

## HOW TO PHOTOGRAPH SHOES (IDEAS, PROPS & SETUP EXAMPLES)

*Taking awesome photos of shoes may sound simple but there's a lot that goes into getting creative results. Here are our top tips for footwear photography.*

[Learn](#) | By [Leonardo Cavazzana](#)



Shotkit may earn a commission on affiliate links. [Learn more.](#)

Learn these shoe photography tips for Instagram or for sale online.

If you want to sell shoes on eBay or Facebook Marketplace, these footwear photo ideas will help you get a quicker sale.

Or maybe you need some professional product shots of shoes for social media or brand advertising.

Whatever the case, I'll show you how to display and pose shoes for a picture worth sharing.

Taking great shoe photography at home is actually pretty easy when you know how, so let's dive into the tips.

Table of Contents



# How to Photograph Shoes: 10 Footwear Photography Tips

## 1. Understand Your Subject when photographing shoes



Footwear can be a fascinating subject to photograph.

Shoes come in various shapes, sizes, and colors, and ultimately enable us to perform well outdoors, on adventures, in sports, and everything else.

Understanding the character of the shoe will help you decide the best way to showcase it.

So understand where your subject is meant to be and look for a location that will give you the backdrop you need.

- **Athletic Shoes:** These might look great in an action-oriented setting.
- **High Heels:** Consider an elegant, stylish backdrop.
- **Children's Shoes:** Think playful and fun.
- **Hiking boots:** time to go outside and explore.

## 2. Create the story you'll shoot



Once you understand your subject, footwear photography is product photography.

You need to tell its story in a way that is relatable to its public audience at the same time you sparkle their imagination with ways they could use it.

This means creating a story to follow throughout your shoot will help you create better images.

If we are shooting an outdoor hiking boot, I'd start by shooting how easy and tight it fits on the foot.

Then I'd go about photographing it overcoming different terrains. To then end it on a viewpoint, showcasing what you can achieve with the right shoes.

Use this logic for every other kind of shoe. What is the story of someone who might wear the shoes you are photographing?

- [How to photograph feet](#)

### 3. Set Up the Stage for shoe photos



Photographing shoes doesn't always have to be out on locations.

Sometimes a white background is all you need to add a professional appearance and make the shoe images pop.

This will allow you to focus on the design and details of the product, making it perfect to be posted on e-commerce or to be used as an asset for a design piece.

#### 4. Lighting: Natural Light vs. Studio Light for shooting shoes



In shoe photography, light plays a crucial role.

Natural light can provide a soft, realistic touch to the images, while studio lighting offers control and precision to make the product pop.

Depending on the style and mood you wish to create, you can choose what kind of light you want to use.

Photographing products with a flash will usually give you a shaper image.

So remember the story you want to tell with these images and select your lighting accordingly.

## 5. Take The Shoe Off The Ground



Even though shoes are meant to be worn on the ground, the ground can be a limiting factor when composing footwear images for there are very few angles you can go about.

So try lifting your feet, such as sitting on a higher bench or over a wall. This will allow you to compose with the sky in the background and show 360-degree views of the product.

A worm's eye view may also work well to give your viewer a unique perspective.

## 6. Use shoe photography props



Using props is how you can make your image more interesting and easier to compose.

Look for [homemade DIY photography props](#) that will enhance your image and help you tell a story by creating context.

Here are a few examples:

1. **Fabrics and Textures:** Using different materials like silk, leather, or rustic wood can create contrast and highlight the shoe's texture. They can be laid under or around the shoe to complement the design.
2. **Fashion Accessories:** Items such as watches, sunglasses, belts, or handbags can illustrate how the shoes might be paired with other accessories in an outfit.
3. **Foot Forms or Mannequin Feet:** These can help in showcasing how the shoes will look when worn.
4. **Seasonal Elements:** Depending on the season, you might incorporate props like leaves for autumn, flowers for spring, or shells.
5. **Jewelry:** Elegant pieces of jewelry can create a luxurious feeling, especially for high-end or formal shoes.
6. **Sports Equipment:** If photographing athletic shoes, consider using relevant sports equipment like a basketball or tennis racket.
7. **Urban Elements:** Bricks, graffiti, or street signs can provide an urban vibe for casual or streetwear shoes.
8. **Natural Elements:** Stones, sand, water, or grass can provide a natural setting, particularly for outdoor or casual footwear.
9. **Books and Magazines:** These can give an intellectual or sophisticated touch to your images, especially if you're photographing formal or classic shoes.
10. **Travel Accessories:** Luggage, maps, or passports can create a traveling theme, perfect for casual or adventure shoes.
11. **Food and Beverages:** Coffee, fruits, or elegant dining utensils could add a lifestyle aspect to the shoe images.

## 7. Use the box to take pictures of shoes



Sometimes even using the box can create an interesting depth to your image allowing you to play with heights and angles when leaning your shoe against the box.

## 8. Flat-Lays are great for shoe photography



Flat-lay photography is a unique approach to shoe photography, allowing you to create compelling and fun product images.

You can surround the shoe with elements often used alongside it to create a composition that sparkles the imagination.

- [Tips for flat lay clothing photography.](#)

## 9. Remember Composition Techniques to Take Pictures of Shoes



One of the essential shoe photography tips is to photograph shoes from as many angles as possible.

This helps in showcasing all the shoe's straps and features, giving the customer a detailed view.

Don't forget the importance of quality appeal, so making sure the image is crisp, bright, and well-composed is essential when getting the perfect composition.

## 7. Use of Soft Focus for Selective Focus with Footwear Photography



Soft focus can add a touch of elegance and highlight specific features in footwear photography.

Utilize soft focus when you want the audience to pay attention to a single detail instead of the full product and enhance the aesthetic appeal of the product.

## 9. Explore Different Styles and Techniques of Photographing Shoes



When learning how to photograph shoes, experimenting with different styles and techniques will add diversity to your portfolio.

Here are some advanced shoe photography tips to explore:

- **Macro Photography:** Get up close to capture the details, from the shoe's straps to the texture of the fabric. It's an excellent way to emphasize the quality and craftsmanship of the product.
- **Action Shots:** Action shots can make a dramatic impact. You might need to adjust your shutter speed to capture movement without blur, making the shoe images more dynamic.
- **Lifestyle Photography:** Lifestyle footwear photography can help your audience visualize how the shoes might fit into their daily life. Use natural light and real-world settings to make the product feel relatable and aspirational.
- **Studio Photography:** When aiming for a professional appearance, a well-equipped studio gives you control over every aspect of the image. From controlling the shutter speed to manipulating the natural shadow through lighting, studio shoe photography can bring perfection to your images.

## 11. Product Photography Tips for Footwear E-commerce



When planning to sell shoes online, product photography plays a vital role. There are two essential considerations:

- **Consistency:** Keeping the images consistent across your online store will provide a cohesive and professional look. It's not just about using the same white background but maintaining consistency in angles, lighting, and post-production.
- **Quality Appeal:** The quality appeal of the product images is paramount in convincing customers to make a purchase. Pay attention to details like the shoe's straps, color accuracy, and natural shadow to make the images stand out.

These considerations are equally important for clothing photography, which usually goes hand in hand with taking pictures of shoes.

## 10. Post Production and Image Editing



Image editing and post-production are vital in making images consistent across your online product portfolio.

During your post-production workflow check for colors, if they are right and if they pop, and if there are distracting objects surrounding your subject.

You should also fine-tune lighting for more interesting images, avoiding harsh shadows, clipping highlights, and a consistent white balance.

---

### How to Photograph Shoes: FAQs

#### **What equipment do I need for shoe photography?**

Basic equipment includes a good camera, appropriate lenses (macro can be useful), a tripod, and lighting equipment (which can range from studio lights to reflectors for natural light).

#### **How should I prepare shoes before photographing them?**

Shoes should be clean and, if they're new, tags and stickers should be removed. Stuffing shoes with tissue paper can help them retain shape.

#### **What are some good settings for shoe photography?**

A lower aperture (like f/8) can provide more detail. The ISO should be kept low (like 100) to avoid noise.

#### **What kind of lighting should I use for shoe photography?**

It can vary based on your style and the shoe type, but soft, diffused lighting typically works well to highlight details without creating harsh shadows.

### **What are some creative ideas for shoe photography?**

Experimenting with different angles, using props, and playing with background colors and textures can help create interesting shots.

### **Should I use a specific color background for shoe photography?**

It depends on the shoe's color and the style of the photo, but white or neutral backgrounds are generally a safe choice as they make the shoes stand out.

### **What post-processing should I do for shoe photography?**

Post-processing may involve color correction, background cleanup, and minor touch-ups to the shoes.

### **What's the best way to photograph shoes for online selling?**

Clear, well-lit images from multiple angles (including the sole) are important. It's also useful to include a picture of the shoes being worn.

### **How can I avoid shadows in my shoe photos?**

Using a lightbox or careful positioning of your light sources can help minimize shadows. Diffused light tends to cast softer, less noticeable shadows.

---

# Final Words



Whether you are a professional photographer or someone trying to sell shoes online, shoe photography involves a thoughtful process that considers angle, lighting condition, and even post-production.

With an understanding of how to photograph shoes and the right approach to lighting, focus, and composition, you can make footwear photography an enjoyable and rewarding experience.

Remember, consistency, quality appeal, and a professional appearance are key to success in this field.

Shoe photography isn't just about taking pictures; it's about creating a story and showcasing the product in its best light.

So grab your camera, follow these footwear photography tips, and start creating stunning shoe images today!



## Leonardo Cavazzana

Hello, my name is Leo Cavazzana, I'm a professional photographer and film director. As a photographer, I've been photographing our natural world for the past 8 years and worked on assignments with NatGeo, BBC, and UN on all 5 continents. As a film director, I've been directing commercials and campaigns for brands for the past 4 years. I'm passionate about sharing about the world and photography with others.