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## Taking Pictures For a Website

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If you're selling items on-line, whether at your own business website or through another outlet, creating and posting GOOD pictures may be the guiding force that changes the *shopper* into the *buyer*. And, getting a GOOD picture for the web doesn't have to be expensive or complicated. So, let's get started.

**STEP 1: Use a digital camera.** Although photos may be scanned and downloaded to a website, you'll never know until you receive your prints whether or not you have a workable photo... and by then, you may have already lost valuable "listing" time. And, pictures scanned from printed material tend to digitize.

**STEP 2: Select the items that will look the BEST in the photograph.** For instance, if you have similar items that may only vary by size, only one item is necessary in the photo. Size variances can be LISTED without a separate picture.

**STEP 3: According to the size of**

**your items, set up your photo area.** No matter what color your items may be, a SOLID OFF WHITE works best for a photo shoot. And, your background should be FLAT with NO wrinkles. A mat finish tag board/foam board or painted board works great because it won't reflect any light.

Place the first board flat on top of a hard surface (such as a table) and the second board perpendicular to the first (this one will be behind your item). You'll have to prop the second board from the back, but be sure to keep it at a 90 degree angle to the first. Any deviation may cause shadows. Also, as you set up the boards, keep in mind that you'll want to be able to take pictures from above and directly in front of your items, so your boards will need to be sized and placed accordingly.

**STEP 4: Place the first item(s) on the board to photo.** If the item will reflect the flash from the camera, shut the flash off and use front AND side lighting in order to avoid

shadows. Also, place the item so YOUR image doesn't reflect in it. Be sure that you only see the white board around the perimeter of your item. You don't want to have to spend time "cleaning up" the image.

**STEP 5:** Even though **you don't need a large image for a website**, taking the photo as a larger image will give you "room to manipulate" it. However, if you don't have a photo program or don't want to spend time changing your photo, take the picture in **VGA mode** or approx. 640 x 480 pixels. If you are sending your picture to someone else for them to adjust or change, you may use the largest size your e-mail provider allows you to send (1M, 2M, 3.2M or 4M). Most web pictures range from 80 pixels square (approx. 1 inch square) up to 600 pixels square (6 inches square). Some are even larger, but larger pictures load slower.

**STEP 6: Taking the picture from the front of the item, straight on, is best.** This way you'll avoid distorted perspective. If the item changes when viewed from different directions, take pictures from different views, trying to avoid SHADOWS and REFLECTIONS.

Also, get as close to the item as you can without losing focus. If you don't have a steady hand, use a tripod. And, if your image is reflected in the image, a tripod and

time exposure will help.

**STEP7:** After you've taken the pictures, **upload them to your computer.** If you have a program that allows you to adjust them:

- A) Crop your picture as close to the object as possible, or if it's to be a SPECIFIC size, restrain your image size when cropping.
- B) Lighten the image if it's too dark.
- C) Remove any background "noise".
- D) Resize your image to whatever the web specifications are.

Okay... that should do it. You're ready to post your pictures to the web and sell your item.



Reflected flash



Distorted perspective



Front and back view of same item



Background noise



Distracting Wrinkles/Cast Shadows



A better picture



Distracting base/background/flash