

Here are things to do when you're in a jam

Have you ever shot a roll of film, begun to rewind it into the cassette and then — you guessed it — found the film had never advanced through the camera.

Don't feel lonely; it's happened at some time in almost every photographer's career.

But did you know there's a way to assure that your film always advances through the camera? In fact, there are a number of helpful hints to get you out of a jam and improve your photographs. Here are some:

To resolve the film advancing problem, watch the film "rewind" crank when you advance the film for the first few shots. If the rewind crank turns, everything is OK. If not, the film isn't going through the camera. It's that simple.

Use a skylight or haze filter on all of your lenses. They not only will warm up colors and cut through haze, but they will protect your valuable lenses.

Thoroughly read the owner's manual that came with your camera. Carry it in your camera bag for quick reference. It contains valuable information on your camera and general information on photography.

Change batteries in your camera once every year, even though it still appears to be functioning properly. Pick a day you will remember, such as your birthday, or Jan. 1. (It's also a good time to re-read your owner's manual.)

Tape the label from your film box on the back of your camera — some cameras have slots for this purpose — as a reminder of what kind of film you're shooting. If you don't take many pictures, it's easy to forget what's in your camera.

If your meter should fail, all is not lost. Simply set the shutter speed to the number closest to the ASA of the film you're using. Example: With Kodachrome 64, the shutter speed should be 1/60th of a second. Then set the aperture at f/16 on a sunny day, f/11 on a bright overcast day, f/8 when it's overcast, and so on.

Don't always use "fast" film (high ASA ratings). I recommend using the slowest speed film that conditions and lighting will permit. You'll get sharp results, and save money on the lower-priced slower films.

When is it safe to hand-hold your camera? Shoot at the shutter speed that comes closest to the focal length of your lens — not slower. Example: With your normal 50 mm lens, shoot at 1/60th sec. or faster. With a 135 mm lens, use 1/125th sec. or faster. When poor light demands a slower speed, use a tripod.

Add impact to your pictures. Move in close, compose carefully, watch your backgrounds, and learn how to use depth-of-field creatively.

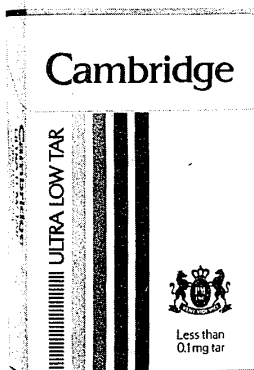
Look at photographs. Go to museums, galleries, exhibits. Invest in photography books. Not just "how to" books, but photography picture books. Study closely and carefully the works of other photographers, especially those that have impact on you. This will improve your own pictures as well as enhance your personal enjoyment of photography.

© 1980 by Monte Nagler. The writer is a West Bloomfield resident, area businessman and president of the Greater Detroit Camera Clubs Council. Send questions to him care of this newspaper.



Eleanor Bruce followed good rules of composition in this photo of the bell tower of Hope United Methodist Church in Southfield. Note strong subject placement and the impact she gets from filling the frame with the subject.

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