SAMSUNG PHOTOGRAPHY ACADEMY

Free printable plan

The 30-Day Samsung Photography Challenge

Get your Galaxy off Auto in four weeks, taking over one camera decision a day.

30	~12 h	~24 min	Free
daily prompts	in total	a day	no sign-up

How it works

1. Print this plan or keep it on your phone. Most days take 15 to 25 minutes, and a few evening shoots run to 40.
2. Read the Start line before you shoot, then adjust it to the light in front of you.
3. Tick the box when you finish, and heart your best frame of the day in the Samsung Gallery app.
4. Keep every photo until day 30, when you reshoot your day 1 scenes and compare the pairs.

The four weeks

DAYS 1–7	**Steer Auto** Stay in Photo mode and take over the choices the phone usually makes for you.
DAYS 8–14	**Pro mode and light** Set ISO and shutter speed yourself and learn what each one costs you.
DAYS 15–21	**Color, focus and RAW** Choose your own white balance and focus point, then start shooting RAW.
DAYS 22–30	**Shoot it all by hand** Manual settings on real subjects, ending with a reshoot of your day 1 scenes.

Tips and fallbacks for each day: www.samsungphotographyacademy.com/blog/samsung-photography-challenge

DAYS 1–7

Week 1. Steer Auto

Stay in Photo mode and take over the choices the phone usually makes for you.

- [ ] **Day 1** — **Shoot your Auto baseline** — 20 min
  Choose eight scenes you can come back to on day 30, including at least one dim room and one moving subject, and shoot each once in Auto.
  Start Photo mode, 1x, everything at default, no filters or edits

- [ ] **Day 2** — **Prepare the camera** — 10 min
  Switch on grid lines and set a volume key as the shutter. Then check which resolution you're shooting at, because it matters at night.
  Start Camera settings › General › Grid lines; Shooting methods › Press Volume buttons to › Take picture

- [ ] **Day 3** — **Tap, then slide the exposure** — 15 min
  Find a bright window or sky behind a darker subject. Tap the subject, then drag the exposure slider down until the bright part keeps its detail.
  Start Photo mode, tap the subject, exposure slider -0.5 to -1.0

- [ ] **Day 4** — **Lock it and reframe** — 15 min
  Tap and hold your subject until AE/AF lock appears, then move the phone so the subject sits on a grid line. Shoot the same framing without the lock as well.
  Start Photo mode, tap and hold until AE/AF lock shows, recompose, shoot

- [ ] **Day 5** — **Pick the lens with your feet** — 20 min
  Shoot a subject with a distant background at each of your lenses, walking backward as you zoom in so the subject stays the same size.
  Start Photo mode; tap 0.6x, 1x and each telephoto button, and don't pinch between them

- [ ] **Day 6** — **See what Scene optimizer adds** — 15 min
  Shoot food, a plant and some blue sky with Scene optimizer on, then switch it off and repeat. Compare the pairs side by side.
  Start Camera settings › Intelligent features › Scene optimizer, on, then off

- [ ] **Day 7** — **Burst for timing** — 15 min
  Set the shutter swipe to burst and photograph something that moves unpredictably, like a dog, a ball or splashing water.
  Start Camera settings › Swipe Shutter button to › Take burst shot; drag the shutter down and hold

DAYS 8–14

Week 2. Pro mode and light

Set ISO and shutter speed yourself and learn what each one costs you.

- [ ] **Day 8** — **Meet Pro mode** — 20 min
  Open Pro mode, set ISO to the lowest number and leave the shutter on Auto. Shoot three daylight scenes and write down the shutter speed each one gets.
  Start More › Pro, ISO 50 (or your lowest), shutter Auto, WB Auto, 1x

- [ ] **Day 9** — **Climb the ISO ladder** — 20 min
  In a dim room, shoot one still scene at ISO 50, 400 and 3200, changing the shutter each time so the brightness stays the same.
  Start Pro mode, ISO 50, 400, then 3200, shutter adjusted until the preview matches, phone braced

- [ ] **Day 10** — **Freeze motion at 1/1000s** — 25 min
  Outdoors, photograph something fast, such as a cyclist, a fountain or a kid on a swing, at 1/1000s.
  Start Pro mode, 1/1000s, ISO 100–400 (raise it until the preview looks right)

- [ ] **Day 11** — **Find your handheld limit** — 20 min
  Holding the phone normally, shoot a still, detailed subject at 1/60s, 1/15s, 1/4s and 1/2s. Zoom into each to see where blur starts.
  Start Pro mode, 1x, ISO 50, shutter 1/60s › 1/15s › 1/4s › 1/2s, elbows tucked in

- [ ] **Day 12** — **Slow water at dusk** — 25 min
  At dusk, rest the phone on a wall or railing and shoot moving water at 1/4s and at 1s.
  Start Pro mode, ISO 50, 1/4s then 1s, 2s timer, phone on a solid surface

- [ ] **Day 13** — **Light trails** — 30 min
  After dark, find a road you can shoot from safely and record passing cars at 2 seconds, then 4 seconds.
  Start Pro mode, ISO 50, 2s then 4s, focus on a streetlight, 2s timer, phone braced

- [ ] **Day 14** — **Night mode against Pro mode** — 30 min
  Shoot one dim street scene twice, first in Night mode handheld, then in Pro mode with the phone braced at ISO 400 and 1/4s.
  Start Night mode (S26: moon icon in Photo mode, set to Max), then Pro mode, ISO 400, 1/4s, braced

DAYS 15–21

Week 3. Color, focus and RAW

Choose your own white balance and focus point, then start shooting RAW.

- [ ] **Day 15** — **Find your bulbs' white balance** — 15 min
  Put a sheet of white paper in a room lit by warm bulbs and change the kelvin value until the paper looks white on screen.
  Start Pro mode, WB starting at 4000K and dropping 200–300K at a time until the paper looks neutral

- [ ] **Day 16** — **Keep the warmth at golden hour** — 30 min
  In the hour before sunset, shoot the same scene with white balance on Auto and with it fixed at 5500K.
  Start Pro mode, ISO 50, shutter Auto, WB Auto, then 5500K

- [ ] **Day 17** — **Focus by hand** — 20 min
  Shoot a flower or a small object close up with manual focus, and put the sharpest point exactly where you want it.
  Start Pro mode, MF, drag the focus slider until the green focus peaking outlines your chosen spot

- [ ] **Day 18** — **Try spot metering** — 20 min
  Find a lit subject against a dark background, like a lamp-lit face or a shop window at night, and compare the metering modes.
  Start Pro mode, ISO and shutter Auto; metering Center-weighted, Matrix, then Spot on the subject

- [ ] **Day 19** — **Shoot RAW** — 25 min
  Shoot a high-contrast scene, such as a bright sky over shaded buildings, as RAW and JPEG at the same time.
  Start Expert RAW (free in the Galaxy Store), or Pro mode with RAW copies on; ISO 50, exposure -0.7

- [ ] **Day 20** — **Push the RAW file** — 30 min
  Open yesterday's DNG and JPEG in Lightroom Mobile and pull the highlights down and the shadows up by the same amount on each.
  Start Lightroom Mobile, Highlights -80 and Shadows +60 on both files

- [ ] **Day 21** — **Meter for a silhouette** — 20 min
  Use spot metering on the bright sky beside the sun so anything in front of it turns black, and pick a subject whose outline reads on its own.
  Start Pro mode, ISO 50, metering Spot on the sky, exposure -0.7

DAYS 22–30

Days 22–30. Shoot it all by hand

Manual settings on real subjects, ending with a reshoot of your day 1 scenes.

- [ ] **Day 22** — **Full manual on a walk** — 40 min
  Set ISO, shutter and white balance once for the light outside, then take a 30-minute walk and change only ISO as the light changes.
  Start Pro mode, 1/500s, ISO 50–200, WB 5500K

- [ ] **Day 23** — **Window portrait in Pro mode** — 30 min
  Seat someone side-on to a large window with the room lights off, and shoot a portrait with every setting chosen by you.
  Start Pro mode, 2x–3x, ISO 100–200, 1/125s, WB 5500K, tap to focus on the nearer eye

- [ ] **Day 24** — **Food or still life by the window** — 25 min
  Set up a plate or a few objects by a window and shoot them with fixed settings, changing only the shutter between frames.
  Start Pro mode, ISO 50, 1/30–1/125s, WB 5000–5500K, phone braced, 2x if you have it

- [ ] **Day 25** — **Blue-hour street** — 40 min
  Twenty minutes after sunset, set the phone on a wall or railing and shoot a lit street or skyline while the sky is still blue. Use what you learned on days 11 and 14.
  Start Pro mode, ISO 50–100, 1/2–2s, WB 4500–5500K, 2s timer

- [ ] **Day 26** — **Fast subject in dim light** — 25 min
  Indoors in the evening, photograph a moving child, pet or friend and choose a shutter speed fast enough to freeze them.
  Start Pro mode, 1/250s, ISO 800–3200

- [ ] **Day 27** — **Moon by the numbers** — 20 min
  Photograph the moon in Pro mode on your longest lens with a fixed exposure instead of letting the phone guess.
  Start Pro mode, longest lens, ISO 50, 1/250–1/1000s, manual focus at infinity

- [ ] **Day 28** — **Panning** — 30 min
  At dusk or under streetlights, follow a passing cyclist or car with the phone and press the shutter mid-swing, so the subject is sharp and the background streaks.
  Start Pro mode, 1/30s, ISO 50–100, swing from the hips and keep moving after the shot

- [ ] **Day 29** — **Edit a matching set** — 40 min
  Pick nine of your best challenge frames and edit them so they look like one set, starting from a single preset.
  Start Lightroom Mobile; edit one photo, ... › Create Preset, apply it to the other eight, then adjust exposure per photo

- [ ] **Day 30** — **Reshoot day 1** — 40 min
  Go back to the eight scenes from day 1 and shoot each one again with settings you chose. Put the pairs side by side.
  Start Pro mode, or Photo mode with your own focus and exposure; WB and ISO set by you

DAY 1 AND DAY 30

Reshoot log

Fill in the left columns on day 1 and the right column on day 30, one row per scene.

SCENE	WHAT AUTO GOT WRONG ON DAY 1	YOUR SETTINGS ON DAY 30
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		

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