

## Cold Snap, Snap a Photo

The beauty of nature surrounds people every day. Appreciation of nature comes in many art forms. The art of photography becomes easily accessible for all ages with a simple cell phone and basic principles. All seasons are beautiful but the season least captured in photos is winter. Special consideration needs to be taken when capturing photos in negative temperatures and the reflective nature of snow. The results of winter photography are spectacular.

Nebraska Extension, UNL Food and Fitness, gives ideas on how best to be active in the winter weather. It is said, "There is no bad weather, just bad clothing." Dress in multiple layers. Clothes with some stretching allow for getting down to take close-up photos. Include layers on top and bottom. Socks matter. Opt-in for long socks that are moisture wicking. Sweating feet equal cold feet. A good pair of mid-height, low heel boots with a good grippy sole should serve well on short winter walks. If temperatures dropped below zero, consider taking photos from inside looking out the window.

The cold air zaps the energy from your phone and camera. Keep the phone protected until you are ready to shoot. Keep your equipment dry. Snow may quickly melt on your phone causing damage. Take care not to drop it. A good pair of gloves with thin thermal fabric allows for a secure grip.

Look for interesting objects in the snow to be the focal point of your winter photo. A pop of color or texture contrasting with the white, smooth snow adds dimension to pictures. A photo of a brightly dressed child playing winter games captures a warm memory. Objects also create a sense of scale and interest.

The winter season brings a different angle of the sun than other seasons. Take advantage of the shadows in the early evening. Take care not to capture your own shadow in the shot unless your shadow is the focus. Get off the beaten path to find the unexpected. Remember sunrise and sunset are the best times to photograph landscapes.

Photos of ice and frost show the magic of the season. Use macro or zoom mode to capture the natural elements that are only found in winter. A dried up weed suddenly looks like a fancy ice flower when covered in frost. Use your feet to take you up close to your subject.

Capture the rugged beauty of winter. Stay warm, take special care of your gear, and look for the unexpected. Print the best of the winter photos and consider sharing them as a 4-H exhibit at the county fair. The special challenges of winter photography may just move you to the next level of expertise.

To request additional information about Nebraska 4-H call your local Extension Office or <https://4h.unl.edu/>

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