

Important Factors for Product Photography

- Natural Color (usually)
- All details in focus
- Most important factor? Lighting.
 - Shows all details vividly
 - All reflections are carefully controlled
 - Almost no clipping



Setting Up The Product

- Decide on the best angle for the product.
- Make certain the product is perfectly clean. Dust, scratches and finger prints that you wouldn't notice with the naked eye will be revealed in the picture.
- Use a "sweep" or seamless background that curves up from beneath the product, up behind it, all the way out of the frame above the product.



Most Popular Lighting Equipment for Product Photography?

- Softbox
 - Purpose: to soften contrasts
 - To provide rectangular reflections
 - Outputs light that is both diffused and directional
 - Easy to control



Softbox Grids and Honeycombs

- Keep light from spilling into un-required areas.
- But watch to keep reflections of the grid off of visible product surfaces.



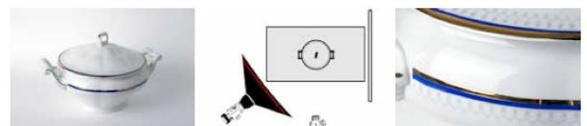
Softbox Placement

- The larger the softbox, the softer the light will be.
- The closer to the object, the softer the light
- Place at 1/2 the box's diagonal length
 - Further away increases contrast & shadow
 - Closer and too little contrast



Softbox Placement

- Usually off to the side with reflector or 2nd softbox placed across



Softbox Placement

- Straight down is classic car photography, antiques, glass, jewelry, expensive items.



- Car ads use 20' softboxes just out of the frame (or skip photos and use computer 3D models).



Varying the Size of the Softboxes?

- To make reflections uneven and interesting – (See speaker image)
- On reflective objects, all you see in the image is the label, the cap, and the reflected softboxes!

Reflective Objects

- For shiny round objects get the light really close.
- You are actually taking pictures of the lighting equipment reflecting in the products.
- Light from below to minimize shadows. Light from below inside lights transparent objects and reduces glare.



Reflective Objects

- Light from below to minimize shadows.
- In shiny transparent objects, light from below reduces glare.



Ambience

- Look at the background. What do you want there?
 - Will it be easy to select the product for compositing?
- You may have to light the background to have contrast between the object and background.
- Use snoots, barndoors, grids to keep light from where you don't want it.



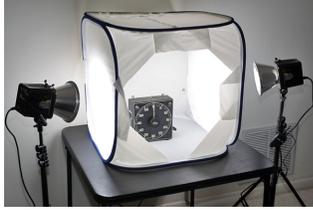
Photographing White Objects

- Whitish objects need a not-so-bright fill light.
- Allows gradients to show. Enhances form of object.



Alternate Lighting: Tent

- Has advantages for less reflective and more complex products. Provides a soft even light that fills cavities and minimizes harsh shadows.
- Room inside for a sweep
- Less expensive



General Advice

- Many products are shot at the ragged edge of overexposure.
- Use a relatively narrow aperture.
- Have a puffer and/or small brush to remove dust.
- Set it up on a little stand to minimize shadows (sometimes supported at an angle).
- Resist over-sharpening the image.

