

ROUNDTABLE: FUN WITH PANORAMAS

Advantages of Panoramas

Wide-screen look
Less optical distortion
Big “wow” factor
Different visual story
Can be printed at home or at a lab

Best file formats

Shooting: JPEG or RAW
Saving finished product: Photoshop (.psd) or Tiff (.tif)

Basic Tips

Start in program or manual modes
Overlap frames by at least 25%
Use a tripod where possible
Use a level where possible
Shoot in a clear sequence
First frame should be a photo of your left foot or a blank frame and the last should be your right foot or a blank frame. It helps keep track where you start and end the panorama.

Basic Gear Needed

Point-and-shoot camera with Program, Aperture priority, Shutter priority and Manual modes
Or
Digital SLR, experiment with lens focal length; 50-80 mm works great. Avoid shooting too wide (wide-angle) or too narrow (telephoto).
Tripod (some come with a bubble level)
Cable release to prevent camera movement

Advanced Tips

Use manual metering and focusing
Experiment with white balance
Experiment with horizontal and vertical
Experiment with two or more rows of images

Stitching Software

There are lots of options (do a Google search and you’ll see all the choices!). Most photo editing software programs include some type of stitching program. In addition, most D-SLR cameras come with a basic editing program that includes stitching. Adobe Photoshop and Photoshop Elements are popular and work great. Find one that you are comfortable with and that does a good job. Some of the software is better than others.

Adapted by Tom Miller, Dane County 4-H Photography Leader, from a handout developed by Robin Nichols at BetterPhoto.com.