

Tips for Photographing Fall Colors

For SLR Cameras

- Set your camera to “aperture” priority and use a small aperture to maximize depth of field for the big vista shots.
- Set your camera to “aperture” priority and use a large aperture to minimize depth of field for the smaller detailed shots. Beware of long shutter speeds if the wind is blowing your subject around.
- Set the camera “Picture Style” on “Landscape” for increased color saturation and sharpening.
- Use low ISO settings and large JPEG or RAW picture size for maximum quality.
- Use a tripod, or steady the camera on a rock or wall to minimize camera shake.
- Use a remote shutter trigger or self timer for long exposures to avoid camera shake.
- Try a polarizing filter to make the leaves’ colors stand out from the background.

For Point and Shoot Cameras

- Set your cameras on the “Landscape” setting. Most often this is depicted by a stylized picture of a mountain with a person standing in the foreground. This will set your camera to small aperture, slower shutter speed and will automatically saturate and sharpen your photographs.
- For medium shots where you want to blur the background, but keep the subject sharply focused, use the “portrait” setting, usually depicted by a stylized picture of a person.
- For tight, detailed shots use the “close-up” setting on your camera, usually a stylized picture of a flower.

Tips for all Photographers

- Don’t take only big vista shots for fall foliage pictures. Try some detailed shots with high contrasting colors like a single red leaf against green grass or moss. Watch for detailed shots like colored leaves on the road or on water.
- Reflections from ponds or streams make for striking photographs. You might even try photographing color reflected on moving water, this can be very interesting.
- Try to include a wall, fence or stream in your photographs to lead the viewer’s eye to the subject. This is called lead-in lines. You could also include a rock, a person or other item of interest in the foreground. Vary your point of view; look to photograph trees up from the base or your shoot your subject from a higher perspective if possible.
- Vary the lighting; back lighting and side lighting of colorful trees are the two most useful means of shooting trees and landscapes. Shooting with the sun at your back is not as interesting. Be sure to use a lens hood, a hand or other object to block the lens from direct sunlight that will cause flairs of light on your photographs.
- Bring a black cloth or board to photograph single colored leaves on a dark background.