



Understanding Composition (Expanded Guides - Techniques)

David Taylor

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A concise, jargon-free guide through the basics of composition

In photography, as with other visual arts, composition is the placement or arrangement of elements in an image as distinct from the subject of a work. Although it may sound clichéd, the only rule in photography is that there are no rules: just a number of established guidelines that can be applied to enhance the impact of a scene. These guidelines will help you take more compelling photographs, investing them with a natural balance, drawing the viewer's attention to the important parts of the scene, or leading the eye through the image. Professional photographer David Taylor guides the reader through the basics of composition, why it matters, and how to attune the mind to the art of looking. Beginning with a guide to choosing a camera—and how different types help you think about composition differently—he explains aspect ratios, the focal length of lenses, and the effect of perspective. The main composition concepts—from the Rule of Thirds, the Golden Section, the Rule of Odds, visual weight, and contrast, to actual and implied lines in an image, symmetry, viewpoint, and abstraction—are each analyzed and demonstrated with the aid of the author's own beautiful images. The techniques of exposure, depth of field, shutter speed, and white balance are explained, with practical hints and tips. Finally, post-production techniques such as cropping, selective blurring, panoramic stitching, and use of filters complete this in-depth guide to a fascinating area of photograph. Includes four punch-out quick reference cards at the back of the book.

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