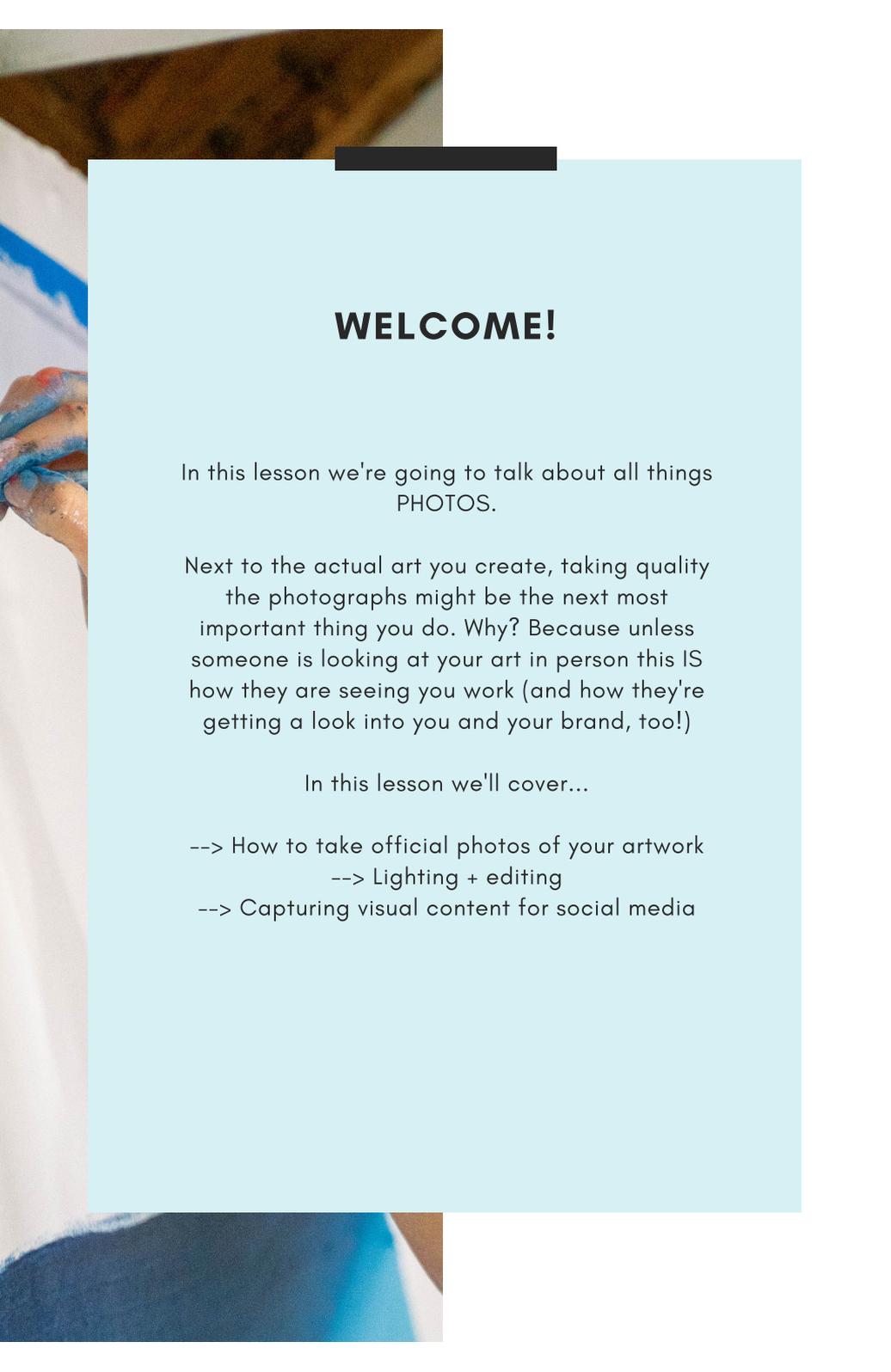


THE ART BIZ ROADMAP

PDF GUIDE

Week Two: Up and Running

Lesson One:
Photographs



WELCOME!

In this lesson we're going to talk about all things
PHOTOS.

Next to the actual art you create, taking quality
the photographs might be the next most
important thing you do. Why? Because unless
someone is looking at your art in person this IS
how they are seeing you work (and how they're
getting a look into you and your brand, too!)

In this lesson we'll cover...

- > How to take official photos of your artwork
 - > Lighting + editing
- > Capturing visual content for social media

Photographing Your Work

As an artist, you should definitely be taking quality photos of your work. Here's why:

--> To best showcase your gorgeous work in your shop, on your website and social media. **People can only experience you pieces to the degree that the photo portrays it.**

--> To document your work as you move along (you'll be sooo glad you have those high res photos of your earlier work-- I promise).

--> For submitting to shows and features (both of these require high res images)

--> For licensing and creating prints. Prints will be covered in an upcoming lesson, but if this is something you might want to do down the line you'll definitely need proper digital images.

RECOMMENDED EQUIPMENT

The camera

If you can, I recommend investing in a **standard DSLR camera**. Nikon and Cannon offer ways to purchase refurbished bodies and lenses which can help keep cost down. Alternatively, **a newer smart phone** can do the trick, but it won't be as up to par if you want to make prints.

If these are out of range for you at the moment, you can make up for it with lighting and editing and save the investment for when you're ready to license, apply to publications and/or make prints.

A tripod

Whether it's for your camera or your phone, this essential tool is often overlooked. It doesn't need to be anything fancy, but you do need to have one. To capture high resolution, your image needs to be perfectly still. You won't be able to do that manually no matter how steady you think your hands are.

*Pro tip: Setting your camera or phone to **self-timer** will also improve the quality of your image as it gives the device more time to focus and capture the light.

Lighting

Natural light is the best light! If your home or studio doesn't get great natural light, I recommend photographing outside when it's overcast.

However, even if you get great natural light in your space I find have additional lights to balance things out is really helpful.

I use **clamp lights from Walmart** (super cheap) and **daylight light bulbs with the highest number of lumens I can find.**

Place them in parts of the room that will balance the direction of natural light, but never shine them directly onto the art as that will show in the photo. You can also diffuse the light by covering the light with wax paper and sealing with a rubber band (super budget and DIY!).

These are also great to use for painting in a poorly lit space.



If you want something more professional there are a great variety of lighting kits on amazon.

EDITING

Equally important as proper lighting is editing! As for software, I recommend using Photoshop for your official art photos. If you're not too savvy in this department-- fear not. I'm going to go over my simple editing regimen in the video class for this lesson. As for your social media content, I love the app PicTapGo (which I'll also discuss in the video!).

BATCH THOSE BABIES

Photographing your work can be a time consuming thing! For that reason, my recommendation is to **set aside half a day to photograph your work in batches** (perhaps one series at a time if you work that way). That way you can get your lights and tripod all set up in the right spot and just change out the art one after the other.

Ditto for editing!

Social Media Images

After capturing official high res images of your pieces, the next most important photos you need are for your website and social media.

I recommend following similar protocol as listed above where appropriate-- especially for lighting! **The number one thing that can improve your overall visual presence on social media is use of natural light.**

Again, if you don't have access to this I recommend moving the party outside or, at minimum, working with some sort of lighting kit.

When it comes to Instagram, as previously discussed, the idea is to tell a visual story.

In returning to your **ideal buyer + branding questions** from Week One, I encourage you to ask yourself:

How can I showcase this aspect of myself/my work/my values/my process VISUALLY?

Some photo ideas for visual story-telling are...

--The process. Your messy space, or how a piece looks in the beginning + middle (people love artist's messes!)

-- Your space. Whether it's a kitchen table or a gorgeous studio, this gives people insight into how you work.

--Your favorite tools or mediums

--Yourself! Either in the process, with your art or just a lovely photo of YOU, the artist.

--Your inspiration. What visuals do you notice in the world? Where do you draw inspiration from? These are great to include, especially if they goes with your brand and aesthetic.

--Your art in context. This could be in your own home, studio or that of a collector's (or maybe a friend's adorable living room that you borrow!?). This is a great way to show how your work looks in spaces.

--Other aspects of your brand. Are you also an interior designer? Is health or nature part of your work or brand? Showcase this every once in awhile.

If you'd like to showcase your work, but want to add some visual variety to your feed here are some ideas to change it up...

-- A close up detail shot

-- A pulled back photo with your piece on a wall or in a room

-- The corner of a piece

-- Multiple pieces that compliment each other lined up together

-- Multiple pieces in a stack, or poking out in different ways

-- Including your hand or feet in the photo to show scale

-- Smaller pieces against the background of larger pieces

Get creative! The way you showcase your work can and should be unique to your own eye and what's relevant for your art.



Just like making art, learning to take great photos is a process!

Don't be discouraged if you feel like your feed and photos don't match up to the professional accounts you see out there (yet!). The more you practice, the more you'll get the hang of it and find your flow-- I promise.



That concludes this Lesson One of this week.
I'll see you for the next one!