

## Phenomenal Fall Photos

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As the warm colors of flowers and green pastures at ground level give way to browns and grays, our eyes are drawn up into the foliage where a new riot of colors is emerging in the chilly air and waning light - fall is here. And with it, comes a new set of opportunities to capture stunning and expressive photos as Nature bids farewell to another year and we set our thoughts on coming celebrations.

Whether you carry your camera with you almost everywhere or bring it out on special occasions, the splendor and self-reflective potential of fall-theme photos add interest and potency to any collection. Here are some ideas to help you build a fall portfolio your friends and family will think is "phenomenal."

Click any photo for a larger example.



### Reflecting on Colors and Moods:

The most obvious and essential fall theme is a study of color. To give your photos the most impact, look for opportunities to combine this theme with the feelings and realities of fall such as decreasing light, emptier streets and parks, reflections on the passing year and so on. Good examples include catching the patchwork colors of trees reflected in water and showing deserted park pathways lined with radiant trees and strewn with leaves. As in the above examples, early morning and sundown or heavily overcast days often provide the best light for completing the effect of these reflective photos.



### Playful and Festive:

Just as Nature is pouring on the pizzazz in a crescendo of color, we too are pursuing a final burst of energy before settling in for the winter. With exuberant kids playing outdoors in the shortening days, active critters getting ready to hunker down, and events and holidays celebrating the successful year, there are plenty of chances to catch the playful and festive feelings as in the examples above.



### Studies in Close-Up:

As the most recognizable of falls symbols, leaves are worth a special look in your fall collection. Think of ways to be creative and different in your approach to photographing them and wow your audience with your artistic prowess. Above left, a single leaf has been used to add focus and interest to a lonely cobblestone street. Above right, the feeling of kids rejoicing in the fun of fall is captured indirectly by simply photographing a bunch of leaves thrown in the air.

### Summary:

Catching the feelings of fall is often achieved best by getting into a relaxed and reflective mood and thinking of all the pleasant things you associate with the season and then taking the time to try to record them. Is it the smell of leaves being burned in the neighbor's backyard? Maybe you can capture the column of smoke as it rises over colorful trees. Is it the rustle of leaves or the smell of pumpkin pie? The real fun of fall photos is the challenge of revealing these personal yet universal associations in your photos.

### Equipment Tips:

As many of your fall photos will concentrate on landscape and still life themes, remember to bring your tripod along. A tripod will help you frame shots more easily and, since you won't usually be using flash for this kind of photo, it will also enable you to use longer shutter speeds and get the right exposure. A polarizing filter will also come in handy to enrich color and reduce glare from water and other reflective surfaces, including foliage. This will especially be the case if there is a mist or it has been raining. Finally, a powerful, off-camera flash will help you by lighting as much area as possible and avoiding underexposures without getting too close to the action at fall fairs and festivals.

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