

# Basic Digital Photography to Make You an eBay PowerSeller!

Jim Miotke  
President  
BetterPhoto.com



BOSTON | JUNE 14-16  
07 

The power of all of us™ 

# Important Information

Presentation content © 2007, BetterPhoto.com, Jim Miotke. All rights reserved.

The views expressed in this presentation are those of the presenter and do not necessarily reflect those of eBay Inc.

Please do not take our picture or record this class without asking permission.

eBay, eBay Live!, and the eBay logo are registered trademarks of eBay Inc.

Other trademarks and brands are the property of their respective owners.

No part of these materials may be further reproduced or transmitted in any form, by any means (electronic, photocopying, recording or otherwise) without prior permission of the presenter.





# To Sell at the Best Price, Your Product Must...

- Dominate the stage
  - Your goal = Make your product pop off the page!
- Stand out
  - With great color, against contrasting background
- Be shown in its best light
  - Soft, diffused light



# Items You'll Need: Camera on Tripod



# Remote Shutter Release



# Other Items You'll Need:

- Simple backdrop
- Light source
  - Strobes (If hot shoe on camera)
  - Continuous lights
  - External flash
  - The sun (natural light with reflector)
- Diffusers (soft box, umbrellas, diffusive materials)





# Pre-shoot Checklist

- No need for mega-megapixels—2+ is enough
  - Forget about 72dpi; only pixel dimensions matter
- Set to JPEG and choose high quality
  - Low pixel dimensions okay
  - Low quality/high compression not okay
- Flash on/flash off
- White balance set to Daylight, Shade or other
- ISO low and camera mounted securely on tripod

# #1 Simplicity Is Key



# Which Is More Likely to Sell? Item with Distracting Background or Without?





# Note Distractions In Upper Background





# Simplicity—Part II: Seamless Paper



# Okay But We Can Do Better





# Seamless Black Paper Background: Buyer Can Now Focus on the Product

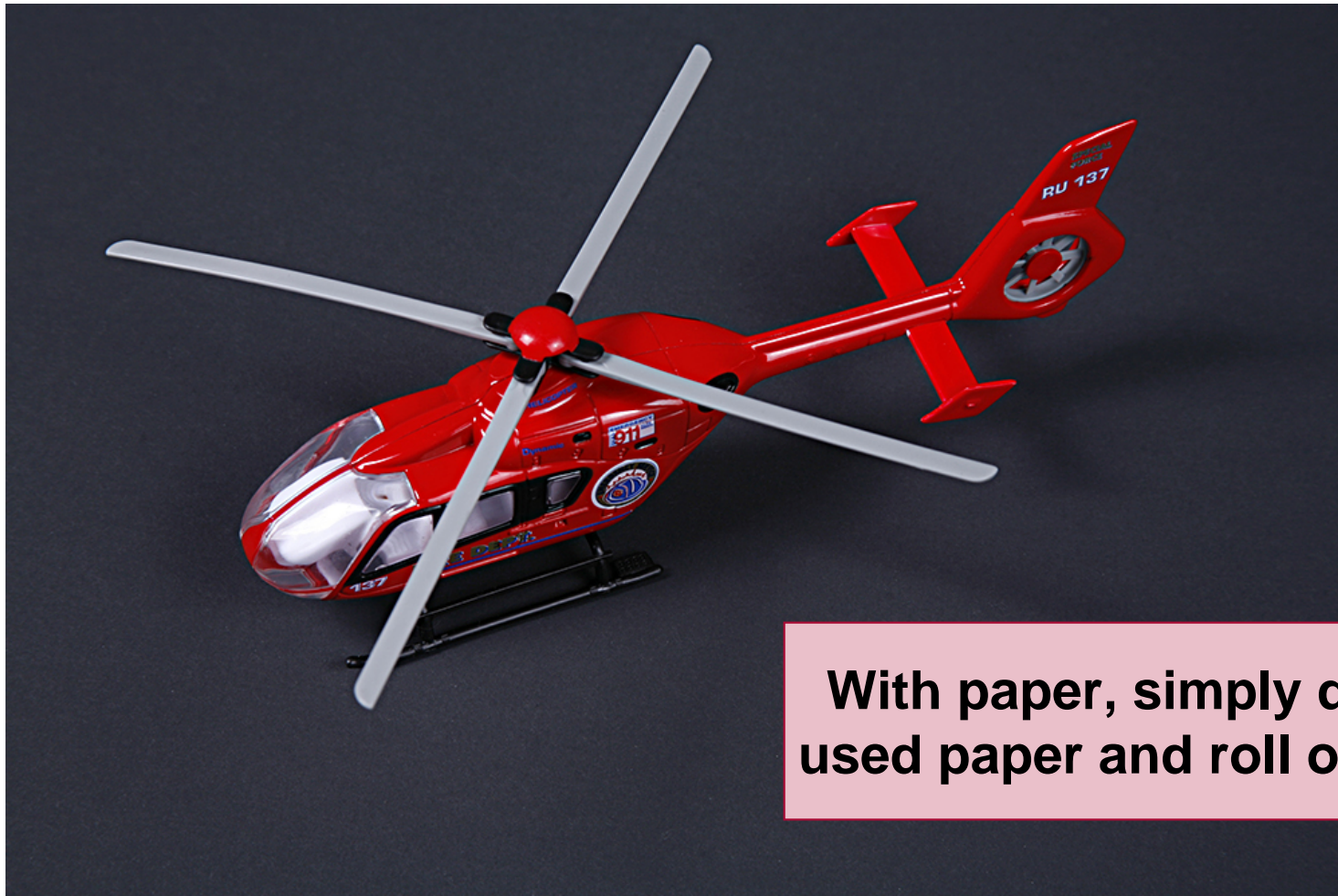


# And Again...From Okay to...





# Much Better



**With paper, simply discard used paper and roll out more**

# Against Same-color Background: Item Is Lost on White Background





# Against Opposing-color Background: Contrasting Color Helps Make Item Pop!



# Backgrounds: Summary



- Simplicity is #1
  - Even color, preferably simple white or black
    - Seamless even better
- Contrast the color with your subject
- How to hold: tape, clips, PVC, or professional holding stands



# Making a BIG Impression



# Clean & Simple...But Far Too Small



# Moving In Closer: Product Stands Out





# Again, Too Far Away



# Much More Impact & Connection





# Another Bad “Before” Photo: Where’s the Product in All This?





# Better: On Seamless Background But Still Too Far



# From Wide-angle To Telephoto: Least Distorted (& Best Selling) Photo On Right



# Show Details & Multiple Angles





# Show Side Views, Plus...

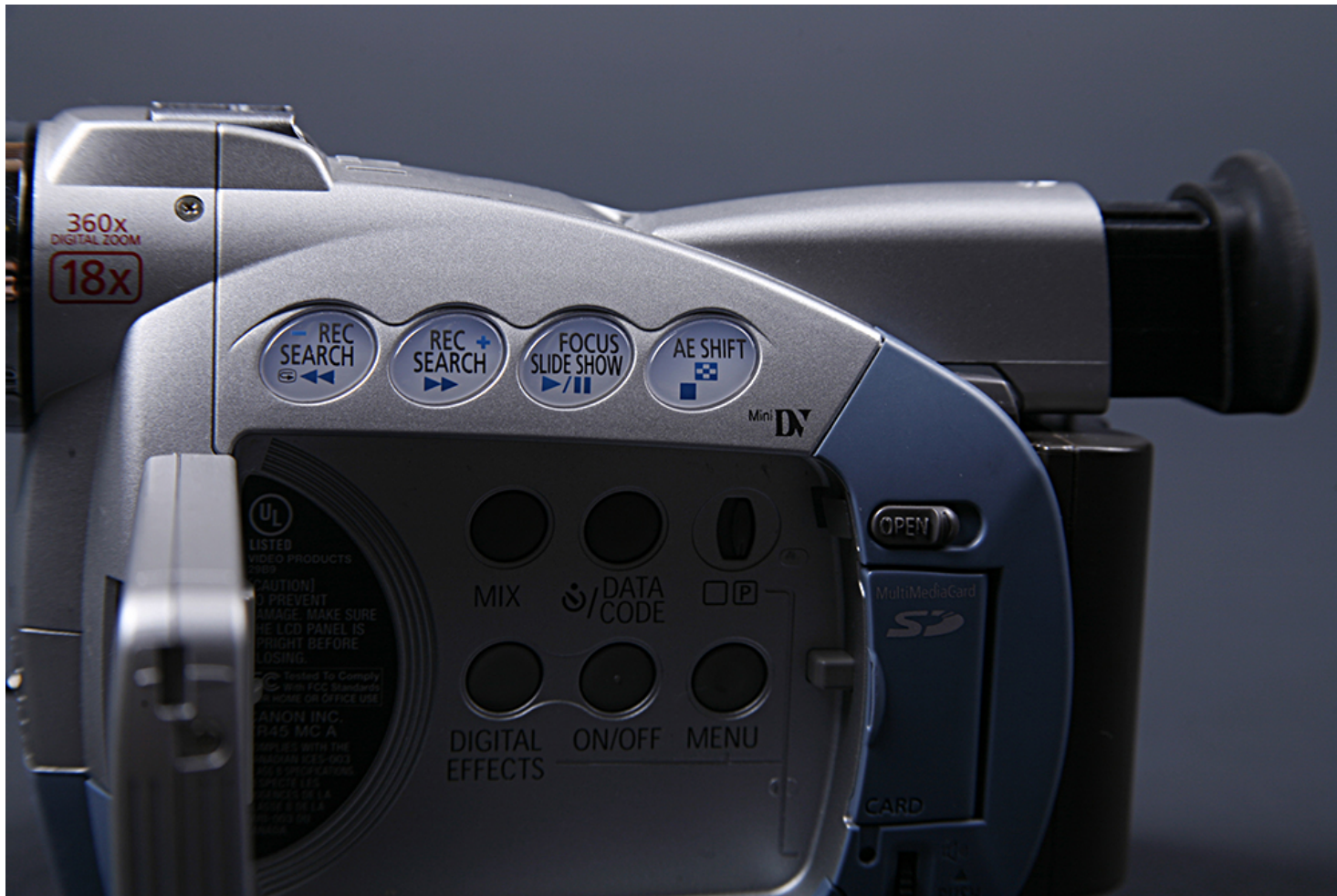


# Front View...Plus





# Close Ups of Details





# When Giving Shopper Photos, Enough Is Never Enough

- Give the shopper many views
  - Don't just take one picture
  - Since you can post many photos...include many views
- Change point of view to show various facets of product
  - Shoot high, shoot low
  - Left and right
- Experiment with positioning of subject

# Create Full Product Views as Well as...



# Close Up of Details



**Keep it clean: Remove dust, polish, and arrange objects**



# Give the Buyer Everything They Might Want... & More





# Simple Flat Set-up on Simple Background



# With Holder





# Positioning Your Subject: Slight Angle Helps Differentiate Objects



# Show Both Pros & Cons



# Be Sure to Include Photos of Accessories, Boxes & Certificates That Help Sell the Item

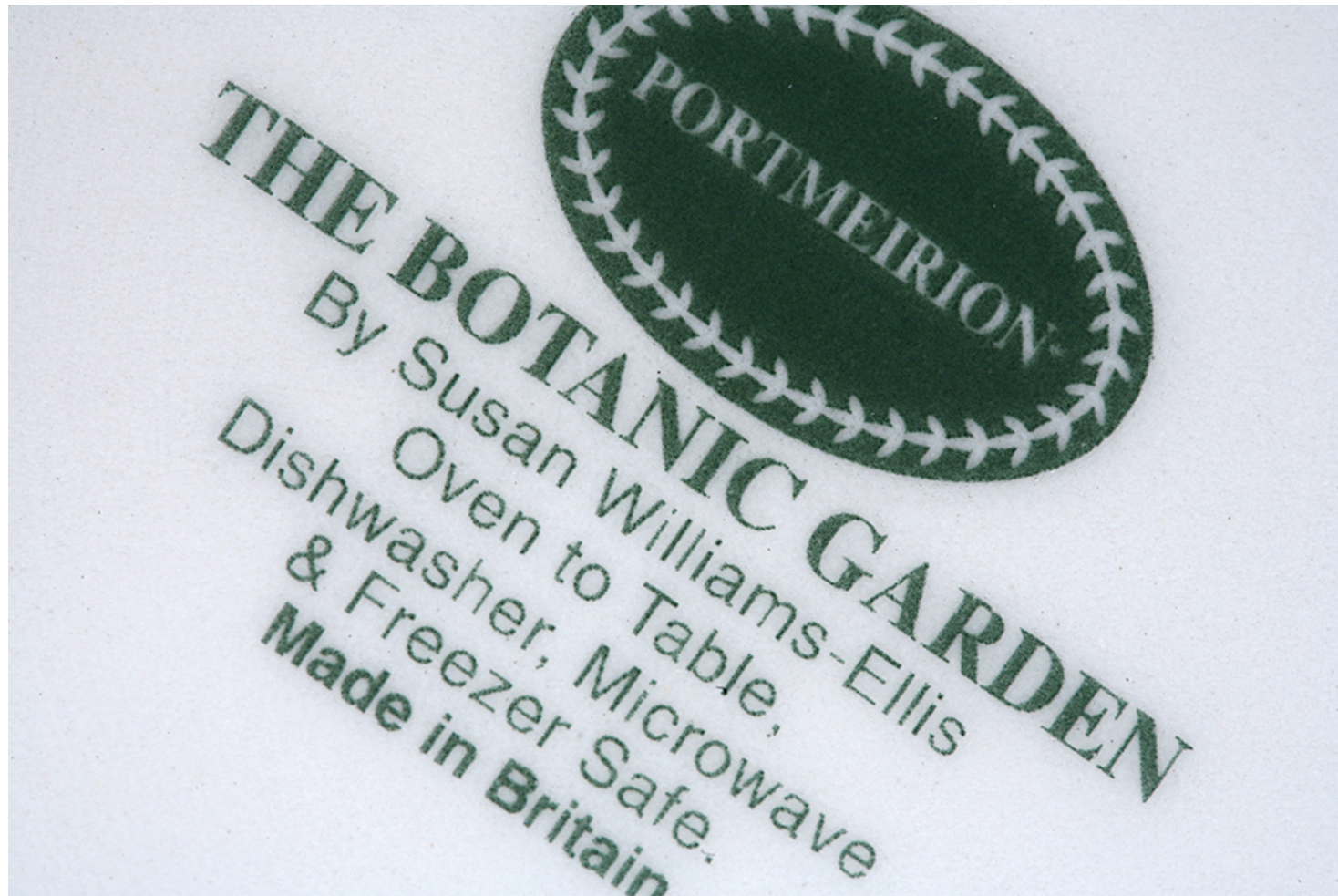




# Be Sure to Include Photos of Accessories, Boxes & Certificates That Help Sell the Item



# Be Sure to Include Photos of Accessories, Boxes & Certificates That Help Sell the Item





# Show Dings, Dents, Scratches, & the Like





# Show Dings, Dents, Scratches, & the Like



# Show Dings, Dents, Scratches, & the Like



# Macro





# Getting in SUPER Close

- Does your camera have a “macro mode”?
  - Turn on
  - Zoom in and/or move camera closer
  - Watch LCD screen for focus
- If using digital SLR, use macro lens or accessories

# Okay But Not as Close as We Would Like: as Close as Possible Without Macro Options



# Getting Close & Beginning to Blur; Camera May Not Allow You to Shoot at All





# Getting Closest—Lens Has Lost Ability to Focus



# With Special Macro Lens or Mode: You Can Get Extremely Close & Still Focus





# Examples with Objects to Show Scale





# Summary: Ways to Make Subject Big

- Zoom in at time of shooting—“cropping in the camera”
- Move in closer, but watch for distortion
- Macro—best with lens or macro mode
- Cropping with software okay...to a degree

# Flash vs. Available Light



# On-camera Flash: To Be Avoided





# On-camera Flash vs. Natural Light



# Use On-camera Flash Only as Last Resort

- Available light far superior
- External accessory flash better than on-camera
- You can diffuse flash with diffuser/bouncer
- Or lower flash intensity with flash compensation

# Shadows & Positioning Lights





# Bad: Direct, Harsh Light from Single Light Source



# Slightly Better: Direct, Harsh Light from Both Directions





# Best: Soft, Diffused Light from Both Directions





# Diffusing the Light to Soften Shadows

- Options
  - Soft boxes
  - Umbrellas
  - Semi-transparent plastic
  - Post-it notes
  - Pro diffusers

# Post-it Note: Use to Diffuse Light from Flash

**Believe it or not,  
this works!**



# With One Diffused Light: Strong Shadows





# With Two Diffused Lights: Shadows Lessened with Second Light



**Tip: with small objects,  
get down low**

# Shadow Search & Destroy

- Watch the shadows
  - Strong with single light
  - Even with two or more lights, placed strategically
- Move light back and forth as needed
- Alter light source before altering settings on camera

# Using Reflectors





# Without Reflector



# With Reflector





# Without Reflector





# With Reflector



# Reflecting to Fill in Shadows

- Options
  - Foam core
  - White sheet
  - Professional reflectors

**Foam core can be found at  
craft stores and frame shops**

# Tips for Saving Time

- Keep studio set up in an out-of-the-way spot
  - Plain background (with holding system that works)
  - Lights (so you can shoot at any time)
  - Tripod
  - Accessories, power and other cords ready to go
- Shoot from every angle at one “sitting”
- Use low-res, high-quality JPEGs (800px)
- Do as much altering “in camera” as possible



# Troubleshooting: Focus Issues



# Camera Shake: You Move Slightly as You Take the Picture



# The Solution: A Tripod with a Remote Shutter Release





# Remote Shutter Release: Keeps Hands Off of Camera While Shooting



**Alternately, you can use self-timer on camera**

# Focus In Wrong Place: The Eyes Always Have It





# Focus Now On the Eye





# Summary



- Simplicity is key
  - Plain background
  - Large subject in center
  - Zero distractions
- Lighting is everything
- Be willing to experiment (view LCD and adjust exposure and lights as needed)
- Show all sides of product
  - Goal: encourage shopper to buy “sight unseen”

# Determine Your Game Plan

- Does your camera:
  - Give you control of aperture/shutter speed?
  - Allow you to control resolution and JPEG compression?
  - Give you the ability to control white balance?
  - Have a macro mode or macro lens?
  - Have a hot shoe?
- Do you have and use a tripod?

# Determine Your Game Plan

- Can you set up a studio?
  - Space
  - Money for lights (if not, use natural light)
- What's your budget?
  - Mini-studio will save you time, make it easier, and increase your profits from sales
- Where to set up studio
  - Out of the way (so it can be left up and available at all times)

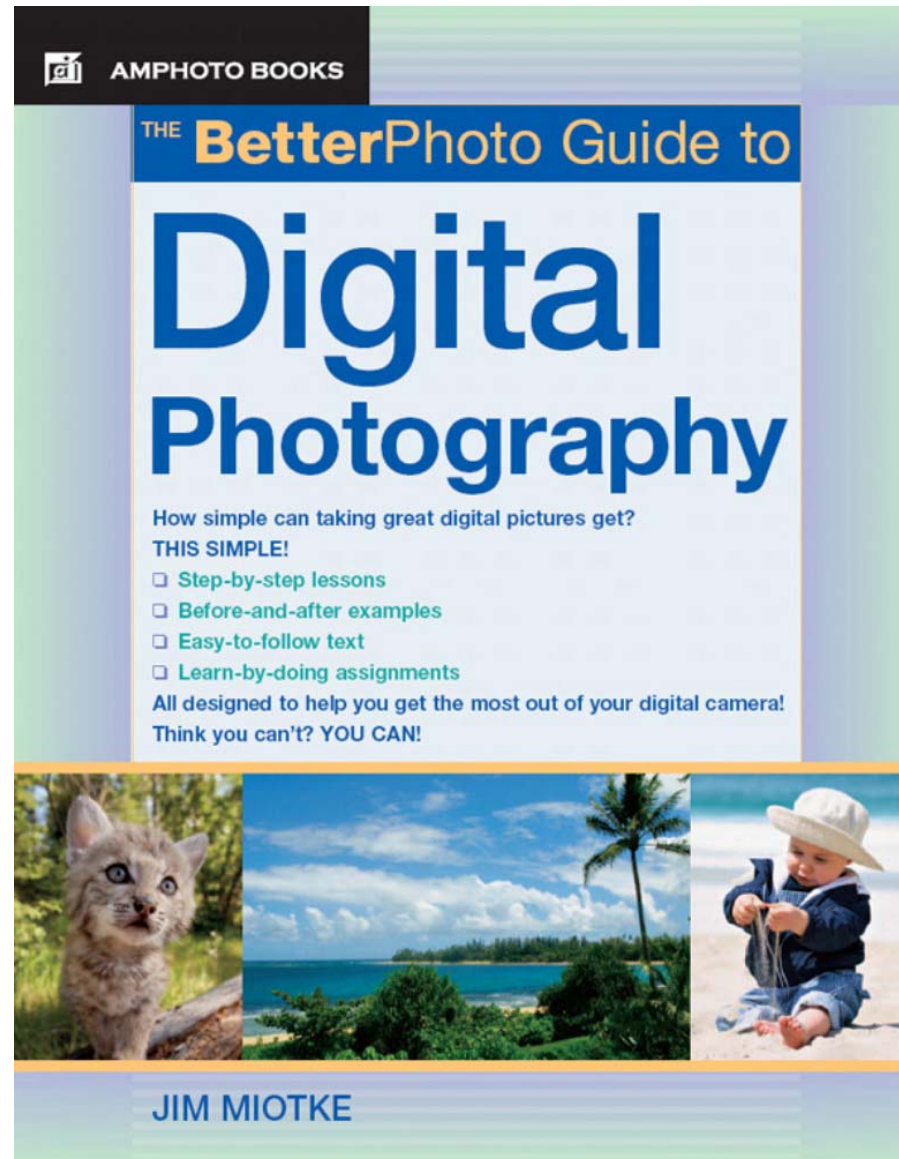


# Other Great Stuff!



# Buy The Book!

Have your  
copy  
autographed



Available at  
the eBay shop

# Online Photo Courses

# BetterPhoto.com

*The better way to learn photography!*





# Q&A

Jim Miotke

[www.BetterPhoto.com](http://www.BetterPhoto.com)

Photography Classes  
and  
Photo Sharing



The screenshot shows the BetterPhoto.com website. At the top, it says "BetterPhoto.com™ The better way to learn photography!". The navigation menu includes HOME, COURSES, PHOTOS, HOSTING, COMMUNITY, RESOURCES, CONTEST, and STORE. A user is logged in as "Welcome Robin Nichols!".

**Online Photography Courses**

**Featured Course:** Using Your Digital SLR with George Schaub. Learn basic to advanced techniques for making the most of the features found in many digital SLR cameras. Only \$297 USD. Enroll online at our photography courses page or toll-free at 1-888-586-7337. [View all of our courses](#)

**What's New**

More with the Great BetterPhoto Instructors

- 2nd Annual BetterPhoto Summit
- Interview with Vik Ojastaho
- Other Instructor Interviews

**Photo of the Week:** Pory Tenover's "Bare Exam - 2nd Place April 2008 Photo Contest". Recent Entries and Winners. A search bar is visible below the photo.

**Announcement:** Celebrating 10 Years. Celebrating 10 years of community, learning, and fun! <http://bit.ly/10years>

**Footer:** It's not too late... [Click here to sign up today!](#) Photos and more | Site Map | About Us | Help | Contact | Feedback | Tell a Friend | PhotoShare Links. Copyright © 1996-2008 BetterPhoto.com, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

# Thank you!

## Questions?

To learn more, visit [www.ebay.com/education](http://www.ebay.com/education) to see the eBay University calendar, online tours, tutorials, and more.

