



8 Tips for Taking Sports Photos like a Pro

Are you looking to shoot better sports photos, Sports photography presents many opportunities to capture dramatic and vivid imagery that will last a lifetime. No other medium presents you with heart-pounding action, vivid color patterns and unique shooting opportunities.

The steps featured in this article cover a broad range of topics - from perfecting shutter speed, to capturing all of the action.

Practice makes perfect, ensuring you have a steady hand and are ready when the big play happens.

1. Prepare to Use High ISO

Looking to capture the perfect shot but the lighting is poor

Trying to stop the action during little league game using a higher shutter speed

Increase the ISO allowing you to shoot at a higher shutter speed,

Professional sports photographers use a shutter speed of around 1/1000 of a second to stop motion. During the day this is simple. At night, you may need a faster F Stop than your lens is capable of.

To compromise, you increase the ISO allowing your camera to see more light.

Typically sports are usually shot at 1600 ISO. Providing a happy medium between 800 ISO and 3200 ISO

Depending on the camera, you may also want to use Auto ISO allows your camera to automatically choose the best ISO setting.

2. Try Something Different

Every sports picture doesn't have to look the same. Instead of shooting at eye level, lay as low to the ground as you can in the end zone with a wide angle lens. It will present a new angle to help tell the story.

When shooting, be original and try something different. At each event you cover, look for as many new ways to approach it as possible. new backgrounds, new angles, and new shooting locations.

You don't have to be shooting professional sports to try something different.

By trying something different, you allow your creativity to flourish and capture something that everyone else doesn't have.

3. Don't Forget the Surroundings

This may seem like a no-brainer, but don't forget your surroundings. Whether it be a stadium full of cheering fans, to the tailgating outside, the surroundings present unique opportunities to capture the spirit of the game without shooting the action itself.

Before kick-off, tailgating is a great place to capture shots of true fans before the game.

The crowd is as important as the athletics

Before tipoff of a basketball game, court side is also a great place to shoot pictures of team spirit.

Even after the game begins, don't forget the surroundings. If you have a wider lens, such as a 10.5mm or 14mm, climb as high as you can and take a shot showing the whole stadium full of cheering fans.

4. Be Prepared With an Equipment Belt or Bag

Ever wonder why sports photographers carry so much equipment?

Once you are on the sidelines or in the middle of the action it's hard to run to your bag and change equipment. Many sports photographers use one of three things to carry their equipment while working on the sidelines: a fanny pack, a belt system or a photo vest.

Photo vests were popular a few years ago but today they are impractical with all the lenses you need to carry and quickly have access to. Use a good belt system with at least 6 holsters that can be used ranging from large lens holders to one dedicated for the flash

Be prepared to take lots of different shots.

The belt system allows you to quickly change between lenses and to keep all your memory cards together in safe place. allowing you to be prepared for the action with a variety of lenses and, it has covers for each holster offering rain protection for outdoor sports.

5. Long Glass Goes a Long Way

The key to capturing the perfect shot in sports is able to isolate the action using a good quality lens, occasionally requiring the biggest and most expensive equipment available. Allowing you to shoot from anywhere in the stadium, to get that perfect head on shot.

A long lens lets you isolate individual people during the action

When looking for good glass for sports photography, consider these factors:

- Consider a long lens such as a 300mm or 400mm
- Choose a lens with an f/stop of f/2.8 or f/4.
- The bigger and heavier the lens, the better it usually is.
- Make sure the lens has a tripod mount built in.
- Look for lenses that have stood the test of time: there is a reason

When buying good glass, it's not like buying a new camera body. A good lens will last at least 10 years with proper care and maintenance.

6. Don't Chimp, Please.

Every sports photographer is guilty of "chimping". If you're unfamiliar with the term, this definition will clear everything up.

chimping is when you check every photo you take on the LCD. Taking your eyes off the action and focuses on it on the camera.

This is bad (1) you can get hurt, (2) you may miss a good shot.

When you chimp, you take your eyes off the field and the action. If you're shooting football, you can easily be run over on the sideline when not paying attention.

While reviewing your pictures is ok, there is a time and a place to do so.

In sports, after the shutter clicks there's no second chance. You must move on to the next play.

7. Use a Slow Shutter Speed

A slow shutter speed?

Along with trying something different you should try a different shutter speed sometimes. If you're shooting baseball and want to capture the swing in a perfect silhouette, try shooting at 1/60 of a second. If, you want a cool blurry background shot, it works great.

A slow shutter speed creates energy.

Many professional photographers use this technique to add energy to their pictures and create great looking backgrounds. Shooting at 1/100 of a second or 1/80 of a second allows the player to be in focus and sharp but the background to be very blurry

8. Avoid Using a Flash

When shooting professional or college sports, flash photography is typically strictly prohibited. Flash can distract the players possibly cause an injury.

For indoor sports, some venues have very powerful flashes (or strobes) installed in the rafters of the gym, allowing an ideal amount of light to fall on the playing surface. These flashes are then synced to your camera using a Remote wireless trigger

When shooting outdoor sports such as football or baseball, never use an on-camera flash.

Whatever the sport, get used to working without flash.

Always check with the proper authorities to ensure you are allowed to use flash

Many sanctioning bodies have specific rules for photographers, so before you shoot an event be sure to read these so you know what is OK and not OK.

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Bio

My name is David Wright.

I have many years experience writing procedures on how to test high tech electronic equipment. Re wrote technical manuals so that the average person could understand them.

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