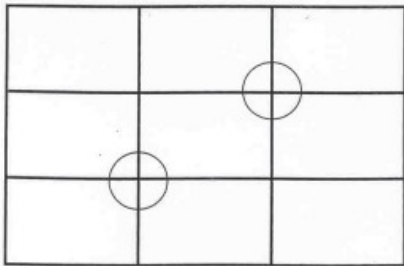# COMPOSITION
"If your pictures aren't good enough. You aren't close enough." Robert Capa

Composition is one of the most important elements of photography. ***In the end, its what the viewer sees.***

- By changing the aperture you can control **Depth of Field.**
- **What do you want the picture to showcase?**
- **Shallow Depth of Field** emphasizes a specific element in a photograph.
- **Deep Depth of Field** shows the entire scene and creates a sense of distance.
- Control **Shutter Speed** to blur or freeze action. Photos of kids and animals often need a **fast shutter speed.** Make sure your **shutter speed** isn't **too slow.**
- Use your different lenses to your advantage. Get creative with camera angles and wide lenses for unique perspectives.
- **Wide-Angle Lenses** creatively distort your image.This is not ideal in portraits of people.
- **Shoot eye level.** No matter who/what your subject is. If your subject is on the ground, you should be too.
- **Worm's eye** vs **Bird's eye. Think about perspective.**
- **Telephoto Lenses** show compression and a narrow field of view.
- **Always 3** When photographing your subject, remember the three basic shots to fully capture the scene.
- **Wide shot:** *Sets the scene*. Captures multiple elements of the subject matter. Use your widest lens setting.
- **Medium Shot:** *Takes you there*. Use your medium focal length setting or the standard 50mm.
- **Close-Up:** *Shows a specific detail of the subject*. Use your telephoto setting to zoom in or use a macro lens or diopter filters to get really close.
- Try **Vertical** and **Horizontal** shots of the same scene. Just turning your camera can create a completely different image. **What is important in the scene?** Does a vertical orientation include more important elements?



- **Rule of Thirds** is one of the basic compositional tools in photography. It breaks the frame into horizontal and vertical thirds. Place subject or vantage point along these lines.
- The diagram illustrates how you can visually **divide a frame into horizontal and vertical thirds**. Compose your subject along one of the thirds for compositional balance.
- The circles in the diagram show "**sweet spots**." Compose an important element or point of interest where the lines intersect.
- **Leading Room** gives the viewer the impression of where the subject is looking or going to next. Compose your subject facing the empty space within the frame to create balance within the photograph.
- Negative leading room vs. positive leading room
- Experiment with **horizon placement** within the frame. By placing the horizon in the **bottom** thirds of the frame, the viewer concentrates on the sky. This technique works best with a well-exposed sky or when you need to simplify a cluttered foreground.
- By placing the horizon in the **top** thirds of the frame, the viewer concentrates on the foreground. This technique is effective to use when the sky is plain and lacks detail. What element of the photo should be dominant in the composition?
- **Leading Lines** "lead" the viewer into the photo. Compose your shot using available lines and shapes.
- **Fill the frame** with your subject matter. Compose the frame by using available patterns. textures and repetitive elements. Every **corner** matters.
- Make sure you pay attention to the **background.** No ifs, ands or.....

- **Frame your photograph** with existing lines and shapes. Eliminate negative space and give the viewer a sense of completion.
- **Busy** background? De clutter.
- Use **odd numbers** when composing your scene. Create balance in your photographs.
- Use people or available objects to show **scale.** It breaks up the shot and gives the image a point of focus.
- Get **close.**
- **Time of day** has a huge effect on the quality, saturation and amount of light in your image. Always be conscious of shadows, use them to your advantage. Create different moods of the same scene by photographing the subject at different times of the day.
- **Overcast light** diffuses shadows and evens out how harsh the light is in on the subject.
- Overcast light is **ideal for portraits**.
- And when you can, shoot in the **golden hour**. Everyone and everything looks great in golden, warm light.
- Be creative. Have fun. Slow down. Compose every image.

**Elements of Design:** The 'building blocks" of Art

- **Line** - Vertical (stature, strength)
- **Horizontal** (stability)
- **Diagonal** (activity, motion)
- **Zig-Zag** (rapid motion)
- **Curved** (slowness, gracefulness)
- **Shape**
- **Color**
- **Texture** – Implied and Pattern
- **Size** – Scale
- **Value**

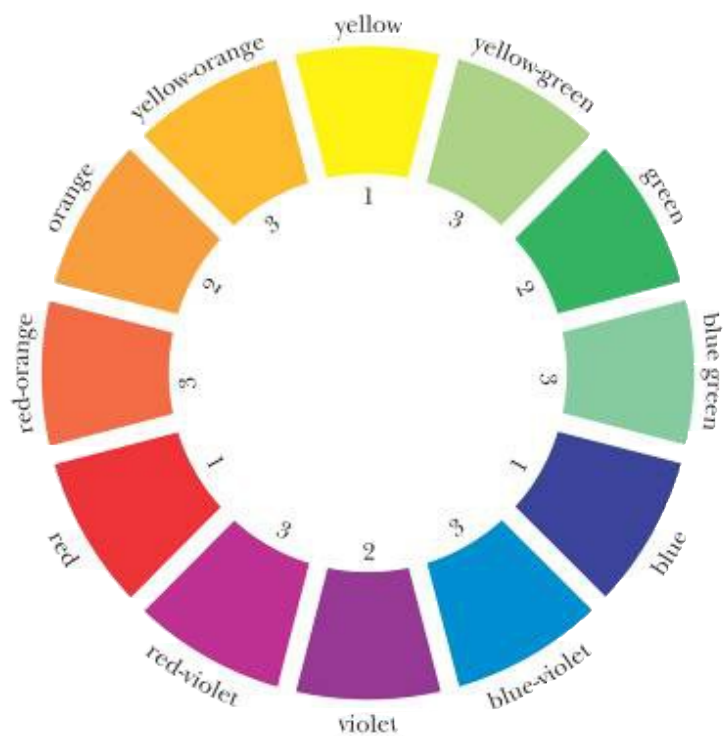**Principles of Design**: How we apply the Elements of Design

- **Emphasis** – Where does your eye go first? What is your "focal point"?
- **Our eyes are attracted to:**
- **Contrast**
- **High value** (bright areas)
- **Complementary colors**
- **Saturated colors**
- **Large shapes**
- **Sharp focus**
- **Human faces/figures**
- **Text**
- **Unity**
- **Variety**
- **Balance –** Asymmetrical vs Symmetrical

**Assymmetrical -** Eyes go to lightest value
Lightest values "make sense" at top
Larger shapes "make sense" at bottom

- **Movement –** Implied vs Optical
- **Repetition / Rhythm**



COLOR WHEEL