

The Zion Photography Guide

Best spots, best light, and what to pack.

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Best Photo Spots

- The Watchman, from the Canyon Junction Bridge - the classic Zion sunset shot.
- Canyon Overlook - a short trail to a wide view over the lower canyon, good any time of day.
- Court of the Patriarchs viewpoint - a big, layered canyon wall, one of the most recognizable views in the canyon.
- Zion Canyon Scenic Drive - the Virgin River and canyon walls change character along its whole length.
- The Narrows entrance at Riverside Walk - a reliable river-and-canyon composition.

Best Light

Zion Canyon runs roughly north-south, so its walls catch dramatic side-light at sunrise and sunset rather than a flat frontal glow. The Watchman lights up orange-red in the last direct sun of the day. Early morning light on the canyon's east-facing walls is often the calmer, less crowded option.

Gear Checklist

- A camera with some zoom range - canyon walls are often farther away than they look.
- A lightweight tripod for sunrise/sunset and any water or long-exposure shots.
- A polarizing filter - cuts glare on the Virgin River and deepens the red rock and sky.
- Extra batteries - cold mornings in shoulder/winter season drain them faster.
- A dry bag or rain cover if you're shooting anywhere near the river.