificial light, using flashes and reflectors.
- Manipulates and enhances scanned or digital images to create desired effects, using computers and specialized software.
- Transfers photographs to computers for editing, archiving, and electronic transmission.
- Determines project goals, locations, and equipment needs by studying assignments and consulting with clients or advertising staff.
- Reviews sets of photographs to select the best work.
- Performs general office duties, such as scheduling appointments, keeping books, and ordering supplies.
- Estimates or measures light levels, distances, and numbers of exposures needed, using measuring devices and formulas.

Photographers create images that tell stories or record events. But, working in this field is competitive. They need to master both the artistic and the technical sides of the job.

Some photographers use traditional cameras that record images on film. Many others use newer cameras that take digital images. Most know how to use both types. Those who use traditional cameras may develop their own film. This complex process takes place in a darkroom. In this room, the film or prints are treated in a series of chemical and water baths.

Before they can take a picture, photographers make many technical decisions. They choose the right cameras, lenses, and filters. They make sure they have the right film stocks and lights.



SALARY INFORMATION

Location	2018				
	10%	25%	Median	75%	90%
California	\$24,830	\$29,880	\$47,720	\$73,030	\$95,610

*Pay period based on yearly amount.

EMPLOYMENT
OUTLOOK

Decreasing growth
rate estimated to be **-4%**

1,500 estimated annual
job openings

Photographers may use natural light for their work. This is often the case for nature photographers and photojournalists. They pick a position to get the best picture with the light nearby. If they have the chance, they wait until the light is just right.

Next, they choose the angle to shoot from. They decide how close to get to the subject, and how to frame the shot. The shutter speed and aperture width can also change the outcome. Photographers make careful choices before, during, and after each shot.

Often, a picture is meant to have a certain atmosphere or concept. During big-budget photo shoots, a crew may help to achieve these moods or ideas. Lighting technicians use their skills to light the scene. Models, makeup artists, and wardrobe experts work to create the right look.

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PHOTOGRAPHY

Photographers continue to work on pictures after taking them. They can change digital versions of the photos using computer programs. Through this process, they can create exactly the shot they want.

There are many areas of this career, and each calls for a unique set of skills. For example, portrait photographers take pictures of families and babies. They take pictures of people at weddings and of students on school picture day.

Fashion or beauty photographers take striking photos of models. These shots end up on billboards and in magazines. Photojournalists capture newsworthy people and events. They tell stories of local or world issues with their pictures.

Commercial photographers take pictures of cars, computers, food, and other items. These photos end up in catalogs or ads. Scientific photographers use high-powered lenses to capture things the human eye can't see. These include small or far-away things such as cells or stars.

Fine art photographers sell their work as art pieces. They can focus on just about any subject matter that inspires them. Others in this career are experts at taking nature or travel photos.

Many photographers own their own businesses. Part of their job includes advertising and booking appointments. Sometimes, they also mount and frame their own pictures. They buy supplies and keep records. They bill customers, and may hire and train employees.

RELATED OCCUPATIONS

Self-Enrichment Education Teachers ☀

Camera Operators, Television, Video and Motion Picture ☀

Tour Guides and Escorts ☀

Retail Salespersons ☀

Prepress Technicians and Workers

