

Taking great photos

Chris Snider | Drake University

5 tools all great photographers use

- Light
- Composition
- Portraiture
- Action
- Moment

Light

- Light has four properties: direction, intensity, softness/hardness and color temperature.
- Direction: Think about how light works in nature. Light from above is natural (the sun is above us). Light from below isn't natural and therefore can create images with a “scary” feel. Side light adds depth. Front light can make image flat.
- Intensity: Is there enough light for the photo to turn out? Is the intensity of the main source creating the mood/effect we want?
- Softness/hardness: Soft light is diffused and creates smooth shadows, hard light is harsh and will cause hard shadows. Soft light is most flattering on photos of people.

Light

- Color of light is controlled by the source: daylight, incandescent and fluorescent are the three main sources (flash is basically the color of the sun).
- Fluorescent lighting casts a greenish color.
- Tungsten bulbs make things appear more orange.
- Candles turn colors red.
- The setting sun produces reddish hues. Overcast days tend to be blue.
- Your camera has “auto white balance” and likely other settings for this.

Using Light

- A successful photographer can discern between front light and back light.
- Shoot in the first and last two hours of daylight because of the direction and warmth of the sunlight.
- Cloudy days allow you to shoot during all daylight hours, because the clouds diffuse the light.

Front light
Back light



Source: thepioneerwoman.com

Back light



Mark J. Terrill / AP

Side light

Creates depth and
texture in your photo



Source: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/joeireed/3782715251/>

Light from below

Adds an unnatural
feel to your photos.



Golden hour

First and last 2 hours
of daylight.



Source: photographycorner.com

Golden hour



Intensity of light

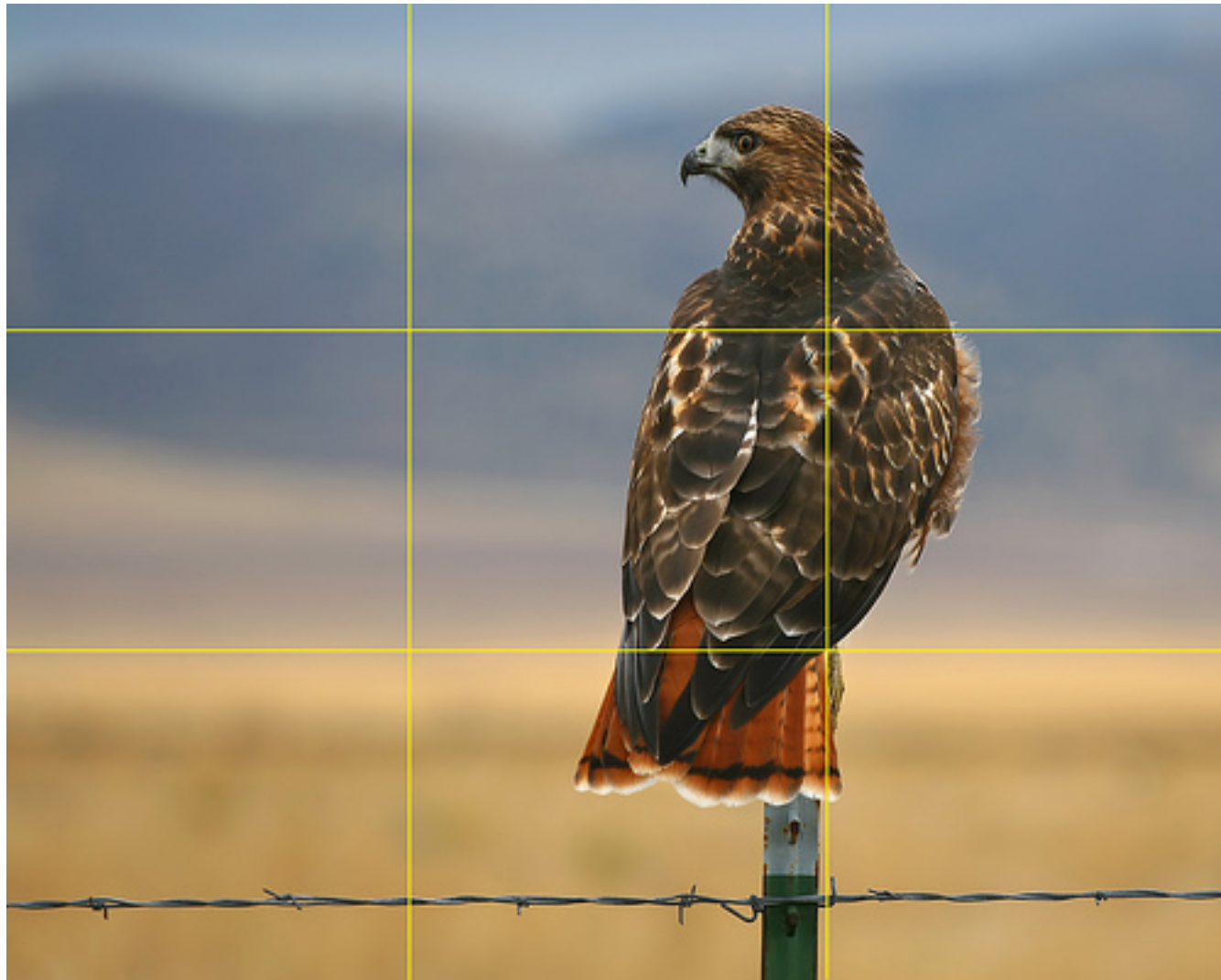


Composition

- Capturing the attention of the viewer and the movement of the eye through the photograph.
- Rule of thirds
- Leading lines
- Juxtaposition
- Framing
- Emphasizing the foreground or background by changing camera angles

Rule of thirds

Aligning a subject with these points creates more tension, energy and interest in the composition than simply centering the subject would.



[LeggNet](#) on Flickr

Rule of thirds Framing



Breaking
rule of thirds



Leading lines

Leading lines are lines within an image that leads the eye to another point in the image, or occasionally, out of the image.



Leading lines



Leading lines



Juxtaposition



Juxtaposition



Gabriel Bouys / AFP - Getty Images

Juxtaposition



<http://www.poyi.org/68/17/>

Framing



<http://digital-photography-school.com/25-images-using-framing-in-composition-weekly-inspiration>

Framing



Framing



<http://www.poyi.org/68/17/>

Foreground/ Background



Chris Snider

Foreground/ Background



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Camera angle



Camera angle



Camera angle



Camera angle



Erika Schultz / Seattle Times

Portraiture

- Three types of portraits
- Formal
- Informal
- Environmental

Formal



Informal



[emily ann](#) on Flickr

Environmental



Action

- Three ways to deal with action
- Stop action
- Pan shot (moving the camera with the subject so the background blurs)
- Blur shot (camera stays still, subject blurs against background)

Stop action



Stop action



Pan shot



Pan shot



Blur shot



Blur shot



Moment

- You must do two things to be a successful photographer...
- Truthfully and accurately portray a subject, scene or event.
- Evoke an emotional response in the viewer.
- We accomplish this by capturing moments, those life-telling gestures and juxtapositions, the action and reaction of subjects, scenes and defining moments of events.



















20-minute assignment

- Go outside and take photos focusing on the idea of composition
- Try to get a photo that represents each of these things
 - Rule of thirds
 - Leading lines
 - Framing
 - Foreground/background