

Taking Pictures of your Products

Natural sunlight can work really well for taking pictures of your products. Try taking them near a sunny window but out of direct sunlight.

A couple of years ago some awesome pictures of products were taken right in the backyard. A fence post was used to hold products one at a time and the picture was shot up towards the sky at an angle. It made a beautiful "blue sky with clouds" background.

Another series that was done to highlight a natural product line was done with a wooden basket filled with raffia. Each product was nestled into the raffia, the basket was placed on the grass and pictures were taken there. They came out great!

With a little imagination it is amazing what can be done - even in your own backyard. Digital cameras make it so easy to play around - and it is no big deal if you delete 95 percent of your pictures. You might accidentally discover the exact "look" you want.

If you know what products you are going to be selling, you can set up a bunch of photos all at once. An afternoon of picture taking is kind of fun and can really set your products apart. Play around with detail shots, "still life" photos and props like flowers, baskets or leaves, etc.

Also, look for chances to take once a year-type photos if you want to highlight something that is not available all the time. Here are some examples for soaps using appropriate props and backgrounds. A tray of snow holding a dish of peppermint swirl soaps or you could try seashells or sea glass and sand with sea breeze soaps. As fields fill up with wild sunflowers in late summer, you can plan photos to include those. Fruit scented soaps could be photographed with different fruits as they are in season. A few blooming lilac sprigs with a floral soap or a slice of hot apple pie next to a similarly scented soap could be fun.

When you travel home from vacations, don't forget a baggie of magnolia seed pods, pine cones, colored rocks, sea shells, sand and other "weird" things. They make great props for your product pictures!

Experiment with fabrics as well. Buy a yard of something you really like and play with it - just avoid anything shiny or you'll get too much flash bounce back. You might even find a scarf or other fabric in your house that will work for you. If you are looking for warm, rich looking pictures, try a yard of dupioni silk as a backdrop. It glows a little, but with practice you can use it as a neat effect in pictures.

Wool, batiks, polar fleece, calicos and many other fabrics can be used as backdrops. Velour also makes a nice backdrop. Some really nice pictures have been done where someone spread out the velour, then gently swirled the middle and put a product on it. This works well on a table so you can stand directly over the product and shoot straight down.

Alternatively, you can stack a pile of books on a table, cover them with fabric and put the products on the table in front of the books. Then, when you shoot, the whole background is the same color and you don't have to worry about what else is behind your products. There is nothing worse than an elegant product photo with a messy bookcase in the background!

Your kitchen counter can even be used as a background by fastening fabric to the cabinets above and draping it over the counter. Set your product on the fabric so that it is in the perfect position then, take your picture.

You could also use a "light tent" when you photograph your products. You can find them on e-Bay or do a search on Google for "how to make a light tent" and you'll get tons of tutorials and advice.



This is an example of photographing bars of soap using silky fabric in a bright color.