

Tips for Flowers

- Lighting
 - Bright, direct sunlight brings out the colour, but is very harsh and creates deep shadows
 - Overcast skies can provide the best lighting
 - Flash is not always ideal as it can ‘blast’ too much light bleaching out detail & colour
 - Use pieces of card to control light available
 - Shade from direct sunlight
 - Reflect flash or ambient light to fill in shadow
 - Use black card to deaden ‘hot’ spots
 - Use card as background for a single bloom

Tips for flowers

- Close-Ups
 - Use macro
 - Don't just shoot the entire flower head, get even closer and shoot detail of stamens or even just veins in leaves or petals
 - Fill the frame
 - Use small aperture (high F no.) to increase depth of field

Tips for flowers

- Wider Vistas
 - Think about composition when photographing a vista of plants
 - Shape of flowerbeds can be important as can ranks of flowers with same colour
 - Zoom in and out to see what looks best
 - Move viewpoint constantly and look for best angle or vantage point

Tips for flowers

- Getting Creative
 - Avoid temptation to always stand up
 - Try dropping to your knees
 - Try lying down to emphasise a single plant or bloom in the foreground with a distorted perspective
 - Use water spray to add a mist of water droplets

Flowers in close up

- Move in close
- Select macro
- Choose composition
 - Good shape
 - Grouped together
 - Soften light
 - use fill-in flash
 - Hold a sheet of paper to soften light falling on plants or reflect light from below
 - Remove dead blossoms or twigs (slide 1)

Flowers and foliage

- Enhancing colours (slide 2)
 - If too many blooms, isolate choice bunch against a clean background
 - Take exposure from flowers and keep the background dark
 - Use long focal length to help isolate blossoms and blur background
 - Only use flash if it is really dark
- Add interest (slide 3)
 - Waterlilies are spectacular, but adding an insect can bring it to life
 - Use flash in full sunlight to help freeze rapid motion & control shadows
 - Get as close as possible and set long zoom
 - Focus on flower and wait for an insect to land on it

Flowers and foliage

- Focus on raindrops (slide 4)
 - They add an extra sparkle
 - Position yourself so drops catch the light
 - Set zoom to long focal length and max aperture to blur the background
 - Compose very carefully, miniscule changes in position can make or break the picture
- Backlit leaf (slide 5)
 - Very large leaves are often best photographed lit from behind to show their structure
 - Get as close as possible
 - Use wide angle setting
 - Focus on symmetrically arranged detail rather than mass of leaves

Flowers and foliage

- Monochrome abstract (slide 6)
 - Strong symmetrical plants are ideal
 - Try different lighting
 - Hold camera square on to plant to make pattern as abstract and evenly sharp as possible
 - Set to black and white, if available. If not, capture and change it later on the computer
- Isolated bloom (slide 7)
 - Look for dark backgrounds to help isolate both shape & colour
 - Use long focal length
 - Expose for brightest parts to leave shadowed areas dark in contrast

Flowers and foliage

- Busy Composition (slide 8)
 - Not everything has to be clear & sharp
 - Sometimes try and capture that random feeling
 - Or, push camera right into the mass of leaves and flowers using Macro, turn flash off
- Extreme close up (slide 9)
 - The closer you get, the more is revealed
 - Use highest ISO setting to counteract depth of field dropping, causing blurring
 - Use macro + wide angle zoom setting
 - Try and line up main features so they are square to camera, making the most of depth of field

Flowers and foliage

- Lift the shadows (slide 10)
 - Use mirror or white sheet of paper on shadow side of plant to bounce fill-in light
- Petals and reflections (slide 11)
 - Petals and twigs floating in water can be attractive if sun is reflected in water
 - Measure exposure from important tones
 - Hold camera square to water to keep sharpness
 - Don't remove twigs or dead leaves as they can add to the chanced-upon look of the shot