MEDIA DEVELOPMENT

Media and information literacy
A practical guidebook for trainers
3
Power of pictures
- Your photos
- Photojournalism

You can download the guidelines and worksheets from this chapter here: dw.com/akademie/mil-practical-guidebook-for-trainers
3
Power of pictures
Your photos
Eye of the photographer

**EXERCISE**

Making a handmade paper camera

1. You need scissors, paper and, if possible, colored markers

2. Fold a piece of paper in half and cut a tiny rectangular hole in the middle.

3. Decorate the paper to look like a camera.

4. Look through the hole with one eye. Press the paper as close as possible to just see your surroundings through the simulated lens. Vary camera subjects, object distances and perspectives. Choose scenes that would be good compositions for a real photo.

**EXERCISE**

We are surrounded by images every day, in different forms of media and at home. Being able to describe a picture is an important skill. From the list below, try to distinguish between objective description (circle the word) and personal judgments (draw a crossmark with an x). Try to find opposites.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>light</th>
<th>unusual</th>
<th>boring</th>
<th>has depth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>modern</td>
<td>black and white</td>
<td>warm</td>
<td>vivid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>out of focus</td>
<td>low contrast</td>
<td>close-up</td>
<td>arranged/posed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sad</td>
<td>emotional</td>
<td>old-fashioned</td>
<td>beautiful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>colorful</td>
<td>dark</td>
<td>flat</td>
<td>cold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ugly</td>
<td>documentary</td>
<td>usual</td>
<td>harmonious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lifeless</td>
<td>disgusting</td>
<td>sharp</td>
<td>funny</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interesting</td>
<td>high contrast</td>
<td>without emotion</td>
<td>overview</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“Beginners”: Composition rules I – photos

**TASK**

Take photos that follow each of the nine composition rules for beginners listed below. Try out variations on each composition rule and always take more than one shot. Take at least one photo that does not comply with the rule and two that do.

After addressing each composition rule, look at your pictures and evaluate their quality according to the rule.

Make a check mark in the table under the minus sign (−) for a bad picture, the plus sign (+) for a good picture, or the double plus sign (++) for a very good picture.

For portrait photos, take pictures of each other. For landscape pictures, take shots of the surrounding landscape. Feel free to choose various camera subjects to practice the other rules.

### Composition rules for beginners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rule</th>
<th>−</th>
<th>+</th>
<th>++</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Holding the camera</strong>: Find a good, stable position.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Camera field sizes</strong>: Vary the distance between the camera and the object.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sharpness and blurring</strong>: Determine the area that is in focus.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Camera position and angle of view</strong>: Explore new and unusual perspectives.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Light and exposure</strong>: Use the flash and backlighting.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Landscapes</strong>: Sharpen perception of various ways to take landscape pictures.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Portraits</strong>: Sharpen perception of good and bad ways to take a portrait.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Movement</strong>: Focus on moving images or panning the camera.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Foreground and background</strong>: Play with the audience's perception.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TASK**

Choose your two best and two worst photos, and be prepared to explain why they are good or bad. Discuss the photos and your experience applying the composition rules with the other groups.
Almost all photos you see in the media have been digitally edited. Digital editing gives media makers an enormous range of design options, and empowers them to alter pictures to convey a certain message, style or emotion. Various apps and software packages contain hundreds of design options. The power of digital editing has both benefits and drawbacks.

### Task

Choose the app or software that runs on your hardware (laptop, computer, or cell phone) and familiarize yourself with it. Select two of your photos (a good and a bad one) for digital editing. Try different versions of each photo and save each of these versions under a unique name, e.g. “dog_version_1.jpg.” Import the photos into your software.

### Worksheet

**Editing rules for beginners**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Good photo saved as …</th>
<th>Bad photo saved as …</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Crop the photo:</strong> Create different versions of selected parts of an image.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choose image sections that appear harmonious.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choose image sections that don’t appear harmonious.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chose various details from the image.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Contrast:</strong> Edit the contrast and compare it to the original picture.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Colors and brightness:</strong> edit colors and brightness in various ways.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make the picture look warm, then cold.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make it dark (mysterious), then bright (friendly).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Photo filters:</strong> Play with the filters and compare the results.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Text messages:</strong> Change the photo’s media message by adding different texts.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add an informative headline to the photo.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add a humorous headline to the photo.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add a sensational headline to the photo.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Resize one version of each photo to 1000-pixel width and export it.</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compare the file sizes.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Select three to five edited pictures for a presentation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“Professionals”: Composition rules II — photos

**TASK**

Each picture tells a story. Think about the story you want your picture to tell. Choose something that is easy to implement right now and write it down in one sentence, e.g. A student is having trouble doing his homework because he is tired. / A girl is working on a drawing. / Two close friends meet up somewhere and have fun.

Our story:


**TASK**

Arrange the setting and take several photos, keeping the composition rules for professionals in mind. Try to explore as many camera angles, views, perspectives, leading lines, etc. as possible. Feel free to vary the setting, background, objects in the foreground, camera position, and whatever comes to mind.

Work together with the people being photographed (subjects), and suggest poses they can strike or gestures they can make. Try to get them to behave as normally as possible, and help them forget that they are being photographed.

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Composition rules for professionals</th>
<th>Check off rules used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rule of thirds</strong>: the focal point of the composition is at the intersection of one of the horizontal and vertical lines</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Contrast</strong>: the degree of lightness and darkness in the picture</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Depth of field</strong>: the objects in focus and out of focus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Perspective</strong>: whether a picture is taken from eye level, from above, or from below</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Patterns</strong>: following and breaking patterns</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Symmetry</strong>: balance is achieved along internal symmetry lines</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Leading lines</strong>: the path or direction the observer’s eye follows when looking at the photo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Framing</strong>: natural framing places the focus on the subject</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cropping</strong>: the part of your field of vision that you select for your picture</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TASK**

Choose your best photos and justify your selection. Discuss your photos and your experience applying the composition rules with the other groups.
“Professionals”: Digital editing II — photos

**TASK**

Take your favorite photo from the “professional” session and edit it digitally. Familiarize yourself with all the options available on your editing software, and reflect on which ones you want to use.

Edit your photo into different versions. Save each version under a unique name that includes the number of the task, such as: “task_1_dog.jpg.”

**Task:** Edit your photo...
1. to make it more impressive.
2. to make it less impressive.
3. as if it is going to appear in a newspaper.
4. as if it is going to be used in an advertisement.
5. as if it is going to appear on social media (choose a clear section of the image and resize it).
6. as if it is going to be a still from a dramatic Hollywood movie.
7. as if you were an artist.
8. as if it were taken years ago.
9. in a humorous way, or give it a humorous message.

**SUMMARIZE**

Compare your pictures and try to draw conclusions about the messages of pictures and how media makers construct their messages. Write your conclusions down here.
Developing a photo story

**Step 1: Brainstorming**
The best way to find an interesting topic for a photo story is to listen to and consider everyone's ideas. There are two brainstorming rules:

- No negative comments about any idea (this stops the creative process).
- Don’t provide overly detailed feedback on a specific idea. Allow time for all the ideas raised by the group to be considered.

**Step 2: Checking and choosing**
After brainstorming, consider all the ideas and identify the best one that all group members support. The following rules may help:

- Eliminate the ideas that all members of the group dislike or don’t consider feasible.
- Which topic is the most important and emotional?
- Can you imagine a story and photos for the topic?
- Can the photos be taken here? Do you need additional equipment?
- Can the story be told in just a few (about five) pictures?

### Elements of a story

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>A title indicates the topic and creates tension.</td>
<td>“Getting lost”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main character</td>
<td>A hero or anti-hero is important for viewers to identify with.</td>
<td>Ben, a 15-year-old boy from a village, is traveling to town to visit his grandmother and gets lost.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other characters</td>
<td>Other characters are needed to develop the storyline. What makes them interesting for the story is their relationship to the main character and their problem (try to help or destroy the main character, or appear to help, but act egoistically instead ...)</td>
<td>Grandmother (worries) Thomas (criminal, tries to rob him) Sophia (Ben’s cousin) Taxi driver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location and setting</td>
<td>A story takes place at specific locations (country, town/village, indoors) and in specific settings.</td>
<td>Streets of big city and grandmother’s house.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genre</td>
<td>A genre determines the style in which the story is told (thriller, comedy, romance, non-fiction).</td>
<td>Thriller</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storyteller and storyline</td>
<td>The storyteller determines the point of view. The storyline determines when and what is told (action, conversation).</td>
<td>The storyteller is the narrator. The storyline is developed according to certain rules (see below).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Storytelling — Developing a storyline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beginning</th>
<th>Middle</th>
<th>End</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This section introduces the main and other characters. It reveals the main character’s conflict—a problem that needs to be solved.</td>
<td>In the middle section of a story, various actions take place that help the main character solve the conflict, prevent a solution, or even make the problem worse. Tension increases in this section.</td>
<td>The tension that has built up is released, either as a happy ending (in which the problem is solved), a negative ending, or an open ending.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ben steps out of a bus with a map of the town and tries to figure out the right way to go. Thomas sees Ben.</td>
<td>Ben gets lost in town. The grandmother starts worrying and asks Sophia to look for him. Meanwhile, Thomas pretends to help Ben, but wants to take him to a dark place in order to rob him.</td>
<td>Sophia sees Thomas by chance, recognizes the danger and rescues Ben with the help of a taxi driver.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Preventing your photo story

**TASK**
Discuss topics that you would like to report on using photography.

**TASK**
Assess the feasibility of the topics and then choose your favorite one.

- Eliminate those ideas that the whole group dislikes or considers unfeasible.
- What topic is the most important and emotional for you?
- Can you imagine a story and photos for the topic?
- Can the photos be taken here? Do you need additional equipment?
- Can the topic be told in a story of just a few (about five) pictures?

Our topic:

**TASK**
Formulate your story idea in just one sentence.

**TASK**
Create characters and give them names. Choose a main character with a problem that needs to be solved. Develop a storyline (beginning, middle, and end) and think about the location.

Write down some key words:
### Storyline and storyboard

**Photo title:** __________________________

**What**  
__________________________
__________________________
__________________________

**Who**  
__________________________
__________________________
__________________________

**Where**  
__________________________
__________________________
__________________________

**Shot size/perspective**  
__________________________
__________________________
__________________________

**Photo title:** __________________________

**What**  
__________________________
__________________________
__________________________

**Who**  
__________________________
__________________________
__________________________

**Where**  
__________________________
__________________________
__________________________

**Shot size/perspective**  
__________________________
__________________________
__________________________

**Photo title:** __________________________

**What**  
__________________________
__________________________
__________________________

**Who**  
__________________________
__________________________
__________________________

**Where**  
__________________________
__________________________
__________________________

**Shot size/perspective**  
__________________________
__________________________
__________________________
Storyline and storyboard

Photo title: ____________________________
What
____________________________________
____________________________________
Who
____________________________________
____________________________________
Where
____________________________________
____________________________________
Shot size/ perspective
____________________________________

Photo title: ____________________________
What
____________________________________
____________________________________
Who
____________________________________
____________________________________
Where
____________________________________
____________________________________
Shot size/ perspective
____________________________________
Power of pictures
Photojournalism
### Impact of pictures: Interview

**TASK**

Work in pairs and interview each other about the impact of pictures. Write key words under each question.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviewee</th>
<th>Interviewer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Where do you see pictures from the media in your daily life?</td>
<td>Where do you see pictures from the media in your daily life?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>___________________________________________________________</td>
<td>___________________________________________________________</td>
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<td>___________________________________________________________</td>
<td>___________________________________________________________</td>
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<tr>
<td>___________________________________________________________</td>
<td>___________________________________________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are those pictures about?</td>
<td>What are those pictures about?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>___________________________________________________________</td>
<td>___________________________________________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>___________________________________________________________</td>
<td>___________________________________________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>___________________________________________________________</td>
<td>___________________________________________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What impact do pictures in the media have on your life?</td>
<td>What impact do pictures in the media have on your life?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>___________________________________________________________</td>
<td>___________________________________________________________</td>
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<tr>
<td>___________________________________________________________</td>
<td>___________________________________________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>___________________________________________________________</td>
<td>___________________________________________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can you remember one impressive example?</td>
<td>Can you remember one impressive example?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>___________________________________________________________</td>
<td>___________________________________________________________</td>
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<tr>
<td>___________________________________________________________</td>
<td>___________________________________________________________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Pictures: Impressions and emotions

**TASK**

Examine your sample picture(s) and discuss the following questions. Write down some key words that represent your impressions and arguments for the other groups.

1. What is your first reaction to this photo?

2. Put what you see into words. Can you describe the composition of the photo?

3. Do you like this photo? If so, why? If not, why not?

4. Do you remember or can you guess the circumstances under which the photo was taken?

5. What main message (text) does the photo immediately convey?

6. What hidden messages (subtext) does this photo convey?
Characteristics of photographs

**TASK**
Examine the characteristics of photographs by finding examples that illustrate the criteria below. Judge each characteristic’s influence on the credibility and authenticity of pictures. Discuss whether photos are objective or not.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Two-dimensional</th>
<th>Tells the story of the person photographed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Static</td>
<td>Tells the story of the photographer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited area or scope</td>
<td>Is composed according to rules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Captures a unique moment</td>
<td>Needs to be decoded by the viewer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contemporary witness</td>
<td>Can have different meanings to different people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does not need a caption</td>
<td>Can be edited digitally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meaningful to people worldwide</td>
<td>Can be manipulated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CC photos for the Web

TASK
Agree on five topics for your Internet search for pictures:
1 
2 
3 
4 
5 

TASK
Now search for pictures on the Web that you can download and post without violating copyrights. Compare your results with other participants.

What topics was it easy to find CC pictures for, and what topics were harder? Try to explain why.

TASK
Select one topic and do another search, looking for pictures based on different criteria and compare the search results:
- Photos for use on a commercial website
- Photos for non-commercial use only
- Photos that can be cropped and edited

Select photos that work on the Internet because they fulfill the criteria for good web pictures (they follow composition rules, they work as a thumbnail, their message can be clearly seen and grasped).

TASK
If you have time: digitally edit your selected photos to make them even better for web use. Make sure the CC license allows editing.
Impact of pictures — beauty I

**TASK**

Characterize beauty: what are the typical features of beautiful men and women?

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**TASK**

Now list some examples from your daily life: in what types of media do you see pictures of beautiful men and women (i.e. magazines, advertisements, TV, the Internet, comics, movies, music clips, etc.)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media type</th>
<th>Name of the medium</th>
<th>Describe the beauty that is shown. What message does it convey?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>
Impact of pictures — beauty II

TASK
Choose one media example with beautiful people that you find impressive and that you want to present to the others.

Our example:

Collect pictures to illustrate your example by downloading them from the Internet, cutting them out of newspapers and magazines, or taking photographs yourself.

TASK
Prepare a presentation about the person or people you’ve chosen:

– Who are they?
– What makes them beautiful?
– What characterizes them?
– What messages do they convey?

TASK
Now consider the same topic and think of (or do an Internet search for) a counterexample of the person or people you’ve chosen. Who conveys the same message but isn’t beautiful at all?

Our example:

TASK
Prepare a presentation of your counterexample, describing the different effects of the people involved and the difficulties you encountered in your research.
Preparing your slideshow

**TASK**
Find a story idea for each of these two topics:

**Topic A:**
A slideshow depicting an action step-by-step (like an instruction manual without words)

**Topic B:**
A slideshow depicting a theme, a color, or an emotion (e.g. my hometown, happiness, stress, love, red, white, family, death, etc.)

**Research:** Do basic research for your story ideas. Take notes.

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**TASK**

**Storyboard:** Write down or sketch out 10 possible photos for each slideshow on a storyboard.

Take the photos for both of your slideshows. Take more than enough pictures so you can select the best ones while editing.

**Tip:** Take all your pictures with a horizontal (landscape) orientation, as this corresponds to our natural field of vision and to most slideshow players on the Web. Don’t alternate between vertical (portrait) and horizontal (landscape) orientation in one slideshow.
Digital editing basics

Some basic steps in the digital photo-editing process
Digital editing of photos means that the source image file is changed. This is often intended to improve the image. But even compressing a picture into a smaller format results in a digitally edited picture.

1. Import ____________ uploads your photo into the editing software.
2. Crop ____________ redefines the most impressive section of the image.
3. Contrast ____________ changes the intensity of dark and light parts of a picture.
4. Colors and brightness __ can turn a photo warm or cold, bright or dark
5. Photo filter ____________ adds special effects to a photo, e.g. make it look antique
6. Text/message ____________ can be added as a headline, to provide information, or to add humor
7. Resize/export/save ____________ creates a reduced file size to export and upload pictures.

Digital editing software
There are many digital editing software options available on the Internet. Many are only available in English. Simple touch-ups and edits can be done using Microsoft Paint, a simple computer graphics software included with Microsoft Windows. However, those who want more control over their images should use more advanced photo-editing software. Some software is free, but be aware of hidden costs or special conditions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Software - digital editing with a computer</th>
<th>Software - digital editing with a cell phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GIMP</td>
<td>Pixlr Express (Android, iPhone, Windows 8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.gimp.org">www.gimp.org</a></td>
<td>download from corresponding app store</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photoscape</td>
<td>Snapseed (Android, iPhone, Windows 8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.photoscape.org">www.photoscape.org</a></td>
<td>download from corresponding app store</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paint.NET</td>
<td>Aviary Photo Editor (Android, iPhone, Windows 8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.getpaint.net">www.getpaint.net</a></td>
<td>download from corresponding app store</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fotor (online editing software)</td>
<td>Instagram (Android, iPhone, Windows 8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.fotor.com">www.fotor.com</a></td>
<td>download from corresponding app store</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PicsArt (Android, iPhone, Windows 8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>download from corresponding app store</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PicLab (Android, iPhone)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>download from corresponding app store</td>
</tr>
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Composition rules I

The basic principles of organization that affect the composition of a picture are:

1. **Holding the camera**: find a good, stable position
2. **Camera field sizes**: vary the distance between the camera and the object.
3. **Sharpness and blurring**: determine the area that is in focus.
4. **Camera position and angle of view**: explore new and unusual perspectives.
5. **Light and color temperature**: use existing light or a flash to create moods and effects.
6. **Landsapes**: sharpen perception of various ways to take landscape pictures.
7. **Portraits**: sharpen perception of good and bad ways to take a portrait.
8. **Movement**: focus on moving images or using a moving camera.
9. **Foreground and background**: play with the audience’s perception.

### 1 Holding the camera

Holding the camera in a stable position is the key to sharp pictures. Camera stability plays a very important role in preventing the camera from shaking and producing blurred or crooked pictures. It’s best to hold the camera firmly with both hands. Sometimes, it’s useful to rest it on a solid base.

### 2 Camera field sizes

The camera field size determines the distance between the camera and the object. You can find various field sizes in each visual medium, e.g. photography, films, video games. Each field size has a certain purpose: long shots give the viewer a lot of information, like where and when an action took place, while close-ups and details direct the viewer’s attention to a person’s emotion or a certain object. Slideshows and stories are more interesting when field sizes vary.
3. Power of pictures — Photojournalism

### Detail: a shot of a hand, eye, mouth or object in detail.

### Full shot: a view of a figure’s entire body in order to show action.

### Medium shot: shows a subject down to their waist, e.g. people in conversation.

### Close-up: a full-screen shot of a subject’s face, showing the nuances of expression.

#### 3. Sharpness and blur

Before taking a photograph, decide which object you want to have in sharp focus. The most appropriate focus setting is often on the center of the image. But if the main object (such as a person) is not in the center, then decide which part of the image you’d like to have in sharp focus. How it works: if you want something outside the center to be sharp and you are using a cell phone camera, tap the part of the image on the screen that you would like to be in focus. The autofocus will make this part of the picture sharp. Then take the picture. If you are using a traditional camera, focus the camera on the part of the image you would like to be sharp; press the shutter button halfway down and move the camera to its final position. Then press the shutter button all the way down to take the picture while keeping the object in focus.

#### The focus is often on the center of the image.

#### The focus is on the tree outside the center.

#### The focus is on the background.
4 Camera position and angle of view
The angle at which a photo is taken determines the spatial depth and tension. More tension can be generated through an interesting background. A face from the front often looks flat (like a passport photo), whereas a half-profile conveys more depth and vibrancy.

5 Light and color temperature
Light determines the effect of the image. Colder light in blue and gray tones creates a rather cold atmosphere, and warm light in yellow and orange tones conveys a warmer and cozy atmosphere. The light is usually warm just after sunrise and before sunset, whereas it is harsher and colder at mid-day. Light and shadows should be used intentionally. Avoid backlight that makes the subjects dark, e.g. when a subject is standing in front of a light source, such as a window. In these cases it may be advisable to use a flash—even in daylight.

6 Landscapes
The horizon should not be placed in the middle of the image in landscape photography because this creates a boring image. Try to position the horizon about a third above or below the middle to make the photo more interesting. Avoid distracting elements. Add depth to landscape shots by including objects or people in the foreground.
7 Portrait
Good portraits are not as easy to take as many people think. The photographer should opt for interesting picture details and encourage the subject to relax. Do not place the person in the center of the picture, and ensure that they are looking “into the picture” and not out of the frame.

8 Movement
A camera can capture motion. This includes movement in front of the camera (e.g. sports), as well as conscious movement of the camera itself by quickly panning the camera during the shutter release.

9 Foreground and background
Many images look more interesting if there are objects in both the foreground and the background; this creates greater image depth. The photographer should always consider what the viewer should perceive as the central element of the image. Playing with the foreground and background can create interesting effects.
Composition rules II

Some principles of organization that affect the composition of a picture:

1. **Rule of thirds**: the focal point of the composition is at the intersection of one of the horizontal and vertical lines
2. **Contrast**: the degree of lightness and darkness in the picture
3. **Depth of field**: the objects in focus and out of focus
4. **Perspective**: whether a picture is taken from eye level, from above, or from below
5. **Patterns**: following and breaking patterns
6. **Leading lines**: the path or direction followed by the observer’s eye while looking at the photo
7. **Symmetry**: balance is achieved along internal symmetry lines
8. **Framing**: natural framing places the focus on the subject
9. **Cropping**: the part of your field of vision that you select for your picture

### 1. Rule of thirds

According to the “rule of thirds,” pictures are pleasant and interesting if key visual elements are positioned where the lines intersect. Try moving your camera so your subject appears where two lines meet. The subject doesn’t have to be exactly at the intersection, but should be fairly close. Try out a couple different compositions to find the one you like best. In the example on the right, the horizon is close to the bottom grid line, the dark areas are in the left third, and the light areas in the right third.

The road leads the viewer’s eye to the bottom third of the photo.

### 2. Contrast

Stark contrasts between dark and light make shapes and contours easy to recognize. That’s why pictures with high contrast work well on the Internet, because they are easy to grasp even if only seen as thumbnails. As a composition rule, contrast can also refer to colors that stand in stark contrast to one another (blue > yellow; red > green) or to contrasting shapes that appear on a photo (round shapes > angular shapes or lines).

The dark statue and bird contrast with the light blue sky.
3 Depth of field
When you take portraits, an out-of-focus background makes the face stand out.

You can limit the depth of field by using a wide aperture. This technique can make everything that is not the subject of the photograph look blurry or out of focus.

![Example of bird's-eye view](image1.png)  
![Example of frog perspective](image2.png)

4 Perspective
Rather than always shooting from the photographer's eye level, try photographing from different points of view: from high above (bird's-eye view), or from the ground (worm's-eye view/frog perspective). You can also take a picture of a subject from far away with a telephoto lens, or up close with a wide-angle lens. Different perspectives have different effects on the viewer. A little boy who is photographed from above (adult's eye level) looks small and insignificant. A photograph taken at the child's eye level treats him as an equal; a photo taken from below could result in an impression of dominance or menace.

![Example of bird's-eye view](image3.png)  
![Example of frog perspective](image4.png)

5 Patterns
Patterns can be visually compelling because they suggest harmony and rhythm. Things that are harmonious and rhythmic convey a sense of order or peace. Patterns can become even more compelling when you break the rhythm because it introduces tension. The eye then has a specific focal point to fall on, followed by a return to that harmonic rhythm.

![Nature and plants often show patterns.](image5.png)
6 Leading lines
When we look at a photo, our eye is naturally drawn along lines. By thinking about how you place lines in your composition, you can affect the way people view the picture. You can pull the viewer into the picture towards the subject, or take the viewer on a “journey” through the scene. There are different types of lines—straight, diagonal, curved, etc.—and each can be used to enhance your photo’s composition. Diagonal lines can be especially useful in creating drama in your picture. They can also add a sense of depth, or a feeling of infinity.

7 Symmetry
We are surrounded by symmetry, both natural and artificial. A symmetrical image is one that looks the same on one side as it does on the other. Symmetry creates a feeling of harmony in the viewer, but symmetrical compositions can also be boring. Sometimes, tension can be added to your picture if the symmetry is broken somewhere.

8 Framing
The world is full of objects that make perfect natural frames, such as trees, branches, windows and doorways. By placing these around the edge of the composition, you help isolate the main subject from the outside world. In addition, you can create depth through a foreground and background. The result is a more focused image, which draws your eye naturally to the main point of interest.

9 Cropping
A subject can be rendered more dramatic when it fills the frame. Cropping can be used to eliminate distractions from the background. By cropping a subject very close, you can make it more intriguing. When taking a tight close-up of a person, you can even crop out part of their head, as long as their eyes fall on the top line of the “rule of thirds” grid.
Digital editing: Pixlr Express (cell phone)

Choose the photo
Choose the photo that you want to edit from your cell phone.

Main menu
Familiarize yourself with the main menu. Swipe left and right.

Adjustment menu
Tap Adjustment and edit the picture’s highlights, colors, and contrast as you wish.

Cropping
Crop your image in order to focus on the most impressive area of the image.

Effect menu
Familiarize yourself with the Effect menu and try out the various effects.

Overlay menu
Familiarize yourself with the Overlay menu and try out the various effects.
Choose an image size. It’s better to choose a large image size so the picture can be reproduced and enlarged at a later date, if desired. Only make a smaller copy if necessary, e.g. for the Web.

Look through all the things you can add to your photo in the Stickers menu.

Add a speech or thought bubble to your photo and adjust its size.

Compare your original photo...

Type text into the bubble. Choose your favorite font and color and resize the text. Save your image.

... to your edited photo.
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