

## Photographs

When visiting communities, items relevant to the research are likely to be found in the homes of people encountered. Rarely can these items be retained, either because of their significance to their owners or simply because the space and facilities to preserve them are not accessible. However, keeping a record of these items is practical for collective memory and, eventually, for creating devices of cultural transmission. Consequently, photography is a good means of preservation. Here are some tips and concepts to consider for successful photographs.



### Equipment

- Use a tripod: this ensures the same photographic quality for each object and the same photographic plane for each photo.
- Use two light sources on each side of the object, ideally at an angle of about 45 degrees to avoid casting shadows around the object. However, this angle may vary depending on the type of object and material.

### Sharpness and image quality

- Use a white or black background: the white colour enables the object's details to be more visible and creates a better colour balance. Black should be used for very pale objects or when a contrasting effect is desired.
- Choose a location with controlled lighting and favour cold light, if possible.

### Shooting and framing

The principles of framing and cameral shot angles, as well as lighting, are the same as for video. Here are some specifics about photographing objects:

- Determine a frame for the objects: objects should be placed in the center of the image with an equal amount of empty space on each side;
- Reflect on the orientation of the object: ideally, the object should be placed according to the orientation of its use. For instance, if a photograph of an arrowhead is taken, it should be pointing towards the top of the picture;
- Take pictures from several angles: the recommendation is to take several pictures of each side of the object (front, back and sides) to allow a better understanding of the object;

- Use a scale of relevance: a visual marker in a photograph enables the object's measurements to be determined from the photograph. This can be as simple as placing a quarter near the object. Certain scales can also make it easier to calibrate colours. For smaller artifacts, it is recommended to use black and white scales. The scale should be placed below the object and centered with the latter.

### **Useful links**

**Archéolab :** How to take successful photographs of artifacts

<https://www.archeolab.quebec/en-coulisses/pratiques-et-astuces/comment-reussir-ses-photographies-d-artefacts#:~:text=Choisir%20un%20lieu%20o%C3%B9%20l,assez%20pr%C3%A8s%20de%20l'objet>

**Video :** Video – Lighting Techniques for Photographing Heritage Objects

<https://www.canada.ca/fr/institut-conservation/services/formations-apprentissage/ateliers-en-personne/documentation-photographique/techniques-eclairage.html>

**Choosing a shot**

**PDF file photo procedure**

[https://histoires-perspectives.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/procedure\\_Photo.pdf](https://histoires-perspectives.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/procedure_Photo.pdf)