

Photographing at the beach

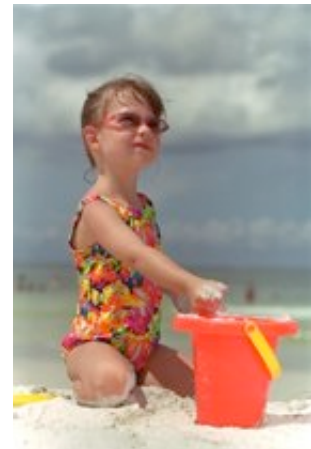
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Few subjects conjure warmer memories than your carefree days at the beach. And few subjects offer more picture-taking opportunities—and challenges. So let's see what it takes to put some pizzazz into your beach pictures.

Catch the beach action

Beach antics abound and you need to photograph them to reveal the unique atmosphere of the beach. Show your family building giant sand castles, digging deep holes, surfing the waves. And put the viewer into the scene by getting down to the subject's eye level.



Tell a story

Any important event can become a picture story. An all-day outing is perfect for a photo story. Show the departure, the arrival, a picture of your destination's entry, a variety of events during the day, and the tired kids on their way home.



Protect your gear

Sand, water, and heat are your camera's worst enemies. All of which, you'll find in abundance at the beach. Here are some suggestions on how to deal with them. When you're not taking pictures, keep your camera in a zippered plastic bag out of the hot sun, maybe under a white towel.



If sand does get on your camera, first blow it off, and then carefully brush off any remaining grains with a lens cleaning brush. Consider taking a [one-time-use camera](#) instead of your favorite camera. You won't mind so much if sand or water gets into it.

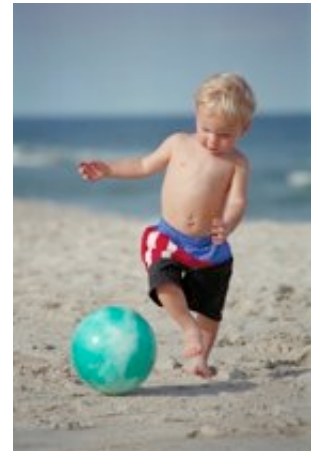
Avoid harsh shadows

Avoid harsh facial shadows by using the [soft lighting](#) of a cloudy day or a shady area. On sunny days, if your camera has several flash modes, select [Fill-Flash](#). This will fire the flash even in bright sunlight. This "fills" the shadows on nearby subjects, creating more flattering portraits in direct sunlight. Check your camera's manual.



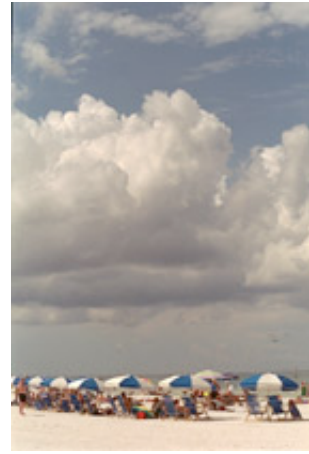
Include the water

Refreshing, invigorating, and soothing in person, the body of water can add those qualities to your pictures. Be sure to frequently include it in the background of your beach pictures. Its presence will increase the emotion of your beach pictures.



Place the horizon high or low

Ocean panoramics make great pictures. Just be sure to keep the horizon straight and to place it either high or low in the [viewfinder](#). When a horizon cuts across the middle of a picture, it seems to slice the picture in half, and makes it less appealing.



Use a single use camera

With a waterproof [single use camera](#), not only can you get some great action water shots, but you can also use it without fear of damaging your regular camera. Kodak's camera is good to 50 feet under water. And with its fast film, you can catch cannonballers and body surfers on the go.



Don't forget beach hangouts

From the beat-up taffy shack to the fishing pier to the nighttime boardwalk, every beach has hangouts where people gather and socialize. Include pictures of these locales to strengthen memories of your favorite times at the beach.
