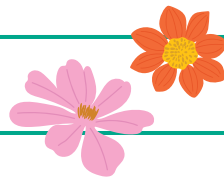




How to...



Capture spring on camera

Lots of the pictures that readers send in for our Photos of the Week pages feature nature. They might show a close-up of an interesting insect, a bird on a twig or a long-distance view over fields or woods. Spring is a great time of year to practise nature photography because there is so much life and colour on display.

Try practising your photography during a walk, taking pictures of things you see. Spring is bursting forth in city streets, gardens and parks, as well as in the countryside. Pause for a few minutes in one place.

This will help you observe your surroundings fully and give you time to pick out interesting features. Great photos can come from focusing in on a tiny portion of something – such as a little blossom on a huge tree – or from standing back and snapping a whole scene that tells a story, like a picnic in a park.

Whether you have a camera of your own or borrow a family member's phone to snap your photos, try the following tips to help you capture the essence of spring.

LIGHT SHOW
Bluebells grow where bare trees let light reach the ground. Try to snap sunbeams in a wood.



Seek out colour

The UK's landscapes are generally grey and brown in winter but in spring, plants start to grow again and bring a riot of colour. By April, trees are blanketed in pink and white blossom and bright flowers bloom in parks. Find colour and help it stand out by showing contrast in your photos: yellow flowers against green grass or a blue sky, for example, or a person dressed in colourful clothes.

Find new beginnings

Spring is all about growth; plants are unfurling and baby animals take their first steps. Farm animals often have young with them: look out for lambs or ducklings. Sunrise or sunset is a good time to spy wildlife too, but don't walk up to young creatures in case you alarm the mother. With plants, try looking closely. Zoom in on a bud that is half open to show nature opening up, or show a bee pollinating a flower.



Embrace the conditions

In spring, one minute you're basking in sunshine and the next you're reaching for your raincoat. This changeable weather is what makes the season special. Can you capture blossom falling from a tree in the wind like confetti, or frame the pink flowers against a lead-grey sky? You could also zoom in on a leaf dotted with raindrops or snap a vase of spring flowers by a rain-dashed window.

Play with focus and angles

You don't need a fancy camera to take great photos – just experiment with how you take them. For example, if you photograph a plant, angle your shot so you're looking up at it from the ground. It will look impressive and the photo will communicate a sense of growth. Also try focusing on one flower but have a blurred background filled with lots more. This will give an impression of life bursting up everywhere.



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