**Photojournalism**

Photojournalism is a particular form of journalism (the collecting, editing and presenting of news materials for publication or broadcast) that creates images in order to tell a news story. It is new usually understood to refer only still motionless images and in some cases to video used in broadcast journalism. Photojournalism is distinguished form other close branches of photography such as documentary photography, street photography or celebrity photography by the qualities of

**Timelines**: - The images have meaning in the content of a published chronological record of events

**Objectivity**: - The situation implied by the image is accurate representation of the events they depict reflect

**Narrative: -** The images combine with other news elements, to inform and give insight to the viewer or reader.

## Photojournalism

Photojournalism is an area of photography dedicated to taking accurate shots of current events. The basic mission of a photojournalist is to take pictures to accompany a news story (whether it is broadcast or published in a newspaper). However, truly great photojournalism pictures should tell the story BEFORE the text or broadcaster does.

Photojournalism pictures attempt to capture the viewer’s attention and emotion to entice him to continue listening to or reading about the story. Think of newspaper covers with large, dramatic shots of the latest current event: these pictures reflect the articles’ titles while adding a dynamic edge to story by visually communicating the pathos of the event.

The photograph has affected the way many cultures throughout the world understand and learn about their world. One of the main fields responsible for this paradigm is photojournalism. Photojournalism is the use of photographs in conjunction with the reporting of news in media such as print newspapers, magazines, television news and internet reporting. The incorporation of photographs into news reports is so ubiquitous that a story without photographs to a contemporary audience feels incomplete, as though they were only getting half the story. Consumers depend upon photojournalists to bring them the images that allow them to feel connected to far-away realities, and to be educated about thoserealities.  
  
Photojournalism distinguishes itself from other forms of professional photography by its adherence to the principles of journalism: timeliness, accuracy, fair representation of the context of events and facts reported, and accountability to the public. While a wedding photographer may be documenting an actual event, his or her responsibility is to the client and the presentation that client would like to see. A journalist, on the other hand, cannot be held to the demands of the photographic subject, but rather he or she **must be concerned with producing accurate news for the public.**

In addition to accuracy, the photojournalist must be careful not to exclude important parts of the context of the event being photographed. A shot of an individual rioter breaking a store window can look like an isolated act of criminality if the photojournalist does not show it in the context of a larger social event whose significance goes beyond the individual act.

**2.1. History**

Photo journalism has been a major element of newspaper and magazine reporting since the early twentieth century, although its historic origins have been traced to mid 19th C. European battlefield photography by British press reporters in the **Crimean war**. Its use was greatly spurred by the development of the commercial 35 mm Leica camera. The invention of the term photojournalism is commonly attributed to Cliff Edom (1907-1991), who taught at the University of Missouri: school of Journalism for 29 yrs. Edom established the first photojournalism workshop there in 1946. Some attribute the word, instead, to the then-Dean of the school of Journalism, Frank L. Mott.

**The Golden Age**

In the “golden age” of photojournalism (1930s-1950s) some magazines (Picture Post (London), Paris Match (Paris), Life (USA), Sports Illustrated (USA)) and newspapers (The Daily Mirror (London), The Daily Graphic (New York) built their huge readerships and reputations largely on their use of photography and photographers such as Robert Capa, Alfred Eisenstaedt, Margaret Bourke- white, W. Wagene Smith became well known names.

**Farm security Administration**

From 1935 to 1942, the Farm Security Administration and its predecessor the Resettlement Administration were part of Frankly Roosevelt’s New Deal, and were designed to address agricultural problems and rural poverty associated with the Great Depression. A special photographic section of the agency, headed by Roy Stryke was intended merely to provide public relations for its programs, but instead produced what some consider one of the greatest collections of documentary photographs ever created in the US. If such documentary photography can be called photojournalism remains debatable since the FSA photographers had much more time and resources to create their work than would usually be the case

**World War II**

WWII brought a tremendous increase in the supply and demand for quality of photojournalism. In its later stages, the war also stimulated the supply of new faster and smaller cameras from Japan to Europe and the USA.

**Magnum**

On 1947, Two years after WWII ended, the **Magnum Photos** photographic agency was founded by four photographers Robert Capa, Hanri Cartier Bresson, George Rodger, and David Seymour. Magnum differed form other agencies in that it was a cooperative (all members of the agency were also partial owners). Magnum is highly respected photo agency and membership is extremely selecting. There is a review process once a year during which portfolios from applicants are viewed by all current members. From there, the few who are invited to join must withstand a several years probationary period before (with a vote every year by full members to see if the probationary members recent photo work is up to par) they can be considered full members.

Many probationary members are asked to leave after one or two years. Some of the famous contemporary Magnum photographers have left the agency for various reasons either to be independents or to begin their own agencies. Magnum photos agency has more or less been experiencing financial troubles for the last 40 years.

**2.2. Professional organizations**

The **Danish Union of Press Photographers** (pressefotografforbundet) was the first national organization for new papers photographers in the world. It was founded in 1992 in Denmark by six photographers in Copenhagen. Today it has nearly 800 members.

The **National Press Photographers Association** (NPPA) was founded in 1946 in the U.S., and has approximately 10,000 members others around the world include:

* British Pres Photographers Association , 1984
* Hong Kong Press Photographers Association , 1989
* Northern Ireland Press Photographers Association , 2000
* Pressfotografernas Klubb Sweden, 1930
* PK Press Photographers Association Norway

News organizations and journalism schools run many different awards for photojournalists. Since 1968, Pulitzer Prizes have been awarded for the following categories of photojournalism; “feature photography”, “Spot news photography” and “Capture the Moment”. Other awards are World Press Photo, Best of Photojournalism and Pictures of the Year.

**2.3. The impact of new technology**

Smaller, lighter cameras greatly enhanced the role of the photojournalist. Since the 1960s, motor drives, electronic flash, auto-focus, better lenses and other camera enhancement have made picture taking easier. New digital cameras free photojournalists form the limitation of film roll length, as thousands of images can be stored on a single micro drive or memory card. Content remains the most important element of photojournalism, but the ability to extend deadlines with rapid gathering and editing of images has brought significant changes. As recently as 15 years ago, nearly 30 minutes were needed to scan and transmit a single color photograph from a remote location to a news office for printing. New, equipped with a digital camera, a mobile phone and a laptop computer, a photojournalist can send a high quality image in minutes, even seconds after an event occurs. Videophones and portable satellite links increasingly allow for the mobile transmission of images form almost any point on the earth.

There is one concern by news photographers that the profession of photojournalism as it is known today could change to such a degree that it is unrecognizable as image-capturing technology naturally progresses. There is also concern that fewer print publications are commissioning serious photojournalism on timely issues

Another concern is the concept of media convergence or the merger of news media businesses of different mediums. Such instances could put a print photojournalism side-by-side with a broadcast or video photojournalists. There is increasing pressure in the industry to re-train all journalists in a wide variety of mediums, which may one day include training many still photojournalists with video. Video adds a new dynamic of movement and sound, foreign concepts to photojournalists trained to capture moments frozen in time.

**2.4. Definition of photojournalism**

Human beings are more of visual communicators. Our ancestors have always been more of visual species than verbal one. We can mention some historical remnants of mediums of communication as examples:

Hieroglyphs of ancient Egypt

The Aztecs and the Symbols of Chinese languages

These were visual symbols that represent thoughts and ideas.

Nowadays, we are also using various types of visual languages such as

Graphic street signs

Musical scores etc

So now with this human nature, our primary visual language tool is became photography with the progress of technological (industrial) revolution.

Let us look to the nature and definition of photojournalism has the photographic part on the one side, and the journalistic part on the other side. As a branch of photography this genre of visual commutation encompasses some characteristics of other branches of photography and as a part of journalism it gathers, edits and publishes images with various stories so its definition is more than taking pictures

If so how can we define photojournalism?

We can define photojournalism as a combination of tow mediums words and pictures and that these two elements communicate facts and information to all of our perspective faculties for our eyes and emotion.

**Summary**

**Photojournalism:**

Informs

Stimulates thoughts and action

Gives facts

Arouses the viewer‘s emotion

has main object &focal point

shows something we can‘t ordinarily see for ourselves

Answers some of the classic questions of journalism(WH & How questions)

So to differentiate photojournalism from other types of photography, we need to ask the following questions:

Does the event affect many people?

Does it represent a clash between people or institutions?

Does it involve well-known personalities?

Are we dealing with nearby events?

Is it timely?

Is it bizarre (strange or unusual)?

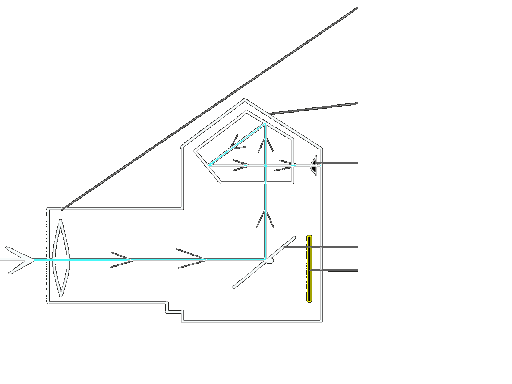
**Camera**

The most important tool of photography is camera itself. Basically, a camera is a light-tight box with a lens on one side and light sensitive film on the other. Improvements in camera technology over the years have been given photographers more control over the quality of their photographs.

Even though, camera has variety of forms today i.e. there are different types of cameras in their functions such as **Box Cameras, View Cameras, Rangefinder Cameras, Point-and- Shoot cameras**, we shall see **Single-lens Reflex Camera** which is the most common type of camera that allows us to work with it either manually or automatically.

**5.1 How does Single-Lens Reflex (SLR) camera work?**

Single-lens reflex means that the same lens is used for viewing the scene and taking the photograph (picture). Light comes through the lens onto a moveable mirror between the lens and the film, then the mirror reflects it on a five-sided prism (ground-glass viewing screen) into the viewfinder while the photographer adjusts the focus. When the shutter release button is depressed (or at the moment the photographer snaps the picture), a spring automatically pulls/pushes the mirror out of the path between the lens and film. Because of this system, the image recorded on the film is almost exactly what the photographer sees in the viewfinder, a great advantage in many picture taking situations.

  
**lens** type: macro, fisheye, super wide, wide, standard, telephoto, super telephoto, zoom  
 **five sided prism**  
  
 **view finder  
  
  
mirror  
  
film/sensor type (for digital cameras) : CCD , CMOS**

**All modern SLRs share some basic features:**

* A body
* A lens which is interchangeable. That means you can take it off and put on a different one.
* An adjustable aperture which is inside the lens.
* An adjustable shutter which is inside the body
* A built in TTL light meter. (Probably!).Measures light coming **T**hrough **T**he **L**ens

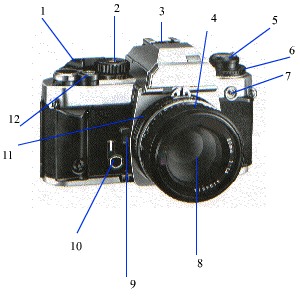
**They also share similar controls.**

* **The aperture ring**. This is a narrow rotating ring on the barrel of the lens. It is generally located close to the body of the camera.
* **The focusing ring**. This will be a wider ring located near the front of the lens.
* **The shutter control**. This is usually a small dial on the top of the camera next to the winder lever. If your camera is an electronic model with a load of 'modes' then the shutter may be altered by using a thumbwheel or pressing a button. Whichever it is the actual control will be located on the top right area of your camera.
* **The shutter release**. Again this will be top right, either on the front of the top-plate or near the top on the front. Light pressure on the shutter release usually activates the built in TTL meter.
* **Film speed dial**. On the top plate usually to the left. Newer electronic cameras set the film speed from the DX code on the film cassette itself. You may be allowed to over ride this or maybe you won't.

These are the controls that you will have to get to grips with to get the most from your camera. Additionally there may be other knobs and buttons on your camera which could prove useful.

* **Depth of field preview control**. Not very common but very useful. On the front near the lens.
* **Self timer**. Has its uses.
* **Exposure lock**. Has its uses as well.
* **Multiple exposure switch**. Probably near the wind on lever, if you have one. Allows you to make multiple exposures on to one frame.
* **Exposure compensation dial**. Allows you to over ride automatic exposure settings. Probably easier and quicker to switch to manual if you can.
* **Mirror lock up**. You would be so lucky!
* **On/Off switch**. Move to **On** to make your camera work. Move to **Off** to make it stop. Leave it on and you will have to buy a lot of batteries.

This illustration shows a fairly standard traditional SLR camera with manual controls. The make and model are not important as most cameras of this design will have similar controls in similar places.



1. Film winder.
2. Shutter Speed Dial.
3. Flash Hotshoe.
4. Focusing ring.
5. Film Rewind Crank.
6. Film Speed Dial.
7. Flash Synch Socket.
8. Lens.
9. Depth of Field Preview.
10. Self Timer/Exposure Lock.
11. Aperture Ring.
12. Shutter Release.

Some Olympus cameras have the shutter control on the lens.

**Aperture**

Lens opening. The hole or opening formed by the metal leaf diaphragm inside the lens or the opening in a camera lens through which light passes to expose the film. The size of aperture is either fixed or adjustable. Aperture size is usually calibrated in f- numbers-the larger the number, the smaller the lens opening. Aperture affects depth of field, the smaller the aperture, the greater is the zone of sharpness, the bigger the aperture, the zone of sharpness is reduced. The hole or opening formed by the metal leaf diaphragm inside the lens; controls amount of light and depth of field, prevents vignetting and reduces lens aberrations; the size of the aperture is indicated by its f-number, i.e., the ratio of the diameter of the opening to the focal length of the lens; a large aperture is indicated by a small numerical f-number.

**Darkroom**

A light tight area used for processing films and for printing and processing papers; also for loading and unloading film holders and some cameras. For image purist, the cycle of photograph is not complete if the darkroom process is not handled personally.

**Diaphragm**

An adjustable device inside the lens which is similar to the iris in the human eye; comprised of six or seven overlapping metal blades; continuously adjustable from "wide open" to "stopped down"; controls the amount of light allowed to pass through the lens and expose the film when a picture is taken; a]so controls the amount of depth of field the photograph will have; in lenses designed for single-lens reflex cameras, there are basically two types of diaphragms: Lens opening. A perforated plate or adjustable opening mounted behind or between the elements of a lens used to control the amount of light that reaches the film. Openings are usually calibrated in f-numbers. The more blades used will have a more natural and rounded spots.

There are two types of diaphragms:

Automatic: The most popular type; controlled by a single aperture ring; during viewing and focusing, the diaphragm remains wide open, allowing the maximum amount of light to go to the viewfinder for a bright and easy-to-focus image; at the instant of exposure, it stops down automatically to a particular aperture and then reopens to full aperture immediately afterward.

Manual Preset: Used in some specific lenses like, [PC-Nikkor](http://www.mir.com.my/rb/photography/hardwares/speciallenses/pcnikkor.htm) lenses for Nikon for instance; controlled by two separate rings; the preset ring is first set to the desired aperture, then the aperture ring is rotated to stop down the diaphragm manually for metering or prior to taking pictures.

Understanding Lens Speed

A lens’s speed is determined by the maximum amount of light the lens is capable of transmitting—the largest f-stop value. When a lens is capable of transmitting more light than other lenses of the same focal length, that lens is referred to as *fast*. Fast lenses allow photographers to shoot at higher shutter speeds in low-light conditions. For example, lenses with maximum f-stop values between 1.0 and 2.8 are considered fast.

**f/stop**

A fraction which indicates the actual diameter of the aperture: the "f" represents the lens focal length, the slash means "divided by," and the word "stop" is a particular f-number; for example, with a 50mm f/1.4 lens, the actual diameter of its maximum aperture is 50mm divided by 1.4 or 35.7mm; at f/2, the diameter becomes 50mm/2 or 25mm; at f/2.8, the aperture is 50mm/2.8 or 17.9mm across; as the numerical value of the f/stop increases, the aperture decreases in size.

**Exposure Meter**

An instrument with a light-sensitive cell that measures the light reflected from or falling on a subject, used as an aid for selecting the exposure setting. The same as a light meter.

**Shutter**

Blades, a curtain, plate, or some other movable cover in a camera that controls the time during which light reaches the film.  
**Viewfinder.**   
  
Device or system indicating the field of view encompassed by the camera lens. The term is sometimes used as a description of the type of camera that does not use reflex or "straight-through" viewing systems and therefore has to have a separate viewfinder

**Depth of Field**

Depth of field is the area of the image that appears in focus from foreground to background and is determined by a combination of the opening of the aperture and the focal length of the lens. A small aperture setting results in greater depth of field.

Controlling depth of field is one of the easiest ways for a photographer to compose the image. By limiting the depth of field of an image, the photographer can turn the attention of the viewer on the subject in focus. Often, limiting the depth of field of an image helps eliminate clutter in the background. On the other hand, when shooting a landscape, you want the image to have great depth of field. Limiting the depth of field to the foreground would not make sense.

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| **Depth of Field: One of the most important elements in photography.** |

**Depth of field** is the amount of distance between the nearest and farthest objects that appear in acceptably sharp focus in a photograph. A preferred selection Depth of field ("DOF") in a focused subject in an image can be quite subjective. Remember this, adequate selection of DOF for one situation; application may be unacceptable for another photographer. It is all a matter of personal preference when trying to determine the appropriate use of DOF to enhance an effect in a photograph.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Shallow depth of filed control via use of LARGE aperture to throw distraction from your main suject of interest | A typical example of a photo with **shallow** depth of field control. (only the main subject of interest is enhanced by throwing other elements out of focus. |

In simpler term, we define depth of field as the zone of sharpest focus in front of, behind, and around the subject on which, when lens is focused on a specific subject; with TTL (through the lens) SLR camera, DOF can be previewed in the viewfinder of a camera - the preview is very handy for critical type of work. For an example, when taking a product shot, when you require absolute certain if DOF is adequate to cover the object you intend to photograph Generally, the closer the subject to the camera, the more evenly with the distribution of depth of field in front and behind the subject. As distance of focus extends, DOF usually will be more behind than in front of the focused area.

**TelephotoLens**  
A lens that makes a subject appear larger on film than does a normal lens at the same camera-to-subject distance. A telephoto lens has a longer focal length and narrower field of view than a normal lens and have a shallower depth of field than wide angle lenses. But it can do isolation of subject and have a longer reach without going near to the subject. Life can be very difficult in sports and wildlife photography. Telephoto lens whose focal length is longer than the diagonal of the film frame; in 35mm photography, lenses longer than 50-5Bmm; also referred to as a "long" lens.

Photojournalists should consider themselves to be on an equal status as word journalists. Photojournalists are reporters. But instead of pen, notebook, or tape recorders, these reporters use a camera and its accompanying selection of technical devices to record events for each day's printed record. As reporters, photojournalists must have a strong sense of the journalistic values that guide all reporters. Truthfulness, objectivity, and fairness are values that give the journalism profession credibility and respect. From getting the names spelled correctly in a group portrait to not misrepresenting yourself or a subject, truthfulness is a value that gives the public a reason to rely on the accuracy of the news they read and see in their newspaper. If you are economically, politically, or emotionally involved with a subject, your objectivity will be put into question. A photographer's credibility will suffer if free gifts from a subject are accepted or if political views or personal opinions cloud news judgments. To be fair, a journalist tries to show both sides of a controversial issue, prints stories and photographs proportionate to their importance, and if mistakes are made, prints immediate, clear, and easily found corrections.

A photojournalist, from experience and education, must know what is and what is not news. The media are often criticized for concentrating their efforts on negative, often tragic events in their community. Journalism professors Ted Glasser and Jim Ettema (1989) reviewed the most commonly held news values: "prominence, conflict, oddity, impact, proximity, and timeliness." In their article, Glasser and Ettema argued that a journalist should also use common sense, taught in journalism schools or through work experiences, to decide what is news. Unfortunately, tragic events usually fit into most news value categories (pp. 18-25, 75).

Successful picture taking is a combination of a strong news and visual sense. It is no easy proposition. As reporters, photographers use their sense of news judgment to determine if a subject is worth coverage and to present a fresh or unusual angle to an ordinary event. As visual recorders, photographers must use their sense of visual composition to eliminate distracting and unnecessary elements in the frame. As technicians, they must have a high level of expertise to use their machine to expose correctly and in focus that peak news moment.

The French photojournalist Henri Cartier-Bresson used the phrase, "the decisive moment" to describe the same idea. The decisive moment is an instant when the subject and the compositional elements form a union. For a newspaper photographer, the moment may come when a subject expresses in a minor facial gesture or an overt action the essence of his or her situation and when the foreground and background visual elements contribute to a reader's understanding of that subject's emotional state.

A confident news and visual sense is essential when covering any of the many assignments a photographer may face. Photojournalistic maturity elevates an ordinary picture taker to a journalist with a clear communicative goal. Whether the assignment is a ground-breaking ceremony at a local high school or a five-alarm fire at a nursing home, a mature photojournalist will find a way to capture in photographs a fresh and decisive summation of the event.

There are six basic types of assignments a photographer faces. News, features, sports, portraits, illustrations, and picture stories each present a photographer with a different set of challenges.

**NEWS ASSIGNMENTS**

News is the assignment most people probably think of with the term photojournalism. Crossing police lines to get to the heart of a raging fire or head-on collision, photojournalists often risk physical harm with the news assignments they cover.

Types of News Assignments

News is actually divided into two parts: spot and general.

Spot News. Spot news is any unplanned event where little advanced planning is possible. Photographers will often learn of spot news events through a radio call from their photography editor or directly from a police and fire scanner in their car. Because photographers are often driving in their car, spot news is sometimes found through coincidental circumstances. Although emotions are high when driving to a spot news scene, special care must be taken to drive safely. Traffic laws must be obeyed. Most likely, arriving an extra minute sooner because of a high speed chase will not make a difference in capturing the most dramatic moments. Almost always, spot news is an assignment where subjects will be injured or in physical trouble. The photographer must be prepared to help the injured if no rescue workers are on the scene. To get quickly through police lines, an identification card is usually connected to a small chain and hung around the neck. Police officials are supposed to allow news photographers access to news events. Understanding and tact are often necessary by photographers during heated emotional moments on both sides of the police line. A photographer who obstructs the work of the police or rescue workers runs the risk of arrest.

General News. General news assignments give photographers a chance to prepare. Special film, camera lenses, and lighting needs can be anticipated. General news assignments usually take the form of a politician's press conference or a group of donors to a local charity. A photographer's main concerns with such assignments are typically arriving on time to get a good vantage point, making sure that names in a group picture are spelled correctly, and having enough energy and curiosity to produce an unusual, yet telling moment. A picture of a politician or lecturer will always be more visually interesting if an emotional facial expression or hand gesture is captured on film. A standing group of business persons all smiling at the camera, a milk bottle picture as a photo editor used to say, is a visually dull image. Take care to find angles or activities that will not only show the physical appearance of a group, but will reveal their personalities.

Be on your toes. Even during the most banal news conference, strange events happen. Still and video journalists covered the Dwyer news conference that suddenly turned tragic. A photojournalist must always be prepared for the unusual and the newsworthy.

**FEATURE ASSIGNMENTS**

With feature assignments a photographer needs the sharp reflexes honed by spot news events. The trouble with features, however, is that a photographer usually cannot anticipate where the assignment will take place. It is no wonder that many undergraduate photography students often complain that they cannot find meaningful feature pictures to photograph.

Feature assignments are usually self-generated ones. Photo editors, with no other assignments, will tell the photographer to shoot "wild art" or "a colorful enterprise picture for Page 1."

An ordinary photographer might drive to a public park and capture the usual scenes: a child rides a swing, a young woman reads a book, two men talk on a bench. These pictures are made to show readers nothing more than that the weather was nice and people enjoyed the day.

A more mature photographer anticipates the need for a feature picture by the photo editor and has already scouted an area of town or a particular subject that is both visually interesting and filled with meaningful content.

Types of Feature Assignments

There are two types of feature assignments: human interest and pictorial.

Human Interest. These features show persons being natural and unique. The images cannot be anticipated. They are one of a kind moments that capture a person or group being themselves: odd, humorous, and natural. Cute kids, animals, and nuns are traditional subject cliches.

Features offer an opportunity for a page to be highlighted with a pleasant, happy picture that may offset the tragic events of the day. A photographer looking for human interest features thinks like a hunter. Keenly aware and observant, knowledgeable on matters of basic human nature, quiet and unassuming, and technically competent to capture quick and fleeting moments, the photographer stalks the city looking for pictures that go beyond the cliche.

Pictorials. The other type of feature picture is the much maligned pictorial. Traditionally, the pictorial is a silhouette of two standing, arm-in-arm lovers at sunset. Pictorials rely on the graphic elements of composition and lighting more than subject matter. Many times pictorial feature pictures, when combined with bold page layout design, can educate unsophisticated readers to the artistic forms and lighting characteristics within their world. A photojournalist should never become distracted by shapes and shadows. Personal artistic expression in the form of pictorial feature pictures have a limited place in the photographer's portfolio. It is far better to take pictures that combine the striking visual qualities of the pictorial with human interest moments.

Because feature assignment photographers often are their own reporters, much of the responsibility for the caption is left to the photographer. Names and locations are a minimal requirement. Quotations from subjects bring more interest to an otherwise ordinary picture/caption package and increase the chances for larger, front-page treatment.

**SPORTS ASSIGNMENTS**

Although most persons would link photojournalism with news assignments, a recent survey of newspaper photographers revealed that the most common assignment is actually sports. Sports assignments combine the action and excitement of news within a clearly defined structure. The key for successful sports photography is to know that structure. You have to be familiar with the rules of the game to predict dramatic moments. You should also know the backgrounds of some of the key players and anticipate their contribution. If you know that a rookie kicker is about to attempt his first field goal for an NFL team you should concentrate your telephoto lens on his sideline preparations. In an instant, his face may reveal his nervousness that would make a good picture.

Types of Sports Assignments

Sports Action and Sports Feature are categories within the sports assignment. Sports Action is a photograph of any moment that occurs on the playing field during the run of the game. Sports Feature is a picture that shows anything else: an angry coach in the locker room, a frustrated player on the sideline, an anxious fan in the stands. As implied by the name, the same procedure applies to sports feature hunting as with human interest features. A photographer tries to capture a peak, dramatic event not happening on the playing field.

Most sports involve a ball and at least two opposing players. The best sports photographs not only show the ball, but reveal the determination in body language and facial expressions each player's struggle to out-perform the other. Readers are aware of the overhead perspective offered by television of the linebacker blitzing a quarterback. A successful sports photographer gets beyond the uniform and the helmet and into the eyes of the players. A reader should be able to see the passionate, determined eyes of that blitzing linebacker or the frustrated expression of the soon-to-be-sacked quarterback.

For most sports, long lenses are a necessity. Fast shutter speeds are also in order. Because many sports are played at night or indoors under artificial lighting, expensive telephoto lenses that let in as much light as possible are necessary. A fast ASA film or a film that is pushed to a higher ASA with high speed developer is as necessary as a fast telephoto lens. These techniques are valuable because a photographer wants the most depth of field and the fastest shutter speed possible from a film and lens combination. Focus is a problem with fast moving players. If the lens is wide open, there is no room for focus error. Stopped action without blurring is almost mandatory for sports pictures.

To round out a photographer's equipment list, cameras should include motor drives for fast film advancement, a unipod to help support the telephoto lens, and a players' roster for caption information. Many photographers keep track of key plays by shooting the scoreboard immediately afterward.

Tips for Shooting Various Sports

It is difficult to give guidelines for shooting sports because they are so different. Knowing the rules of the game will help you find a spot where the key action is most likely to occur. Here are some general rules, but always look for an unusual angle. Suggestions are included.

Football photographers usually squat about 5 yards either side of the line of scrimmage with a 300mm telephoto lens on a unipod. When a team is within 10 yards of the goal, photographers usually stand behind the outside boundary of the end zone. Another camera with a wide angle lens is ready for close-up, sideline action or features. To facilitate mobility, many shooters use a small, stomach bag to carry film, another lens, and a flash. Pay strict attention to the movement of the players. Several photographers have been hit and their equipment damaged by a 210-pound running back. Play your hunches. A quarterback may be ready to throw a "bomb." Get away from the pack and catch the reception.

Basketball photographers seldom locate themselves on the sidelines. They are most likely found on one side or the other of the net with a 35mm lens for close-up action and a 300mm lens for action farther down the court. Try an 85mm lens with a straight-ahead perspective. Or you might use a telephoto lens from a high, sideline position.

Baseball is a difficult sport to cover because the action is usually quick with long periods of dull innings. Photographers are usually confined in a special area behind first and third base. The usual equipment configuration is to have one camera on a tripod that is fixed on second base with a second camera around the neck. Pay attention. Foul balls can hurt if they are a surprise. Use your fixed position to take pictures with your wide angle lens of fans reacting to key plays.

Soccer photographers roam from the sidelines to the goal looking for headers. You may want to use an extreme low angle through the netting of the goalie attempting to stop a score.

Hockey photographers try to get high enough with long lenses to avoid the protective shield around the playing area. Use a wide angle lens up against the plastic protector to capture a hard check or scuffle.

Tennis is best photographed while kneeling at one side of the net. However during professional matches photographers are limited to an area at a courtside location. As with baseball, try to get crowd feature pictures.

Swimming events are often photographed with a flash and a long lens wit favorable results. Use an underwater camera to record the other side of a dive or turn.

Most track and field events require a long lens and knowledge of the individual event. You might use an extremely long telephoto lens and take close-ups of key actions-the relay hand-off, the pole vaulter's grip, or the shot put thrower's grimace.

Whenever there is doubt on how to cover an event, look at the positions and equipment of other, more experienced photographers. Then, think of a position based on your knowledge of the game. Above all, keep in focus, minimize blurring, and show the drama of competition in the players' eyes.

**PORTRAIT ASSIGNMENTS**

Readers want to know what people in the news look like. The portrait assignment is an opportunity for photographers to capture a person's personality. It is no easy task. Important and ordinary newsmakers tend to hide behind a facade of friendliness. Seldom does a photographer get the luxury to spend long periods of time with a busy businessman. All the photographer's instincts and technical competence come into play to watch for a moment when the subject's personality is revealed.

Types of Portrait Assignments

There are two kinds of portrait pictures: mug and environmental. Mug shots, those little head and shoulder, close-up portraits, have staged a comeback on the pages of newspapers. A recent research study revealed that the front pages of five large circulation newspapers are filled with the tiny face photographs. It seems that photographers must learn to live with the small images (Lester, 1988).

Mug Shots. The term mug shot comes from the definition, "to make faces." The challenge for photographers is to make the mug shot more than a picture of a subject smiling for the camera. Despite its small size, the picture can and should be a telling record.

The Environmental Portrait. The environmental portrait not only shows what the subject looks like, but also reveals aspects of the sitter's personality by the foreground and background objects the person displays. Personal mementos on a desk or hung on a wall let the reader know more about the subject than a simple portrait can reveal. It is a picture of a person AND that person's environment-NOT simply a picture of a person in an environment. Some photographers specialize in the environmental portrait with wonderful results. Arnold Newman and John Loengard make photographs that reveal a subject's personality through facial expressions and background clues.

Because the environment in which a person lives, works, or plays is a necessary part of the photograph, a wider lens is needed than for a mug shot. The depth of field should be more extreme because the background needs to be in focus. A wide angle lens choice in a range from 20mm to 35mm is most preferred by photographers.

If a large, picture window is available, use that soft, natural light for the portrait. Often, however, the available lighting must be supplemented with electronic flash. A bare-bulb flash simulates soft, window light and is an excellent flash choice. If the ceiling is of moderate height and lightly colored, a flash head aimed at an angle will bounce the light off the ceiling and create a soft, even glow. If possible, a photographer may want to bring an umbrella or a light box and a stand for the flash. The photographer should try to avoid the flash mounted on the camera and pointed directly at the subject unless the personality of the subject warrants such a technique. Direct flash creates a bright, blinding light and harsh shadows that is inappropriate for most portraits.

Some photographers stage manage their environmental portrait subjects. They tell them where to

sit or stand, whether to look at the camera or away, and to hold a prop. The clich6 environmental business person's portrait always has the subject pretending to talk on the telephone. Such a picture always looks phony and is a result of laziness or a photographer's much too prevalent ego who assumes he or she knows how the subject should look. The best method is to have plenty of time for picture taking, have a reporter interview the subject so that the photographer can work more freely, and if asked by the subject where to stand or what to do, simply tell him or her to decide. It is always better to not create or stage manage a portrait session. Even if a pen and pencil set on a desk or a large, leafy, potted palm is in the way, avoid the temptation to move those objects. Part of the challenge of being a photojournalist is to work with the limitations that are presented during a shooting session. Distracting visual elements are a part of the subject's personality and should be left in the composition.

**ILLUSTRATION ASSIGNMENTS**

Consisting of food, fashion, and editorial subjects, the illustration assignment has come under criticism by leaders in the field who worry about the rise in the use of set up, contrived and computer manipulated images. The judges for the 47th Annual Pictures of the Year, one of the most prestigious photographic competitions in the world, announced that because of a concern for photographic credibility, the editorial illustration category would be eliminated. In addition, "photos that portray the subject realistically . . . will be preferred to those that illustrate a clever headline or concept" ("Contest Instructions," 1989).

**PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPOSITION**

Photographic composition is *the pleasing arrangement of subject matter elements within thepicture area.* Creative photography depends foremost on the photographer's ability to see as the camera sees because a photograph does not reproduce a scene quite the way we see it. The camera sees and records only a small isolated part of the larger scene, reduces it to only two dimensions, frames it, and freezes it. It does not discriminate as we do. When we look at a scene we *selectively* see only the important elements and more or less ignore the rest. A camera, on the other hand, sees all the details within the field of view. This is the reason some of our pictures are often disappointing. Backgrounds may be cluttered with objects we do not remember, our subjects are smaller in the frame or less striking than we recall, or the entire scene may lack significance and life.

Good pictures are seldom created by chance. To make the most of any subject, you must understand the basic principles of composition. The way you arrange the elements of a scene within a picture, catch the viewer’s attention, please the eye, or make a clear statement are all qualities of good composition. By developing photographic composition skills, you can produce photographs that suggest movement, life, depth, shape, and form, recreating the impact of the original scene.

How are photographic composition skills developed? You look, you study, you practice. Every time you take a picture, look all around within the viewfinder. Consider the way each element will be recorded and how it relates to the overall composition. You must become thoroughly familiar with the camera and learn how the operation of each control alters the image. Experiment with the camera and look at the results carefully to see if they meet your expectations. With experience and knowledge of your equipment, you begin to "think through your camera" so you are free to concentrate on composition. Devote serious study to the principles of good composition. Study books and magazine articles on composition. You should analyze various media: motion pictures, TV, magazines, books and newspapers, and evaluate what you see. What is good about this picture or that TV image? What is bad about it? What principles of good composition could you apply in a different way to make the picture better.

Good or correct composition is impossible to define precisely. There are no hard-and-fast rules to follow that ensure good composition in every photograph. There are only the principles and elements that provide a means of achieving *pleasing* composition when applied properly. Some of these principles and elements are as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| * Center of interest * Subject placement * Simplicity * Viewpoint and camera angle * Balance * Shapes and lines * Pattern * Volume | * Lighting * Texture * Tone * Contrast * Framing * Foreground * Background * Perspective |

As you study these principles of composition, you should soon come to a realization that some are very similar and overlap one another a great deal.

Because all or most of these principles must be considered and applied each time you take a picture, it may all seem quite confusing at first. With experience you can develop a sense of composition, and your consideration and application of the principles will become almost second nature. This is not to suggest that you can allow yourself to become complacent or careless in the application of the principles of composition. Doing so will be immediately obvious because the results you produce will be snapshots, not professional photographs.

The principles of composition that follow apply equally to both still and motion media photography.

**CENTER OF INTEREST**

Each picture should have only one principal idea, topic, or *center of interest* to which the viewer's eyes are attracted. Subordinate elements within the picture must support and focus attention on the principal feature so it alone is emphasized.

A picture without a dominant center of interest or one with more than one dominant center of interest is puzzling to a viewer. Subsequently, the viewer becomes confused and wonders what the picture is all about. When the picture has one, and only one, dominant "point of interest," the viewer quickly understands the picture.

**NOTE:**

"Point of interest," as used here, has the same meaning as center of interest; however, using the term *point of interest* prevents giving the impression that the center of interest should be located in the center of the picture.

The specific topic, idea, or object to be portrayed must be set in your mind as you prepare to take a picture. When there is nothing in the picture to attract attention to a particular area or object, the eyes wander throughout the scene. The center of interest may be a single object or numerous ones arranged so attention is directed to one definite area

When the center of interest is a single object that fills most of the picture area or one that stands out boldly, such as a white sail against a background of dark water, attention is attracted immediately to it. As may be expected, not all subjects are as simple to arrange or as bold and impressive.

A photographer usually has at his or her disposal many factors or elements that can be used and arranged within the picture area to draw or direct attention to the primary idea of the picture. Some of these elements are lines, shapes, human figures, tone, and texture.

Human figures attract attention more strongly than almost any other subject matter and unless they are the main object of the photograph should probably be kept out of the picture; for instance, a photograph showing a person standing at some distance in front of a building may leave the observer wondering whether the person or the building is the primary subject. When people are included in a scene for comparative size of objects or just for atmosphere, keep them from looking directly at the camera. When people look at the camera and therefore at the viewer of the picture, the viewer tends to return their gaze by looking directly back into their eyes. When they are not the intended point of interest, we miss the statement and purpose of the picture. When people are subordinate elements within the picture and they are looking in a direction other than at the camera, the viewer’s attention is directed from the people to what *they are* looking at, which *should* be the center of interest; for example, when people are grouped around a piece of machinery that is the center of interest of the picture, have them look at the machine, rather than the camera.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **SUBJECT PLACEMENT**  Sometimes good composition is obtained by placing the center of interest in the geometrical center of the picture; it is generally not a good idea to place it there. Too frequently it divides the picture into equal halves and makes the picture uninteresting and difficult to balance. By dividing the picture area into thirds, both vertically and horizontally, and locating the center of interest at one of the intersections of the imaginary lines, you can usually create a feeling of balance to the composition (fig. 5-5). | fig0505.gif (3886 bytes) |
| In photographic composition there are two general guides for determining the best location for the center of interest. *The* first is the *principle of thirds. The* other is *dynamic symmetry.* In the principle of thirds, the intersection of lines that divide the picture area into thirds are marked by O’s. These intersections are good locations for the center of interest in most photographs. Notice we said THE center of interest. Remember, have only one center of interest to a picture-keep it simple. The principle of dynamic symmetry is a similar idea. A good location for the center of interest is found by drawing or imagining a diagonal line from one corner to an opposite corner. Then, draw a second line perpendicular to the first from a third corner (fig. 5-6). The intersections of the lines are the location for the center of interest. | fig0506.gif (4220 bytes) |

**SIMPLICITY**

Simplicity is the key to most good pictures. The simpler and more direct a picture is, the clearer and stronger is the resulting statement. There are several things to be considered when we discuss simplicity. First, select a subject that lends itself to a simple arrangement; for example, instead of photographing an entire area that would confuse the viewer, frame in on some important element within the area. Second, select different viewpoints or camera angles. Move around the scene or object being photographed. View the scene through the camera viewfinder. Look at the foreground and background. Try high and low angles as well as normal eye-level viewpoints. Evaluate each view and angle. Only after considering all possibilities should you take the picture. See beyond and in front of your subject. Be sure there is nothing in the background to distract the viewer's attention from the main point of the picture. Likewise, check to see there is nothing objectional in the foreground to block the entrance of the human eye into the picture.

A last point of simplicity-*tell only one story.* Ensure there is only enough material in the picture to convey one single idea. Although each picture is composed of numerous small parts and contributing elements, none should attract more of the viewer's attention than the primary object of the picture. The primary object is the reason the picture is being made in the first place; therefore, all other elements should merely support and emphasize the main object. Do not allow the scene to be cluttered with confusing elements and lines that detract from the primary point of the picture. Select a viewpoint that eliminates distractions so the principal subject is readily recognized. When numerous lines or shapes are competing for interest with the subject, it is difficult to recognize the primary object or determine why the picture was made.

**VIEWPOINT AND CAMERA ANGLE**

The proper viewpoint or camera angle is an important factor in good composition. Repositioning your subject within the viewfinder frame and changing the camera viewpoint or camera angle are two simple ways of controlling composition.

**Camera angle**

One must take several different photographs of an object, from different places and positions as though looking it over.

(Alexander Rodchenko in Lavrentiev, 1979:31)

In the age of balloons and airplanes, architecture can be viewed not only in front and from the sides, but also from above. So the bird’s-eye view, and its opposites, the worm’s- and the fish’s-eye views become a daily experience.

(Moholy-Nagy, 1924)

Photographing from a different viewpoint or camera angle can often add drama and excitement or even bring out an unusual aspect of a subject. Most of the subjects you photograph are three-dimensional and should be photographed from an angle (to the right or left of and/or from higher or lower than the subject) that allows the viewer to see more than one side of the subject. The photographer should study the subject from different sides and angles. Walk around the subject and look at it from all viewpoints. See it from elevated and low positions as well as from eye level to find the best composition. This greatly assists in composing the subject for the best balance and helps to select a background that compliments, not distracts from the subject.

The terms *viewpoint* and *camera angle* are often used in conjunction with one another and sometimes used interchangeably. They can also have different meanings depending on how they are applied. Viewpoint" is the camera position in relationship to the subject. "Camera angle" is the angle in which the camera lens is tilted; for example, a picture of sailors marching, made from ground level with the camera held horizontal with reference to the ground, may be referred to as a "low viewpoint" (or camera position); however, when this picture is made, again from ground level, but with the camera pointed up, it may be referred to as a "low camera angle." Likewise, a picture made from an elevated or high position, with the camera again held horizontal with reference to the ground, or even pointed straight down, can be referred to as a "high viewpoint"; however, if the camera is not held horizontal to the ground or pointed straight down, but pointed at some angle between horizontal and vertical, the camera position could be referred to as a "high camera angle."

**BALANCE**

Balance in photographic composition is a matter of making pictures look harmonious. Each element in a picture has a certain amount of value in respect to all the other elements. Every tone, mass, shape, tree, rock figure, building, line, or shadow contributes a certain amount of weight that must be arranged correctly in the composition to give the impression of balance. The subject placement within the picture area is the factor that must be carefully considered.

**Aspects of Balance**

There are many other factors to consider in order to make pictures appear balanced. Some of these are as follows:

* An object far from the center of the picture seems to have more weight than one near the center.
* Objects in the upper part of a picture seem heavier than objects of the same size in the lower part of a picture.
* Isolation seems to increase the weight of an object.
* Intensely interesting objects seem to have more compositional weight.
* Regular shapes seem to have more weight than irregular shapes.
* Elements on the right side of an asymmetrical picture appear to have more weight than elements of the same size on the left side of the picture.
* The directions in which figures, lines, and shapes appear to be moving within the picture area are important to balance; for example, a person may be walking in a direction, or his eyes may be looking in a direction, or the shape of some element creates a feeling of movement. When the feeling of direction is present within a scene, it tends to upset the balance if judged on the size of the subject alone.

Understanding the factors required to create pictorial balance is essential for you to produce good pictures. To gain this understanding, you can continually test your feelings for balance as you look through your camera viewfinder. Once you gain an understanding of the principles of pictorial balance, achieving balance in your photographs becomes an easy process.

**SHAPES AND LINES**

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| --- | --- |
| Shapes and lines are important elements in photographic composition. When properly used, shapes and lines can create a desired effect. As a photographer, you usually have control over the way shapes and lines are used in your pictures.  **Shape**  *Shape* is a two-dimensional element basic to picture composition and is usually the first means by which a viewer identifies an object within the picture. *Form* is the three-dimensional equivalent of shape. Even though shape is only two-dimensional, with the proper application of lighting and tonal range, you can bring out form and give your subjects a three-dimensional quality. Lighting can also subdue or even destroy form by causing dark shadows that may cause several shapes to merge into one. |  |
| **Lines**  Lines can be effective elements of composition, because they give structure to your photographs. Lines can unify composition by directing the viewer's eyes and attention to the main point of the picture or lead the eyes from one part of the picture to another. They can lead the eyes to infinity, divide the picture, and create patterns. Through linear perspective, lines can lend a sense of depth to a photograph. (Linear perspective causes receding parallel lines to appear to converge in the picture. This allows you to create an illusion of depth in your pictures.)  The viewer's eyes tend to follow lines into the picture (or out of the picture) regardless of whether they are simple linear elements such as fences, roads, and a row of phone poles, or more complex line elements, such as curves, shapes, tones, and colors. Lines that lead the eye or direct attention are referred to as *leading lines.* A good leading line is one that starts near the bottom corner of the scene and continues unbroken until it reaches the point of interest (fig. 5-12). It should end at this point; otherwise, attention is carried beyond the primary subject of the photograph. The apparent direction of lines can often be changed by simply changing viewpoint or camera angle.  Vertical, diagonal, horizontal, and curved lines create different moods. Vertical lines communicate a sense of strength, rigidity, power, and solidarity to the viewer. On the other hand, horizontal lines represent peace, tranquillity, and quietness. A generally accepted practice is to use a vertical format for pictures having predominantly vertical lines and horizontal format for pictures having predominantly horizontal lines. Again, this is a *generally accepted practice,* NOT *a rule.* |  |
| Diagonal lines represent movement, action, and speed. A picture with diagonal lines conveys a feeling of dynamic action even when the subject is static (fig. 5-13). Curved lines present a sense of grace,  smoothness, and dignity to a photograph (fig. 5-14). The most common curved line is the S curve.  [**[Click here to see Figure 5-14]**](http://photoinf.com/General/NAVY/Basic_Photography/fig0514.gif)  Lines are not only present in the shape of things but can be created by arranging several elements within the picture area so they form lines by their relationship with one another.  **Guidelines for Better Photographic Composition: Lines**  **Lines** also play an important role in composition. This sculpture has some beautiful lines, but they're obscured by the busy background. Let's simplify this picture by moving our camera viewpoint in close to the base of the sculpture.  2 views of sculpture  Now we can look up and see the lines against a clear blue sky. The picture on the right is much more dynamic because of the strong diagonal lines.  Diagonal rays of sunlight  Imagine this view without the diagonal rays of sunlight and you'll probably agree: diagonal lines are dynamic!  Fence and sidewalk with figure  You can use diagonals as leading lines to provide a way into the picture. It's a simple and easy path for the eye to follow to the main subject.  Boy on steps  You can also use repetitive lines to draw viewers' attention to your center of interest.  S  curve of fence  One of the most common and graceful lines used in composition is called the S curve.  Man on path  Here's another S curve that forms a diagonal leading line. This picture is also improved with a well-placed center of interest, and the result is a photograph that's easy to look at. |  |

**PATTERN**

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| --- | --- |
| Creating your pictures around repeating elements or patterns provides picture unity and structure. Pattern repetition creates rhythm that the eyes enjoy following (fig. 5-15). When lines, shapes, and colors within a picture occur in an orderly way (as in wallpaper), they create patterns that often enhance the attractiveness of photographs. Pattern, like texture, is found almost everywhere. It can be used as the primary subject but is most often used as a subordinate element to enhance composition. When pattern is used as a supporting element, it must be used carefully so it does not confuse or overwhelm the viewer. Pictures that are purely pattern are seldom used, because they tend to be monotonous. Patterns should be used to strengthen and add interest to your subject. | fig0515.gif (32942 bytes) |



Shape is the most common and powerful pattern element. Repeated lines, tone, and color can also provide unity to your composition and combinations of these create interesting pictures. Triangles, squares, and circles are the basic shapes to look for in a pattern. Triangles and squares are usually static but can be placed to create a tension-filled, dynamic effect. Circles and curves are pleasing pattern shapes.

**LIGHTING**

Lighting is also an important creative element of composition. By controlling the light and directing it where you want it, you can subdue objects or distracting elements in the scene to give more emphasis to the main point of interest.

For good picture composition, you must develop an awareness of how changes in lighting can affect the appearance of things around you. Light and shadows can be used in composition to create mood, to draw attention to an area, to modify or distort shape, or to bring out form and texture in the subject.

Shadows are a key to apparent form in photographs. Without shadows, the subject records without form, curvature, or texture, appearing flat and lifeless. This does not mean that shadows must be harsh and black to achieve the effects of form, curvature, and texture. They may be soft, yet of sufficient density to show the most delicate roundness and form. Generally, harsh, black shadows are undesirable in a photograph due to the loss of detail in them. From a compositional standpoint, black shadows can be very useful in balancing a scene and directing attention to the point of interest. Harsh shadows can also be excellent for emphasizing texture and form, for creating interesting patterns, and for directing attention to the main point of interest; however, the same elements can also obscure detail and reduce form. When the lighting is harsh, such as on a clear, sunny day, shadows have sharply defined edges and are probably very dark, sometimes to the point that they appear stronger than the primary subject and attract attention to themselves.

# Photography e-Book Chapter 15 - Rule of Thirds

The most oft-advised technique to good composition is to use the rule of thirds. There are two aspects to the rule of thirds and understanding how they work and interrelate is not difficult at all.

The basic picture scene will have three major elements of:

* 1 - Foreground
* 2 - Middle-ground
* 3 - Background

These elements are self-explanatory and although they may seem more appropriate for a landscape image, they can still be used and applied to other photos such as portraits or abstracts. Being aware of these three elements and how they should be positioned, isolated and enhanced will provide you with a basis to avoid the typical subject-centered image with a 50/50 split that many novices seem to do in the beginning. Yours truly has several of these types of images hiding away in a shoebox somewhere under the bed.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| The middle orientation probably has a lot to do with the central focusing sensor of cameras and people's tendency to lock focus and then just shoot. I do the Nikon Shuffle of locking focus on the subject and then recomposing the scene. If your camera allows you to remove auto focus start from the Shutter Release button, do it! This allows you to control when to AF or not and usually, the Shutter Release becomes an Exposure Lock button when pressed half way. You can focus on one subject yet meter for another, a great feature that more and more companies are copying from Canon.  http://photoinf.com/Golden_Mean/Edwin_Leong/Camera_Hobby_-_e-Book_on_the_Rule_of_Thirds/Grid.jpgThe rule of thirds that most photographers will tend to think of is the viewfinder grid division into nine sections, as seen here. The central four points of the middle rectangle - outlined in red - represent the key points of the composition and it is at one of these four points that you would place an important subject matter. This concept of the rule of thirds is so prevalent and accepted that some companies are offering cameras with auto focus points at the important grid sections as above. The Contax 1N is an example of such a camera. The message? Simple, take the rule of thirds composition but do not stop at one or two shots but take many images and thoroughly work the subject if it is worthy enough. Now of course we all do not have National Geographic expense accounts that allow us to shoot hundreds of rolls of film for a trip or outing, so cost can and will be a factor. A digital camera would make the experimentation process much easier to bear.Rule of thirds First, learn the "rule of thirds." As you look through your camera's viewfinder, imagine there are lines dividing the image into thirds, both horizontally and vertically, essentially dividing your image into nine equal-shaped blocks. Frame your subject at one of the intersection points instead of in the center of the viewfinder, as shown in the following illustration.  Photo of dog, picture divided into nine equal-shaped blocks  Now, with this said, many photographers make a very good living breaking this rule, but your photography will become much more interesting and visually stimulating if you use the rule of thirds when framing your subjects. |  |

# Photo essay

A **photo essay** is a set or series of [photographs](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Photograph) that are intended to tell a story or evoke a series of [emotions](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emotion) in the viewer. Photo essays range from purely photographic works to photographs with captions or small notes to full text [essays](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Essay) with a few or many accompanying photographs. Photo essays can be sequential in nature, intended to be viewed in a particular order, or they may consist of non-ordered photographs which may be viewed all at once or in an order chosen by the viewer. All photo essays are collections of photographs, but not all collections of photographs are photo essays. Photo essays often address a certain issue or attempt to capture the character of places and events. People who have undertaken photo essays include [Bruce Davidson](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bruce_Davidson), [W. Eugene Smith](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/W._Eugene_Smith) and [Walker Evans](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Walker_Evans).

[](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:Huahine,_French_Polynesia,_Image_-_Scott_Williams.jpg)

"After School Play Interrupted by the Catch and Release of a Stingray" is a simple time-sequence photo essay

A photo essay can take a number of forms, including:

* An article in a publication, sometimes a full page or a [two-page spread](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Two-page_spread). Newspapers and news magazines often have multi-page photo essays about significant events, both good and bad, such as a sports championship or a national disaster.
* A book or other complete publication.
* A web page or portion of a web site.
* A single [montage](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Photomontage) or [collage](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Collage) of photographic images, with text or other additions, intended to be viewed both as a whole and as individual photographs. Such a work may also fall in the category of [mixed media](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mixed_media).

## An [art show](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Art_show&action=edit&redlink=1) which is staged at a particular time and location. Some such shows also fall in the category of [installation art](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Installation_art). A [slide show](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Slide_show) or similar presentation, possibly with spoken text, which could be delivered on slides, on DVD, or on a web site.

**MORE ON CAPTURING GOOD IMAGES**

**Light**

Photography is ‗light writing.‘

To learn to write with light, you must know what it will do to your subject and how it will evoke responses from your reader.

Light is to the photographer what words are to the writer.



Light illuminates, but light is also darkness.

While a feature writer listens to his subject, intent on finding the salient quote, the photographer looks at her subject, intent on finding the most appropriate light.

**Characteristics of light**

**INTENSITY**- is simply its brightness

Bright light may require high shutter speeds and small aperture.

**Quality-** of light ranges from hard to soft.

**Hard light-** comes from compact, point light sources such as the sun, a light bulb, headlights on car.

It creates a sharp line between highlights and shadows.

**Soft light-** comes from broad source like the sky on a foggy day, skylight coming in a window, or the fluorescent light.

**Direction-** emphasizes the shape of the subject.

You can discover the direction of the light by looking at the shadows, which always point away from the light.

**Color**

Redder colors will create a warmer feel for your shots than blues or greens.

Color affects the way we look at pictures, so try to use color creatively in your shots.

Look for images that contain contrasting colors, such as red and green or yellow and purple, to add tension or drama.

Using shades of the same colors will create a sense of harmony.

Color can help create harmony or discord.

A more varied pair of colors will interact and gain contrast from one another.

**Other important tips**

Try placing the main point of interest towards the sides of your photographs for more interesting compositions.

Place your horizon near the top or bottom of your shots to add emphasis to the ground or to the sky respectively.

In this picture, you can see there is a large amount of sky and the rocks have been placed well to one side to emphasize the feeling of space.



Take lots of pictures. With digital they don't cost you anything.

Move around as you photograph to experiment and give yourself plenty of choice.

Stay alert for that chance-of-a-lifetime shot. In this picture, the golden eagle put its wing on the man for only a short time, and the man smiled for even less time! 



*Jim Garner wanted to create the illusion that this group was really airborne. He chose a very low camera angle and prepped the guys so that they would get maximum lift off the ground. He made it fun for them, as you can see. While not everybody got “good air,” Jim helped the situation by cloning in some sky background beneath them to further enhance the illusion. This image was used as a double-truck bleed spread*

*in the final album, occupying two full pages in the album.*

**SHUTTER LAG**

Shutter lag is the time a digital camera needs to capture a picture after you have pressed the shutter button.

Reduce shutter lag by focusing beforehand and waiting for the moment.

In this picture, the only way to catch the child at the right instant was to release the shutter **just before** she reached the ideal position. 

## Ethical and legal considerations

Photojournalism works within the same ethical approaches to objectivity that are applied by other journalists. What to shoot, how to frame and how to edit are constant considerations.

Often, ethical conflicts can be mitigated or enhanced by the actions of a sub-editor or picture editor, who takes control of the images once they have been delivered to the news organization. The photojournalist often has no control as to how images are ultimately used.

The emergence of [digital photography](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Digital_photography) offers whole new realms of opportunity for the manipulation, reproduction, and transmission of images. It has inevitably complicated many of the ethical issues involved.

The U.S. National Press Photographers Association, and other professional organizations, maintain codes of ethics to specify approaches to these issues.[[8]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Photojournalism#cite_note-7#cite_note-7)

Major ethical issues are often inscribed with more or less success into law. Laws regarding photography can vary significantly from nation to nation. The legal situation is further complicated when one considers that photojournalism made in one country will often be published in many other countries.

**Photojournalism Ethics**

[Michael Young](http://photo.net/shared/community-member?user_id=975436), Dec 27, 2004; 08:53 a.m.

NBC has been running video all morning of the disaster is Malaysia, Thailand, and Indonesia from the Earthquake and Tsunami. The video is rather disturbing, it depicts people being washed away by a fast moving river, some people on the bank are making rescue attempts with long poles. Dozens of people are shown in the river while there are very few trying to pull them out. The photographer(videographer) is standing on the sidelines watching this all happen. So at what point should the photographer drop the camera and try to save these people? The photograph, while important, isn't worth letting someone die over.   
. Here is a pic of the renowned British Photojournalist Don McCullin in Greece during a gunbattle in the 19-60s He has broken the golden rule and is running with this old woman in his arms to remove her from the danger zone.

**John Bullmer pic**

**Ethical considerations in photojournalism**

 There are no firm answers to ethical problems

 Your moral judgment may be right for you or your newspaper, but it is wrong to deduce that your moral judgment, or that of your survey pool, is ever right for everyone.

 Therefore, you must qualify your conclusions based on the demographics of your pool.

**Conflicts of Interest**

 Emotional involvement with subjects

 Political and business involvement

 Professional conflicts

As a photojournalist, at an emergency, will you take the pictures or try to help the victims?

**“A Human being first, a journalist second.”**

**Unpublished photos**

If you had photos that could prove someone‘s guilt or innocence and if you hand it to the police, would that compromise journalistic independence by getting you involved in the story?

 How about in cases where no laws had been broken but police still wanted the photos for unspecified investigations?

 How would people react to you if they suspected you were an informant?

Pictures can lie

 A moment to time can be taken out of context. So it is not always true that ―pictures never lie‖

 You can distort facial features

 Light can change shape

 Photographic techniques can make things look better than they really are.

It must be made with honest intent, the goal must be to present to the reader as accurate a representation of what was there as possible.

 **Stereotyping:**

In selecting a photo to use, you should be sure the image is an honest representation of the particular story, and not a moment out of context that results in an unfair stereotyping

**The ethical dilemma can be reduced by considering the following:**

 When a decision is made, it should be carefully reasoned

 It must be based on careful consideration of the value of the photograph as news

 The consequences of its use—its effect on the subjects of the photo, the readers, and the credibility and reputation of the publication.

 So we are visual species

 Industrial Revolution rendered photography a primary tool of visual language