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# A Guide to Capturing 360° Photos and Videos in Nature and Outdoor Environments

**360° photos and videos enable you to capture an environment in its entirety, allowing viewers to explore the scene in every direction — forward and backward, left and right, up and down.**
**This method is particularly well suited for showcasing natural attractions, tourist destinations, and accommodation settings.**

This guide provides practical instructions and tips for getting started with 360° content in nature and outdoor environments. It is designed for beginners with no prior experience.

## 360° photos

A simple and efficient way to capture subjects, these images are highly versatile and suitable for a wide range of uses. They work especially well for documentation, marketing, and providing general overviews. Compared to video, photographs are typically faster to prepare for publication and require less post-processing expertise.

## 360° videos

Delivers a more immersive and engaging experience through sound and motion. 360° Video can capture atmosphere in a way that images cannot—for example, the gentle rustling of wind or the soft lapping of water.
Editing video requires dedicated software (free or paid), sufficient computer performance, and some time to craft content that is clear and enjoyable for the viewer.

# Required Equipment

## 360° Camera

There are several camera options available on the market, such as Insta360. Prices can range from a few hundred to several thousand euros, but for most everyday use, a camera in the lower price range is perfectly sufficient.

## Compatible Memory Card

Most 360° cameras require a separate memory card. The correct type is usually specified in the camera's manual. It's important to choose a card with adequate read and write speeds, especially for recording 360° video. If you're focusing only on photography, the performance requirements are less demanding.

## Tripod

A tripod is used to keep the camera steady during shooting. Prices typically range from around €100 to a few hundred euros. While videos can also be captured handheld or with the camera mounted on a moving object, a tripod is ideal for stable shots.

## Smartphone (Recommended)

Many 360° cameras can be controlled via a smartphone during shooting. A phone's larger screen also makes it easier to preview and frame your shots, improving the overall shooting experience.

## Computer or Smartphone for Editing

You'll need a computer or smartphone to process and edit the captured material after shooting.



# Planning and Execution of the Shoot

## 1 Planning the shoot

**1. Planning Before the Shoot**
Consider which locations or subjects are the most interesting and worthwhile to capture. Create a simple shooting plan to guide your work in the field. It's also helpful to decide in advance whether you will focus on 360° photography, 360° video, or a combination of both.

**2. Pre-Shoot Checklist**
Before heading out, make sure your camera has a memory card inserted and the battery is fully charged. Take a test shot at home or in the office to confirm that everything is working properly — this ensures you're ready when it's time to start shooting.

## 2 Photography or Video Shooting

**3. Shooting on Location**
Ensure the camera lenses are clean before you begin. Confirm that the correct shooting mode is selected—either 360° photo or 360° video. Use a timer or smartphone control if needed to trigger the shot.
Position the camera, activate the timer, and move out of view—hiding behind a building, large rock, or tree if necessary. Wait until the camera has completed capturing the image or footage.

Repeat this process consistently at each planned shooting location to ensure a uniform and well-structured set of images or videos.

# Processing Captured Material and Useful Tips

## 3 Processing Captured Material

- Transfer the captured material to a computer, for example by connecting the camera with a USB cable (or the camera's own cable) or by inserting the memory card directly into the computer.
- On the computer, the files can be imported into the camera's dedicated software, such as Insta360 Studio. These applications often include useful tools—for example, the option to remove a tripod from the image by covering it with a selected logo.
- The software typically allows you to export 360° photos and videos in widely supported formats (such as JPG or MP4), making them ready for further use—for instance on a company website or platforms like YouTube.



*This is what a 360° photograph looks like as a standard image*

## 4 Best Practices and Tips

- Check the weather conditions in advance before your shooting day.
  - Cloudy weather is often ideal, as it creates softer shadows and more even lighting.
  - Avoid rainy weather, as water droplets can easily show up on the lenses of a 360° camera.
  - Shooting in sunny conditions is also possible, but be mindful that direct sunlight hitting the lens can cause strong contrast and make shadowed areas appear very dark.
- Take a test shot before heading out to ensure everything is working properly.
- Position the camera at a reasonable distance from buildings and other large objects, as 360° imaging can distort subjects that are too close to the lens.
- Finally, make sure the shooting location is clean and safe.

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# Don’t hesitate to experiment and make the most of the possibilities offered by 360° content!

360° photos and videos is an easy way to create engaging and versatile content that allows a location to be presented in a comprehensive way. The result is high-quality material that is especially well suited for tourism, marketing, and guidance purposes:

- when shooting locations are carefully planned
- the camera is positioned at an appropriate height
- the images are processed to match their intended use.

After a few tries, you’ll quickly realize how easy and enjoyable creating 360° content can be. New ideas will naturally emerge —and they’re well worth exploring.



This guide has been created as part of the HAVU project (Wellbeing and Experiences from Private Forests through New Technologies) at Seinäjoki University of Applied Sciences. More information about the project (2024–2026):

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***P.S. Interested in experiencing nature through mobile gameplay? Explore the HAVU trail game!***