

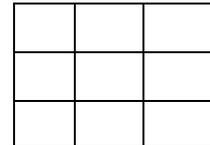


# Photography Basics

Due to the technology advancements in the past decade, taking a picture is now easier than ever. Whether you are using a 35 mm automatic camera or a digital camera, the camera itself has taken much of the guessing work out of photography.

## Composition

- Composition is the arrangement of elements in a photograph to create a well balanced and interesting photo.
- In order to achieve good composition, you must have the pictorial elements organized and presented in a way that effectively communicates the photographer's ideas, feelings, or moods.
- Many times this means that the photo will be about something, an object or a group of objects. This subject will stand out as the purpose of the picture.
- **Rule of Thirds**- Divide your picture area in your mind, into thirds, both horizontally and vertically. Try to place the objects or subjects at one of the intersecting points of the four lines. This may help to add tension and drama to the photograph.
- **Movement** is an important concept that usually attracts a viewer's eyes to the picture. A common problem with movement is that if the photographer does not provide space for the movement within the picture, the viewer's eyes will move out of the frame.
- Don't forget **camera angles** are very important when you are trying to portray a certain look and feel. An *eye level shot* appears most natural because it reflects how we view the world. A *low angle shot* is a shot that is taken from a position lower than the subject, helping to emphasize height. The opposite is a *high angle shot*, which is taken from a position higher than your subject, emphasizing the smallness of the object.
- **Lines and Shapes** appear everyday all around us. They help to add drama and interest into photos. Each time before you shoot, take a moment and try to notice the lines in the scene you are about to capture. Photos can be strengthened by becoming more visually aware and incorporating lines and shapes into the photographs.
- By incorporating **framing** into your pictures you can add depth, dimension, and perspective to scenes. This can be achieved by including foreground material or by including an object on the side of the photo, such as, part of a tree.
- When using **vertical composition** try to fill the foreground with the face or figure of a person standing in front of a site.



## Lighting Techniques

- When considering where and how you are going to get your shot, remember that lighting is important. Each type of lighting will add different effects into your photo. There are three different types of lighting.
- Diffused lighting is usually found on a foggy or overcast day. Diffused lighting leaves no shadows, the lights are soft, and it gives additional color saturation.
- Cross lighting, otherwise known as side lighting, is light that comes in at 75-90 degree angle to the subject. This side lighting can best be found in the morning hours with sunrises and in the evening hours at sunset. This creates strong shadows.
- Backlighting is when the light source comes from directly behind the subject. A perfect example of this is a silhouette. There is an increase in color saturation and warm tones are provided when the use of backlighting occurs. It is difficult to master however, because you are shooting almost directly into the light.

## Finding the Right Film

- There are two basic 35mm film formats that are commonly used in color photography. One is color negative film labeled “color” and is perfect for color prints. The other type is reversal film which is called “chrome”; it is perfect for slides or other images that can be used in publication printing.
- Choosing a film speed is another very important consideration. For the best results, consider using 400 for color negative film and ISO 100 for color reversal film. A 400 film is great for action shots, it has a faster shutter speed so therefore the pictures will be less blurry along with being more crisp and clear. In contrast, a 100 film is better for still shots, such as people standing or posing. It has a richer color and will appear less grainy.
- For digital cameras the film for the camera is the small card that is inserted into the camera. This is known as a flash memory card or a smartmedia card. These cards can be erased and reused many times. Once you take your picture you can then download it onto your computer (develop your film) by inserting the card into a specialized floppy disk or you can download the pictures directly onto your computer through the USB. The USB otherwise known as the universal serial bus, transports images to and from digital devices. In terms of the digital camera, this often means transporting images to and from camera to computer.
- With a digital camera you can choose the image quality. This is all related to dpi (dots per inch). The more dots per inch, the higher quality the picture will be. As of right now, the highest quality digital picture is a TIFF, meaning that these pictures appear to be very similar to a picture taken on a 35mm camera. When printing these pictures they appear to be of a very high quality. However, these pictures are very large and take up a lot of space. With a JPEG, the quality is not as high as a TIFF picture. These pictures do take up less space and are not as large as the TIFF files. When posting pictures on the internet or for images that don't need to be printed, JPEG is probably the best way to go however, if you will be printing the image and you want the highest quality, the best choice would be a TIFF.

- For digital cameras, it is also very important to have extra flash memory cards, or Smart media cards. When not using a digital camera don't forget to have extra film too.

### **Always Keep Batteries Ready!**

- When you have to replace batteries, always replace the batteries of the same type and brand as before.
- Changing different batteries can cause problems which include safety hazards. Batteries are available in manganese, alkaline, lithium, NiCd, NiMH, and other types. Your camera manual will identify what type of battery should be used.
- Please avoid touching electrode contacts of the batteries. If for some reason you do touch them, wipe off oil or moisture.
- Do not stock up on batteries because they deplete over time and may not provide needed power after slight use.
- Weak batteries can kill a photo opportunity.
- ALWAYS bring along a spare battery or a charger in case your battery dies.

### **Focus is critical**

- It is very important to make sure your pictures are in focus. You must grip the camera tightly and hold it steady. Keeping your body balanced and being comfortable is the best way to ensure a focused picture.
- You can also use the automatic focus on the camera or you can manually focus it yourself, depending on what you prefer.

### **Guidelines:**

- 1) Pre-visualize the image that you want to obtain. If you have a central idea in mind you can think of how you want the final product to appear.
- 2) Move your camera in as close as possible to your subject.
- 3) Whenever possible, use or create a natural background for the subject.
- 4) Also when possible, emphasize the contrast between the subject and the background.
- 5) Apply the rule of thirds as a guideline or a starting point for composing your photos. For digital, keep the rule in mind when you are cropping photos.
- 6) Have extra film, flash memory cards, and batteries with you when taking you camera with you.
- 7) Practice, Practice, and Practice some more.

The most important thing to remember is...Practice makes perfect and in order to become familiar with a camera you must use it. The glory of a digital camera is that it's easy to erase bad pictures. Also remember that the best photo opportunities usually happen when you don't have a camera so try to remember to take the camera with you at all times.

### **Sources:**

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