

Composition & Technique



Balance

Can be achieved by using symmetry, using a visual counterweight for a large mass, use of color palette, or by specific arrangement of large masses within the frame.



Framing

Fill the frame! Decide what needs to be in the frame, and what needs to be out. Don't treat your subject like a bullseye. Do a walk-around and try framing your subject matter from every height, angle, and focal length you can think of.



Foreground / Background Relationship

Use something in the foreground to provide scale, guide the viewer's eye, or give more information about the subject in the background. An overhanging archway or branch in the foreground will add depth to an image, and guide the viewer's eye deeper into the frame.



Leading Lines

Leads the viewer's eye on a path through the image. Use them to direct attention towards the subject. Shadows, roads, paths, or even implied leading lines such as a gaze, will do the trick.

Composition & Technique



The Rule of Thirds

Helps achieve balance within the frame and avoids centering subjects. Divide the frame into thirds vertically and horizontally. The 4 intersections are ideal locations to place subject matter. The horizon is best placed at the upper or lower third, rather than the center of the frame.



Shape & Form

Emphasize shape by contrasting it against a plain background or using backlighting. Emphasize form (3-dimensionality) by using light sources that are not from the same direction as the camera. Side-lighting, butterfly lighting, work well for this.



The Decisive Moment

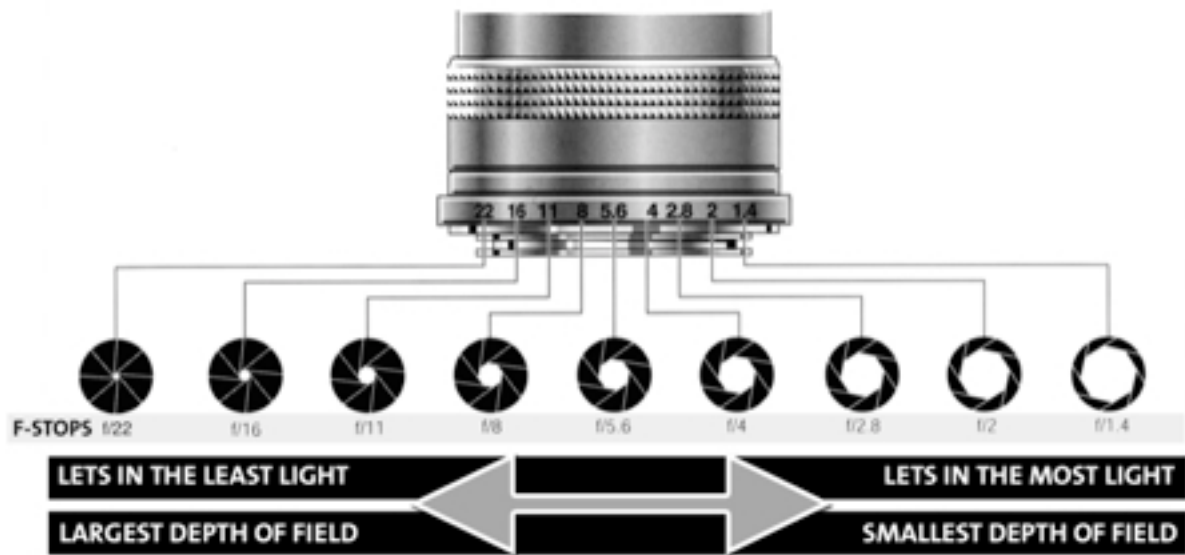
The timing of when you snap the photo. A composition in which each element is in balance, in context and an essential part of a scene. The idea is to see the "moment" about to happen and have the presence of mind to have your camera at hand to capture it!



ISO Settings

Use a higher ISO for low-light situations (400, 800, 1600, 3200), and use a lower ISO for brighter lighting (50, 100, 200). Remember, the higher the ISO, the higher the digital noise, so it's a trade-off.

Composition & Technique



Aperture & F-stops

Use the Aperture Priority or Manual mode on your camera to select the f-stop you would like to use. The larger the f-stop number, the deeper the depth of field. The smaller the f-stop number, the shallower the depth of field will be.

Depth of Field

Defined as the range of acceptable focus within an image. Use a shallow depth of field to single out a single subject matter. Use a wide depth of field to have everything in focus from the foreground to the background.



Motion Blur

Use Shutter Speed Priority (Tv) or Manual mode to control your shutter speed. To reveal motion, set it to anything below 1/60 sec. Keep in mind that to have some parts in focus, you will have to use a tripod. This exposure was likely several seconds long with a tripod.



Freeze Motion

Use Shutter Speed Priority (Tv) or Manual mode to control your shutter speed. To freeze motion you must use a very fast shutter speed. How fast? Depends on the speed of your subject matter. This one was shot at 1/8000 sec.

Composition & Technique



Back Light

Creates rim lighting around the edges and can create silhouettes without proper lighting from the camera-side.



Window Light

Acts like a giant softbox diffusing light onto your subject. Perfect for portraits.



Dusk, Dawn & Night

Dusk and dawn light provides warm and cool light that is directional, yet softer than midday. When shooting after/before the actual sunrise/sunset, you can also balance glowing lights with the ambient light.



Ambient Light

Can be very soft, or directional and harsh depending on the time of day and cloud cover. Soft light on overcast days acts like a giant softbox and evenly lights the scene. Shooting portraits in direct sunlight? For flattering light, try shooting in a shadowed area. Always consider timing and weather when planning outdoor shoots.