



Max Bertola's Photo School

Visually Proclaim Your Focus!



Composition – The rules of the road

Welcome to our fine arts course in digital photography.

The purpose of this course is to help you create a portfolio of art representing your understanding of some of the basic fundamentals in composition and photography.

Take twenty people and have them create twenty images of the same subject and you will get twenty different photographs. That is because we all see things differently and express things differently. But, we can provide you with some basic concepts of composition to help you get started.

Of course, we should tell you what some great photographers say about composition:

There are no rules for good photographs, there are only good photographs. - Ansel Adams

"Consulting the rules of composition before taking a photograph, is like consulting the laws of gravity before going for a walk."- Edward Weston

Composition defined

The balance of all things in a photograph: the elements, the way the light interacts with those elements, the way those elements are arranged, are all part of a photograph.

The art of composition has its roots way back to the Renaissance. It is interesting to note that the guidelines for creating a photograph were already established centuries before the first camera was invented.

Photoshoots for this course

Photoshoot #1	Getting to know your equipment and software
Photoshoot #2	Simplicity – Visually Proclaim Your Focus
Photoshoot #3	Rule of thirds, Horizontal and Vertical Formats, Lines and Direction of Motion
Photoshoot #4	Exploring Light, Time of Day, and Texture
Photoshoot #5	Landscapes, Foregrounds, Framing, Background Merge, Viewpoint, and Patterns (Optional: Depth of Field, and Focal Length)



Photoshoot #1: Getting to Know Equipment and Software

Our first photo shoot just gets you out into the field.

1. Choose a place that interests you. You should pick a location where you can wander for a few hours.
2. From an 8 x 10 card stock sheet, cut a 4 x 6 hole in the center. Look through the opening of the card to see what your scene may look like in the finished picture. Hold the card closer and then farther away to simulate telephoto and wide angle.
3. Start taking pictures of things that interest you.
4. Ask yourself the question: "What drew my attention to this image?" Then try to capture the essence of what interested you.
5. When you find something that interests you, take a picture of the subject – then move closer and continue to move closer to take each picture. Move so close that you can touch the object.
6. Explore the different lenses or lens options: normal, wide angle, and telephoto
7. Take your images and move them from your camera to your computer.
8. Work at least 10 images (crop, lighting, size), save them at least 500 pixels wide or tall and as a .jpg format (compression 5) and then send the Word document to your instructor.



Step 1: Take the image of something that interests you.

For this photoshoot, you will need to work at least 10 of your favorite images. Be sure to spend at least two hours exploring your location.



Step 2: Crop your image to eliminate anything that does not contribute to the idea of the photograph.

Step 3: Resize the image to 600 pixels at 72 dpi. Save the image as a .jpg format with a "5" compression. This makes a small file – easy to work with.



Step 4: Work the image for light, contrast, color saturation. (Read your digital software's instruction guide)

Step 5: Insert the 10 worked images into a Word document. If you need help, check Word's help screen about inserting images.