<https://web.archive.org/web/20221209090553/https://www.photorobot.com/manuals/getting-started>

# Getting Started - PhotoRobot User Support

PhotoRobot Controls App (further referred to as 'CAPP') is designed to automate content production processes (images, videos, 360s, and 3D models). This guide consists of 4 sections, each representing the process:

1. SETUP - Create a workspace: cameras, hardware, and projects.
2. CAPTURE - Control PhotoRobot hardware and cameras, capture images and video
3. EDIT - Post-process visual content
4. PUBLISH - Generate output images in multiple formats, 'manage profiles'

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## Installing PhotoRobot Controls App

To install PhotoRobot Controls App on your computer, login to your [PhotoRobot account](https://web.archive.org/web/20221209090553/https://account.photorobot.com/) and go to Downloads:

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## Setup

### Compatible Cameras

**Important:** To make sure CAPP communicates with your camera properly, please close all other programs that connect to the camera. Also be sure to use a [compatible camera](https://web.archive.org/web/20221209090553/https://www.photorobot.com/manuals/compatible-cameras). This includes recent Canon DSLRs and mirrorless camera models.

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### Compatible Lights

For CAPP to communicate with lighting, be sure to use compatible lights. These include two types of lights: strobe lights from FOMEI and Broncolor, and any type of LED lights with DMX support.

### Creating a Workspace

After opening CAPP, typically the first thing a user does is create a **workspace**. A workspace is a list of hardware that is being used for a particular photoshoot. It can include various PhotoRobot modules, cameras, lights, and other accessories.

For demo purposes, users can work with a predefined, Sample Workspace, which is configured to use virtual hardware. In this way, users can still experiment with various features of CAPP by selecting virtual robots and cameras.

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### Connecting Hardware

To start using actual (as opposed to virtual) hardware, make sure the hardware is connected to the same computer network (or a sub-network) as the computer you are using to control your PhotoRobot. Your camera must be connected to the computer via USB. Wireless connections are currently not supported.

When adding a piece of hardware to a workspace, you can check whether it is online (and recognized by CAPP). To do this, look at the dot to the left of the name of the given piece of equipment. If it is recognized, the dot turns green, as seen in the following image.

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A gray color signalizes that the hardware was not recognized or is not turned on. For possible causes of this, please refer to the [troubleshooting section](https://web.archive.org/web/20221209090553/http://troubleshooting/) of this guide.

### Managing Files - Projects, Items, and Folders

In CAPP, images are organized into projects, items, and folders.

* A **project** is the highest-level data entity. Typically, a project will include items from a single photoshoot or perhaps a single shooting day/week.
* Projects consists of one or more **items**. A single item will typically be a specific, photographed object.
* An item includes one or more **folders**. In CAPP, you can have multiple folders in a single item in order to keep different kinds of images separate. A very common example is to have one folder for a 360?? rotating presentation (called 'spin'), while using another to store still images ('stills').

To start shooting, you must first add a new project (unless you already have one that you would like to use), as well as at least one item.

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( ! ) - If experiencing issues, find additional support for connecting cameras, robots, lights, and editing in the [PhotoRobot Troubleshooting Manual](https://web.archive.org/web/20221209090553/https://www.photorobot.com/manuals/troubleshooting).

## Capture Mode Interface

After clicking on an item, you will be taken to a capture/edit interface. The controls available to you change based on whether the **capture** mode is active, or the **edit** mode. The capture mode is used to control the photography sequence, while the edit mode controls all post-processing performed within CAPP. The active mode will be highlighted at the top of the screen:

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### Adding a Spins, Stills, or Video Folder

Before any photoshoot, you must create at least one folder. The main types of folders are **spin** (used for 360?? presentations), **stills** (for still images), and video (for videos).

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### Creating a Spins Folder

When adding a spin folder, CAPP will automatically add stops (also called 'frames') based on how many images per spin you select. The default number is 36, and this can be changed in the bottom left corner. With a higher number of stops, the rotation will be smoother, but it will also take up more storage space.

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### Creating a Stills Folder

If you select a stills folder, you must add your stops manually. This will include a **turn angle** (the rotational angle) and a **swing angle** (the vertical position of the camera along a circular trajectory). The swing angle is important if you are using our Robotic Arm or another module that can change the horizontal position of the camera.

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### Control Compatible Lights

When using lights compatible with CAPP, you are able to select lights in the bottom right corner of the edit mode window.

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### Capture Mode Interface Overview

The central part of the capture mode interface includes the preview window, which either displays the currently selected image (if you have already taken some) or the live view streamed from the camera.

Live View, which is useful if you want to check composure and focus, can be toggled in the camera control area in the central part of the control bar on the right-hand side of the screen.

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### Taking Test Shots

Before taking final images, it is a good idea to take one or more test shots. The easiest way to do this is by pressing the **T** key on your computer keyboard. This will help you check whether you should change the settings of your lights, camera, etc. Test images are stored in the 'test shot' folder, which you can access in the bottom left part of the screen.

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### Starting a Photography Sequence

When satisfied with the settings, which were verified by taking a test shot, it is time to run the photography sequence. This can be triggered by pressing the space bar on your keyboard or by clicking the 'start' button shown in the picture below.

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If you have a barcode scanner, you can also trigger the sequence by scanning a special 'start' bar code, which you can download [here](https://web.archive.org/web/20221209090553/https://storage.googleapis.com/photorobot-cloud2-public/sources/210316%20-%20PhotoRobot%20BarCode%20Stickers%20-%20v4.pdf).    
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You will know that the sequence has finished successfully if all thumbnails on the left-hand side have been filled with images. It is a good practice to pay attention to any potential misfires of the strobe lights.

If any of the thumbnails are darker compared to the others, lower the rotation speed or, if necessary, check the condition of your lights. You can then mark these images and reshoot them without having to run the entire sequence again.

Once the capture sequence is complete, you can switch to edit mode, which is where you will perform post-processing.

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## Edit Mode Interface

On the right side of the screen, you can add any number of editing operations:

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Some of the most common editing operations are listed at the top: crop, center, and background.

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### Automatic Crop

**Crop** - when cropping images, there are three main controls: the toggles for automatic cropping, aspect ratio, and padding (which controls how much space there is around the photographed object).

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### Auto Center**'**

**Center** - even though most PhotoRobot machines are equipped with lasers that help with positioning objects on the surface, most images will need additional software centering. This is especially important for 360?? spins. When getting started, it is recommended to keep the 'auto center' function on, as seen in the picture below:

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### Background Removal

**Background** - this operation is used to adjust the background of the image, completely removing it if desired. Different results can be achieved by selecting the **level** method of background removal, the **flood** method, or **freemasking**.

With background removal **by level**, users utilize an RGB (red, green, blue) color of each pixel to remove colors above a certain threshold. This is advantageous when shooting products with a white backdrop, and for making an off-white background disappear.

To use the **flood** method, you must select at least one point outside the photographed object. Experiment with the settings until you are satisfied with the results.

'**Freemasking** requires more configuration than level or flood methods, but can be one of the quickest and most exact methods. It does however require additional configuration of your lights to create main and mask images for background removal.

Remember that whether or not CAPP will be able to remove the background depends mainly on how the scene is lit. If you are unable to find settings that work to satisfaction, reshoot the images with different light settings.

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When you are satisfied with your edit settings, apply the parameters by clicking the 'apply' button, located where previously the 'start' button appeared.

## Publishing Images

Once the progress bar reaches its end, your edits have been successfully applied to your images. If you are using CAPP without PhotoRobot Cloud services, your resulting images are stored in a folder structure on your local drive.

If using PhotoRobot Cloud hosting, files can also be found in the PhotoRobot cloud storage. To access these, click **Open in the cloud** in the **Photos** section at the top-left part of the screen.

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### Exporting Images

When exporting, it is possible to export images with a user-defined naming convention, in different resolutions, formats, etc.

To access the export settings, go to the Items section. You will find the **export** button in the menu above the item list:

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The following window will open, allowing you to change export settings:

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Run the export process by clicking the **Export** button in the bottom right corner of this window.

When the export progress bar has reached its end, you can click **Open folder** to access your exported images.

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### Publish via Cloud

If publishing via PhotoRobot Cloud services, first open the item in the cloud. The interface displays the captured image. Click **Codes & Links** button:

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Copy the **Direct link** and paste it into your browser to view the image or spin. If satisfied, copy the **Embedded spin** HTML code. Paste this code onto your page to embed the spin for display.