



HS Digital Media Production/ Advanced Digital Media Production

Monday, May 4, 2020



HS Digital Media Production/Advanced Digital Media Production

Overall Lesson: Photojournalism

Sub lesson for Monday, May 4: Basic Rules of Photojournalism - Rule of Thirds, Leaving Space & Balance

Learning Target:

Students will understand how the principles of the Rule of Thirds, leaving space and balance work in photography and improve the composition of their photos.



Opening Activity

- Find 5 photos on your phone that you have taken. Make sure they're ones that you consider to be well-taken. We'll come back to them later.



Photojournalism Lesson

- **Photojournalism**: the art or practice of communicating news by photographs *(Source: dictionary.com)*
 - Photojournalism is about telling stories through photos and captions
 - “Journalism” is part of the word for a reason: photojournalists are still journalists
 - This means they need to be observant, pay attention to details, ask questions and, in general, do what all journalists do
 - Taking photos is not a photojournalists’ only responsibility



Photojournalism Lesson

- Basic “Rules” of Photojournalism
 - Use the Rule of 3rds
 - Get close to your subject
 - Walk instead of zoom
 - Use angles
 - **Leave space within the frame**
 - **Balance**

Bold indicates what we’re going to focus on today



Photojournalism Lesson


- Rule of Thirds, Leaving Space & Balance

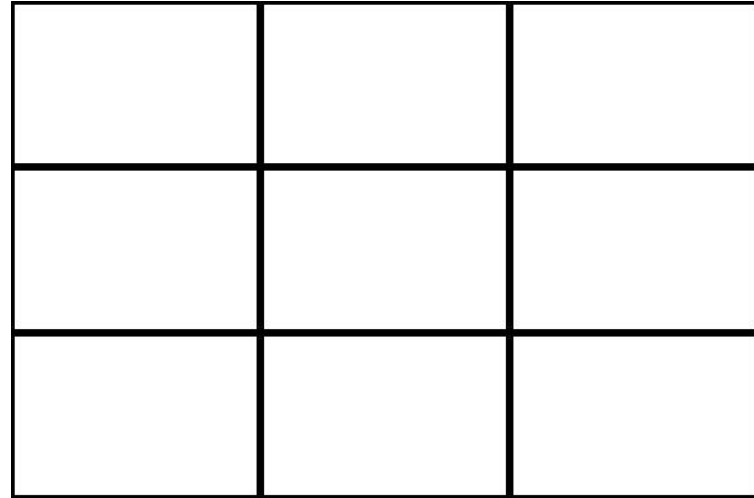
- **The Rule of Thirds, Leave Space Within the Frame and Balance** concepts all go hand-in-hand:
 - When you do the first (*Rule of Thirds*), you're going to be doing the second (*Leaving space*) and offering the third (*Balance*)
 - Why do them?
 - They help draw the viewer's eye into your photo composition better and direct it where you want it to go

Photojournalism Lesson

- Rule of Thirds, Leaving Space & Balance

- Rule of Thirds

- Great place to start when composing a photo.
- Most basic element of photo composition.
- Divide the frame into thirds and place elements in your picture along the lines. 
 - Studies have shown those places are where viewers naturally look.
 - Also a good organizational tool, because it provides consistency in placement.



Photojournalism Lesson - Rule of Thirds, Leaving Space & Balance

- Rule of Thirds - Examples



In the photo on the left, the subject is more centered in the frame. The face of the guy on the right side of the frame is cut off. It just feels awkward, and your eye kind of stops moving around the frame.

In the photo on the right, the subject of the photo is on the left vertical third with his eyes close to the top horizontal third. Your eye goes to him, then follows his eyes to the other guy and back again. Your eye is more likely to continue moving around the frame to absorb everything about the photo.

Photojournalism Lesson - Rule of Thirds, Leaving Space & Balance

- Rule of Thirds - Examples



Horizons offer great opportunities to utilize the Rule of Thirds. It's *usually* best to place the horizon in the top third of the frame as opposed to the top two-thirds of the frame, because that will give people more to see and help draw the viewer's eye throughout the entire composition.

Photojournalism Lesson

- Rule of Thirds, Leaving Space & Balance

- Rule of Thirds - Examples



When a person is the focal point of your photo, attempt to line up his/her eyes at one of the intersections of the vertical and horizontal thirds (regardless of whether he/she is looking at the camera). It gives the viewer a place to start.

Photojournalism Lesson - Rule of Thirds, Leaving Space & Balance

- Rule of Thirds - Quick Practice

A



B



Which photo successfully utilizes the Rule of Thirds?

Photojournalism Lesson - Rule of Thirds, Leaving Space & Balance

- Rule of Thirds - Quick Practice



Which photo successfully utilizes the Rule of Thirds?

Answer: **B** - *The two focal points (the man & the sun) are right along the third lines.*

Photojournalism Lesson

- Rule of Thirds, Leaving Space & Balance

- Leaving Space

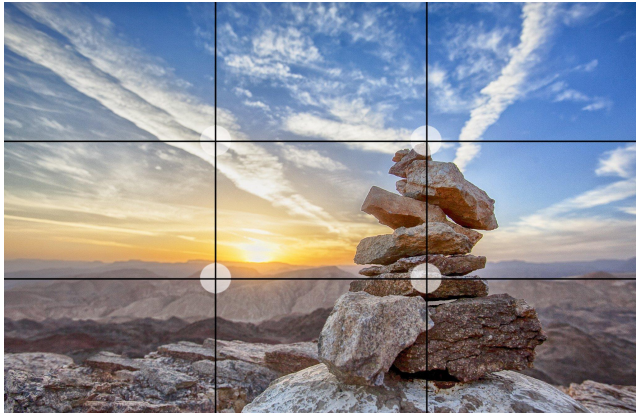
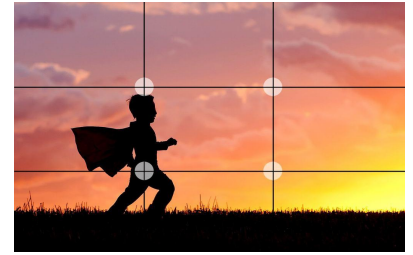
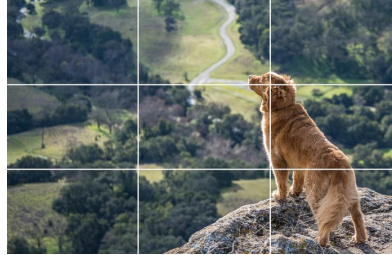
- While we want to be close to the subject of our photos, you want to leave some space for the viewer's eye to explore the rest of the photo
 - *The kayaker is the focal point of this photo, but the space on the left side of the frame leaves space for the viewer to be further drawn into the photo by looking at what the kayaker is seeing*



Photojournalism Lesson

- Rule of Thirds, Leaving Space & Balance

- **Leave Space** - Examples
 - As shown in these photos, the principles of the Rule of Thirds and leaving space work together



Photojournalism Lesson

- Rule of Thirds, Leaving Space & Balance

- Balance

- Refers to the visual weight of objects in a photo
 - Does not always mean symmetrical (*equal weight on both sides of photo*)
- *Can* affect the way we feel when looking at a picture.
 - An unbalanced photo *can* make you feel a little uneasy where a well-balanced photo *can* relax you.

The two large boats are placed on both sides of the photo creating balance and a natural frame. The buildings are much further away and, despite being larger than the boats, the perspective makes them seem similar in size and weight and adds balance to the back of the photo.



Photojournalism Lesson

- Rule of Thirds, Leaving Space & Balance

- Balance - Examples

*This photo makes it really hard to find the focus.
The lines are shooting off in many different directions.
Due to the angle, the structure itself appears to be almost falling over.
It's a chaotic image because of its lack of balance.*



Photojournalism Lesson - Rule of Thirds, Leaving Space & Balance

- Balance - Examples

This unbalanced photo works, because it grabs the viewer's attention. The imbalance draws your focus to the guitar player immediately. It also makes your eyes wonder what else is happening over on the other side, and you see the people on the beach and the pier, which provide a nice scene-setting element to the musician.





Activity #1

- Go back to the 5 photos you found on your phone and analyze them.
 - Did you utilize the Rule of Thirds?
 - Did you leave space for the viewer's eye to explore beyond the main focus of the photo?
 - Are the photos balanced?
 - If you could retake the photos, how could you frame them so they satisfy all three of the “rules” discussed in this lesson?



Activity #2

- Using your phone, take **5** photos of objects around your house and/or outside making sure to utilize the Rule of Thirds, leaving space and balance.
 - You can add the Rule of Thirds grid lines to your phone camera to help you.
 - iPhone:
 1. Launch the Settings app from the Home screen of your iPhone or iPad.
 2. Tap on Photos & Camera. You have to scroll down a bit to find it.
 3. Tap the switch next to Grid to turn it on. It's about halfway down, under the Camera section.
 - Android:
 1. Launch the camera app
 2. Go to "Settings," scroll down and switch the "grid lines" option to "on."



Additional Resources

- Digital Photography School: [Rule of Thirds](#)
- SLR Lounge: [Rule of Thirds](#)
- Video: [The Rule of Thirds in 5 minutes | Creating More Dynamic Framing](#)
- Video: [The Rule of Thirds - Improve Your Photography Composition](#)

- SLR Lounge: [Understanding Balance in Photography](#)
- Adorama: [What is Balance in Photography?](#)
- [Five Kinds of Photography Balance You Need To Understand To Take Appealing Photographs](#)