

PHSC Advanced Photography

Levitation Photo In Camera Technique



Clothing can move in a way that reveals the fact you are jumping so that is something to keep in mind. Think about tucking in your shirt if it appears too loose. Keeping your hair in place with lots of gel and hairspray can help or simply wear a hat.

What you will need:

- Camera (preferably that has a self-timer)
- Tripod or something similar

How to capture a levitation photo:

1. Setup your camera on a tripod, or have an assistant get in position to take the photo.
2. Set your camera to use a fast shutter speed – fast enough to freeze motion (such as 1/500 or faster).
3. Set your self-timer to take the photo (if you do not have an assistant).

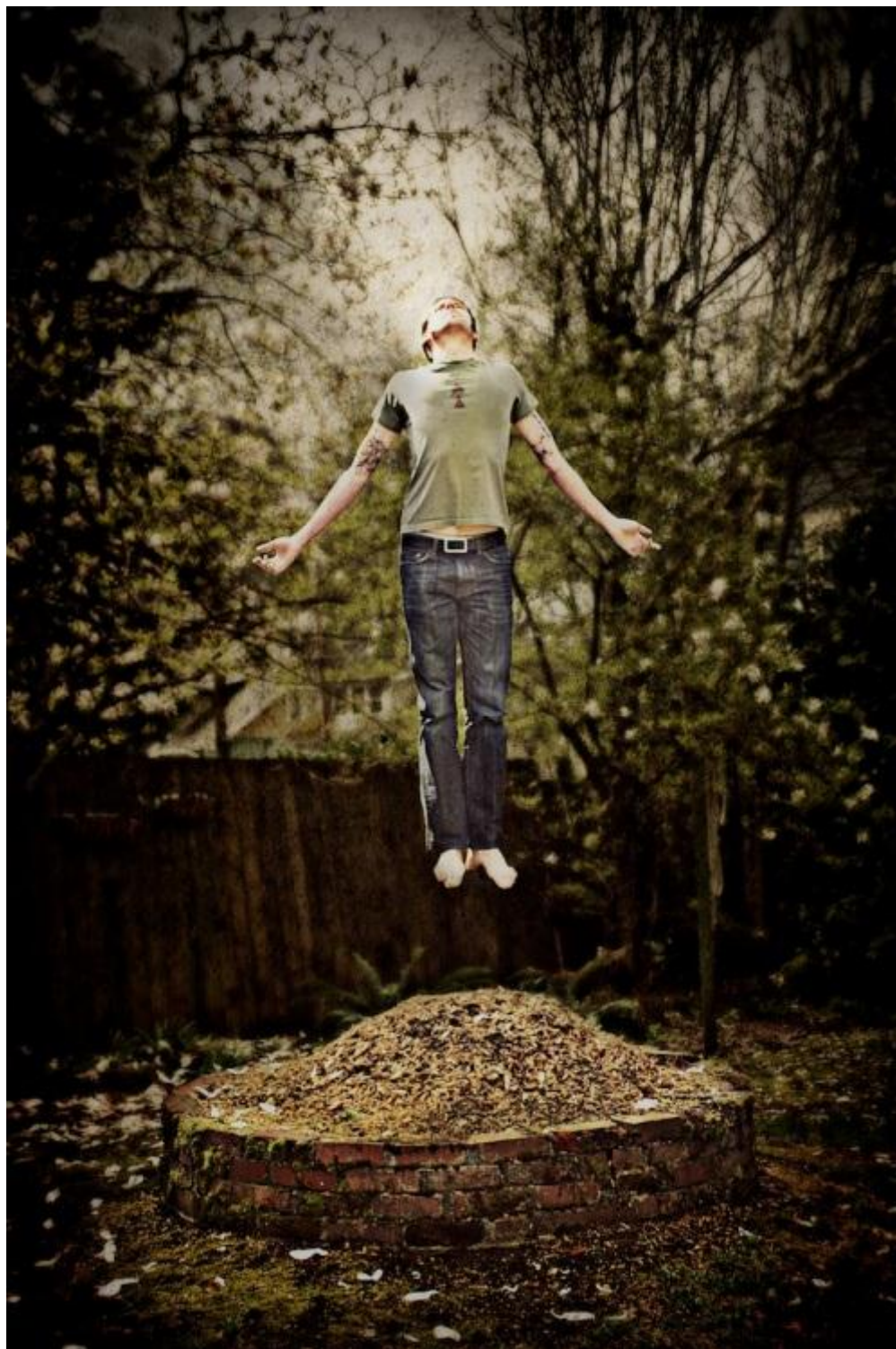
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4. Jump off the ground or step off an object at the exact moment the camera is about to take a photo

Think about integrating accessories into your technique that will make it even more realistic such as a broom, vacuum, purse, or an umbrella as shown here... there are infinite possibilities. Objects in the surrounding environment can also be visual aids such a phone booth, railings, or entry ways. The more creative you are, the better your results will likely be.

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Photoshop Technique



Okay, our goal is to appear to be floating, or hovering, you will need to take two pictures to create the illusion.

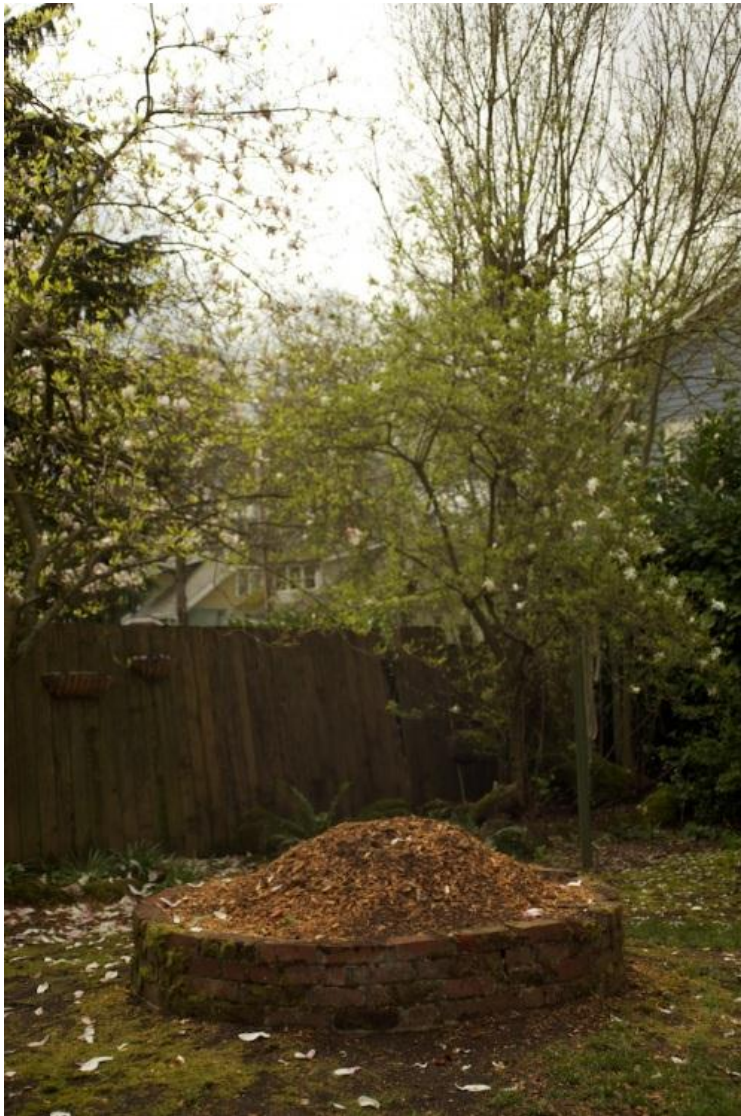
You will need:

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- Camera
- Tripod
- Something to stand, sit, lay on
- Photoshop

Start with a tripod. Frame your scene and get your exposure set. I suggest using manual so that you're exposure settings don't shift from one pic to the next. Also, establish focus for where you will be and disable your auto focus (otherwise you run the risk of the area in focus being different between the two images).

First, you want to take a picture of the scene without you or your prop in it. This will be your background image. When you get it composed to where you like it, fire a shot off. Don't touch the camera other than to set the self timer if you do not have it set up to be remotely triggered.



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Next, use a ladder, box, bucket or anything stable enough to hold your weight and set it up in the scene making sure you leave enough room between you and the surface you will be floating above in the image to give the illusion of just hanging there.



Now you have both your background image and an exact duplicate image with you and the thing that you are going to erase leaving you levitating.

1. Open both images in Photoshop and with both images open on the desktop, drag the “you” image using the move (V) tool on top of the background image while holding SHIFT which will automatically align the images.

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2. Set the opacity of the “you” layer to about 50% to check that you are lined up. If it is a little off, use the move (V) tool to manually align the two layers as closely as you can.
3. On the “you” layer, add a layer mask (the hole in a square at the bottom of the layers palette) and using a black brush (B) paint out your prop. For me, as I was outside, I painted everything but me out because the sun came out for the second shot. You are essentially just painting around yourself which will effectively eliminate any evidence that you’re not just really good at holding a gravity defying pose.