

Jennifer Allman | Session 2:

Composition & Focus

List of Required Supplies: A camera (any camera including a phone will work), pen/pencil & paper

Student Time Required: 60 minutes

Step-by-step Instructions:

- Read attached lesson
- Write down the different composition techniques
- Take at least two pictures using each composition technique
- [Use Rubric to grade student's participation](#)

Composition & Focus

Throughout this exercise you will utilize some of the basic compositional techniques to achieve the following goals:

- Control the movement of the viewer's eye
- Create a feeling or sense of movement and a third dimension

Focusing

Your camera will often default to focusing on the closest object, which may not always be the right choice for the picture. If you notice in the example pictures the first photo focused on the leaf, in order to get the camera to auto focus on the person, we had to shift our composition to move the subject's face closer to the middle of the image.



Depending on what you are using to take pictures, you can also use what is called a focus lock. To use this you will get the subject in focus and then “lock” that focus by either holding down the focus lock button, or if you are using a phone, you would press your finger to the screen, and then you can shift the subject back to the original location (like in the first picture), and take the picture.

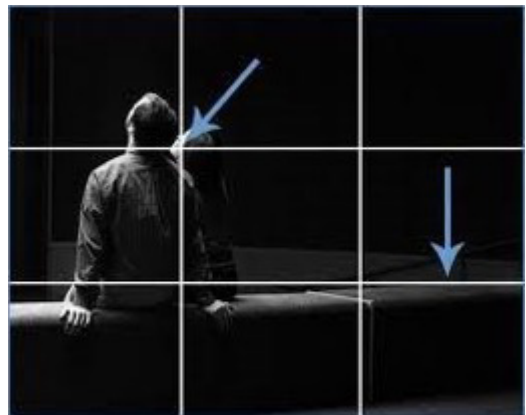
The Rule of Thirds

The rule of thirds is a compositional technique used for the effective placement of primary and secondary objects within the rectangular image area. This method prevents the placement of the visual center-of-interest in the exact physical center of the photograph.

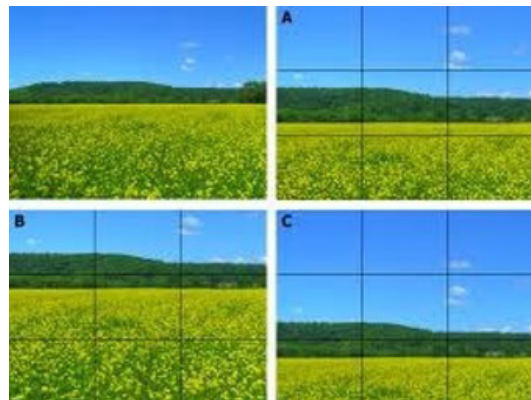


The four points formed by the intersections of these lines can be used to help you position your subject off center.

Look at where the blue arrows are pointing. The photographer uses the rule of thirds in two separate ways. Notice the placement in the frame of the couple's heads, and notice the alignment of the stones.



When photographing landscapes, placement of the horizon is ideal along one of the two horizontal lines. In general, avoid placing the horizon in the middle. Note the ideal placement of the horizon in Photo B and Photo C.

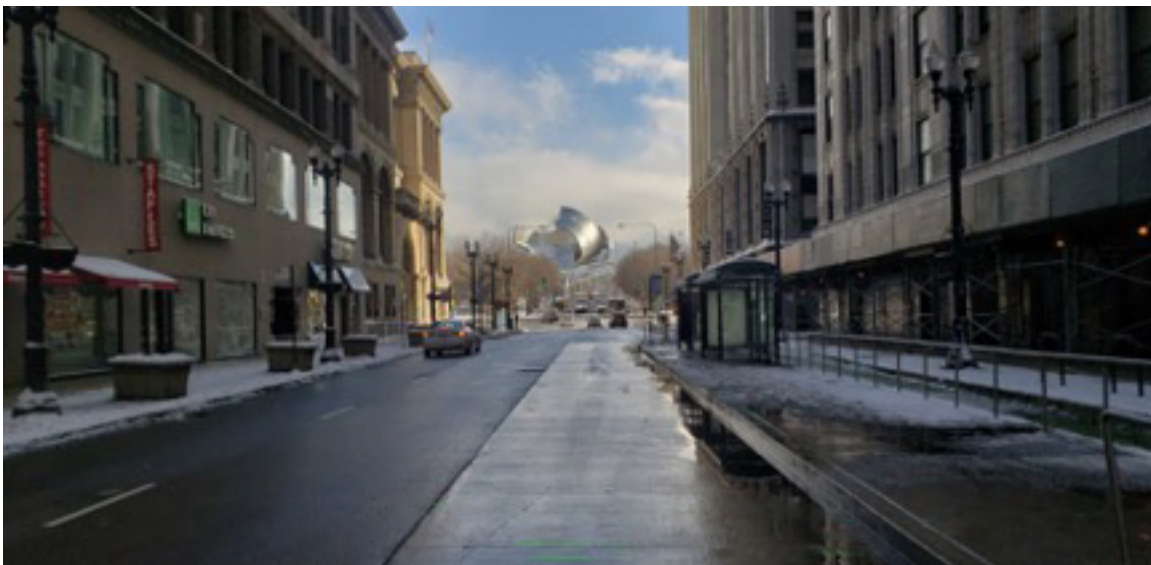


Linear Distortion

Linear distortion is where you have a set of parallel lines that appear to converge or come together. This compositional technique is also sometimes just called converging lines.



We see in the above photos where the street appears to become more narrow closer to the middle of the image. Even the buildings on the sides of the image appear to become shorter as they move to the center of the image.





Framing

Framing is where we create a “frame” or surround our subject with something that draws attention to them. The subject can be framed on all four sides, or even three or two sides. You can create what looks like a traditional picture frame, or you can use color to help focus the viewer on your subject.



Symmetry

Symmetry is where the image is identical or close to being identical on each side of the picture. The picture can be divided vertically, or it can be divided horizontally. Note the use of symmetry in the images below.

