

How to Photograph your bonsai

Don't be shy, give it a try.

You don't need an expensive camera and a complex studio to get a reasonable result. Remember you are trying to take a picture of your tree so you are aiming to make the tree the subject, do not try to show it against a cluttered background as my prize tree shows.



The background should be uncluttered, you want people to look at the tree not think about what else they can see in the photo. What works best is if you can separate the tree from the background altogether by using some form of screen.



What you use will depend on the size of your tree, a piece of card, as shown here can work well for a small tree, for a larger tree you may need to work a bit harder.

Draping a sheet over a rotary clothes dryer and across a patio table should be large enough for the larger bonsai, best not use a white sheet or it could reflect too much light making the tree a bit dark. In general, trees and plants should not be photographed using flash due to the shadows cast.

For smaller trees the sheet could be draped over a box stood on the table. If the sheet runs under the tree it gives an 'infinity' look. Whatever size your tree is take time to ensure that all the tree is in the picture, plus the pot and stand, if used.

Normal 'rules' for displaying a tree also apply to the photograph, so make sure the pot is clean, use a display table if you like, even add your accent plant, anything to make your tree look its best. Treating as a display means you have to take the photo at the same aspect you would look at it, so putting the tree on a table top means you can take the picture at the same level without having to kneel down, or if you put it on the floor, lying down.

Here is my prize tree (still dead) taken with my iPhone rather than an slr or compact camera. I might even iron the sheet next time..

