

* 7 *More* Tips for Wildflower Photography *

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1 Go big.

When facing a gorgeous field of flowers it's a natural inclination to grab the wide angle and go big. So do so! Just remember that an image of nothing but color usually lacks engagement. Remedy that by adding some secondary interest—e.g. a tree, rock, horse, etc. Also, watch those skies—they can make or break a landscape. When greeted by grey include as little of those overcast heavens as possible (*or, follow Tip #2*).

2 Go small.

Cloudy skies call for breaking out the macro. I also reach for my macro lens when dew dots the daisies. When going small watch for wind, as any movement gets magnified. Sub-tip: Sit in a single spot with your mind on the mini for at least 20 minutes and discover another (*albeit tiny*) world.

3 Go in-between.

Find one special bloom amidst a group of others and create its “portrait.” A telephoto lens works well to isolate a single flower. The longer focal length narrows the field of view and softens the background when used with a large aperture. When composing the portrait, don't forget to consider the background; if too busy it distracts from your object of beauty.

4 Shoot through.

Focus on a flower some distance away while letting other flora close to the lens blur to a wash of color (*see Tip #5*). When doing flower portraits, this works especially well with longer focal lengths.

5 Complement with color.

Color often attracts us to flowers in the first place so work to enhance your image. Look for opportunities to use complementary colors—blue/orange, yellow/purple, and red/green—when composing the shot.

6 Backlight to beautify.

When the sun sits low try shooting towards it to backlight blossoms. Sunlight shining through augments petals with an appealing glow, highlighting hairs, bristles, and other unique details.

7 Respect private property.

Come springtime I take a lot of native wildflower shots in Texas—where 95% of the land is privately-owned—so this tip looms large for me. But no matter where you and your lenses play, remember that most folks won't tolerate photographers traipsing across their land without asking. If you don't have permission don't cross that fence no matter how tempting the scene!



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