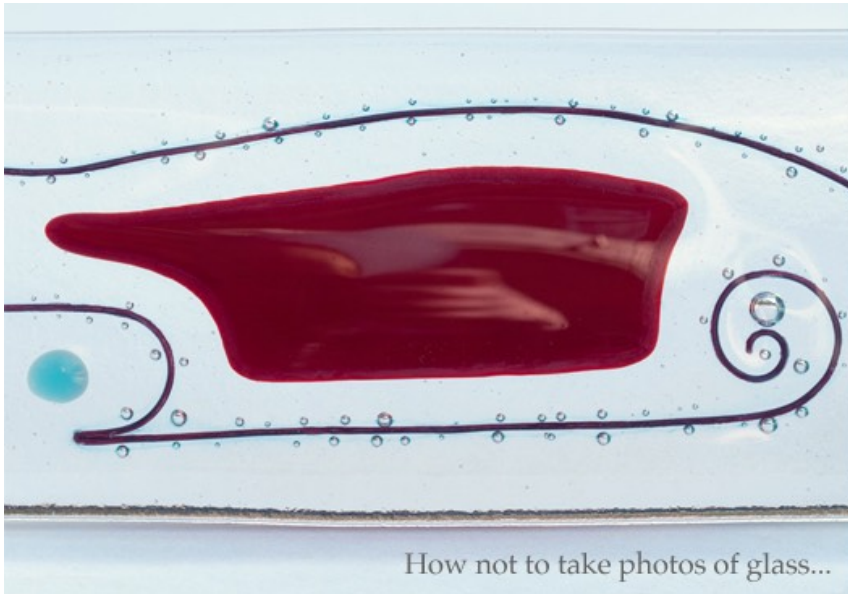


Photographing Glass - a few ideas for better pictures.

Karen Dewson

Whilst it's always worth investing in professional photographs of your work, sometimes you just need to take a quick snap for that daily Insta post or to pique a bit of interest for a new product. As a glass artist, you will know that the qualities of this glorious material actually make it one of the most frustrating to photograph. My early attempts ended up being less about the glass and more about the reflections, usually of me and the camera!



All about the light

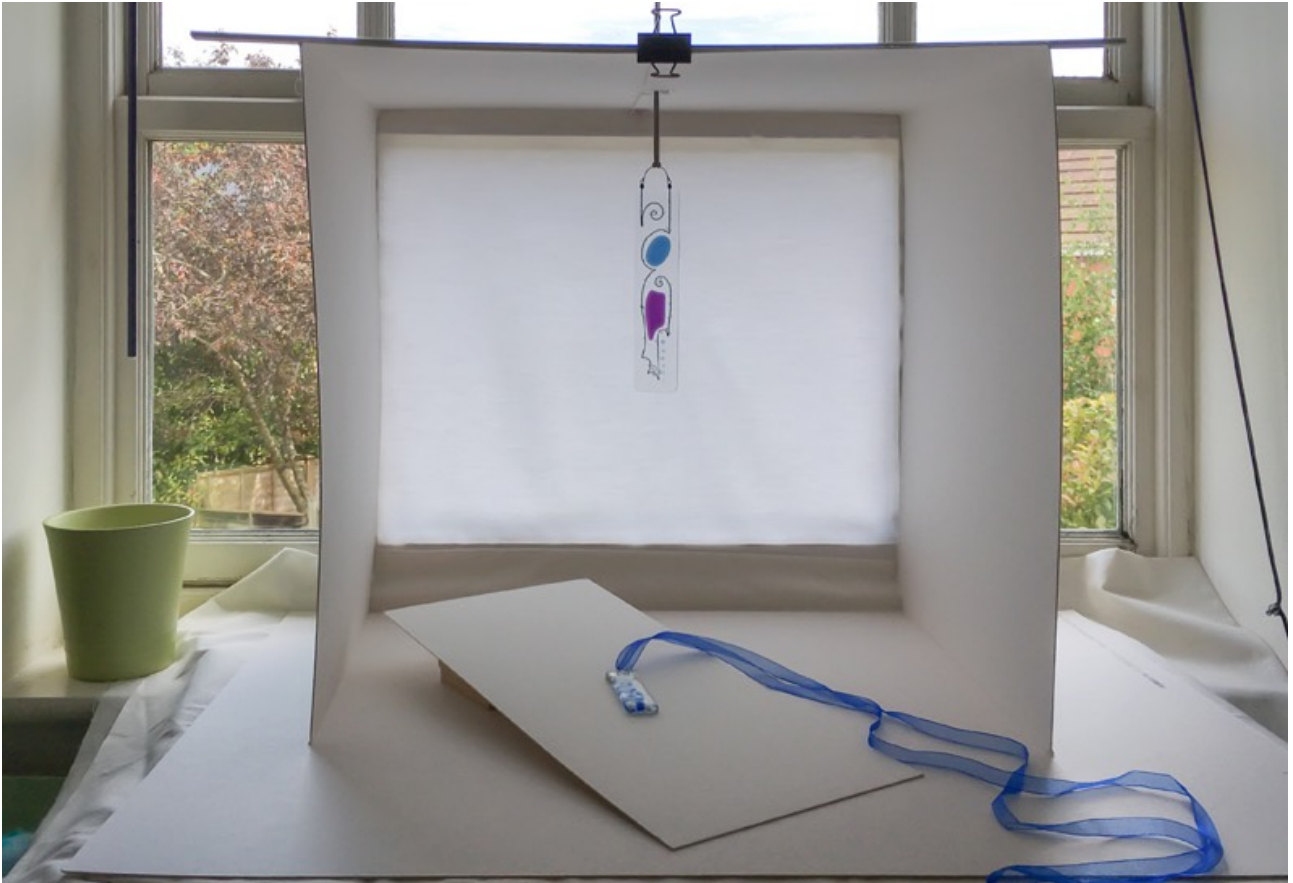
It's helpful to think about what you want to convey about your glass work - what's your favourite thing about it? Is it the brilliant colours when the light shines through it or does it have a shiny surface that sparkles in the sun?



A straight-on shot of the light pull looks flat whereas what really sells it is the texture of the bubbles and the sparkle of the iridescent glass.

Reflections

If you want to avoid reflections you can makeshift yourself an enclosure. When I was starting out I used a piece of white cotton fabric taped over a window surrounded by 3 pieces of mount board (foam board works just as well). It's actually a really good set up for glass but you'll need a bright room or some extra light from the front to bring out the detail.



At other times you might actually want the light to reflect off the glass. Try using a piece of card or a magazine, held in just the right place, to block out the brightest highlights or reflections and remember to check what is actually being reflected in it before you post it to your feed!



Take it outside

Even on an overcast day the light outside is great for taking photos. In fact, overcast days are better as you usually want to avoid bright, direct sun. If it is sunny though, you may be able to move your work or change the angle of the camera to avoid distracting reflections or highlights from dominating the shot. Play around with backgrounds: take a sheet of card with you, find a plain wall or even use the sky.

The Details

Getting in close to your work is a great way to avoid those annoying reflections especially if you're not able to move your glass for some reason. And why not do this anyway, it can be really helpful if you're selling your work online.

Consider getting some kind of tripod for close up work or even a phone stand - you need to keep the camera still to get your shot in focus. Also, the more light the better, particularly if you're using a phone - you're focusing on a very small area so the lens needs lots of light to pick up the detail. Avoid dark corners of your workshop.

Don't get too close either - lenses have a limit. If it looks blurry, pull back a bit until what you're focusing on is sharp.



Over to you

You don't always need an expensive camera to take good photos - most phone cameras are good enough, but it does help to know how to get the best results from what you've got. Invest a little time in practising, play around with different settings and locations and try using different sources of light.

Be kind to yourself and don't expect to get this straight away - it takes time, but once you find a few options that work you will have a go-to method to take a nice little image for your media post.

Karen Dewson is a glass artist in the process of 'giving up the day job' as a graphic designer. She is currently working on 'Fifty Projects' exploring different crafts - including textiles, paper folding and photography, plus a variety of glass techniques. You can find her on Instagram [@karendewson](#) or see more details about the ongoing projects on her website www.karendewson.com. Light pulls are currently available on [Etsy](#).