



Basic photography - **Composition & light**

Adapted from Jim Lucas

Franklin, pg. 231-238

Williams & Tollett, pg. 185-192

Photographs

- Visualize role in design and message
- Survey different sources
- Adjust or remove features to complement purpose
- Choose simple, yet interesting composition
- Select lighting that enhances subject or reinforces the message
- Choose angle that best shows subject and reinforces the purpose
- Use color when practical
- Establish size, scale and orientation





Keep it simple

- Keep background uncluttered
- Avoid mergers
- Have single dominant subject



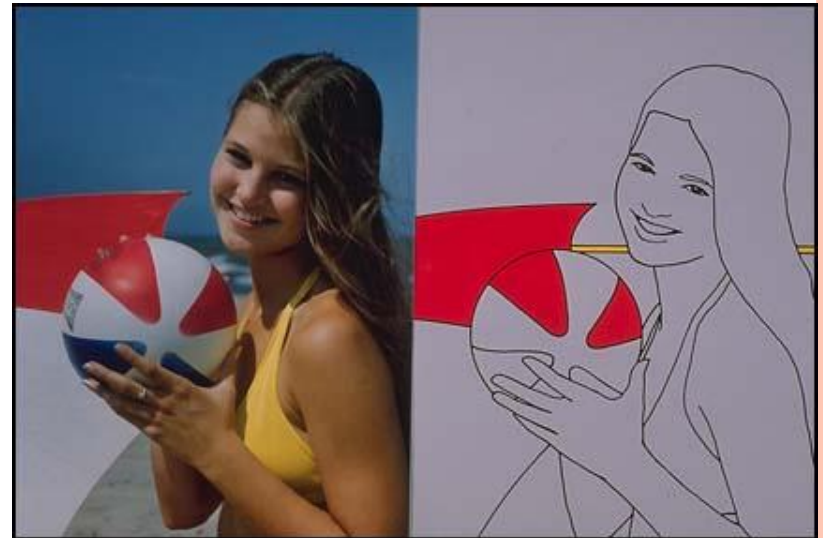
Single dominant subject



Cluttered background



Avoid mergers



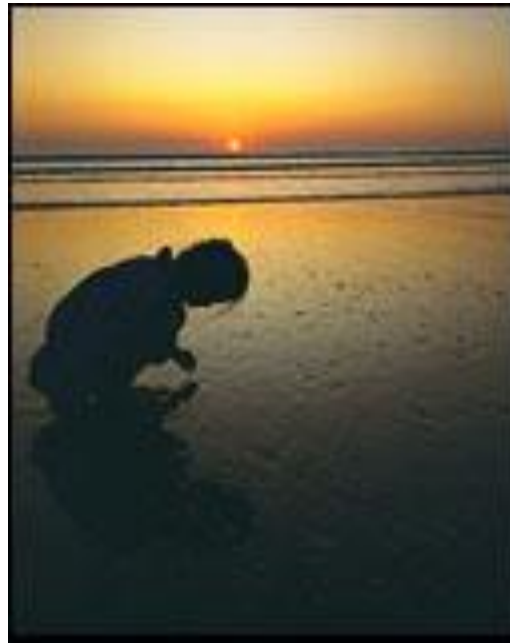


Angle

- Low angle
 - Clear sky backdrop
 - Accentuate movement or action
- High angle
 - Eliminate cloudy sky
- Avoid centered horizons
- Use the light
- Emphasize a point, tone

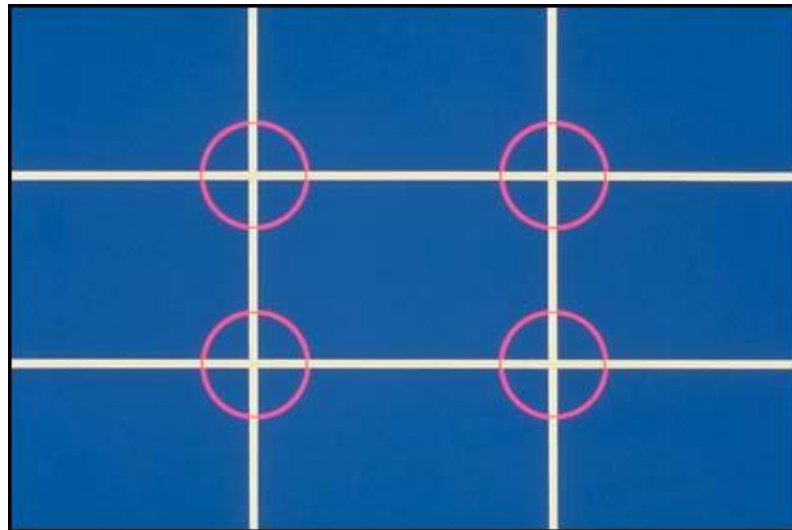


Angle



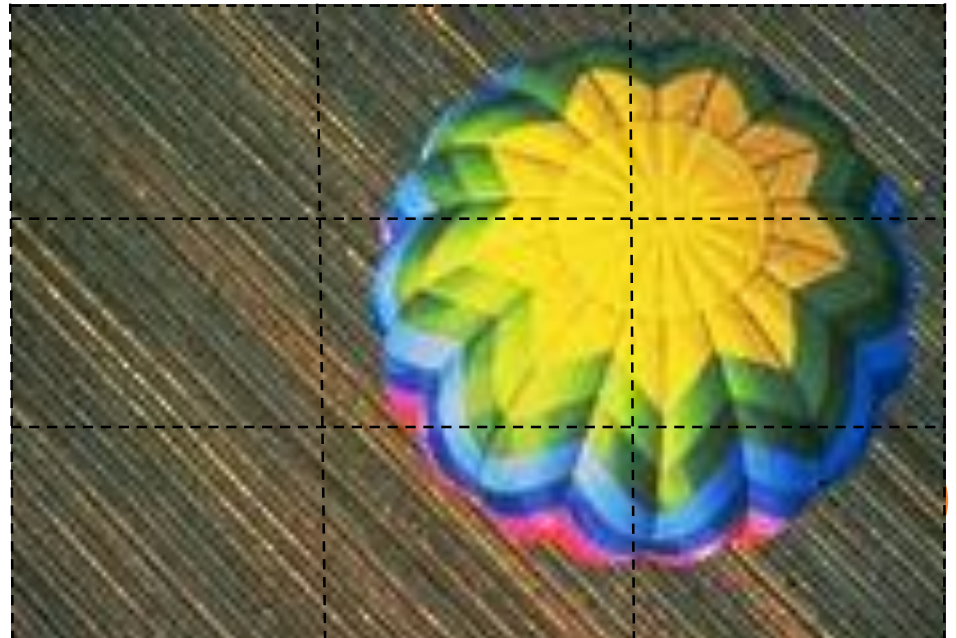
Strong center of interest

- Take pictures at different angles with different compositions
- Work around the rule of thirds





Rule of Thirds





Rule of Thirds



Balance

- Balance color and weight in a picture
- Formal and informal
- Symmetrical and asymmetrical







Line

- Line leads the eye
 - Diagonals
 - S-curves
- Static vs. dynamic lines
- Shape



Line

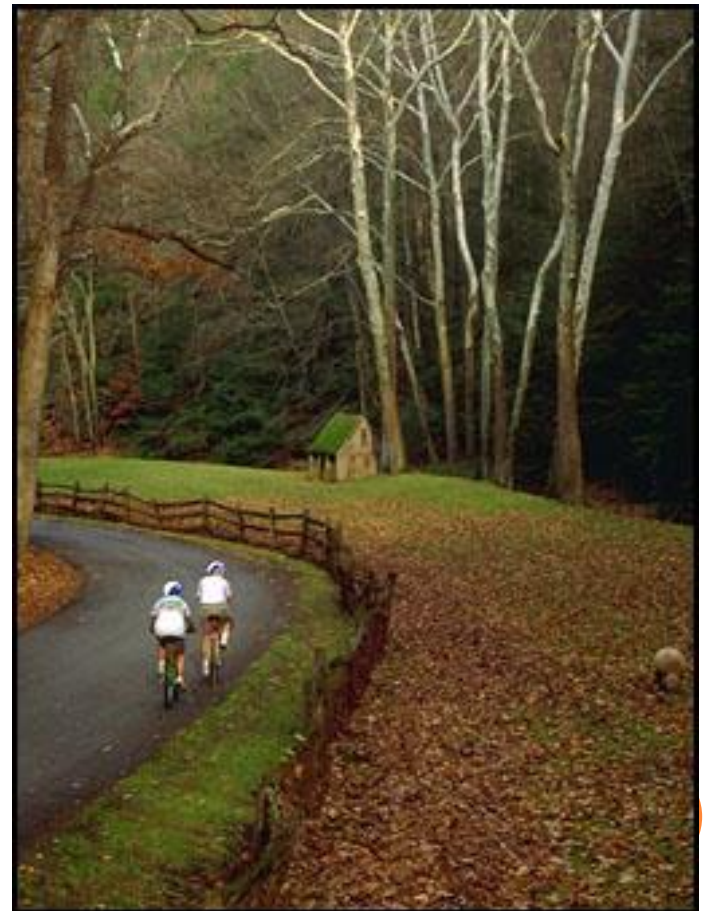




Line



Line



Framing

- Adds depth
- Should fit theme
- Watch focus on foreground
 - Focus on foreground in landscape
 - Focus on subject in portraits
 - Auto-focus should be centered on main topic
 - Overall—**Depends on camera**



Framing



Framing



Fill the frame

- Would this picture look better if I was closer?
 - Focus on subject
 - Detail
- Start far and move closer
- Fill the frame with objects that “fit”
- Long range shots provide depth and perspective



Fill the frame



Fill the frame



Pick a good light direction

- Three light directions
 - Front - sunny with high color
 - Side - depth and texture
 - Back - dynamic but challenging; silhouettes and water effects



Light Direction?



Light
Direction?



Contrast

- Hard vs. soft light
 - Sunny days – high contrast (hard light)
 - Cloudy days – low contrast (soft light)
- Portraits often use soft light (shaded area)
- Flash will reduce contrast
- Soft light helps with color variations
- Time of day



Light and contrast



Light and contrast



Time of day



Light type

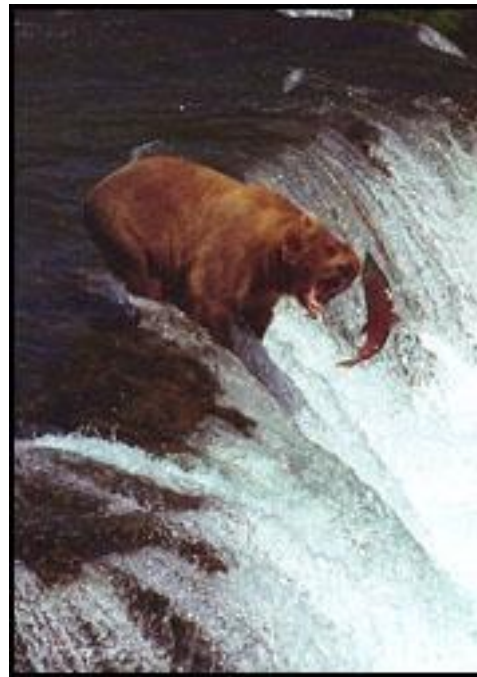


Action shot tips

- High shutter speed
- Telephoto lens
 - Longer lens means faster shutter speed
- Stopping motion
 - Far is easier than near
 - Straight is easier than diagonal
 - Diagonal is easier than right angles
- Panning



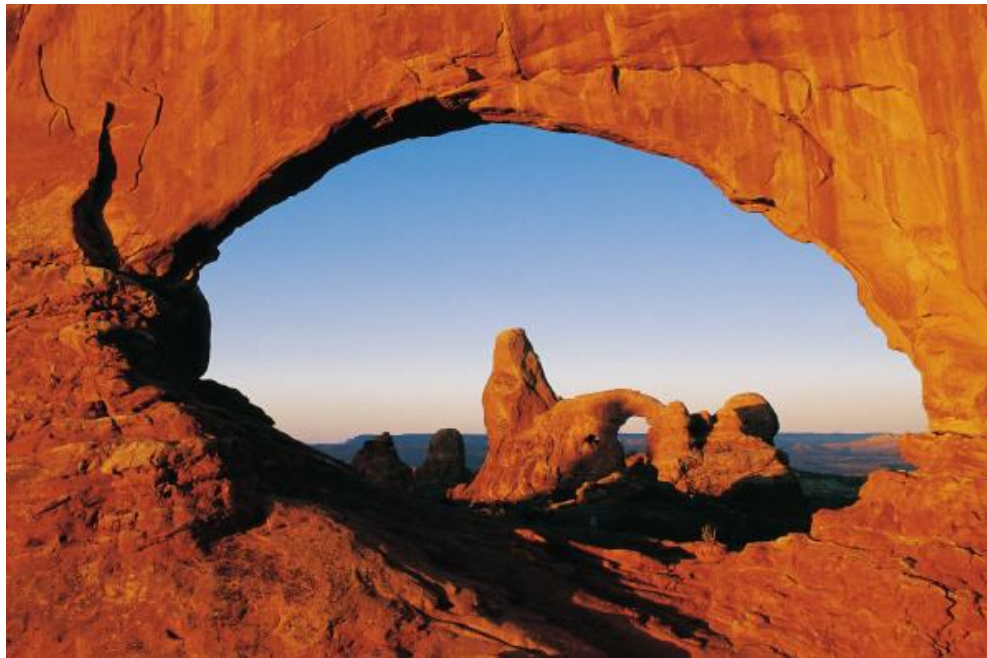
Action shots



Landscape tips

- Take pictures at the start and end of the day
- Anticipate weather changes
- Diffused light can highlight patterns and textures
- Bright light highlights monochrome colors
- Move around to exclude or block objects from view





Objects in the landscape tips

- Add scale, depth and focal points
- Use items to add interest to common or simple scenes





Sunset tips

- Include shadowed image for interest
- Often best after the sun has actually gone down
- Less time closer to the equator to take





Wildlife tips

- Fill the frame
- Avoid barriers
- Shoot against the glass if in a car (no flash)
- Use tripod
- Blur background, or find simple one
- Focus on the eyes
- Go for natural poses, growls, yawns, etc.





Garden tips

- Strong diffused light is generally best—especially for single blooms
- Macro lens
 - Can help you get a 1:1 ration
 - Avoid shadowing your subject
 - Have smaller aperture to allow more depth of field
 - Without macro = 4 foot minimum





Take-away tips

- Think
- Experiment
- Move
- Wait
- Rule of Thirds

