

What Does a Photojournalist Do?

Photojournalists capture images of events, incidents or people to create a press story.

Their job description entails editing and preparing pictures taken in real life situations to obtain visual materials used to support news stories.

In performing their duties, photojournalists visit several locations to obtain photographs of people, events or scenery for journalistic purposes.

They usually work for news agencies, magazines or documentary companies. Their role involves covering of important occasions such as the Olympics, national election, mass protest and other relevant events.

Photojournalists usually operate a range of cameras and image-enhancing equipment such as artificial lighting, lenses, and filters.

They use these tools to capture clear images, which depict a situation and tell a convincing story.

Their work description may also write a brief narration to describe or caption an image.

As part of their responsibilities, photojournalists conduct research to gather useful information about a subject prior to photo shoot.

They process images by developing negatives and using specialized computer software such as Photoshop or Print Shop Pro to edit and enhance image, and also present photos to supervisors for review and approval.

Photojournalists as part of their duties liaise with reporters to position images in a manner cohesive with news stories.

They arrange their schedule and appointments in a fashion that allows for daily completion of assigned tasks. They also keep record of photographs using image databases.

In fulfilling their role, photojournalists may work as freelance press photographers to cover an event and sell the images to a newspaper or web news agency.

They negotiate price of photography and services provided. They also convert images to digital format to allow for web use.

Photojournalists as part of their description use email and other messaging applications to forward images for publication.

They often work in rather dangerous conditions such as poor weather, war zones and other life-threatening conditions.

They also maintain work instruments and ensure they are fully functional for field work.

To get into the photojournalist career requires a Bachelor's degree in photojournalism, journalism, law, or in a related discipline.

To succeed on the job, the qualities you will need include an eye for details, technical skill, and a lot of courage.

Photojournalist Job Description Example/Template

Photojournalists perform various functions in their bid to provide the best pictures to support a news story.

The job description example below gives major duties, tasks, and responsibilities that commonly make up the photojournalist role:

- Use a variety of cameras to take photographs of important locations, people, events or moments
- Process photos by developing negatives or editing digital images to produce clear visuals
- Compose headlines, captions or other descriptive tag to interpret a photo
- Use photo editing software such as Print Shop Pro or Photoshop to edit or enhance an image
- Travel to local and international regions to cover the photo requirements of a story
- Collaborate with reporters to ensure images correspond with news stories
- Present photos to editors or supervisors to review and approval
- Negotiate the price of images and photography services when working as freelance press photographers
- Manage time effectively in order to achieve assigned tasks
- Conduct research to verify facts about an event or incident prior to photo shoot
- Keep record of photographs in an image database
- Manipulate parameters such as lighting, focus, depth and distance to obtain clear images

- Capture images of life-threatening situations such as crisis, war or extreme weather conditions
- Specialize in one or more aspects of photography such as sports, press, documentary or freelance photography
- Conduct interviews to obtain facts which validate a news story.

Requirements – Skills, Abilities, and Knowledge – for Photojournalist Job

If you are seeking to work as a photojournalist, here are typical requirements most employers may expect you to meet to be qualified for an interview:

- **Education and Training:** To become a photojournalist, you require a Bachelor's degree in photography, photojournalism, or journalism. Knowledge of photo editing programs such as Photoshop and other similar software is necessary for the job. Photojournalists are also required to maintain a portfolio of images which highlight their photojournalistic abilities
- **Eye for details:** Photojournalists are able to capture images which are visually descriptive and validate a news story
- **Technical Skill:** They are able to operate various photography tools and equipment to obtain images for a publication
- **Courage:** They display some level of courage when working to obtain images under life-threatening circumstances.

Photojournalist Job Description

If you're looking for a career that combines your photography skills, travel, and interest in current events, you might consider becoming a photojournalist.

Sometimes referred to as a news photographer, photojournalists take still pictures and videos of important or noteworthy local or global events.

Photojournalists might work for specific newspapers, magazines, or websites, or might be freelance photographers hired contractually by any of these sources.

These professionals often work independently and possess a strong eye for detail. They are quick-thinking decision-makers who choose images they believe to be newsworthy; sometimes this decision must be made instantly or at the least in a short amount of time. Photojournalists can be full- or part-time workers.

Photojournalist Duties and Responsibilities

Photojournalists employed in any venue perform the same or similar core tasks. We have examined several job listings and found the following to be among those duties and responsibilities most often mentioned by employers seeking individuals to fill this position:

Take Pictures and Videos for News Outlets

Working independently or directly for news stations or magazines, photojournalists take pictures and videos to accompany stories or that visually tell a story on their own. Photojournalists employ styles as outlined by specific sources, use appropriate lighting techniques, and are willing to shoot pictures in indoor studios or outdoor locations. They take pictures recording breaking news, sports events, investigative features, or political news stories.

Use Photo Software to Edit and Enhance Images

Photojournalists often make use of editing software to touch up or enhance images as needed. They might use software to add or edit sound, crop pictures to fit certain media, or edit pictures to accompany stories.

Maintain Photography Equipment

Photojournalists make sure that their digital cameras and video recorders are working properly. They must update equipment or make repairs as needed to capture the clearest and most compelling images needed to support or enhance

news stories. They must possess the creativity to incorporate the most updated photography technologies into their assignments.

Attend Editorial Meetings and Suggest Story/Photo Ideas

Photojournalists often attend meetings with reporters, editors, and other staff members to add their creativity to current stories, make suggestions for photo opportunities in future stories, and suggest story topics for which they can lend their services.

Photojournalist Skills and Qualifications

Creative, detail-oriented individuals with an eye for images that would capture readers' attention are often the most successful photojournalists. The following skills and abilities are among those most commonly sought by employers of these professionals:

- **Equipment skills** – thorough knowledge of digital camera equipment, lighting equipment, lenses, and other necessary photography tools is essential to photojournalists
- **Editing skills** – knowing what to enhance and what to take away from images is an important ability for photojournalists to master
- **Creativity** – photojournalists must consistently find creative ways in which to visually depict the stories they are covering to draw readers in and maintain interest in stories covered by the magazine/news station/website they are working for
- **Collaboration** – it is crucial that photojournalists work closely with reporters, editors, and news managers to generate story ideas, review images, and assist in choosing which stories would benefit from their photography skills

- **Organizational skills** – a photojournalist might spend anywhere from a day to a week shooting images in various locations, for various stories, and it is important that they maintain organization of their images and corresponding stories
- **Time management** – often being involved in breaking news or current stories, photojournalists must be adept at keeping to schedules and delivering edited images for stories in a short period of time
- **Flexibility** – stories do not often break at any set time; photojournalists have to be available at different times and days; their schedule must be flexible to accommodate the last-minute needs of their employers

Photojournalist Tools of the Trade

Tools and equipment that photojournalists must be familiar with include:

- Photography equipment (lenses, film, light meters, hard drives)
- Photo editing software (Final Cut Pro, ENPS, Adobe Premiere)