

Take Great Pictures in the Rain

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Keep dry

First things first – protect your kit, which means rain covers for your camera and lens (plus a waterproof jacket for yourself). A good umbrella can also be a great help – a collapsible golf umbrella, with its large coverage and reasonably compact size, is ideal. If you can, shoot from a sheltered position: buildings with overhangs, heavily wooded areas and picnic shelters at parks can all help keep you dry, while still ensuring you are at the heart of the action.

Liven up the light

When it rains, the light can often be quite flat, so be aware that trying to get high contrast and bright colours within your images may be slightly more challenging. The muted palette of colours in both the sky and surroundings can, of course, make a nice change of pace for your image. For further contrast or punch in a scene, use the Vivid Picture Control setting (in the shooting menu options) to add more overall contrast and saturation.

Controlling contrast

A combination of rain and sunshine will create high contrast in your image; you'll quite often find these conditions as the rain is clearing. Point your camera in the direction of the sun (although never directly into it) to highlight the intricacy of the raindrops or to create beams of light through your image, or focus on the contrast between a rain-free area and the one still under the clouds being drenched. You might need to use a graduated filter to prevent underexposing the sky or overexposing the foreground in such high contrast conditions; otherwise you'll probably need to spend some time in post-production to even out the exposure across the image. The lush, colour-popping freshness that comes at the end of an air-clearing downpour can make for superb landscapes, too.

Reveal the raindrops

If you want to capture the raindrops themselves, shoot with them backlit if possible. Otherwise, try a burst of low-powered flash to liven things up; use your Speedlight off-camera and to one side to prevent just the foreground droplets from being illuminated. Alternatively, shoot with the aperture wide open (e.g. $f/2.8$) to create a shallow depth of field, with a shutter speed of around $1/200\text{sec}$ to prevent the raindrops from blurring.

If you are indoors, focus on the raindrops on the window panes. A Micro Nikkor lens, which is specifically designed for close focus, will allow you to get much closer (if you have a COOLPIX compact, turn on its close-focus capability, which will act in the same way). You can also use the long end of a telephoto zoom to home in on details, but you'll need to step back to keep within its focusing capabilities.

Shoot for the sky

Rainy skies can make for dramatic images in their own right; watch out for towering storm clouds, which look particularly spectacular in the late afternoon or early morning light. Patches of blue sky and shafts of sunlight streaming through clouds as the rain starts to clear also create great images, and if you're lucky you might catch a rainbow in frame, too.

People pictures

Keep an eye out for people in the rain, as having a figure in the picture can make a scene more interesting and add narrative to your shot. People with umbrellas or walking animals can create a quiet, sombre mood in a rainy photo and an instant focal point to draw in the viewer's attention, while kids in brightly coloured raincoats splashing in puddles can make for fun images.

The wrong type of rain

The type of rain can also make a difference. Drizzle and steady rain are fairly easy to deal with, and can present some great opportunities for reflections in puddles and on wet pavements and roads; go for a low angle for abstract results. The worst of all worlds is driving rain with wind; the most you can do is keep your back to it and keep your fingers crossed it doesn't change direction...

Your rainy-day kit list

- Waterproof camera jacket or rain cover|
- Clear filter to protect the lens's front element
- Lens hood
- Lens cloth
- Collapsible golf umbrella, with a holder fixed to your tripod, leaving your hands free to shoot
- Waterproof clothes and footwear – there's no point protecting your gear then getting so wet yourself that you want to go back inside...

Visit the [Nikon Store](#) to check out our range of Nikon branded protective kit, including lens hoods, cloths and waterproof camera covers.