

A top-down view of various photography equipment scattered on a light blue surface. The items include a large black camera with a lens, a silver and black camera with a lens, a large silver bellows camera, a wooden case with a metal latch, a black camera with a lens, a black camera with a lens, a black camera with a lens, a black camera with a lens, a black camera with a lens, and a black camera with a lens. The equipment is arranged in a somewhat circular pattern around the central text.

Tips for Photography at Home



Making work from home.

- If you are unable to access the university facilities including Photography equipment, Photographic studios and darkrooms... don't panic!
- Here are some tips for things you can do easily at home.

Tip 1: Make use of any natural light you have.

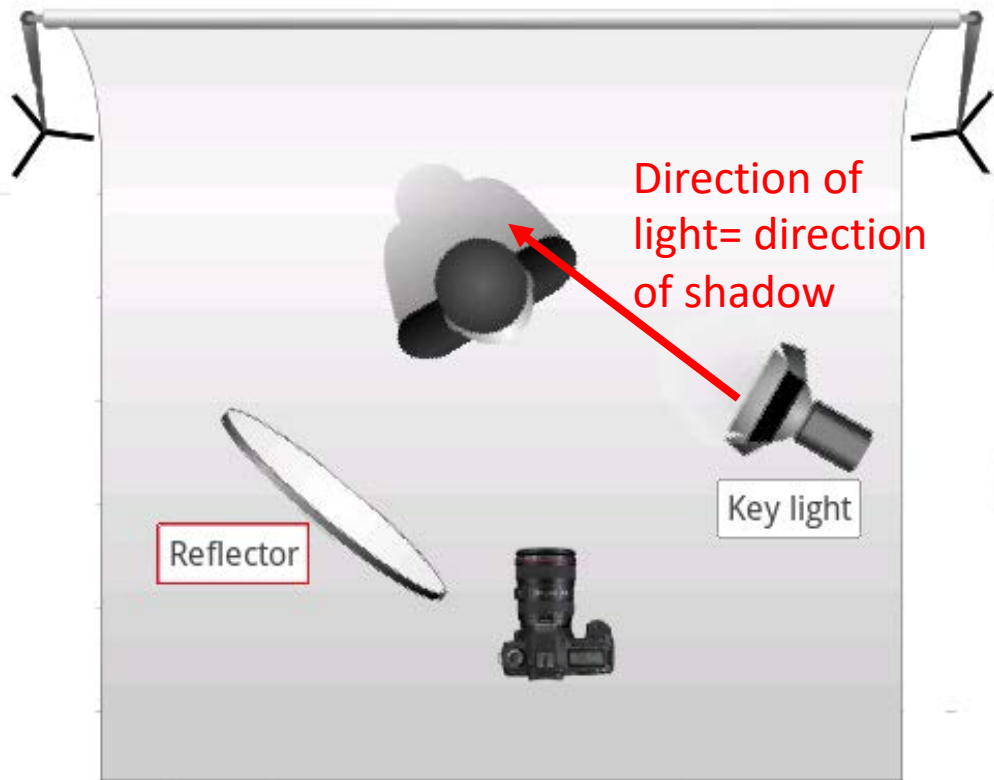


Sunshine is your friend!
Use it for your photo and video shoots 😊

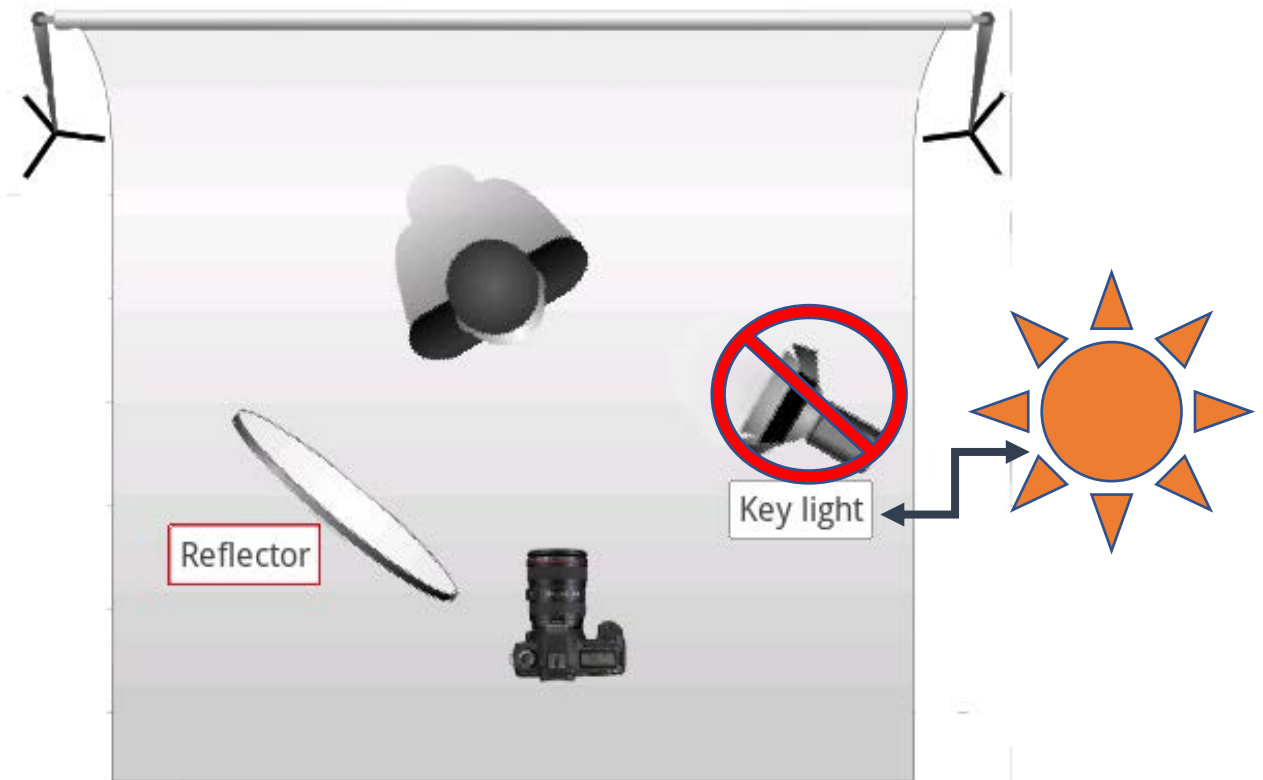
You don't always need flash photography or a studio- you can get great results using the natural light you have available.

Remember to set your white balance on your camera to Daylight or Automatic White Balance (AWB) to avoid colour casts.

Studio lighting set-up techniques can be replicated with a daylight source i.e. instead of a studio light the sun becomes your key light. Just remember whatever your light source the shadows will always be cast in the same direction as your light – so if you can't move the light source move your subject!



CLASSIC STUDIO SET-UP WITH ONE LIGHT

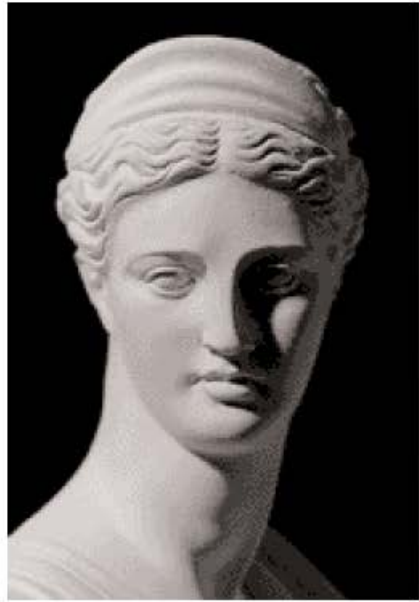


NO STUDIO LIGHTS? DON'T WORRY- THE SUN CAN ACT AS YOUR KEY LIGHT INSTEAD!

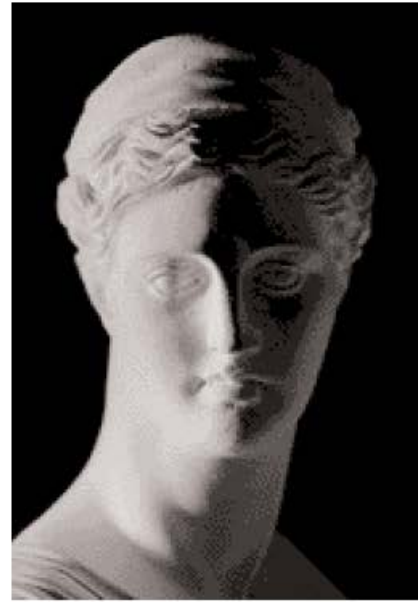
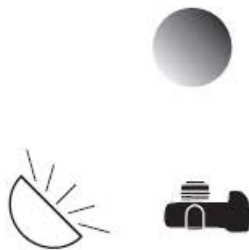
Light and shadow examples with a single light source



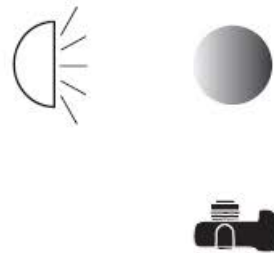
Front, direct



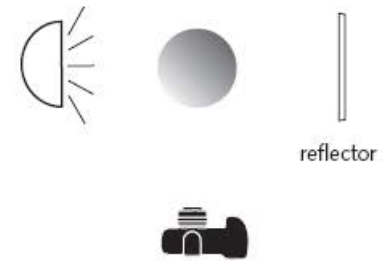
45-degree



Side or 90-degree



Side with reflector fill



Tip 2: Use a reflector to control shadows.



A reflector takes light that would usually spill out to the sides and redirects it back towards the subject. Without the use of a reflector a large quantity of usable light is lost. The colour of the reflector will be seen in the light reflected onto the subject.

Gold – to produce warm tones

White – creates neutral colour effect

Silver – creates neutral tones but brighter than white

Don't have a reflector? Then make one!

How to make a homemade reflector

- 1.) Get an old shoe box or large piece of cardboard.
- 2.) Cover it in tin foil- that's it! You now have a reflector 😊



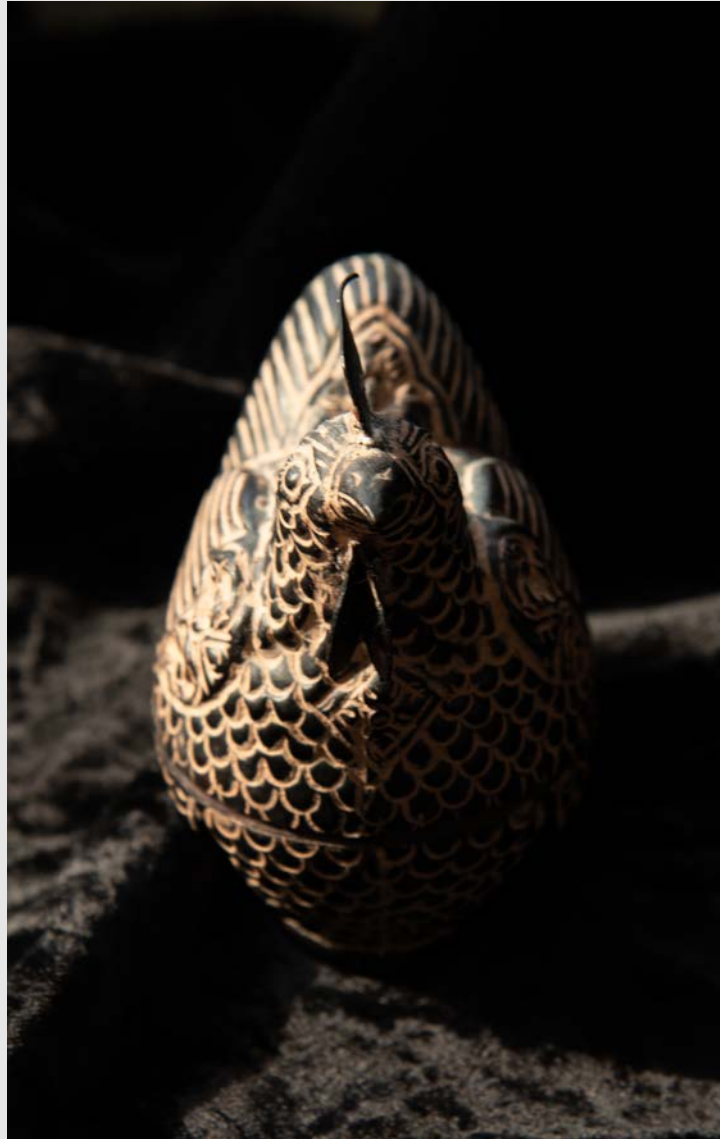
Here's one I made earlier!



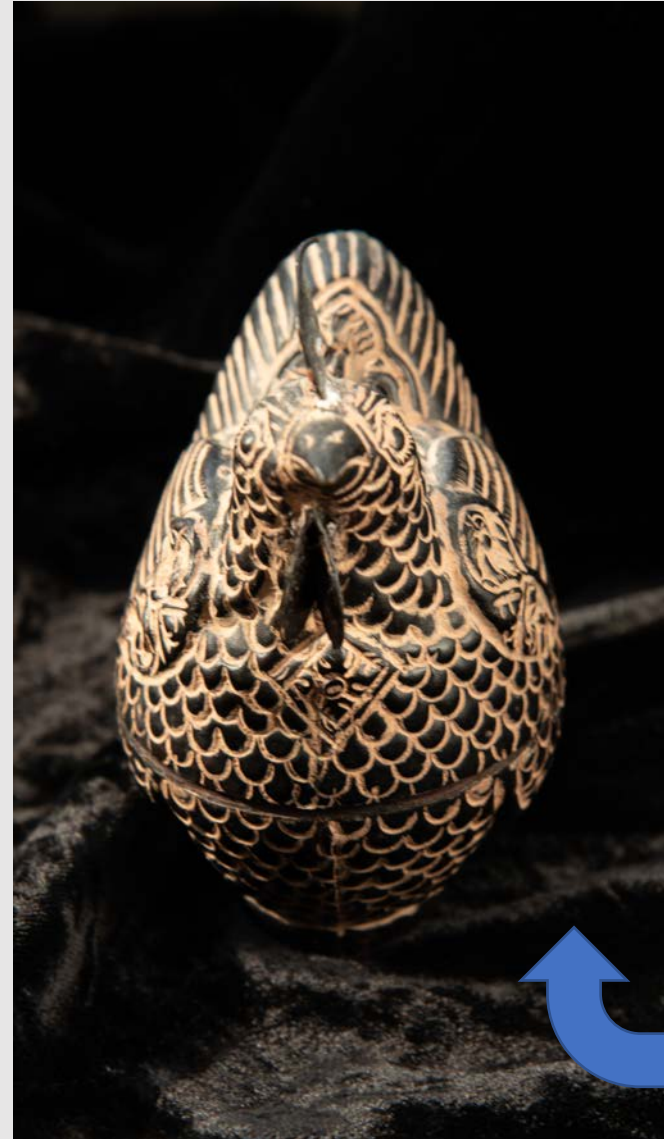
If you don't have any tin foil you can also use some large bits of white card or layer up a few sheets of white paper (note the reflected light won't be as bright as if you use tin foil so the effect will be much subtler).

These images were taken in the same location in my house using only sunlight. The camera used is the same in each (Nikon D750) and the camera settings/exposure are also the same. The only difference is that on the first image I didn't use my homemade reflector and on the second image I did!

WITHOUT REFLECTOR



WITH REFLECTOR



You can really see the difference the reflector has made in lifting the shadows and making the lighting look even on the second image



Without reflector



With reflector



Portraits can look particularly effective when the subject is side lit by sunlight (see the image taken without a reflector). However if you want to balance out the lighting and lift the shadows on the subjects face you can use your homemade reflector to do this. Make sure the reflector is positioned so that it catches the light and bounces back on to your subject- you need to maneuver the reflector until you see the shadows begin to lift! Then take your shot!

Tip 3: Build your own still life studio

- 1.) Find some thick black material (velvet is the best material as it absorbs light but any dark and heavy-ish fabric will work).
- 2.) Use the material to line the inside of a cardboard box or drape over a chair/table.
- 3.) Place your object on the material inside the box/on the chair.
- 4.) Use your light meter in the camera to expose for the object (meaning the background will look dark and your object will be well exposed)- Take your photos! See my sample photos below:



Shoe-box lined with black material.

Black material draped over a chair to create a backdrop



Tip 4: Get familiar with your camera.

If you are using a DSLR camera these settings are a basic guideline for shooting in sunlight-

- ISO - 400 in cloudy conditions, 200 in bright sunlight
- Shutter speed above 1/60 unless you have a tripod
- White balance set to daylight if using natural daylight- use AWB if unsure or using mixed lighting (i.e. indoor lights and sunlight).

For more in depth information please see our other workshops here:

<http://blogs.brighton.ac.uk/photounit/workshopsguides/photography/>

No DSLR? - don't worry you can use a little point and shoot camera or your camera phone and still get good results- but the images will be of a lower quality and you will have less control over what the camera does. Whatever camera you use keep practicing and experimenting until it becomes familiar.

Tip 5: Practice using the Adobe Software for post-production.

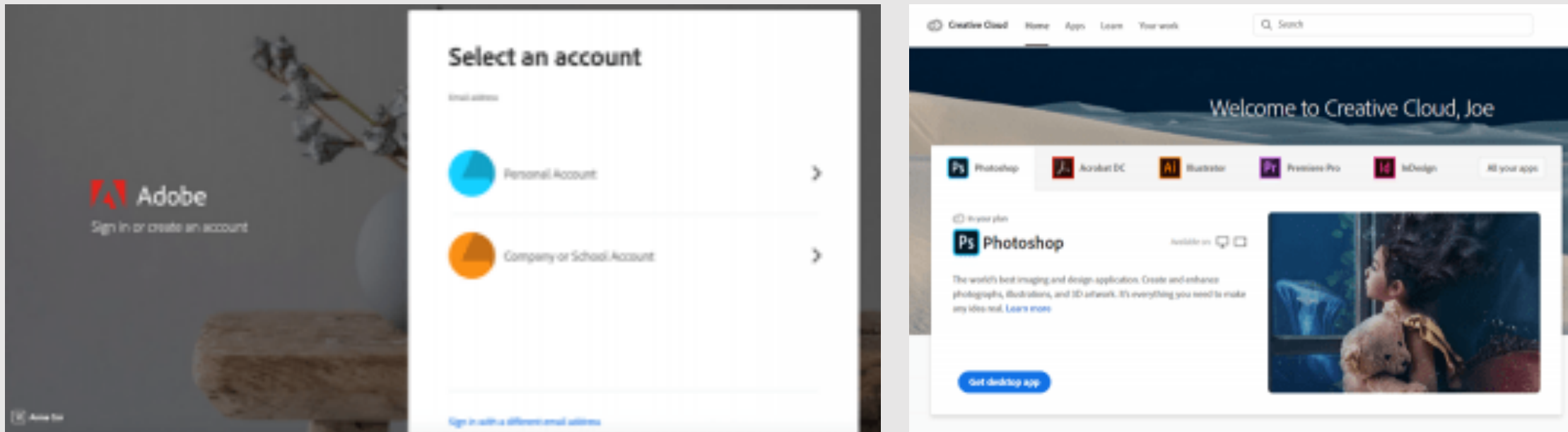
**Adobe Creative Cloud is available for free to all students from 20/03/20 – 20/06/20.
Make the most of it!**

If your images are a little over or underexposed Adobe Photoshop or Adobe Lightroom is a really useful tool to help you tweak and edit your images. You can find online tutorials on LinkedIn Learning (formerly Lynda.com) which is free to University of Brighton students: <https://staff.brighton.ac.uk/is/training/Pages/Lynda4u.aspx>



Free Adobe Create Suite for 3 Months!

Visit <https://creativecloud.adobe.com>
and use your university email address to sign in.



For more information on how to download or install apps, see [Download and Install Creative Cloud apps](#).

Each app will take up space on your computers memory so make sure you only download the applications you need i.e. Photoshop and Lightroom are the two main ones for photography.

Tip 5: Keep in touch and take care.

- All the Photographic Service Unit staff are still available for any help or advice you may have about your photography. Please email us at: photographicsserviceunit@brighton.ac.uk
- We can communicate with you via email or set up a tech tutorial over Microsoft Teams. But don't feel on your own, we are here to help!
- Stay well, look after yourselves and each other and be creative 😊