Go wide-angle to capture a sense of place.

Perfect exposure for optimal results every time.

Master focus to make subjects stand out.

Review images to ensure the correct focus.
How to perfect exposure for optimal results every time

- **USE APERTURE-PRIORITY**
  This setting lets you select the aperture (which is responsible for letting a certain amount of light through the lens) and the camera automatically works out the other settings you need. By working in the ‘A’ mode, you can choose the widest aperture available (usually 1/3.5–5.6 on kit lenses) to create a blurred-out background.

- **WATCH YOUR SPEED**
  While aperture-priority is great for getting the look you want, the automatic computations of the camera may lead to a slow shutter speed, which could result in motion blur in the final image. To combat this, you can raise your ISO (which increases the sensitivity of the sensor). Normally you can work up to ISO 800 before you see any noticeable image degradation, so be wary of going higher than this, although many JPEG modes will reduce this noise in-camera.

- **PERFECT THE EXPOSURE**
  If your aperture and shutter speed are both fine, but you still find the image is too dark or bright, use exposure compensation to fine-tune. This setting tells the camera to increase or decrease the amount of brightness in the image and can usually be set between +/−5EV to suit your needs. We recommend tweaking it in increments of 1, reviewing and adjusting as required.

**EXPERT TIP INVEST IN A RING LIGHT**
A macro ring light sits over your lens and uses constant LED light to illuminate your subject. It’s just powerful enough to brighten your subject but leave the background dark, allowing you to really isolate the scene.

**EXPERT TIP REMOVE DISTRACTIONS**
Every photographer occasionally accidentally captures distractions in the background. But whether it’s a twig or a road, try to get it out of the frame before taking your shot by physically removing it or recomposing the scene.

How to go wide-angle to capture a sense of place

- **GO WIDER**
  Context is a great way to add interest and story to an image. By selecting a wider focal length (such as zooming out to 18mm) you can include more background and give the viewer more to consider. A wider angle also allows you to get closer to your subject while including more background and foreground to create a great sense of depth and context in your final image.

- **USE THE RULE-OF-THIRDS**
  Compositional guidelines, such as the rule-of-thirds, are designed to make your images easy to view. Placing your subject on one of the powerpoints (where the lines intersect) will draw the eye.

**EXPERT TIP CREATE A MAKESHIFT TRIPOD**
A good workaround is to use a tripod or other support, you can make your own. Use a wall, fence post, log or even your sturdy camera bag to act as a solid base to rest your camera on.

**EXPERT TIP ISOLATE YOUR SUBJECT**
If you’re shooting flowers, try to make sure that they aren’t too plentiful. Having just a single stem, rather than a full bunch, in frame will ensure your viewer is automatically drawn to the area you want to showcase.

How to review images to ensure the correct focus

- **CHECK THE SHOT**
  After your first shot, or any time you change composition or settings, make sure you use the Play feature on your camera (which looks like a play button on a CD player) to review your shot. This is handy to check your overall composition and exposure (the brightness of the image), so you know if you need to make any adjustments to your settings before you continue shooting.

- **CHECK YOUR FOCUS**
  While reviewing your images, many cameras also allow you to zoom into the image. By pressing the magnifying glass icon, you can zoom into the centre of the image. You are also able to navigate the image by using the front and rear wheels or D-pads. This is perfect for double-checking sharpness. Since we’re shooting in Single-Point AF, we know where the focus should be and checking is easy.

- **MAXIMISE SHARPNESS**
  If your aperture is as wide as it will go (eg f/3.5) and you can’t increase your shutter speed beyond 1/100sec, you might notice motion blur in the image. A good workaround is to use a tripod that will allow you to work at almost floor-level, as this will keep your camera perfectly still. Activate the camera’s 2sec self-timer to eliminate any blur caused by camera shake.

**EXPERT TIP MAKE IT INTERESTING**
Background blur should be as uncluttered and non-distracting as possible, but it should also be interesting. Fill your background with colours or textures that complement your subject. The more blur you achieve, the better the separation between foreground and background. A colourful background will also add interest to your shot and help your flower stand out.

How to master focus to make subjects stand out

- **USE SINGLE-POINT AF**
  Setting Single-Point AF will let you move the point of focus (denoted by a small red box) to work with your composition. As we are shooting at f/3.5 (the widest aperture) the distance that will be in focus will be very small, so make sure you take the shot immediately after focusing. This will ensure you don’t accidentally move closer or further from the subject and lose your focus.

- **MAKE IT SHALLOW**
  Background blur should be as uncluttered and non-distracting as possible, but it should also be interesting. Fill your background with colours or textures that complement your subject. The more blur you achieve, the better the separation between foreground and background. A colourful background will also add interest to your shot and help your flower stand out.

- **MAKE IT INTERESTING**
  Background blur should be as uncluttered and non-distracting as possible, but it should also be interesting. Fill your background with colours or textures that complement your subject. The more blur you achieve, the better the separation between foreground and background. A colourful background will also add interest to your shot and help your flower stand out.

**EXPERT TIP CREATE A MAKESHIFT TRIPOD**
If you’re out on location and don’t have access to a tripod or other support, you can make your own. Use a wall, fence post, log or even your sturdy camera bag to act as a solid base to rest your camera on.

**EXPERT TIP ISOLATE YOUR SUBJECT**
If you’re shooting flowers, try to make sure that they aren’t too plentiful. Having just a single stem, rather than a full bunch, in frame will ensure your viewer is automatically drawn to the area you want to showcase.