

Total time:
2-4 hours



Difficulty Level: Beginner

Skill Points:

- Understanding when it's best to fill the frame and when it's best not to
- Discovering how filling the frame creates impact in a photo

FILL THE FRAME FOR IMPACT



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This is a common problem for new photographers. They don't "Fill The Frame". Get close either physically, or through your choice of lens, so that your viewers can see the important details of your subject. Don't drown your subject in a sea of background.

KEY LESSON: When people begin photography, they have this subconscious barrier that seems to prevent them from getting close to the subject. Tape a little message to the back of your camera that says, "GET CLOSE". Acquiring this one skill will make you a better photographer immediately.

Lupina flowers

Left: Part of understanding the concept of filling the frame is to always identify what truly is your subject. In this example, is the landscape the subject, or the flowers? The flowers offer a better photo opportunity.

Right: Filling the frame created a much more dramatic and satisfying image. This didn't even require a longer focal length lens. The camera was simply moved closer to the flowers.



Lion and Landscape

Left: There may be times where you physically cannot get the camera any closer to your subject. This is the advantage to telephoto lenses (review the Lens Focal Length Action Card). If it's impossible to fill the frame-look to other tools of composition to help create a compelling image.

Right: When you fill the frame with your subject, it increases interest. Telephoto lenses are great tool for filling the frame. They are also more difficult to handle. **See the Reciprocal Rule Action Card.**



Young Man

Left: If there is one area where you have complete control to get in close and fill the frame-, it's portraits. There is a place for the wide environmental shot. Don't start there. Concentrate on showing the features of your subject's face.

Right: You don't have to be right into their face. Even a half-length shot can include some storytelling background while also giving the details of the person's face. Filling the frame with a wide-angle lens will create distortion. Use it carefully to make sure it fits your subject.



ACTION ASSIGNMENT!

Organize two photo shoots:

First photo shoot: go out with a friend to use as your subject and practice filling the frame, also not filling the frame, and many options in between. Change lenses, and move the distance of the camera around.

Second photo shoot: go out on a photo walk. Look for interesting subjects, and photograph (keep the "fill the frame" lesson in mind). Remember, not every shot requires you to be super close. Spend a moment thinking about what you want to say "visually" about that subject, and don't include anything more than what's necessary to tell your story. Shoot the same subject with different lenses and different camera to subject distances.

HOW DID YOU DO?

- Did you create a number of interesting shots of your friend using various locations and filling the frame appropriately?
- Did you ALSO keep your technical considerations in mind? Were your pictures sharp and properly exposed?