

Contact: For print-quality before-and-after photos to illustrate these holiday photo tips, contact Julie Yamamoto, CMD for ACDSee, 503-223-6794, jyamamoto@cmdagency.com.

The Worst Holiday Photo Mistakes and How to Fix Them from ACDSee

Identify the most common family photo “bloopers” and get expert advice on how to make quick photo fixes

VICTORIA, British Columbia – Getting together with family and friends during the holidays is an ideal time to capture treasured memories, but all too often digital photos are taken in less-than-ideal shooting conditions.

The hallmarks of the holiday – candlelit living rooms, colored lights at night, shorter and darker days – can be formidable challenges for most recreational picture-takers.

Here are the top mistakes that [ACDSee](#) experts have seen in holiday pictures and a few easy fixes that families can use to salvage images that would otherwise be deleted.

“Ultimately, the reason people take pictures is to capture and share memories,” says Madelene Garcia, managing director of ACD Systems, makers of industry-leading photo editing software geared toward family memory keepers and everyday photo enthusiasts.

“But sometimes what you thought would be the perfect picture of the kids may need a little touching up before you e-mail it to your friends and family,” Garcia says.

Top Five Holiday Photo Blunders

1. The green-eyed grinch. A close cousin of red eye, green or blue eye occurs when the camera’s flash reflects off a pet’s eyes.

“You’ll notice that photos of your pets often show blue or white-green neon circles in their eyes,” Garcia says. “Unfortunately you just can’t use regular red-eye removal for this.”

However, you *can* transform Fido back to his gentler self, using your computer if you have [photo editing software](#).

One method that even beginner software users can try is to select the neon-colored areas in the eyes and adjust the color to a darker shade. When fixing green eye in this way, Garcia also recommends adding a glint of light to a pet’s eyes to create a more a natural look.



Four-legged friends with reflective eyes (top); after a quick photo fix (bottom).

2. Fade to black. Shots of holiday lights make for some of the finest memories. However, nighttime backgrounds can mean that your digital camera picks up the colorful lights, but leaves people and backgrounds in the dark.

“This is a common problem with holiday photos – you take a picture of your house and family with all the lights outside, but you can’t see the house or the people. You just see the little pinpoints of light,” Garcia says.

To bring back the background on a dim photo, Garcia

recommends adjusting the shadows and highlights in the overall image to find a balance of between the darker areas and the brighter lights.

3. Shake the cold. Another common complaint with family photos at the holidays is the cold. Cold weather means wind-burned cheeks and runny noses that can ruin otherwise perfect photos of loved ones.

Instead of using Kleenex, parents can wipe away distracting elements by simply selecting the problem area and adjusting just the pixels to blend in naturally with the rest of the face.

4. Lighten up. The visual landscape changes in winter. Not only is the sun lower and the days darker, but holiday activities often take place against a backdrop of reflective white snow.

Digital cameras will base their exposure from the available lighting and how the light reflects off of the subjects in the photo – frequently changing the colors of people and clothing and resulting in a much different picture than the memory you were trying to capture.

By either adjusting the overall light levels in a photo or selecting specific areas to focus on, you can often make your subjects as bright and vivid as they were the day you took the picture.

5. Garish color. Another common problem is that photos shot in low light with a flash take on a reddish overall hue that washes out the other colors.

She advises focusing on one element in the photo that can help bring the other colors back into balance. For example, you can change the hue of the overall photo until skin tones or a wood floor look just right. Chances are that this will remove the reddish cast and bring the other colors closer to real life.



A typical result when shooting holiday lights at night (left); after a quick photo fix to correct the colors (right).

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For the person who has it all, or as an add-on to a new digital camera package, why not give the perfect tool for creating and sharing memories throughout the year?

ACDSee has more than 20 million photo manager users worldwide. The company's newest offering, [ACDSee™ Photo Editor](http://www.acdsee.com), is designed to make touching up family pictures quick and easy and allows users creative control. Photo enthusiasts can quickly compose, adjust and create with their own photos using tools that build confidence and knowledge.

Once you've made your photo edits, you can use Photo Editor's helpful "How-to" guides for creating personalized gift items like scrapbook pages, gift tags, cards and wine labels.

ACDSee Photo Editor is available in English for \$69.99 (USD) via electronic software download or in select retail locations. During the holiday period only, the package comes with a second, gift-wrapped software CD to share with a friend as a stocking stuffer.

www.acdsee.com

