

Becoming Comfortable on the Street: Confidence in Street Photography

One of the biggest hurdles for new street photographers is learning to feel comfortable on the street. It can feel awkward to raise your camera in front of strangers, capturing snapshots without asking for permission. Overcoming this discomfort is essential to developing a confident, fluid approach to street photography.

Start by Asking for Permission

If you're just beginning, *asking for permission* can be a helpful way to ease into photographing strangers. By asking, you give yourself the space to explore this new territory without feeling intrusive. Asking permission also allows you to see that, more often than not, people are open to having their portrait taken.

"Allow yourself permission to ask for permission."

The process of asking can build confidence and help you grow more comfortable over time. Consider making it a personal challenge to ask people you find intimidating, seeing how many "yes" answers you can get. This can be a powerful way to develop courage and learn that most people respond positively.

Create Your Own Game

Street photography has *no fixed rules*—each photographer has their own approach, and discovering yours can be a creative journey. Creating your own "game" makes the process feel less daunting and more enjoyable. By setting small challenges or

goals, like asking for permission or photographing people who initially intimidate you, you allow yourself to grow while also keeping things fun.

"Approach somebody that you deem to be scary, or somebody that you are generally afraid of, and make a photograph of them."

This approach not only helps you overcome fears but also pushes you to see the streets differently each day. Treat each encounter as a unique opportunity, and don't be afraid to step outside your comfort zone.

Go with the Flow

Once you're comfortable asking for permission, it's time to *find your flow* on the street. Move in tune with the rhythm around you, observing the beat of footsteps and the way people interact with their surroundings. To fully enter this flow state, focus on the way you hold your camera—raise it naturally, not jarringly, and avoid sudden movements.

"Focus on your body language, posture, and the way that you present yourself on the front lines of life."

A slower walking pace helps you notice more details, making it easier to enter the flow state. Walking slowly, you'll feel more connected to the environment, recognizing patterns in human behavior and capturing moments in a more relaxed, authentic way.

Learn Through Confrontation

Confrontation doesn't have to be negative; instead, *view it as a way to learn*. Chatting with strangers—whether janitors, security guards, or simply passersby—helps you build confidence. Street photography requires courage, especially when capturing candid shots, so developing a comfortable relationship with confrontation is essential.

"Through increasing your charisma, courage, and working on improving your confrontational skills, you'll realize that you will float through the chaos on a feather bed."

With each interaction, your charisma and courage grow, allowing you to navigate the streets with greater ease. This newfound confidence will make you more adaptable and better equipped to capture the unpredictable, vibrant life of the streets.

Key Tips for Becoming Comfortable in Street Photography

1. **Ask for permission:** Build confidence by engaging with people before photographing them.
2. **Create a game:** Set personal challenges, like photographing intimidating subjects, to push your boundaries.
3. **Go with the flow:** Tune into the rhythm of the street and move fluidly with your camera.
4. **Practice positive confrontation:** View interaction as a learning opportunity to build courage and charisma.
5. **Walk slowly:** Take in the details, allowing the slower pace to guide you into the flow state.

Street photography is an exploration of life itself, and becoming comfortable on the street is key to capturing it authentically. By embracing permission, creating your own rules, flowing with the rhythm of the street, and learning through

confrontation, you'll develop a confidence that makes the street feel like home. Every day on the street offers a chance to refine your approach, grow your courage, and discover something new. Let go, embrace the moment, and enjoy the journey.