

# GEOMETRY (SHAPES)

## BLUEPRINT

In arts (including photography) shape is one of the six classic elements of design, along with line, form, texture, color and space.

Almost every photograph contains one or more shapes (it's basically unavoidable!), but great photographs are those where the photographer has used shape in a unique, interesting and memorable way.

Shapes can convey a lot of information to the viewer. For instance, they suggest size and the way they interact with the negative space in the image tells the viewer something about the object's proportion and how important or dominant it is.

Don't forget that different types of shapes convey different messages and emotions!

As a compositional tool in photography, shapes are very versatile because you can easily combine them with other compositions such as the rule of thirds, leading lines, symmetry, scale, negative space and so on.



Examples of shapes in photography

## 1 ORGANIC VS GEOMETRIC

Organic shapes occur in nature and include curves, such as those in the petal of a flower. Geometric shapes, on the other hand, are straight and often symmetrical.



Geometric shapes are circles, rectangles, squares, triangles and so on - they have clear edges. Most geometric shapes are made by humans, but not all of them. For instance, crystals and honeycomb are perfectly geometric but not man-made. Organic shapes, on the other hand, are typically irregular or asymmetrical.

### TIP:

Try to include and combine both organic and geometric shapes in your compositions, because they convey different meanings.

## 2 POSITIVE VS NEGATIVE

Positive shapes are found in visible objects, while negative ones are made by the objects around them but have no tangible form of their own.



To put it simply, negative shapes are the spaces in between objects. Such shapes are often implied shapes - the spaces between objects that are placed in relationship to each other. We see those spaces as shapes, even though they are not meant to be. Using them in photography is a great way to draw the viewer in.

### TIP:

Don't focus primarily on positive shapes - try to be aware of negative shapes in the scenes you photograph.

## 3 THE ESSENTIALS

### 3 EMOTIONS

When attempting to create a sense of rigidity and order, geometric shapes are used. Geometric shapes may also be used to create abstract interpretations of things that would normally be depicted as organic shapes.



When attempting to create a piece that looks natural, flowing, soft or calming, organic shapes are generally a better choice.

### TIP:

Make sure that the shapes you decide to capture in your photographs leave an emotional impact on the viewer.