

## Water Photography - Reflections

Kristjan Butler

Jun 04, 2005

Taking photos of reflections on water has always been a favorite among photographers and high quality examples abound in photography-related books and magazines. Here are some things to consider when attempting to take a water-reflection photo that will stand out from the crowd.



### 1. Clouds:

Look for overcast days, preferably with patchy or low-lying clouds. There are a couple of reasons for this. First, capturing reflections is much easier and produces more attractive results in soft-light situations. Second, clouds will add more interest to the reflection by filling in what is otherwise a blank area of sky in both the top and bottom of the shot. Low-lying clouds or patchy clouds add a further element of mystery by shrouding parts of the scene and leaving it up to the imagination as to what is really there.

### 2. Glare:

Remarkable water-reflection photos include little if any glare. On cloudy days, glare will already be minimized, to further minimize it, think about shooting in the morning and evening when the sunlight is at a lower angle and is less likely to cause glare. Also, if the sun isn't completely blocked by clouds, be sure to shoot from the right location so it is beside or behind you and not beaming into your camera.

### 3. Mise en Scène:

One of the most compelling aspects of water-reflection shots is often their lonely, romantic feeling and their ability to convey the majesty of nature. To capture such feelings yourself, think about arranging and composing the physical elements of your shot with the same care as a professional stage director. Include nothing that takes away from such feelings and put elements in that enhance them if possible.

For example, if you were setting up a reflection shot of a lonely pier on a dark, cloudy day, you could include an empty rowboat off to one side in the foreground for dramatic effect. Also, if you are going to include people, the fewer the better for a romantic feeling and it is best not to have them looking at the camera or situated too close to it. Rather, have them appear to be doing something that requires their attention and try putting them further back and into the scene, rather than in front of it.

### 4. Still waters:

While it is possible to get some interesting reflective effects from mildly active waters or waters that have been slightly disturbed, the best reflective shots still come from completely still water. This usually means shooting first thing in the morning before the winds come up.

[Back to all Photo Tips](#)

Copyright © 2006 ACD Systems.

All rights reserved. Protected by the copyright laws of the United States and Canada and by international treaties.  
[Legal Notices](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Piracy Policy](#)