

## **Staying Aware in an Era of Cameras**

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Laptops, cellphones, tablets and even cars— almost everything these days has a camera. They can be helpful: saving memories through pictures, using face ID to unlock your phone or taking a snapshot of your almost empty bag of cat food to know the brand and flavor are all wonderful conveniences. That being said, living in an age full of these cameras has its downsides.

Unwanted pictures of you— or your not-so-great parking job— being posted online is frustrating.

So, how does one avoid becoming a victim of the camera? Here are 3 tips to lessen your vulnerability to these picture-taking machines.

### **Integrity**

This is the simplest way to avoid judgement by snapshot. Integrity, put simply, is to do the right thing even when no one is watching. If you are constantly doing the right thing, how could you be photographed doing the wrong thing? Though it may be tempting to take that untouched bag of Miss Vickie's jalapeno chips, your best bet is to walk away. Fear of being photographed shouldn't be your only reason to do the right thing, but it's not wrong to use it as a motivator. In this day and age, you never know who's watching—or who's recording. Having integrity will keep you safe from trial by camera.

### **Overly Emotional Reactions Attract Attention**

People can be infuriating sometimes, but causing a scene will only make things worse. It's easy to respond to situations with our emotions. Logical responses aren't as quick and can seem less satisfactory. However, not letting your emotions take the wheel is helpful in the digital world we live in. People will record practically anything that catches their attention and post it. Before you

know it, the blowup you had in your local grocery store over their lack of Diet Coke will turn into a viral TikTok. Save the meltdown until you're home; save yourself from becoming a meme. Emotions are by no means a bad thing. Feelings are natural and shouldn't be ignored! That being said, sobbing over sugar-free soda in public may not be a great idea if you want to avoid being ridiculed over a recording.

### **Be Aware of Your Surroundings**

Knowing what is going on around you, who is near you and the happenings of the environment you're in can be extremely beneficial when trying to avoid being photographed or recorded.

When you are aware of your surroundings, you know what is the 'norm' of a place. Fitting in with where you are can help you fly under the radar. Knowing the people around you will help you to know what they would deem bizarre enough to record. Now, being aware of your surroundings doesn't mean you need to change to fit the mold. It could simply mean being respectful of the space you're in. If you were to do something against the customs of an area, it could stand out to people and cause them to film. It could also simply come across as offensive... which could also cause them to document the moment. Being aware of those around you and the area you're in will prove to aid you in your goal of avoiding unwanted camera time.

No one wants to be recorded without their consent. These tips will help to avoid non-consensual photography, but there are unfortunately no guarantees. Our world is full of these machines, and with things like security cameras, going even a day without being captured on film is difficult.

The best rule to apply to this issue is, of course, the golden rule. If you don't want to be recorded, don't record others. All in all, until society collectively decides to stop recording strangers, these tips will help keep you from becoming a meme on someone's Instagram feed.