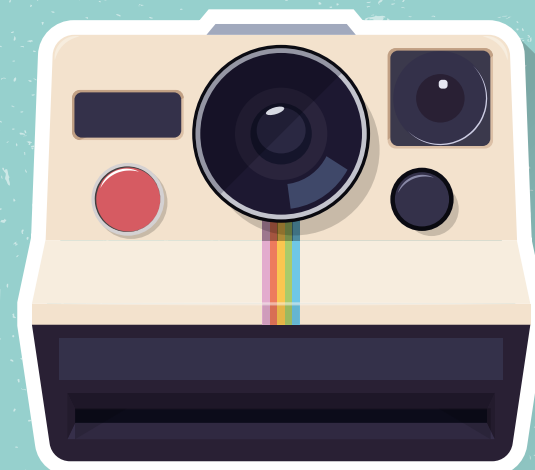


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DIY PRODUCT PHOTOGRAPHY 101



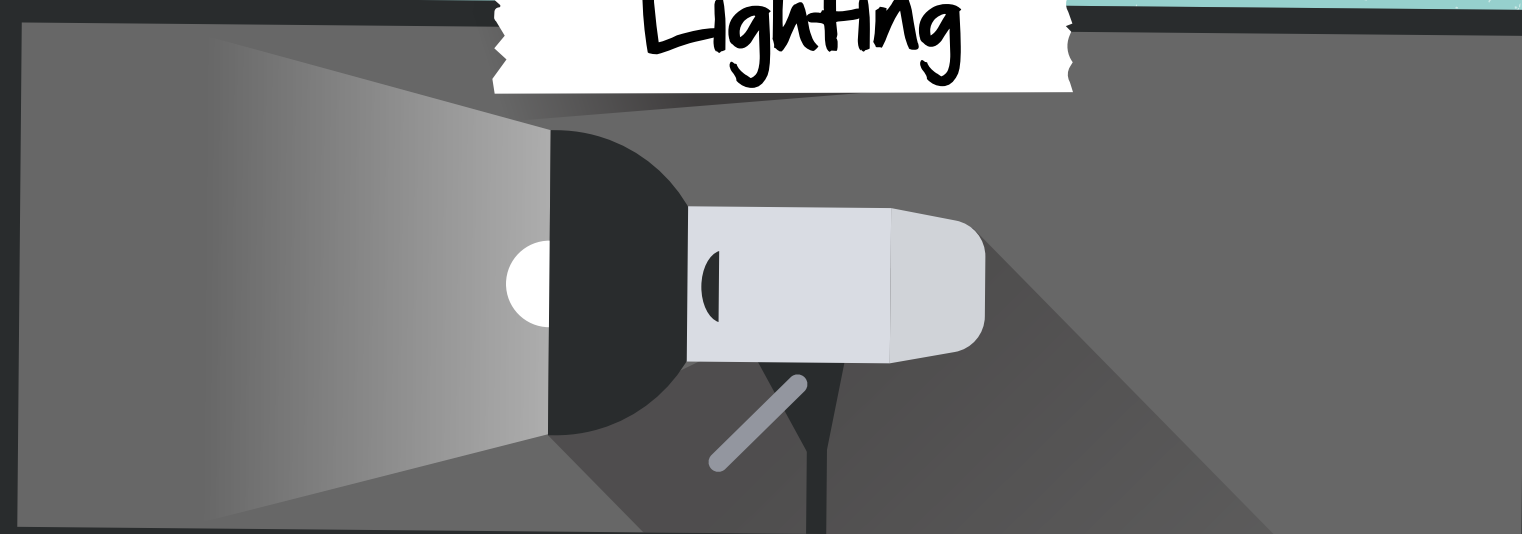
The better your products look, the more likely you are to sell them; in a nutshell, that's the importance of product photography. Contrary to what others might tell you, the equipment doesn't cost hundreds of dollars, and you don't need to hire professionals to get amazing results. Check out our handy, DIY guide to product photography and see how you can start getting phenomenal results – on your own – right now!

Camera/Smart phone



Awesome product photography doesn't necessarily require an expensive, top-of-the-range camera. If you have a compact or DSLR camera, then all the better, but many eCommerce store owners achieve great results using a simple smartphone camera. Most smartphones have several different settings that you can experiment with – white balance, ISO and more – but most product photographers tend to have great success simply with the default settings. One important tip is to ensure you turn off your camera flash, since you'll be using external lighting...

Lighting



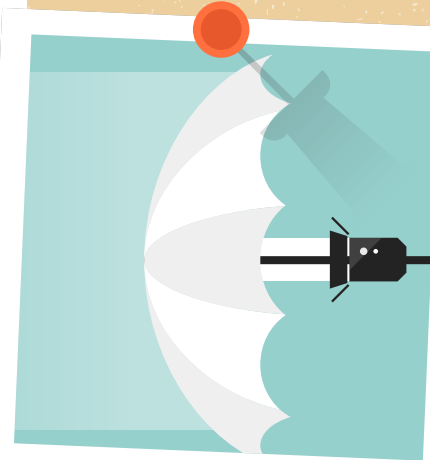
Lighting is probably the most important factor in achieving great product photography. Wherever and however you shoot your product photos, make sure your product is and evenly lit, ideally from different angles to avoid long shadows. Some simple setup ideas can be found on page 2.

Position

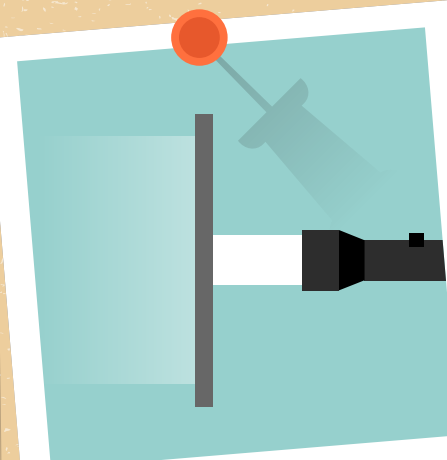


The slightest movement when snapping your photos can result in blurred images, so you should always make sure your camera is stabilized. The obvious way to do this is with a tripod, but don't worry if you don't have one – you can improvise by simply mounting the camera on a solid surface. A pile of books will even do the job!

The shot can also be disrupted simply by the movement of your finger pressing the capture button, so it's a good idea to use your camera's timer function to ensure maximum stability.



Diffusion



Diffusion

If you're using artificial lights, it's important that you take steps to soften or 'diffuse' the light. Lightbulbs naturally produce a very harsh light – it's the same reason we use lampshades in our homes!

The pros use umbrella-style devices to reduce harsh transitions, but you can improvise by positioning a sheer piece of fabric between the light source and your subject for an inexpensive and quick solution – simple baking or tracing paper will do the job!

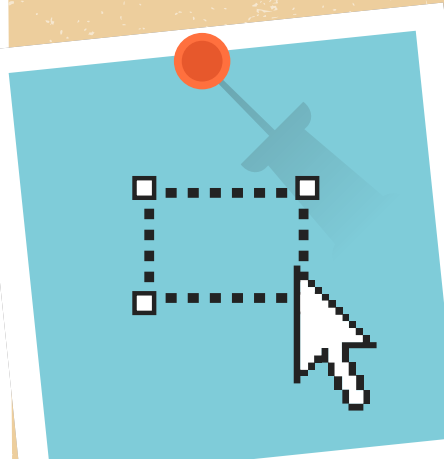


Shooting

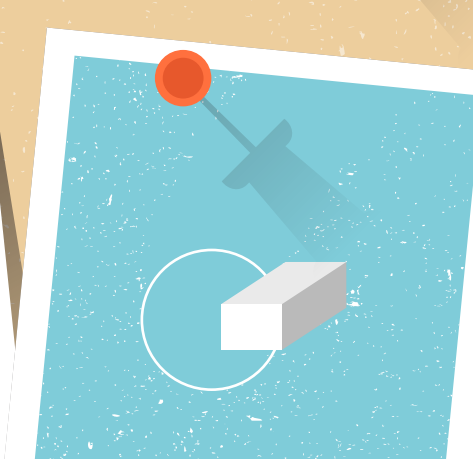


Shooting

To give the most nuanced view of the product, it's best to put the camera at 'product level.' Your customers are going to want to have a thorough look at the product before buying it, so it's also a good idea to snap it from a few different angles – front, back and side at the very least.



Editing



Editing

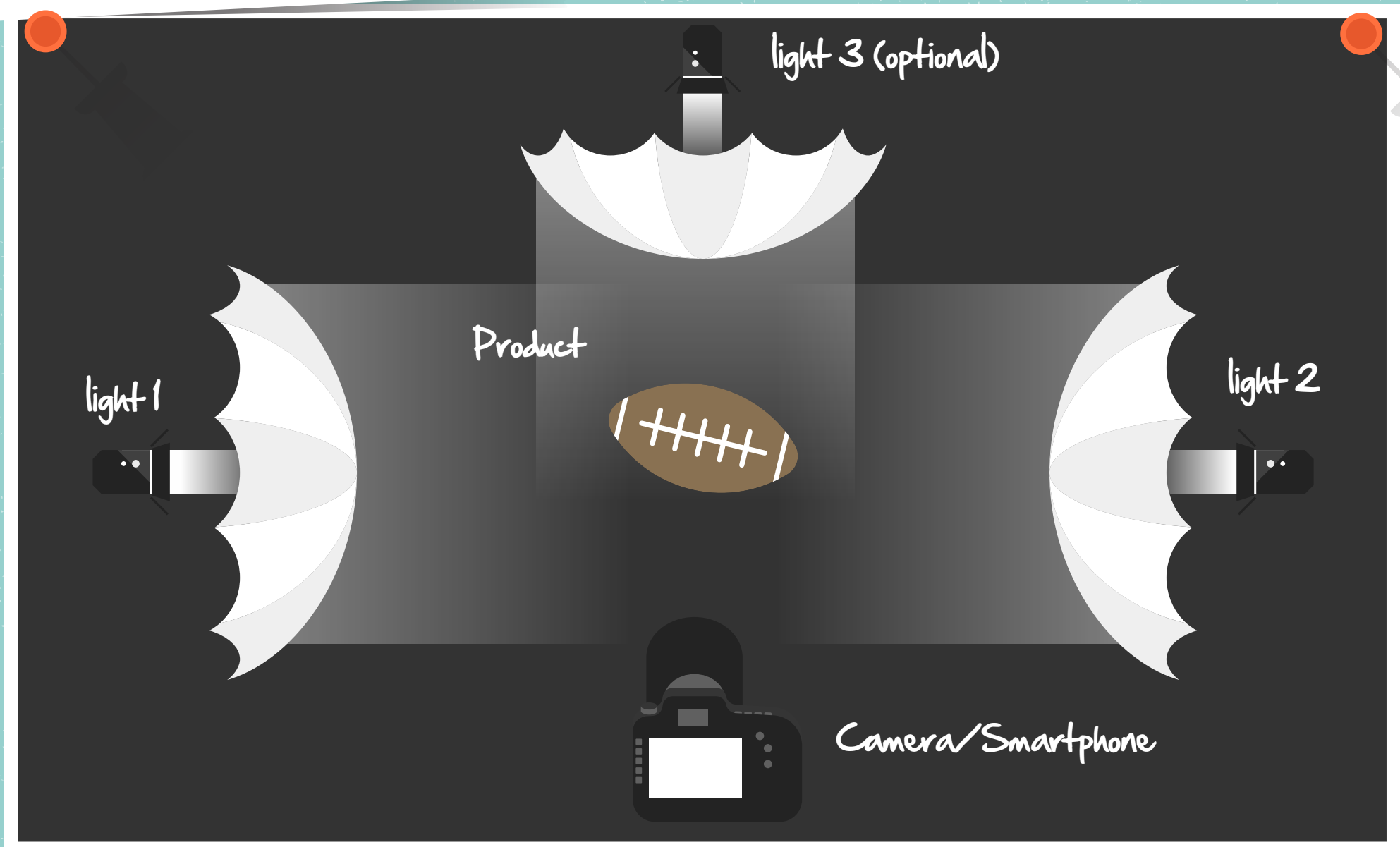
As awesome as your raw photos may be, it's always advisable to spend a little time editing them. For one thing, this can help you remove any dust, scratches or imperfections you missed before taking the shot. It can also help you remove backgrounds, shadows and more. Since product photos often have a solid background (generally white) this can be a really important step.

In terms of software, we recommend GIMP for you guys who are on a budget or don't have access to Photoshop – it's easy to use, and it's totally free.

You can get great
GIMP photo editing
tips from:
docs.gimp.org/en

Example Setups

Indoor With Artificial Light



The light sources in the above example can be replaced by simple desk lamps.

Indoor Lightbox Setup



Light tents are quick, cheap and easy to setup. They diffuse light and create 'walls' for light to bounce off so light effects back onto the product.

Outdoor Lightbox Setup



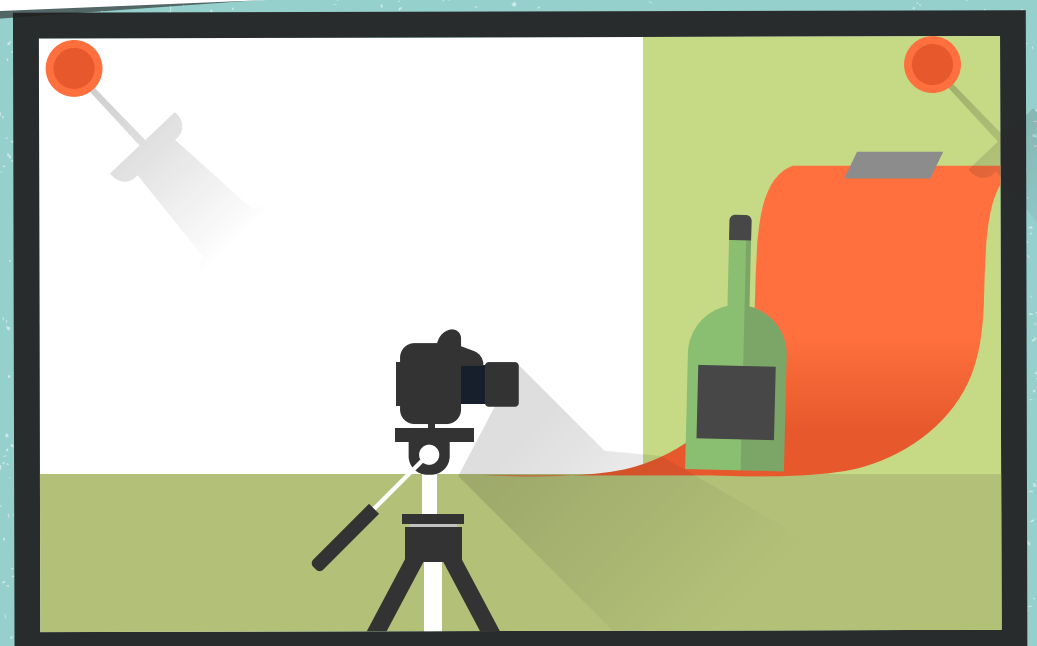
If you don't have the space to put together an indoor setup, you could always take your product shoot outdoors.

Backgrounds



The modern trend is to use product photographs which are very clean with lots of white space and almost look like the product is floating.

This kind of effect can be created fairly easily using paper or card and some sticky tape – just use the tape to mount the card, bending slightly, to the wall.



If you're looking for something a bit different, there's much to be said for the 'au naturale' background which shows your product in an outdoor environment.

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