

## Project Inspiration: Winter Macros

Winter can be a tough time for photographers. If you're used to working in a studio, then you might not even notice the temperature dropping outside, but if you're used to working outside of a studio environment, things can be much more difficult for you. As if humidity and temperature changes wreaking havoc on your camera gear wasn't bad enough, you've got frostbite to contend with as well! But if you bundle up properly, winter can offer a whole new range of special photography projects.

While you can see some truly stunning ice-covered landscapes and some equally evocative street photography if you manage to show up on the right day, one of our favourite winter photography tools is the macro lens. Everyone loves a snowflake, right? But once you've spent an hour or two photographing snowflakes, you start to see a bit of monotony - so let's take things to the next level. If you're just interested in the snowflakes, take some nice black paper, crushed velvet, felt - or even a black microfibre lens cleaning cloth - and let it cool down to match the ambient temperature, catch snowflakes on it, and snap away! That's all there is to it.

For something a little more advanced, however, we're going to need some supplies. If you've got kids, you've probably already got all the tools for blowing soap bubbles, but you can fake up some with a bit of wire and some dish soap if necessary. The key to this project is that the ambient temperature outside should be well below freezing. Take your soap mixture and bubble blower outside, and half-inflate a soap bubble, so that it forms a nice sphere but is still attached to the holder. If it's cold enough, the soap will freeze, and you'll wind up with a beautiful iridescent sphere that presents some beautiful macro opportunities.

If you're feeling extra ambitious, play around with the ratios of the soap and water mixture to find the best possible patterns, and consider using drops of food colouring or coloured light gels to adjust the final shots that you produce. If you get into the project, you probably won't even notice how cold it is! Just remember to keep tabs on your fingertips, since you can't click the shutter with frostbite!