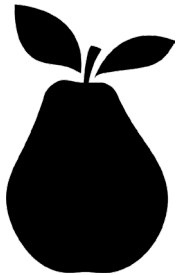


STILL LIFE FRUIT USING GOLDEN SECTION



GOAL

Create a still life photo of a fruit using golden section.

SUMMARY

One of the most relaxing genres of indoor photography is still life photography. It can be done in a small space with minimal gear. You just need a table, preferably by a window, and a reflector. In this project, we will focus on a still life fruit, photographed using the golden section as a compositional guideline.



WHAT IS GOLDEN SECTION?

The golden section is a compositional tool used in photography, also called the golden ratio, golden spiral or Fibonacci spiral and it is used to create visually pleasing images. The elements in the frame are placed along the spiral with the main element or the focus point placed in the center of the spiral. Using this compositional tool, place the most important element or the focus point in the smallest square (that is the center of the spiral). If you are using supporting elements such as props or secondary subjects, try to place them along the curve so the composition leads the viewer along the curve to the subject.

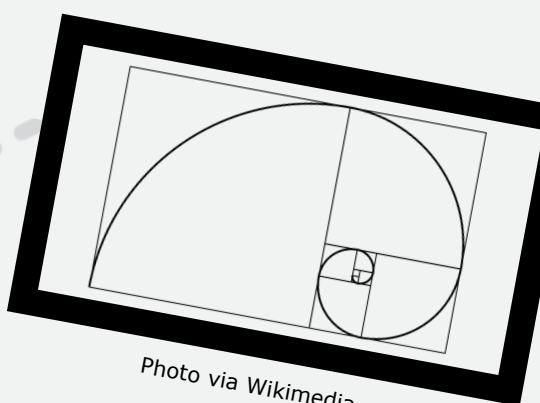


Photo via Wikimedia



Photo by Sharon McCutcheon

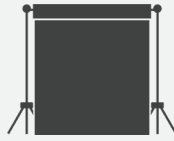
THINGS TO REMEMBER:

1. PLANNING



Plan the shoot. Since this is a still life image, think of a concept that will work well for the frame you are shooting. You could even sketch a layout beforehand. Do not rush and be patient. With still life images, you need to take your time.

2. BACKGROUND



Look for a good background to shoot the still image. The fruit or fruits you are going to shoot need to be crisp and fresh and the background colour and textures should complement the subject.

3. PROPS



Look what you can include in the frame to support the main subject and to get an alluring photograph. This could be props lying around your house or in your garden, other fruits or parts of the fruit tree that you can use to make your frame look meaningful.

5. LIGHTING



Look for a beautifully lit location, preferably a window where you can get beautiful soft light. Natural light is always the best option and side lighting is one of the best ways to illuminate your subject.

4. REFLECTIONS



It is good to avoid glossy and shiny surfaces - they can create unwanted reflections and hot spots in the image and these can be complicated to remove in post-processing.

6. COMPOSITION

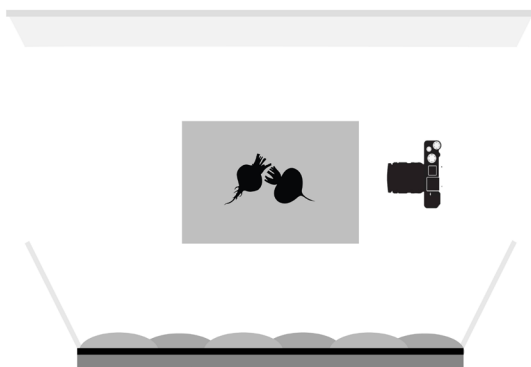


Compose your image based on the golden section, which means that you should place the main subject on the internal part of the curve where the smallest square is.

LIGHTING SETUPS:

Start with light falling between 45 and 60 degrees on your subject and then move around to find the best shooting angle.

You could also shoot a flatlay for a different perspective.



- Natural light



ADDITIONAL TIPS AND TRICKS:

1. DIFFUSER



Photo by Oriol Portell

If the light is harsh, you can use a diffuser. The diffuser can be a white piece of linen, a white piece of paper or anything similar but if you are looking to add textured backgrounds, you can make use of harsh light to reveal the textures and add drama to the image.

2. REFLECTOR



Photo by Margot Pandone

If you are side lighting your subject, parts of the frame may be in the shadow. You can use a white reflector to reflect some light back to the shadow areas. Use one if you have, or use a white piece of thick paper or cardboard as a reflector.

3. ARRANGING ELEMENTS



Photo by Olesia Misty

If you are using props or other elements to support/complement your subject in the frame, as much as possible arrange them along the curve. This will lead to a very pleasing composition and guide the viewer to the main subject. Keep the frame neat and clutterless.

4. MINIMAL COMPOSITION



Photo by Bruno Emmanuelle

If you are going for a minimal composition, choose a powerful complementary background and place the subject in the smallest square of the golden section.

CAMERA SETTINGS:



Wide Aperture (more light)

Narrow Aperture (less light)

- Since you are shooting still life, you may want to have more depth of field. Depending on the distance between the subject and the camera and the lens used, you may have to use aperture values between f/5.6 and f/11. You need to experiment with this value to get the right look.

100 ··· 200 ··· 400 ··· 640 ··· 800 ··· 1600 ··· 3200

Lower

LIGHT SENSITIVITY

Higher

- Keep the iso values as low as possible in order to avoid noise.



Blur Motion

Tripod Recommended

Handheld Ok

Freeze Motion

- Meter the available light and set the shutter speed accordingly. When using a tripod, remember to turn off image stabilisation and it is good to use a cable release to avoid camera shake.



Photos by Sheila Joy and Jess Bailey

ADDITIONAL TIPS:

1.

Set the camera to manual mode and use one of the white balance presets depending on the light available or use auto white balance. With still life, it is good to get the white balance right when shooting the image.

2.

It is best to use a tripod so you are free to move around and focus on the composition.

EDITING:

Import the images into your post processing application. Crop and compose the image to get the perfect golden section.

1. Adjust white balance if you did not get it right in camera.



2. Adjust exposure, increase some contrast. Adjust the highlights, shadows, whites and blacks if required. Play with the tone curve for better contrast and colours. Reduce noise in case it is noticeable. You may also want to add some clarity and sharpening if required.




3. If there are some unwanted elements, remove them with the healing brush or clone tool.



Photo by Lauren Mancke





POST YOUR RESULTS [ON THE FORUM!](#)

