



PHOTOGRAPHY COMPOSITION TIPS



RULE OF THIRDS

- When you're just starting out, it's tempting to put whatever you're shooting right in the centre of the frame. However, this produces rather static, boring pictures.
- Imagine that your image is divided by 2 vertical and 2 horizontal lines. You should position the most important elements in your scene along these lines, or at the points where they intersect.
- Doing so will add balance and interest to your photo.





FRAMING

- The world is full of objects which make perfect frames, such as trees, archways doors and windows.
- By placing these around the edge of the composition you help to isolate the main subject.
- The result is a more focused image which draws your eye naturally to the main point of interest.



BALANCING ELEMENTS

- Placing your main subject off-centre, as with the rule of thirds, creates a more interesting photo, but it can leave a void in the scene which can make it feel empty.
- You can try balancing the “weight” of your subject by including another object of lesser importance to fill the space.





LEADING LINES

- When we look at a photo our eye is naturally drawn along lines.
- By thinking about how you place lines in your composition, you can affect the way we view the image, pulling us into the picture, towards the subject, or on a journey “through” the scene.
- There are many different types of line - straight, diagonal, curvy, zigzag, radial etc - and each can be used to enhance our photo’s composition.



SYMMETRY AND PATTERNS

- We are surrounded by symmetry and patterns, both natural and man-made. They can make for very eye-catching compositions, particularly in situations where they are not expected.





VIEWPOINT

- Before photographing your subject, take time to think about where you will shoot it from.
- Our viewpoint has a massive impact on the composition of our photo and as a result it can greatly affect the message that the shot conveys.
- Rather than just shooting from eye level, consider photographing from high above, down at ground level, from the side, from the back, from a long way away, from very close up, and so on.



BACKGROUND

- How many times have you taken what you thought would be a great shot, only to find that the final image lacks impact because the subject blends into a busy background?
- Look around for a plain and unobtrusive background and compose your shot so that it doesn't distract or detract from the subject.
- You can use a low aperture to blur the background so your subject stands out.





DEPTH

- Because photography is a two-dimensional medium, we have to choose our composition carefully to convey the sense of depth that was present in the actual scene.
- You can create depth in a photo by including objects in the foreground, middle ground and background.



DIAGONAL LINES

- Horizontal lines lend a static, calm feel to a picture, while vertical ones often suggest permanence and stability. To introduce a feeling of drama, movement or uncertainty, look for diagonal lines instead.
- Wider angles of view tend to introduce diagonal lines because of the increased perspective.
- Diagonal lines can be used in architecture photos to make dramatic images.





COLOUR

- Bright primary colours really attract the eye, especially when they're contrasted with a complementary hue.
- You can add colour contrast by including a bright splash of colour against a monochromatic background.
- Scenes consisting almost entirely of a single hue can also be very effective.



SPACE TO MOVE

- Even though photographs themselves are static, they can still convey a strong sense of movement.
- When we look at pictures, we see what's happening and tend to look ahead – it creates a feeling of imbalance if your subject has nowhere to move.
- In portraiture you tend to follow someone's gaze, and they need an area to look into.
- There should always be a little more space ahead of the subject than behind it.





THINK BEFORE YOU SHOOT

- Before you start to take a picture, ask yourself what it is that you really want to communicate in that shot. After you answer that question, think about how you can emphasize the feature that's attracting you.
- Do you need a different position or to get closer, lower or higher?
- What is in the background? Can you frame the image?
- Am I using the rule of thirds?
- How can lines emphasise my image?



ACTIVITY

1. Take a photo of an object using the **Rule of Thirds** technique
2. Take a photo using a **Frame** to border the image
3. Take a photo using **Leading Lines**
4. Take a photo that showcases **Symmetry** or **Patterns**