

BLACK BACKGROUNDS

BLUEPRINT

Photos of a single object in front of a black background are extremely appealing! They look clean, effective, and stylish. Luckily, it is not hard to capture them!

Simple black backgrounds work great in portraiture and product photography. While the first thing that comes to your mind when you think of black backgrounds will be minimal composition, you don't have to stick to it. Combining black backgrounds with the rule of thirds, leading lines or golden spiral can yield truly fantastic results.

When it comes to shooting indoors, the situation is easy since you can simply change rooms or backdrops if you're working in a studio. A simple monotone background will ensure that nothing distracts the viewer from the main subject.

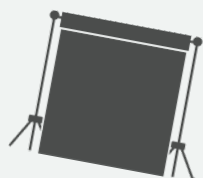
However, you don't have to be limited to shooting indoors. Search for cool black backgrounds outdoors. With the proper attention, it's possible to find the dark nature background and capture dramatic outdoor portraits.



Examples of images with black backgrounds

1 BLACK BACKDROP

The best way to shoot black background photography is to find a proper black backdrop. Finding a backdrop has another advantage: working with a black background significantly reduces the amount of time spent on the post-processing stage.



The best choice is a dark or black stretchy fabric that doesn't reflect light. For instance, black velvet is an excellent choice and it looks very classy. But if you're on a budget, even a black bed sheet or a similar fabric will work great.

TIP:

You may be surprised, but the best black background photos don't always include a black backdrop. The proper lighting and exposure can do the job instead.

2 LIGHTING

Thanks to the great film photographers of the past, we know that the art of creating a pure black background is pretty much a matter of lighting.



Don't hesitate to play with natural light. For instance, a black background can be created by putting your subject close to the window in a room where all the doors and other windows are closely shut. Adding a black backdrop on the wall can make the appearance of a dark background even stronger.

TIP:

Studio lighting is easier to work with. It gives you an extra level of control. Your subject needs to be in a bright spot compared to the background.

THE ESSENTIALS

3 CAMERA SETTINGS

The proper exposure of subjects in front of black backgrounds is as essential as the lighting. Just pay attention to camera settings to achieve the best results.



Set your ISO to the lowest value possible, set your shutter speed to the highest option, select an aperture of around f/5.6, and take it from there. Check that you see nothing but a dark background on the screen.

TIP:

If you need it, use the flash to separate your subject from the background. A backlight can be useful in some cases.