

Capturing Stunning HDR Photos with Your Smartphone

TechRounder PDF Edition

Live article: <https://www.techrounder.com/photography/capturing-stunning-hdr-photos-with-your-smartphone/>

By Vipin PG | Published April 3, 2023 | Updated March 8, 2026 | Format: Article | 4 min read

In brief

Photos taken in HDR format are easy to distinguish from others. They are striking in their richness and amount of detail that cannot be seen in other formats.

Photos taken in HDR format are easy to distinguish from others. They are striking in their richness and amount of detail that cannot be seen in other formats. It's not hard to capture such a picture with a camera, but is it possible with a smartphone? The answer is yes, of course. However, you need to know some secrets to help you get great shots. Today we will reveal them all!

Remember that the photo needs to be edited after you get a good shot. This is so that you can improve it. Luminar Neo from Skylum is an HDR software that will be useful for experienced photographers and newbies. You will get great results with it.

Well, time to go with HDR photos from your smartphone. One, two, three, go!

Let's Find Out What HDR Is

HDR photography captures a more comprehensive dynamic range (the contrast between light and dark areas) in your pics. Rather than taking a single image, it typically involves taking three photos, each shot with a different exposure setting. You can then use HDR photo editing software to merge these images, combining the best parts of each to create a final image with improved detail and contrast.

With the prevalence of high-quality mobile cameras, taking stunning HDR photos is a breeze. Luckily, your smartphone does all the hard work for you. When you take a photo in this mode, your phone captures three images with different exposures - one regular photo and two additional ones. These images are then combined to produce a photo with a more comprehensive dynamic range that closely mimics what your eyes see. The resulting image is richer and more detailed, with brighter highlights and deeper shadows.

Although HDR mode takes a little longer to capture a photo, it's worth waiting. The convenience of having a powerful camera in your pocket means that you can capture stunning, high-quality images wherever you go. So why settle for ordinary photos when you can easily create stunning HDR with your smartphone?

Taking Pictures with HDR on Mobile Cameras

Now we will elaborate on how to take these pictures on smartphones like the iPhone and Android.

iPhone

If you have an iPhone 4 or higher, congratulations! You don't have to make complicated moves because everything you need is already built into your smartphone. Follow these simple steps:

- Choose the camera and tap Options - HDR On;

- Tap the focus icon to focus on a specific subject;
- Press the snapshot button. You will get not one but two photos. The first will be in a standard format, and the second in HDR format.

If your iPhone is a third model or older, then do not despair. You just need a particular application, which you can download from the AppStore. Unfortunately, you can't get HDR photo editing software for free now, but its price is low. So just buy it once and enjoy clear snaps.

Android

If you're an Android phone user looking to capture HDR photos, you may have noticed that the feature isn't available on all devices. However, some Android phone skins, custom interfaces developed by phone manufacturers, include the HDR feature in the camera app.

For instance, if you own one of the latest HTC phones, such as the Rezound, One S, Vivid, or Amaze, you can easily access HDR mode by opening your camera app and going to the "Scenes" menu. From there, simply select "HDR," and you'll be ready to take stunning photos with a wider dynamic range. If this is not the case and your smartphone does not support this format, the solution is a particular application. It can be downloaded from Play Market.

Tips for Using HDR Photography on Smartphones

Let's find out when it's worth using this mode and when it can be detrimental. You should use HDR in those cases:

Landscapes. When taking large landscape photos with a smartphone camera, capturing the distinct contrast between the earth and sky can be challenging due to the small sensor. To avoid compromising the details in either the sky or the earth, using the HDR mode when taking landscape photos is recommended. This will help capture the details in the sky without making the land too dark. So, the next time you plan on taking a landscape photo, consider using HDR mode on your smartphone camera to get a more balanced and detailed shot.

Portraits in sunlight. When you take photos during times of the day with strong sunlight, the resulting images can sometimes have unattractive dark shadows and glares. To combat this issue, turning on HDR can be a helpful solution.

Low light (without flash). By taking multiple pics with different exposures and merging them, HDR can capture the shadows, highlights, and other details that might have been lost in a single image. This is especially helpful in low-light situations where the camera sensor struggles to capture all the nuances of the scene. So, turning on HDR in these situations can make a big difference in the quality of your photos.

We recommend not using this mode when photographing moving objects because their quality will suffer. Also, do not use HDR for bright colors or high contrast. In this case, there is a risk that the images will become dull, and you will have to spend a lot of time post-processing them.

References

1. skylum.com - luminar / hdr-merge - <https://skylum.com/luminar/hdr-merge>