

Pinhole Camera Lab

Please note that, for this lab, it is essential that **all** students are flexible in working out a schedule; the success of the project depends upon this flexibility.

Group Work: You may choose to work on your own or in a group (2-4 students). If you choose to work in a group, each member must participate equally. Each group member must help in

- a. constructing a camera or cameras;
- b. exposing and developing film;
- c. writing the group report.

Objectives: Choose one of the following or make up your own.

1. Work as a group with a single camera to explore different subjects* or lighting
2. Work as a group to build cameras with different focal lengths to explore the same subject but with different effects.
3. Other ideas? Please check with us first!

Week I: Building & Testing the Camera (33%)

1. You need to build a camera according to instructions given in class. You will build the camera in three stages:
 - a. **main box;**
 - b. **film holder;**
 - c. **pinhole.**
2. For this project to be successful you will need, (1) a **sunny** day, and (2) **time** in the darkroom to develop the film and print. So, the advice is to **TEST EARLY AND OFTEN!** Actually, this should be a rule; patience and persistence are important for success.
3. Each group can have two pieces of film to test and/or trouble-shoot a camera.
4. Prior to turning in your final report, (see Week II), submit a written statement with regard to the objectives listed above, e.g., light, focal length, etc., that you will be exploring.

Week II: Getting “Good” Photos (34%) & The Lab Report (33%)

1. If you work by yourself you need to have two “good” photographs that demonstrate your stated objectives. If you are part of a group, each member of the group will need to submit two photographs. (If there are four people in the group, you will need to submit eight “good” photographs.

2. A written report needs to be submitted; it should include:
 - a. a description of the camera(s) that you built;
 - b. a discussion of the how the camera works including how your were able to get clear photographs;
 - c. a scaled sketch of your camera(s);
 - d. a description of your objective(s);
 - e. photographs documenting what you learned; and
 - f. a final in-depth discussion of the process necessary to reach your stated objectives. (For this part, you can explain how much time it took to build a camera(s). What were some of the problems encountered exposing and/or developing the film? How did you manage the limited amount of time available in the dark room?)

*Hints. Subject matter should be carefully chosen. Try to approach your subject with an artist's eye rather than just randomly taking images to turn in. Remember, one of the goals of the Italian artists of the 15th century was to observe how light falls on and reveals an object. Photographers, good photographers, had this same goal when the camera was first developed.

If you are in a group, and, therefore, have multiple cameras to work with, consider deciding on a theme before you start taking the photographs.

Photographing still objects will probably work better than moving objects.

Although you need a sunny day for this project to work well, plan to take photographs early in the day or late afternoon; you will get more interesting light at those times of the day.

