

Using iPhone Photos for Your Kindle eBooks – Best Practices

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Introduction

USING IPHONE PHOTOS FOR YOUR KINDLE BOOKS



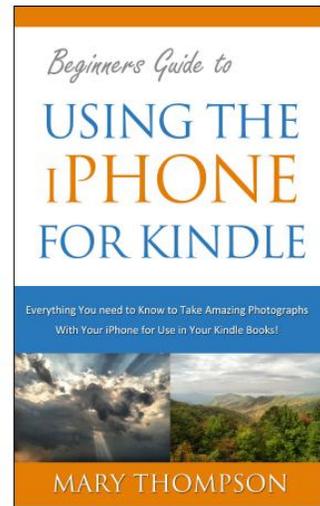
For many of us, one of the most useful advances in technology today is being able to take pictures on a phone that you have on you all of the time. In fact, this technology has advanced so much that, by learning the right techniques, it is possible to take professional-quality photos with your smartphone. Along with the advances in technology, we as a society are becoming more accustomed to visual elements. For the modern author, learning how to incorporate photography and other visual features into your books is becoming more and more fundamental.

The found in this lesson will allow you to learn how to capture these images, edit them, and optimize them for your Kindle books. Learning how to do so can be even more beneficial when you realize that you can use this knowledge in a number of different ways. For example, technical manuals, cookbooks, and how-to books are all largely image-based because it helps people to understand this information. So, the information found here can not only help you to develop your talents and abilities, but also will allow you to become more accomplished and allow you to expand into a number of different areas.

In This Webinar...

iPhone Photos for Kindle Projects:

- Can Your iPhone Provide Quality Photos for Your Kindle Books?
- Resolution and How It Affects Quality.
- Composition Insights, or “How to Make Your Photos Look Awesome!”
- The BEST Camera and Photo Apps.
- And much more!



iPhone Photos for Kindle



This lesson will focus on answering the following questions:

- Can your iPhone provide quality photos for your kindle books?
- How does the resolution affect the quality of your photos?
- How can you make your photos look awesome?
- What are the best camera and photo apps?
- And much more!

Using Your Cell Phone to Create Pro-Style Images for Kindle

Will iPhone Photos Work?

Smartphone Photos for Your Kindle Books...

- iPhone and iPad photos CAN be used IF you recognize their shortcomings.
 - Color Depth not as good as higher quality cameras.
 - Limited Focal Length (zoom degrades image quality)
 - Newer technology means better quality.
 - Recognize that depth of field is limited.



iPhone Photos for Kindle



iPhone photos, and really the photos from any type of smartphone, can be used to contribute to your Kindle books. However, they will only work if you recognize the shortcomings of your phone. Don't let this discourage you though; it is very easy to work around many of these shortcomings. The trick is to have a good understanding of what they are. So, before you begin snapping photos for your book, you should recognize that your phone's camera is likely to have the following limitations:

1. **Color depth is not as good in your phone as in higher quality cameras.** One of the reasons for this is that your phone has a very small lens and the image sensor built into your smartphone is not the best. Fortunately, you can learn to use this to your advantage.
2. **Smartphones have a limited focal length.** You usually have a digital zoom available on your phone, but using the zoom will degrade the image quality of your photos. Often smartphones also limit you to using a wide-angle perspective.
3. **Depth of field is also limited.** Basically, depth of field is a measurement of how much of your photo is in focus front to back. This, again, is caused by the smaller lenses that are

used in phones. Most of time these cameras keep everything, front to back, in focus. This isn't necessarily a bad thing; it just affects when you will want to use your phone to take pictures and how you will need to edit them later.

If you get used to taking these shortcomings into account as you take your pictures, you can actually take high-quality photos with these types of devices. Most people have their phone on them all of the time. So, being able to take high-quality pictures with your phone can be very beneficial and can help you to avoid missing the perfect shot.

Keep in mind that as technology advances the quality of your photos will also advance. For example, the new iPhone 5 has an 8 megapixel camera, which means it will take far better pictures than the iPhone 4. Since these phones are not made strictly for making taking photos, they will probably never be as good as an expensive, professional quality camera. If you learn to use your camera's strengths effectively, however, you will always be able to create photos that will suit the purposes that you need them for. With the advances that are being made, this will just get easier and easier.

Resolution Tips for Kindle Images

Will iPhone Photos Work?

Smartphone Photo Tech...

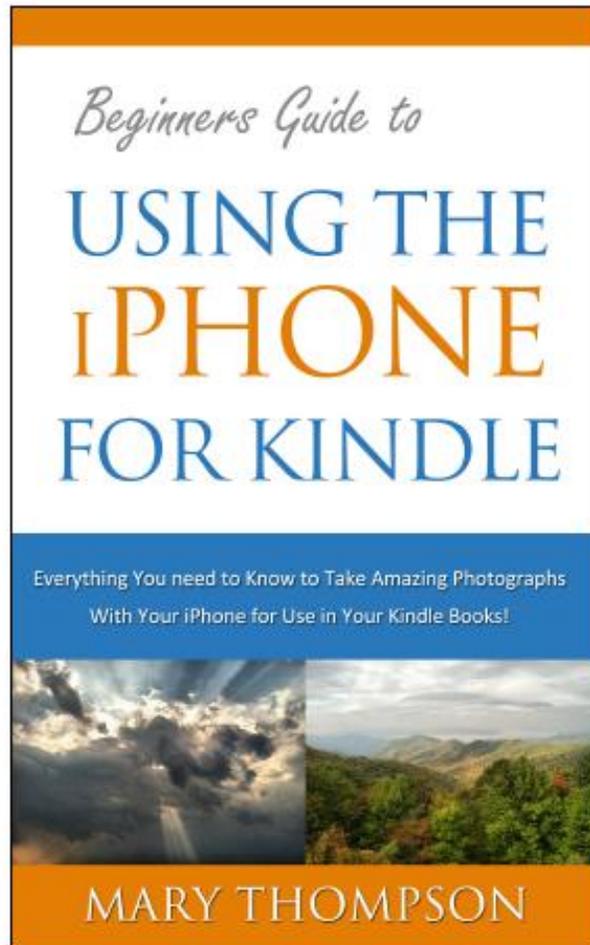
- **Kindle:** **2500 x 1563 pixels** (*Recommended Resolution*)
- iPhone 4: 2592 x 1936 pixels (5.0 MP) 32mm f2.8
- iPhone 4s: 3264 x 2448 pixels (8.0 MP) 35mm f2.4
- iPhone 5: 3264 x 2448 pixels (8.0 MP) 33mm f2.4
- iPad 3: 2048 x 1536 pixels (5.0 MP) 35mm f2.4
- iPad Mini: 2048 x 1536 pixels (5.0 MP) 35mm f2.4



iPhone Photos for Kindle



One of the most important things to understand is how the resolution of your picture relates to the requirements of Kindle Direct Publishing (KDP). The maximum recommended resolution for a Kindle book cover is 2500 x 1563 pixels. So, on a 6 x 9 book, the long edge would be 2500 pixels and the narrow edge would be 1563. Kindle's minimum recommendation is approximately 1,000 x 660 pixels. You don't really want to go that small, however, because the quality of your cover will suffer.



You can tell if a photo is going to work by taking a quick glance at its resolution. For example, an iPhone 4's pixel resolution is 2592 x 1936. So, there is enough resolution in the iPhone 4 to meet the resolution requirements for a Kindle book. Now, the quality of that image compared to a picture taken by a point-and-shoot camera or a digital SLR is not going to be quite as high if you put them side by side. This should be understood. That doesn't mean that it won't be good enough for your book's cover image though. There are also things you can do that can make your book's cover better too, such as using several smaller pictures for in your book's cover, as in the cover above.

You can use the following as a guide to help you understand the quality of photos your device will provide and how they relate to the recommended resolution for your book's cover:

- Kindle: 2500 x 1563 pixels (Recommended Resolution)
- iPhone 4: 2592 x 1936 pixels (5.0 MP) 32mm f2.8
- iPhone 4s: 3264 x 2448 pixels (8.0 MP) 32mm f2.4

- iPhone 5: 3264 x 2448 pixels (8.0 MP) 33mm f2.4
- iPad 3: 2048 x 1536 pixels (8.0 MP) 35mm f2.4
- iPad Mini: 248 x 1536 pixels (5.0 MP) 35mm f2.4

This information shows the abilities of each individual device. The lens of the iPhone 4, for example, would be the equivalent to a 32mm lens with an aperture rating of 2.8. It also can help you to understand how photo resolution advances along with technology. If you look at the iPhone 4s, you can see that the iPhone 4s now has a resolution of 3264 x 2448. So, now you can even use a horizontal photo, cut part of your image out, and still have enough resolution to create your cover. This newer version also has a lower f-stop number, which is better for the purpose of creating a cover.

As you can see, you can snap photos with all of the Apple devices that are currently on the market, and they will be of a great enough quality to use in your Kindle covers. They will certainly also be of good enough quality for your interior photos as well, since these don't need to be of as great of quality and are usually much smaller. The iPhone 4s or the iPhone 5 are currently going to be your best choices, but all of the devices listed above will work.

Will iPhone Photos Work?

Images in Your Kindle Book Layout...

- Kindle maximum file size for your ENTIRE book is 50mb!
- Interior images MUST be JPG and no larger than 127kb.
- Kindle Fire Resolutions:
 - Fire HD 8.9 – 1920 x 1200
 - Fire HD 7 – 1280 x 800
 - Fire – 1024 x 600



iPhone Photos for Kindle



There are a couple of things to you need to understand if you are going to use images in your Kindle book layout. All of this information can be found on the Kindle Direct Publishing website (KDP.com). These are some of the most important things to keep in mind:

1. First, you should understand that Kindle's maximum file size for your entire book is 50mb. If you try to upload a book that is bigger than that, their conversion system starts having problems. That amount seems like a lot at first glance, but you will see that it falls away quickly as start adding images. It is not a requirement to keep it under this amount, but your readers are likely to have problems if you don't.
2. The interior images in a Kindle must be JPG and be no larger than 127kb. Now, anyone who knows much about computer imaging will know that it is nearly impossible to get a decent-sized JPG down to 127kb. This is a bit of a misnomer, however, and it is an issue that will soon be explained.
3. You also need to consider the current resolutions for the Kindle Fire, particularly when it comes to the 'screen real-estate'. In other words, there is no reason to make an image in your book larger than what a screen can physically show. You may want, for example, high-quality images in your book that are 2,000 pixels wide. However, if your screen resolution is only 800 pixels, you're wasting resolution.

Fire HD 8.9, which is the large one, has a maximum resolution is 1920 x 1200. So, if you are reading the book in a vertical format the maximum width that you have to deal with is only 1200 pixels wide edge to edge. If you go down to the HD 7, the screen resolution is 1280 x 800. So, in this case it is senseless to have the width of your images inside your book greater than 800 pixels because you're wasting your resolution. In the original Kindle Fire the resolution is only 1024 x 600. Based on this information, here are a couple of guidelines to remember:

1. In most cases, a width of 1000 pixels is plenty, whether it is formatted vertically or horizontally. As a general rule, however, it is best to just suppose that anything wider than 800px is a waste of space and memory.
2. You will want to use medium compression and save it as a JPG. So, a setting of 5 or 50% is best in Photoshop or in similar programs. Many graphic experts save their images at a setting of 8 to 12, but for a Kindle book this medium compression really doesn't look bad at all in almost all instances.

Will iPhone Photos Work?

Images in Your Kindle Book Layout...

- In MOST cases, a width of 1000px is plenty; 800px is better.
- Use MEDIUM compression with JPG (setting of 5 in Photoshop).
- Realize that different images compress different based on detail.



1000 x 634 – 172kb



1000 x 634 – 231kb



1000 x 634 – 248kb
800 x 501 – 206kb



1000 x 634 – 181kb



iPhone Photos for Kindle



Different images compress differently based on their detail. To better understand this, look at the pictures above. All of these photos were saved out of Photoshop with a medium compression setting of 5.

The first image, which has a lot of solid color without a lot of detail, is 172kb. So although the picture is fairly plain, it exceeds Kindles memory recommendation for an internal image. The next photo to the right is the same size and was saved with the same settings, yet because there is more detail it is 231kb. The third photo is even higher because it contains even more detail, but you can also see that if you drop the size down to 800 x 501 you can shave off about 42kb. Keep this in mind. Finally, the picture to the far right shows that converting a photograph to black & white save a good amount of memory as well.

Although there are always good reasons for using as little memory as possible, there are times when it is not feasible. What if you want to have an image that is 800 pixels wide in your book? If it is 206kb, can you still use it? Yes. Even though it is nearly double what they recommend, you can still use it. The reason is that when it goes through the conversion process it is compressed it even more. Their compression algorithm is tweaked to work perfectly with the Kindle devices. In other words they can get it down to where it needs to be.

So, you really don't have to worry about getting your picture under a 127kb. This is just a guideline for you, and a target that is set for their software. You can use a picture as long as you scale your picture down to a useable resolution. So basically the resolution is all that you really need to concern yourself with.

Optimizing Your Photo Images

Composition...

Making Your Photos Look Awesome...

- Use the Rule of Thirds.
- Don't overdo the effects.
- Be consistent with your photos.
- Allow space for type.



iPhone Photos for Kindle



In order to make your photos the best that you can, you need to learn some of the basics of photography. The first thing to keep in mind when taking your pictures is the Rule of Thirds. Essentially, when you use the Rule of Thirds, you divide your picture into thirds both vertically and horizontally. Where these lines intersect is where the primary focal point of your subject should be. For example, if you were to photograph a landscape you wouldn't want the horizon line to be centered. You would want it to lie on the top third or bottom third of the picture.

Another thing to keep in mind, especially when using Smartphone apps, is that you do not want to overuse the available effects. These are fun to use, but resist the temptation. Your average reader really doesn't care. These images are meant to be a functional part of your book, so be careful not kill it with funny effects.

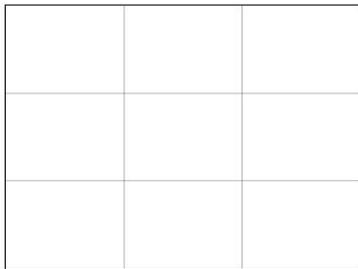
Remember to be consistent with your photos, particularly if you are shooting how-to books. For instance, imagine you were writing a cookbook. If you have four photos of someone making a pie, and three of these pictures have an orange tint to them but the last one has a bluish tint, this is going to stick out like a sore thumb and look like a mistake. For this reason, you need to use the exact same effect in every single photo.

You have to realize that people are going to be looking at your book cover for 20 seconds. You are not going to be there to explain what you meant. So, if the people that view your photo don't get what you are trying to do and it is perceived as a mistake, then it is a mistake. It doesn't matter how you meant it or how much thought you put into it. You should keep in mind that the best way to find out what people will really think about your photos is to show your photo to a number of people before you publish it.

Finally, when you are taking your photos, be sure to allow space for type. In the picture of the landscape above, the type will stand out in the sky but not in the trees because of all the clutter in the background. So, if you plan to place writing on a photo, make sure that there is plenty of clear space within that photo.

Composition...

Rule of Thirds...



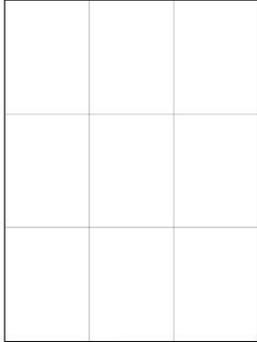
iPhone Photos for Kindle



In the picture above the image on the left represents how you would you divide a horizontal photo. By looking closely at the other photos, you can see how the Rule of Thirds was used in framing out the other two shots. For example, in the middle photo the eyes of the man (making the crab cakes) are located right in the center of where two of the points would intersect if it were graphed. The last picture is graphed the same way. In this photo, the cloud line would follow the top horizontal line. The position of the main point of the cloud lands exactly on the intersection of the bottom and the right line. This was done purposefully. It makes the photo more aesthetically pleasing to a person's eye.

Composition...

Rule of Thirds...



iPhone Photos for Kindle



The above images are representative to how to use the Rule of Thirds for vertical pictures. In the photograph on the left the rooftop line basically follows the top horizontal lines. In the right-hand photograph, you'll notice how the brim of his hat falls directly upon the same intersection. Another composition technique was used in framing this picture. It is called The Golden Mean Spiral, which is a very old and useful technique. You can learn more about this in Tony Laidig's training on cover layout.

Recommended Resources: Camera & Photo Apps

Best Apps...

Camera Apps...

- Camera+
- ProCamera
- Dynamic Light



iPhone Photos for Kindle



There are a ton of camera apps available. There are three primary apps that are recommended here. They are:

Camera+

There are a lot of advantages to using the Camera+ app because it has a lot of built-in effects for adjusting and cropping. Not only is it great at taking pictures, but the clarity filter is also very good. Another advantage of this app is that it will allow you to overlay the lines for the Rule of Thirds. In other words, you can actually see the grid as you take your pictures.

ProCamera

This app has a lot of great features, and it also lets you graph your pictures as you take them. With this app you have a lot of flexibility and control over your light balance and focus as well.

Dynamic Light

The way dynamic light works is that it analyses the photo that you take, and then it enhances the photo, bringing out a lot of the detail and color. It is very similar to what Clarity does in Camera+.

Each of these programs has their own advantages. The situation that you are in would likely determine which one you are using. For example Dynamic Light is best for taking photos of a landscape. In fact, all of the landscape photos in this lesson were taken using Dynamic Light.

Best Apps...

Photo Editing Apps...

- SnapSeed
- FilterStorm

- Hipstamatic
- Instagram



iPhone Photos for Kindle



There are tons of great photo editing apps available as well. SnapSeed is the app that is most recommended here. FilterStorm is not far behind. They provide the user with almost as much control and flexibility as you would find in PhotoShop or Adobe Lightroom. These apps are very high-quality, yet not very expensive.

Hipstamatic and Instagram are helpful as well. Mostly because they give you the ability to switch lenses and choose films. Another advantage is that these apps both make it easy for you to make your photos look consistently the same. The photos above were both edited with Hipstamatic, and both were very easy to edit. Again, be sure not to go overboard with the effects, unless you are trying to create a stylized look for your book. Still, even in this scenario you would want to be sure to keep it simple.

Conclusion

Takeaways...

Important Reminders...

- You will not always need a full cover image!
- Do NOT over-process your images.
- Understand the limitations & work within them.
- Follow good photography practices...
 - Well-lit, properly exposed photos
 - Good composition and framing
 - Shoot to the camera's strengths



iPhone Photos for Kindle



As you can see, you can take pictures for your Kindle book with your iPhone and make them work. Doing so wisely will allow you to utilize what you have on hand at the time and place that you need it. Also, these techniques will not only save time and money, but enhance your abilities, bringing you more and more success. In conclusion, here are some points to remember:

You will not always need a full cover image. You can use, for example, two small photographs on your cover. In fact, these would be better to use because they will look far less grainy. However, it is good to know that if you do need to use a full-cover image off of your iPhone, you do have the resolution need.

Don't over-process your images. Even if you're not using special effect, if you push the effects too hard you can make them look unnatural or blow out the highlights of your photo. Keep in mind what the key element of your photo is, and don't let anything distract your reader from the point of your photo.

In most cases, you should use color images for your cover. For the interior, however, there is nothing wrong with just using black and white, especially if a photo being in color does not add any value to your book.

Remember that taking pictures with your smartphone only really works if you understand your limitations and work within them. For example, smartphone photos have a tendency to be focus in the background as well as in the foreground. From a composition standpoint, this can make it the subject of the photo unclear. This can bring about other problems as well. Say, for instance, you want to take a close up of a rose and there is a garbage truck in the background. The garbage truck is not going to be blurred out, so your iPhone may not be best to use to take this particular picture.

Another limitation to keep in mind is that these phones do not work well in low light situations. Therefore, you always want to try to make sure that you have adequate light when you are taking pictures for your book with your smartphone.

Don't forget to practice good composition and frame your pictures well. This also means making that your photos are consistent in color, tone, etc. Remember that if your pictures don't look well, it is going to have a negative impact on your entire book. After all, you don't want to ruin the credibility of a book that took you years to write just because people based their opinion on a few bad pictures. It only takes a few seconds for someone to form an opinion, and you won't be there to explain your mistakes.

The best way to learn how to work within the limitations of your phone is to take a lot of photos to find out what works best. You should also try taking a lot of photos and only keeping the best ones. This will not only help you to learn your phone's camera and apps, it will help you to develop your eye for composition. Finally, take the time to ask others what they think of your pictures as well. This will help you to understand how other people perceive your work.

FAQ's

Is it possible to embed video into a Kindle book?

One 2 minute high-def video would blow your entire allowed resolution for your book. So, it is unlikely that this is allowed. High-def video is very high in file size. The only way you could really incorporate video into your Kindle ebook would be to insert links to a specific video that is posted on YouTube or in your own website. Now, iPad Author does allow you to embed video into your books, but it doesn't have the file size limitation like Kindle books do. In the future this option may be available for Kindle, but right now you really could not do this without embedding a link.

Where do the images in the book actually go?

The images in a Kindle are usually laid out in a similar fashion to that of a regular book. They should be placed near the content that is relevant to them. In Kindle books, images do have a tendency to move around, but they are never far from where they are supposed to be. In other words they may be a couple of lines higher or a couple of lines lower, depending on what kind of reader a person is on and what size of font they are using. It can be helpful to leave a couple of blank lines before and after the image to keep it in place.

Do you have any recommendations about placing text on an image?

Since the images do have a tendency to move within the body of a text, it is best to place the text that refers to an image on the image itself. For example, if you wanted to put in a caption describing an image, it would be best to create a white space within your image and add it in there. In other words, if you have an image that is 800 x 450, just change the size from 450 to 500 and make the last 50 pixels pure white. Then, you can insert your text within this space. The font used should be no smaller than 14 point, and if you made it any smaller, you should be sure to use a very clean font such as Arial or Calibri.

You can also insert text into your pictures, making your entire book image consist only of images with text inserted within. Many children's books are created in this manner. Again, if you decide to do this, be sure to use a larger-sized font and a clear type of font so that it is easy to read.

Would you need a release if a person was in the background of your image?

In most cases, you do not have to. The reason for this is that photographers have certain rights. If you are taking photos in public, you have a right to publish photos of other people who are in public. This makes sense when you think about it.

Say, for instance, that you are a newspaper reporter who is photographing a parade. There is no way that you could run around and get a release from everyone in the photograph you just took. Really, unless someone specifically comes up to you and tells you not to use their image in your photograph, you have every right to use that photo as long as they were in public when you took it.