(Approx. 660 words)

The iPhone Camera is Just Super

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Do you remember taking a camera with you to take photos? Do you remember something called “film”? Today our smartphones take wonderful photos and have many options available for us to make our pictures even better. In this article, we are going to review some of the fun options on the Apple iPhone, and they are available on other smartphones as well. They all begin by opening the “camera” app on your iPhone (or smartphone). Once you select an option, the phone may suggest other options or actions for you, such as moving closer or farther from the subject.

Photo – this is the default option, the “mode” you get by default when you open the camera app. Also by default, your camera will use a flash if it is needed (you can turn the flash option “off” if you wish, the icon is a small lightning bolt).

What are “live” photos? -- with Live Photos, your iPhone records what happens 1.5 seconds before and after you take a picture. What you get is more than a great photo; it's a moment captured with movement and sound. You take a Live Photo just like you do a traditional photo. You can tap an area on your screen to change the focus or exposure to a certain area or to see other options.

Reverse camera – In the bottom-right area of your screen is a circular icon of two white arrows pointing clockwise.

Touch this icon to use the camera on the opposite side of your device, this is how all those young people take “selfies”.

Yes, your iPhone has two cameras!

Time-Lapse – This will take a periodic or a sequence of photos. Touch the shutter button once to start and again to stop the sequence. This sounds like fun, but I have yet to try it.

Video – When you select this option the shutter button changes from white to RED. Tap it to start your video and again to stop. Yes, you can edit videos, but I will leave that for you to “Ask Google”.

Slo-Mo – Use this option as you would “video” above, but you will have a slow-motion effect. If this is something that interests you, be sure to “Ask Google” about using this effect in different ways.

Photo – the default option – see above.

Portrait – This option will keep your subject in sharp focus and blur the background a little. This gives you stunning professional-looking portrait photos.

Pano – This pantographic option will capture a very wide photo, almost a full circle, around you. Hit the button and move the camera slowly in the direction of the arrow (left to right – you can “pan” right to left if you touch the arrow to change the direction). This is a very cool and wonderful option. Try it on a wide sunset or a street view to get a

super-wide photo.

Square – This will take a square photo (not rectangular) which is best for use in social media.

If you have a different smartphone than an iPhone, look for these options, they are probably available on your device too. And don’t forget the MANY free apps available for you to edit your photos after you take them. No, you will not run out of film but is it always a good idea to delete unwanted photos often to save space on your phone.

Copy the ones you want to keep to your favorite photo storage area, like Google Photos for example, which can be set to automatically save them for you.

Finally, to get the most out of your phone camera, take time to find out more about the options you like to use the most, you will be surprised what it can do. I think the next release will have a photo “X-ray” option to take photos through walls!