

## Photographing children

Kids are always climbing, building, exploring, trying out new things.

Don't just photograph them on holidays and birthdays. Make picture-taking a part of your everyday life.

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### Begin a photo tradition

Take pictures regularly so that you, your family, and friends can see how much your child has changed. Capture your child setting off for the first day of school each year. Or mark your child's growth against a tree as you watch your child and the tree grow. Or surround granddad with all the grandchildren every Father's Day.

### Be patient

Don't expect to get the perfect shot immediately. Sit back and wait for the right moment, then shoot quickly.

### Shoot at eye level

Eye-to-eye contact is as engaging in a picture as in real life. So try sitting on the ground and snapping some photos from the child's perspective. Expressions will look more natural, your flash photos will be more evenly lit from nose to toe, and the background will probably look a lot better, too. This also works great for pets!

### Take candid pictures

Ignore the impulse to force your subjects to always pose staring at the camera. Variety is important. Take candid pictures to show them working, playing, leaning against a banister chatting, or relaxing.

### Include friends

Don't forget to include your kids' friends in some of your pictures. In years to come, these pictures will remind them of happy times and the bonds that were so strong. "Look! That was right after Joanne tried to cut her own hair!" "Whatever happened to Richard?" "I wonder what we were giggling about."

### Get close

Fill the camera's viewfinder or LCD display with your subject to create pictures with greater impact. Step in close or use your camera's zoom to emphasize what is important and exclude the rest. Check the manual for your camera's closest focusing distance.

### Lock the focus

A picture of several people can come out blurry because most auto-focus cameras focus on the area in the centre of the viewfinder. When photographing two people, this can spell disaster &mdash; the tree in the background will be in perfect focus, and your subjects blurry. To remedy this, lock the focus on the subject. Usually you do this by centring the subject in the viewfinder and then pressing the shutter button halfway down. Continue holding the button halfway down while you move the camera until your subject is where you want it in the viewfinder. When you are satisfied, press the button all the way down to take the picture.

### Let kids record their world

It's a whole new world when seen through a child's eyes. Single use cameras and digital cameras make it easy for children to take pictures of each other and capture what's important to them. You might just be surprised!

### Place your subject off-centre

Placing your subject to one side of the frame can make the composition more interesting and dynamic. But if your camera is an auto-focus model, the picture may turn out blurry because those cameras focus on whatever is in the centre of the viewfinder. Check your camera manual to learn how to use the focus lock feature to prefocus on the subject. Usually, this is done by pressing the shutter button halfway down and then recomposing the picture while keeping the button held halfway down.