Get Close to Christmas



CHASE COLOR: Here, I got low and close to a parked car headlight with a wider aperture of f/4 to soften the background colors in this display of Christmas lights.



GET CLOSER TO PEOPLE: This is an example of how NOT to do it. Try to avoid standing far away when photographing family and friends. Get in as close as you can, try to get the person in sharp focus and the background in softer focus. Also, when photographing children, get lower to their eye level.



GET CLOSE TO CHRISTMAS by Jim Austin Jimages

It’s beginning to look a lot like Christmas. When you are out photographing with your family and friends, do Just This: Get close. You will see many folks taking shots of their kids, pets and friends from far away. Do something different. Get in close so you fill the frame and you’ll get more successful shots. First, we’ll cover tips for the iPhone like Portrait Mode. Then, we’ll look at close focusing with a DSLR.

iPhone TIPS TO GET CLOSER AT CHRISTMAS

ONE Set your iPhone to Portrait Mode, orient the camera vertically, then move in as close as you can focus to the person you are photographing.

1. START Open your Camera app on your iPhone.
2. Swipe to the Portrait Mode.
3. Find the yellow colored Portrait box.
4. Tap  .

TWO After you make your Christmas portrait, edit with your iPhone with Studio Light, Contour Light, Stage Light or Stage Mono:

1. Select the photo that you want to change.
2. Tap Edit.
3. Swipe to choose your Lighting effect.
4. Tap Done.

You can also use Portrait Mode on an older iPhone. Just Google Depth Effects and Patch: Smart Portrait Editor. Depth Effects has blur, lens flare and color filters. Patch will apply a blur to your background automatically. While perhaps not quite as good as iPhone’s portrait mode, Depth and Patch are alternatives for older iPhones.

DSLR PHOTOS AT CHRISTMAS

MANUAL FOCUSING: If you have a digital camera or DSLR, try switching the mode and the lens to manual focus. Now, use the closest focus setting the lens has. You may find that a wide angle setting, like 35 mm, or 28 mm, or 12 mm, works better to get in close, but just be mindful that distortion can also happen at the edges of the frame. If you use wide angle setting for people, place them in the center of the frame so their image is not distorted.