Photographing Documents:
Using a mobile phone to copy and transmit documents

Gerald Recktenwald
gerry@pdx.edu
Portland State University
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A little knowledge and a little effort will make your document photos better
In a nutshell

1. Keep the camera parallel to the plane of the document
2. Provide good light
3. Hold the camera steady
Depth of Field
Depth of field is the thickness of the space that is in focus.

Small aperture lenses have thin depth of field.
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On almost all mobile phones, the aperture is fixed at small f (1.4 - 2.0).

Therefore, you can only indirectly control DOF on your mobile phone by changing your focusing distance.
Depth of field limits how much of your image is in focus
Depth of field limits how much of your image is in focus.
Photographing documents at an angle will not produce a good result.

Don’t hold camera at large angle relative to the plane of the document.

Narrow segment of the document is in focus.

Depth of field.
Instead, try to keep the camera parallel to the plane of the document.

Hold the camera parallel to the plane of the document.

Depth of field

Document

DOF can include the entire document.
Use more light.
Avoid shadows
Use soft light from a nearby window. Avoid bright, glaring, direct light.

Indirect light is best.
Hold the camera steady

- Use a weight to hold the document in place
- A binder clip will help keep pages flat
- Hold the camera with both hands

Of course, having an assistant also helps, but it is not necessary.
Summary

Your mobile phone can make good copies

Paying attention to little details will make a difference.

• Hold camera parallel to the plane of the document.
• Place your document in good light.
• Keep your camera (phone) steady.
• Take a couple of shots: choose a good one