

Knapping Dragon Photography

Photography Fundamentals

Syllabus

Instructor: Lizzie Knapp owner/photographer, Knapping Dragon Photography

Course Duration: 12 weeks, 2 hours per week (24 hours total)

Target Audience: Homeschool students ages 10-18 as well as adults (beginner to intermediate)

Location: TBA

Materials: Students should bring a notebook and pen or pencil for taking notes. If you have any type of camera DSLR, Mirrorless, or even Smart phone this will be helpful although I will have my own camera set up for use as well.

Materials Fee: \$20 this is to cover the cost of printing handouts, lighting gels for creative lighting courses, etc.

Course Cost: \$400 per student or \$40 per class. If you pay for the full semester you will get \$80 off compared to paying by the class. It is highly encouraged that you attend the entire semester as we will be progressing as we go and if you miss a class it might be harder for you as we advance. Payment plans are available but the entire amount must be paid before the Semester begins.

Objective: Learn the fundamentals of photography, master creative techniques and create a portfolio of original work.

COURSE OVERVIEW

This 12-week course introduces homeschool students to the art and science of photography. Through hands-on lessons, students will learn camera operation, composition, lighting, and creative techniques, culminating in a personal portfolio. The course emphasizes practical skills and creativity, with a focus on accessible tools and budget friendly methods inspired by Knapping Dragon Photography's unique style.

WEEKLY SYLLABUS

Week 1: Introduction to Photography

Topics: What is photography? Understanding cameras (DSLR, mirrorless, smartphone), Basic camera anatomy (lens, shutter, sensor).

Activities: Camera handling practice; take first photos using auto mode. Discuss goals for the course.

Homework: Shoot 5 photos of your favorite object at home using a smartphone or camera.

Week 2: Exposure Basics

Topics: The exposure triangle (aperture, shutter speed, ISO) How settings affect photos.

Activities: Experiment with manual settings (or smart phone apps for manual control). In class shooting with different exposure settings.

Homework: Capture 3 photos showing different exposures (bright, dark, balanced)

Week 3: Mastering Aperture and Depth of Field

Topics: Aperture's role in controlling light and depth of field creating blurry backgrounds (bokeh)

Activities: Shoot portraits or objects with varying aperture settings. Compare results in class.

Homework: Take 5 photos experimenting with shallow vs deep depth of field.

Week 4: Shutter Speed and Motion

Topics: Using shutter speed to freeze or blur motion. Creative effects (e.g. light trails)

Activities: Practice capturing motion (e.g moving objects or water). Introduction to long exposure basics.

Homework: Shoot 5 Photos showing motion (frozen or blurred).

Week 5: Composition and the Rule of Thirds

Topics: Composition principles (rule of thirds, leading lines, framing) Storytelling through photos.

Activities: In class photo walk to practice composition techniques. Group critique of images.

Homework: Create a 5 photo series using the rule of thirds.

Week 6: Lighting Basics

Topics: Natural vs. Artificial light. Understanding light direction and quality.

Activities: Experiment with window light and reflectors. Create a portrait with soft vs harsh lighting

Homework: Shoot 5 portraits using different light sources.

Week 7: Introduction to Light Painting (Light Art Photography)

Topics: What is Light Painting? Tools and techniques.

Activities: Hands-on Light Painting Session in a darkened room. Create abstract patterns or write words with light.

Homework: Practice Light painting at home. Try and get at least 3-5 usable images for your portfolio. Be Creative!

Week 8: Advanced Light Painting

Topics: Combining light painting with portraits or objects. Controlling exposure for creative effects.

Activities: Shoot a themed light painting portrait. Group feedback.

Homework: Create a light Painting photo with a specific theme.

Week 9: Color and Creative Lighting

Topics: Using color gels or filters for dramatic effects. Balancing creativity with technical accuracy.

Activities: Experiment with colored lights (provided by instructor) to create mood. Shoot a series of intentional color schemes.

Homework: Shoot 5 photos using colored light sources (e.g. phone screen, holiday lights, etc.)

Week 10: Portrait Photography

Topics: Posing, framing, and lighting for portraits. Capturing personality.

Activities: Pair up to shoot portraits of classmates, applying techniques from prior weeks.

Homework: Shoot a portrait of a family member or friend, focusing on storytelling.

Week 11: Building a Portfolio

Topics: Selecting and editing photos for a portfolio, basic editing tips

Activities: Review and select best photos from the course. Begin editing in class. (bring phone, tablet or laptop for this week)

Homework: Finalize 5-7 photos for your portfolio.

Week 12: Final Project and Showcase

Topics: Presenting your work. The importance of feedback and growth.

Activities: Complete a final themed project (e.g. a series inspired by your favorite photographer or a Knapping Dragon style creative shoot). Showcase portfolios in a class exhibition (parents invited)

Deliverable: Each student receives a digital portfolio (PDF or Online Gallery) and one printed photo from their work (provided by Instructor)

Course Policies

Attendance: Regular attendance is encouraged for skill progression. Notify the instructor in advance for absences.

Equipment: Students are encouraged to bring a camera (DSLR, mirrorless, or a smart phone) My professional camera will be set up for use and demonstration for those who do not have their own camera.

Safety: All activities will follow safety guidelines especially for Light Painting and studio equipment. Parents must sign a liability waiver.

Payment: \$400 per student must be paid before semester begins, or \$40 per course. Materials fee \$20 due at the start. No refunds after Week 2 unless exceptional circumstances.

Contact: Reach out to Lizzie at (501)691-6413 or via Knapping Dragon Photography's social media for questions.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course students will:

1. Understand camera settings and how to control exposure
2. Apply composition techniques to create visually compelling photos
3. Master Creative techniques like Light Painting and colored lighting.
4. Produce a portfolio showcasing their photography skills.

5. Gain confidence in experimenting with photography as a creative outlet.