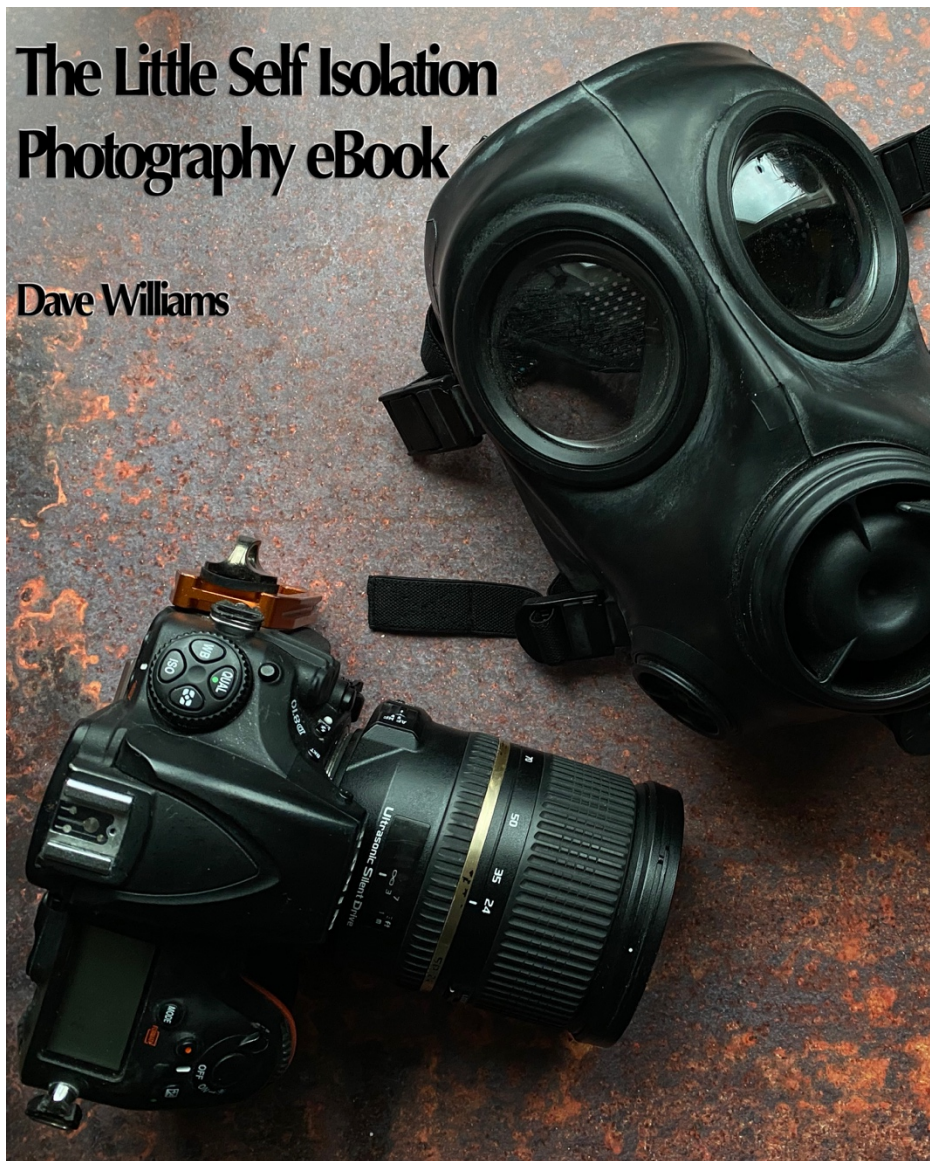


The Little Self Isolation Photography eBook

Dave Williams



The Little Self Isolation Photography eBook

25 ideas for photography education for quarantiners

Dave Williams

(Currently not in quarantine)

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First (and last) edition

idavewilliams.com

Preface

Between the Coronavirus itself and the insane shortages in supermarkets fuelled by irrational panic-buying, I feel like myself and many others are in need of distraction. Worldwide we're seeing stringent, sensible safety measures introduced. Unfortunately, we're seeing the tragic effects of the COVID-19 virus, too. The decision to self-isolate, be it a decision made by an individual or on their behalf by a professional or an agency, seems a sensible one to prevent the spread of the virus. I mean, I've been sharing some straight-up hilarious nuggets on my social channels, but in reality, this is some serious shizz. The countries on lockdown seem to have the right idea as the transmission of this stinking virus seems to increase exponentially. There hasn't been a day here in the UK where it doesn't seem to have doubled. The self-isolation practice is important for several reasons, and people should take note of why.

At the rate of growth this thing is demonstrating, there simply won't be enough hospital beds for the infirm. We already see people treated in hospital corridors, and this is just going to get worse before it gets better. A lot worse. I mean, China is only now beginning to consider a return to relative normality, and it's been months. Our industry has already felt the effects of Coronavirus in China and locally., with events cancelled and camera production delayed. Anyway, back to isolation. So, anyone who has the ignorance to not self-isolate when told to do so is simply spreading the virus to those susceptible to suffering its effects. I'm talking about the 'I'm young and fit and healthy' people. You may be young and fit and healthy, but your presence in a public place unnecessarily is transmitting something that your body can cope with to someone whose body may not be able to cope. Think about your actions, at least for the next few months. Check on your family, friends, and neighbours (from a distance) and help those who need your help. Don't forget it wasn't that long ago we all pledged to #BeKind – let's follow up on that.

So, let's do the bit about why you'll like this book next. Firstly, it's easy! This book is jam-packed with project ideas to help you continue your education in photography in the comfort of your own home. Each idea is simple, concisely explained, and there's enough of them that it's geared at all skill levels. Yes, all skill levels – we *all* need to keep practicing and learning.

Right at the other end of the spectrum, if you're one of those people who we in the industry call a 'camera owner' then perhaps now is the time to get it out, dust it off, charge up the batteries and decide once and for all which direction you want to take your hobby in. This eBook is jam packed with projects and signposts to help.

Whichever you are, and whatever else is going on right now, I sincerely hope this book gives you at least one idea and provokes some education and creativity in the world of photography. Our community of photographers is a strong and defiant one – we've proved that time and again. Nothing can stop us.

1 – Water Droplets

Water droplets are a great place to start to learn about light. Contrary to logic, it's not the shutter speed that freezes the moment, but the flash. A shutter speed of half a second can be used in tandem with a speedlight to suspend the motion of the water droplet as it falls and splashes into the liquid. Roberto Pisconti is in quarantine in Padua, Italy right now, and he's using his Pluto Trigger to get some fascinating water droplet shots like the one below. To step it up a gear, switch the water for milk, or use food dye or glitter.



2 – Smoke

Smoke can look awesome if you do it right, and you do it right when you practice it. To add some fire to this chilli I simply suspended it using a skewer hidden in the shadows on the right, lit it with a speedlight on the left, and added smoke with an incense stick underneath. The incense stick was vanilla flavour, but I've heard other flavours work just fine. With a little patience and some precision placement the smoke from the incense stick will lick the chilli. Smoke on its own looks cool, too. You can experiment with different compositions and different elements to wake up a smoke photo of your own. A room with still air is important to keep the smoke under control.



3 – Still Life Challenge

Still life is obviously a whole thing in itself, but the still life challenge is a way of awakening creativity. All you have to do is this: - pick up your camera and walk around your home to find a composition. The point here is to use what's already there and find the right angle to make it look as awesome as possible. Shooting antibacterial hand gel doesn't count. Good luck!



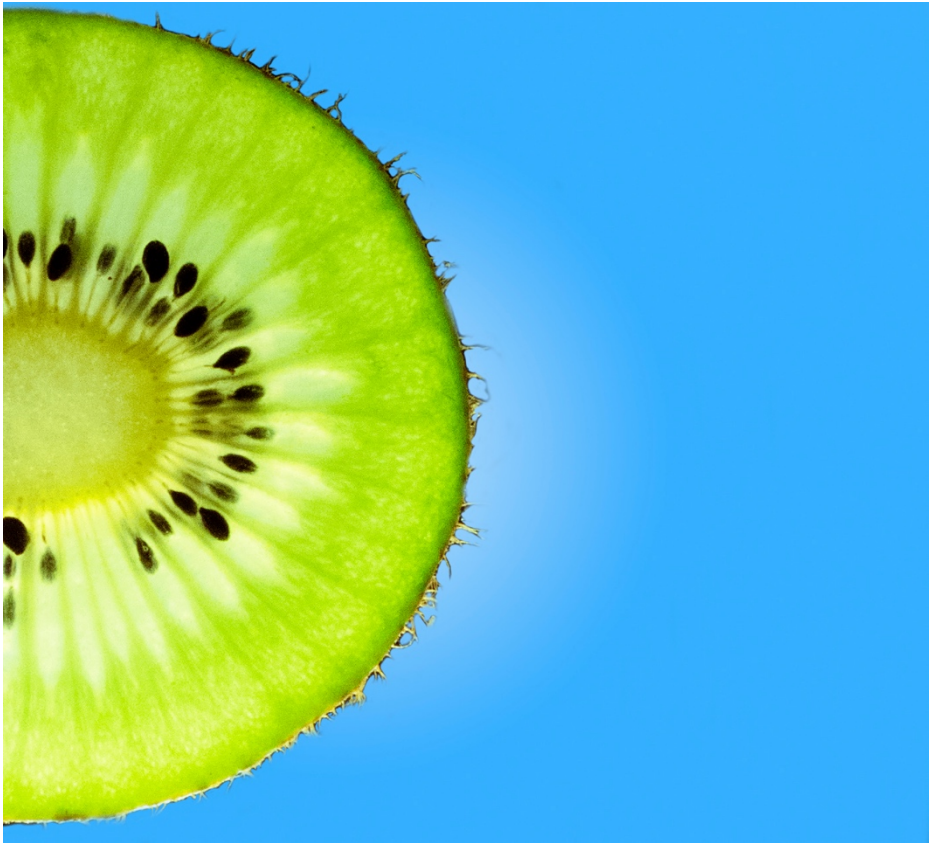
4 – Levitating Everyday Items

This can either be an education in photo manipulation or forced perspective. In the former, use Adobe Photoshop to remove the objects used to levitate your object, and in the latter try to conceal those objects with perspective. In this example I peeled a banana and placed it on my kitchen counter, using toothpicks to hold all the pieces together. I then removed the toothpicks using Adobe Photoshop, specifically using the Spot Healing Brush – keyboard shortcut J. See if you can get creative making something in your home levitate.



5 – Macro Food

In this shot I thinly sliced a piece of kiwi and placed it on a clear Perspex pane, lighting it from the rear to make the colours really pop. You can mix it up with different background and different compositions and remember that it works best to rear light something translucent like this kiwi or some citrus fruits. Anything opaque will be best lit from the front. Be careful though – this project will make you hungry!



6 – Water Focus

Staying in the kitchen for this one, and please excuse my terrible example, we can create some cool images by focussing on water droplets on our Perspex pane, with something interesting underneath. This colourful candy is perfect, and if I had any glycerine handy my water droplets would have been, too! By the way, I'm sorry this photo is so bad, but I usually shoot mountains and stuff.



7 – Flowers

Everybody, no exceptions, has shot flowers at some point. You can practice your flower photography indoors. To create this shot I used green cardboard as a background and sprayed water on the flower from an atomiser to add the droplets. Simple! One trick to shooting flowers is to carefully consider the perspective – if we shoot a flower from a position similar to the view we'd get when we stand over them, there's nothing cool about that and our image isn't going to stand out amongst a crowd. Getting low, side on, or straight down is where it's at.



8 – Go High Key

High Key in photography is basically a way of saying 'bright.' This high key image of a client's jewellery is shot using two speedlights to ensure no shadows. The key to high key (if you'll pardon the pun) is to flood the scene with light but be sure to keep an eye on the histogram to ensure it isn't so much that it's over exposed. To read this simply on a histogram, if the peaks are all on the right, it's too much.



9 – Clean Your Gear

We all have plenty of cleaning gear right now, I'm sure. Using air, cloths, cotton buds, give all your gear a spring clean. We all hate having dust and smears on our images and this is a great opportunity to tidy it all off. Don't go near your sensor unless you know what you're doing, though!



10 – Make a Flat Lay

Flatlay photography is very on trend right now. You'll see it in marketing everywhere, and all over Instagram. Creating a cool flatlay image is far more than simply putting things on a table. The focus shifts on a delicate balance between composition and subject, and the placement of the elements of a flatlay, as well as a considered colour and tone scheme, is crucial.



11 – Catch a Podcast

Despite being a visual art, photography is the theme of many awesome podcasts. It's amazing how we can find such vocabulary to describe our images! Whether it's the focus of your attention or running in the background, a photography podcast can be a tremendous source of information, inspiration and creativity.



12 – Start an Adobe Spark Project

Adobe Spark, included in the Creative Cloud, is a series of apps designed for visual creativity. Using Spark Page you can create a killer webpage, and using Spark Post you can create a catchy splash or thumbnail. These apps are intuitive, and packed with awesome features. You can even use Spark Post to bring a Live Photo to life. Have a go, there's not much to tell you, it speaks for itself.



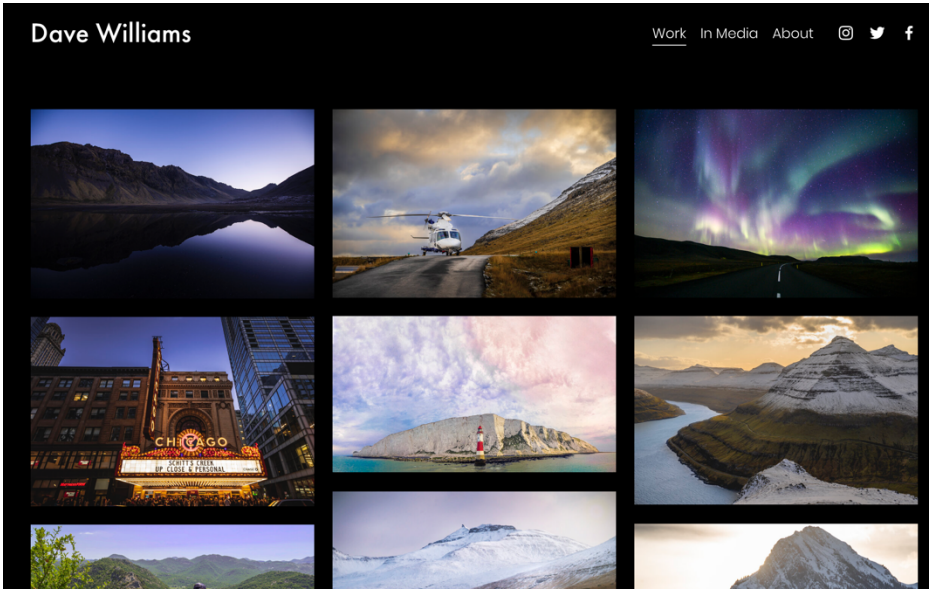
13 – Letter Hunt

This has a couple of interpretations, so this may as well be two ideas, but I've smashed them into one. Try and find letters in your home and shoot the alphabet, either with literal letters, or with objects making the shape of letters. Step it up a gear by spelling out words, perhaps using letter tiles.



14 – Make a Website

Or, if you have one, make it better! A good website for a photographer is a tidy shop-window where we showcase the very best we can do, drawing in new clients with our exposé of skills. A good website is easy to navigate, and for a photographer it has photos on the front page!



15 – Write

As creatives it's common for photographers to have creativity elsewhere, and this can often be in writing. Take a moment to write about something. Perhaps about a photo, or an experience, and try to get a decent, detailed explanation of the subject out there in words. You can take this to the next level by making it regular and starting a blog to add to your website, which shows people a different side to you and also increases your SEO reach. If you want to really push it and you really enjoy it, try writing for others such as the blogs of the companies you love.

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FEBRUARY 11, 2020

Creative Photography in Switzerland with Dave Williams

Photos and text by Dave Williams

I'm Dave Williams, a travel photographer from the UK, and a man with an awkward love for Platypod. I've told stories about Platypod many times, and today I have another such

16 – Sort Out your Hard Drives

If, like me, you seem to have data all over the place, now is a great time to tidy it all up. Backup where necessary, and organise all those files and folders floating around on your computer and hard drives, especially the ones on your desktop!



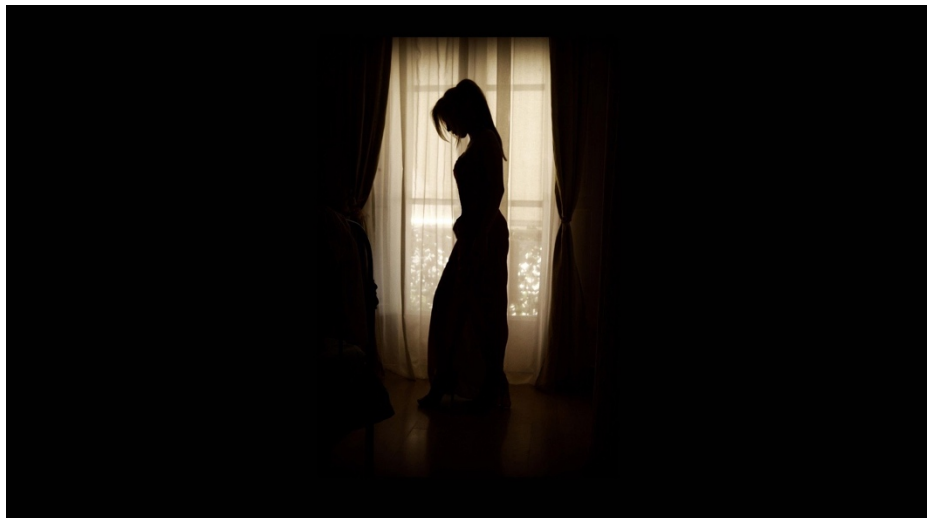
17 – View From The Window

This can be interpreted in a couple of ways. Firstly, we could try to find the most interesting view from a window of our home. Another interpretation is to shoot the same view from the same window under different conditions, perhaps when it's early morning or when it's raining outside, to get a different view from the same place.



18 – Silhouettes

Sticking with windows, another idea is to put one of your fellow quarantiners in front of it and shoot their silhouette. A net curtain works effectively to filter and disperse the harsh light.




19 – Practice Adobe Photoshop

We often learn as we go with Photoshop, so taking the time to deliberately learn new skills and tricks is a great use of time. If you can copy my mirror selfie, I'll be impressed!

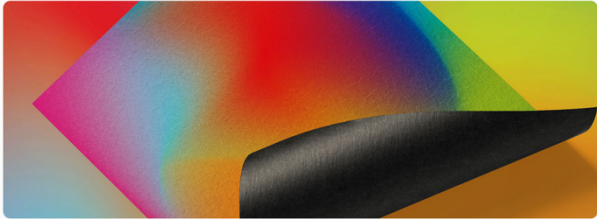


20 – Learn a Parallel Skill

Photography is great on it's own, don't get me wrong with this one, but if we have another trick up our sleeve it stands us on better ground. Looking at the Adobe Creative Suite, learning another app such as InDesign or Premiere Pro is a great way to up our game. There are plenty of resources to learn from like books and even from within the Adobe ecosystem itself.

 **InDesign**
DESKTOP



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Design & Layout



Information
COMPATIBILITY
✔ Works on this computer
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15.0.2

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21 – Print Photos

Learning how to correctly print your own photos, then how to mount and display them, is an inherent element of photography. Glyn Dewis is doing a great job of bringing all of this together right now, so if you want to learn how to print I suggest you learn from him.




22 – Collections

DO you collect something? Shooting it is a cool way to display the collection and to give consideration to an often overlooked compositional technique – patterns and broken patterns. A collection doesn't need to be photographed as a pattern, of course. There are other ways to shoot them, but this will give us a provocative lesson in composition, lighting, balance, and many other things.




23 – Take a Course

There are tons of photography courses out there, begging for us to learn from them. They range from very broad to very specific. Some are free, some come with a cost (which tends to be worth the investment), and in either case we'll learn rather than simply let time pass us by.



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- ☐ Family/Children Photography (0)
- ☐ Fashion Photography (0)
- ☐ Food Photography (0)
- ☐ Inspiration (0)
- ☐ Landscape Photography (0)
- ☐ Lighting/Flash (0)
- ☐ Lightroom (0)
- ☐ Macro Photography (0)
- ☐ Photo Retouching (0)
- ☐ Photography Basics (0)
- ☐ Photoshop (0)
- ☐ Plug-ins, Apps & More (0)
- ☐ Portrait Photography (0)
- ☐ Post-Processing (0)
- ☐ Sports Photography (0)
- ☐ Travel Photography (2)
- ☐ Videos (0)



How to Prepare for Your Travel Photography Adventure

with David Williams

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24 – Read a Blog

If you're still considering the 'Write a Blog' idea, perhaps go and read one. There are lots of photography blogs in the world, keeping us informed of the latest news, biggest developments, coronavirus conference cancellations, and hottest images and techniques. I write for ScottKelby.com and DIYPhotography.net – obviously the two best ones. Also available on my watchlist are fstoppers.com and petapixel.com.

 Photography

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THIS IS HOW TO CAPTURE A ROCKET PHOTO LIKE ERIK 'THE ROCKETMAN' KUNA


March 16, 2020 by [David Williams](#) · [Add Comment](#)





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25 – Bokeh and Fairy Lights

Improving composition and direction in one go, shooting a quarantined model with fairy lights and a wide aperture produces dreamy results. If you don't have a model, stick the fairy lights in a jar or wrap them around something and shoot away. A prime lens with a wide aperture, perhaps f/1.8, is ideal. f/2.8 will also work.

