



THE UNIVERSITY  
*of* NORTH CAROLINA  
*at* CHAPEL HILL

BRANDING AND IDENTITY GUIDELINES  
**REFERENCE GUIDE**

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# Photography

# Photography

## TONE AND MOOD FOR UNIVERSITY PHOTOGRAPHY

Photography should display the diversity of interests and activities at the University. It should vary in place and subject matter and should reinforce Carolina's friendly, open culture and academic excellence.

To capture the right tone and mood in your materials, keep these guidelines in mind:

**Photographs of people should most often be candid.** Captured moments help viewers get an inside glimpse of Carolina, inviting them to be a part of the community.

**To convey a sense of vitality and academic rigor, imagery should show activity and intellectual pursuit.** It's best to avoid passive shots.

**Balance shots of individuals with ones that include more than one person** in order to show a culture of collaboration.

**Represent racial, gender, age and professional diversity.**

**Profile photographs and portraits of individuals should be friendly and approachable.**

**Use a variety of close-ups and wide shots.** Close-ups create warmth and familiarity, while wide shots convey expansiveness.

**Landmark images are most valuable when they also feature people and interaction.** When using photos of the campus, architectural structures or interior shots, convey a sense of openness by lowering the horizon line or cropping images in a wide format.

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## ESSENTIAL FOUNDATIONS FOR A GREAT PHOTO

**Reduce Visual Clutter** – A cluttered photograph can distract from the subject matter and the story being told. It's best to reduce or eliminate extraneous objects and background matter in order for the subject and focus of the photograph to stand out in a clear way.

**Create or Find Great Lighting** – Great lighting can be created by setting up artificial lights or by utilizing the natural daylight—or a combination of both. It is best to avoid direct sunlight in order to reduce harsh shadows, particularly on faces.

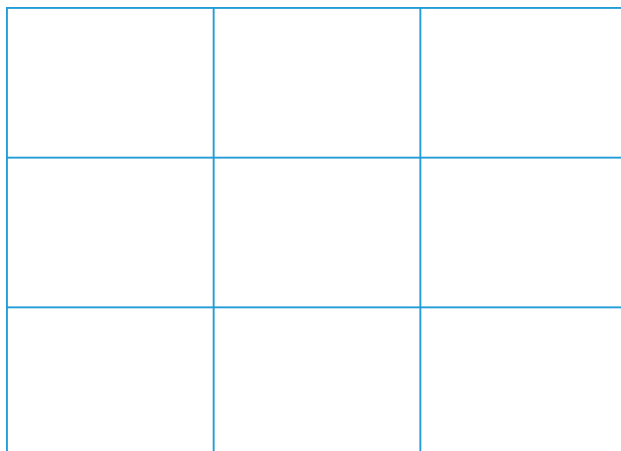
Poor Lighting



Good Lighting



**Use the Rule of Thirds** – The rule of thirds is a compositional guideline for creating well-balanced photographs. Utilizing this rule adds visual interest to photographs by placing the subject matter in an area where the viewer's eyes are naturally drawn. An example of the rule of thirds grid is illustrated below.



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**Shoot Vertically and Horizontally** – When you have an opportunity for a great shot, it is a good idea to capture it both vertically and horizontally. This will ensure plenty of options later to use the image in places with different proportions and orientations.

**Keep it Simple with Portraits** – The focus of a portrait should be on the subject. Try to avoid complicated lighting setups and backgrounds. Instead, err on the side of simplicity so that the image looks as natural as possible.

## MORE INFORMATION

It is important to use professional photography in University materials whenever possible. For help coordinating a photo shoot, connecting with a freelancer or consulting about any projects or workshops, contact **Amanda Zettervall**, director of strategic resources, at 919-843-4967 or [azettervall@unc.edu](mailto:azettervall@unc.edu).

For more information and to view the **University's Branding and Identity Guidelines**, visit [identity.unc.edu](http://identity.unc.edu).