

FOREGROUND INTEREST

BLUEPRINT

The concept of foreground interest represents a great way to take an ordinary image and make it stunning. Images with foreground interest (mostly landscapes) are generally more visually intriguing than those without it.

Using foreground interest creates a layered photograph that provides a focal point to start on, and then allows you to expand to other parts of the image. This concept works great when you have an overbearing subject (such as the sun) as a strong foreground object can help balance out your composition.

The best way to understand the concept of foreground interest is to break your image down into a few simple pieces when approaching a scene you want to photograph and then put them all together in the final photograph.

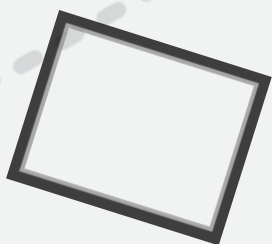
Besides landscapes, street photography is also a great genre for practicing foreground interest.



Examples of foreground interest in landscape and street photography

1 FRAMING DEVICE

The foreground is a perfect place to frame your images. The important part of using the foreground as a framing device is making sure you get some light in the foreground.



If your door frame or rocks are completely in shadow, the image can look odd. By exposing to get some definition in the shadows, you will create some interest in the foreground and help lead the eye to the main subject matter.

TIP:

A framing device doesn't have to be fully surrounding your subject. You can frame the bottom part of a landscape by using some out of focus grass for example.

2 LEADING LINES

Leading lines are a powerful way for using the foreground to draw the viewer's attention to the subject. They can be found naturally in landscapes, perhaps a line of rock formations drawing you into a beautiful scene.



They are equally found in the man-made world. Railways tracks or straight roads are a classic example. Generally, leading lines should be in focus with a good depth of field in order to grab the viewer's eye and direct them into the shot.

TIP:

By their very nature, leading lines as a foreground interest work best when using a wider lens and a lower shooting position.

3 THE ESSENTIALS

3 BREAKING UP AN IMAGE

In some shots there might be two or more competing subject matters. In this case, we can often use the foreground as a way of breaking up those subjects.



In a way, using foreground to break up an image is similar to using it for framing except that rather than trying to contain a single subject we are trying to split multiple subjects.

TIP:

For instance, you can use a trunk of a tree to split the shot along one of the thirds, with one subject to the left and another one to the right.