

Product Photography Checklist

A practical PDF for planning e-commerce, catalog, packaging, and small business product shoots with fewer missed details.

VT Photo Workplace | vphotoworkplace.com/guides/product-photography-checklist-pdf

USE THIS FOR Product intake, tabletop setup, lighting control, shot coverage, file naming, retouching notes, and final delivery QA.

1. Shoot brief and deliverables

Field	Confirm before the shoot	Notes
Client / brand	Who approves the final images?	Name, email, and review deadline.
SKU count	How many unique products and variants?	Separate color, size, bundle, and packaging variants.
Image types	Hero, side, detail, scale, lifestyle, packaging.	Confirm if every SKU needs every angle.
Final crops	Square, vertical, horizontal, marketplace, web banner.	List exact pixel sizes if known.
Usage	Website, marketplace, ads, wholesale catalog, social.	Usage affects framing, retouching, and licensing.
Deadline	Proofs, retouching, final delivery.	Hold buffer for approvals and reshoots.

2. Product intake checklist

<input type="checkbox"/>	Match every product to the SKU list, shot list, and client brief.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Inspect for scratches, dents, fingerprints, wrinkles, label damage, missing parts, or mismatched packaging.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Clean, steam, polish, assemble, charge, inflate, or style products before they reach the set.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Separate hero products from backups, damaged products, props, packaging, and returns.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Confirm handling needs for fragile, reflective, liquid, food, jewelry, apparel, or one-of-a-kind items.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Photograph or note the unpacked state so products can be repacked correctly after the shoot.

3. Studio setup checklist

<input type="checkbox"/>	Tabletop, sweep, background, clamps, acrylic risers, fishing line, tape, and styling tools are ready.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Camera is locked on tripod with level horizon, fixed focal length, stable crop, and tethering connected.
<input type="checkbox"/>	White balance, color card, exposure, lens profile, and file naming convention are set before batch shooting.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Diffusion, white cards, black cards, flags, foam board, and reflectors are within reach.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Computer, tether cable, memory cards, spare batteries, backup drive, and power strips are tested.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Client review station or proofing workflow is ready if approvals happen on set.

4. Product shot list grid

SKU / product	Required frame	Crop / background	Status
	Hero front angle	White / square	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Side or 45-degree angle	White / square	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Detail or texture close-up	Macro / vertical	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Scale or in-use frame	Lifestyle / vertical	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Packaging or bundle	White / horizontal	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Variant or colorway	Match hero crop	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Retouching note frame	Reference only	<input type="checkbox"/>

BATCH RULE

Shoot one test product through the full workflow first. Once crop, lighting, color, and naming are approved, repeat the same settings across the full batch.

5. Lighting and reflection checks

Product type	Watch for	Control move
Matte packaging	Uneven gradients, crushed edges, dull texture.	Use large soft key and a white card opposite the shadow side.
Glossy packaging	Bright streaks, unwanted room reflections.	Move light angle first; add diffusion and black cards to shape reflections.
Glass / clear items	Lost edges, fingerprints, background distortion.	Backlight softly and define edges with black cards.
Metal / jewelry	Camera reflection, hard hotspots, color contamination.	Build a tent or large diffusion surface; keep black cards clean and intentional.
Fabric / apparel	Wrinkles, lint, inaccurate color, flat texture.	Steam before set, use side light for texture, confirm color with a card.
Small objects	Depth-of-field misses and crop drift.	Use tripod, focus check, and repeatable product marks on the surface.

6. File delivery and QA checklist

<input type="checkbox"/>	Review every hero frame at 100 percent for focus, dust, scratches, labels, fingerprints, and visible support tools.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Check color against the product, color card, client references, and any marketplace requirements.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Confirm crops, margins, background tone, shadow consistency, and alignment across the product batch.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Apply consistent file names by SKU, angle, version, and export size before delivery.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Back up originals, selects, retouching files, exports, and client notes before clearing the set.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Send proofing instructions, revision limits, delivery format, and final approval deadline to the client.

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