

# Kingston Photographic Club

## Camera Care

Whether you use a film or digital camera, point and shoot or SLR, there are some basic tenets of camera care. The 3 main enemies of your camera are:

- Dirt
- Shock
- Water

### Dirt

Dirt is everywhere! It's in the air, it's under our feet, and all too often it's on (and in) our cameras. While dirt on the outside of your camera is not a problem (excepting the lens of course), it's the potential the dirt has for getting into your camera that is the problem. Dirt in a camera can affect moving parts, damage mirrors, clog electronic contact points, get on film, and stick to digital sensors. The best course of action for dealing with dirt in your camera is to avoid it. The vast majority of shooting situations will not cause a dirt problem for your camera. However, some areas are more prone to dust and dirt than everyday usage. In order to protect your camera it's best to use a rain hood for your camera. Rain hoods are vinyl/nylon pouches made for specific cameras that allow you to still reach camera controls while protecting the camera from environmental conditions. You can purchase these at your favourite camera shop or make your own using a large zip bag. To make your own cut a hole for your camera lens in one side of the bag and use the zip end to put your hands through to the controls. You will have to carefully secure the bag to the camera lens using tape or a rubber band. Be sure to use a large enough bag to allow for lens movement. Lens changes and film loading. If you are not careful when changing lenses or loading film a lot of airborne dust/dirt can enter the camera body. To minimize dust during lens changes turn the camera facing down and press the lens up into the camera. This prevents dust from falling into the camera body. Also check out [www.cleaningdigitalcameras.com](http://www.cleaningdigitalcameras.com) for all the information you need (and some you don't!)

### Shock

Outside of fully encasing your camera in shock resistant materials, all you can hope to do is avoid camera shock. There are some very common causes of camera shock....

- Broken Camera Strap
- Camera Bag Left Open
- Non-Use of Camera Strap
- Using the Camera on Unstable Support

The best way to avoid these problems is to just pay attention. Check your camera strap and its connectors regularly for wear or signs of damage. Make it a habit to double check that your camera bag is properly closed before picking it up. Use the camera strap whenever using your camera. It is there to catch the camera if you fumble it. Never use questionable support for your camera. Fence edges and railings at scenic overlooks are not acceptable support. Use a tripod on stable ground - and all but the sturdiest of those can be blown over.

## Water

Water doesn't react well with film or digital sensors. Nor does it react well to batteries or any electronic parts. If your camera is not made for underwater use or encased in a waterproof housing, keep it out of water. Use a rain hood during bad weather (even heavy fog can cause problems for some cameras). If conditions would cause eyeglasses to fog when moving from indoors to outdoors or vice-versa, there is a good chance your camera could suffer internal condensation. Use a camera bag to insulate your camera and allow it to change temperatures gradually. If your camera does get wet (more than a few raindrops) there are only a few things you can do.

- Open the camera (if possible) and turn it so that the water can drain freely.
- Wrap the lens in a very absorbent towel once all water has drained that will drain. Do NOT blot or wipe the camera's internal workings.
- Take the camera to the nearest professional repair shop immediately.