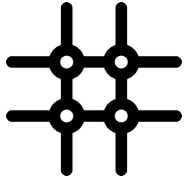


RULE OF THIRDS AND LEADING LINES



GOAL

Capture a photograph that combines rule of thirds and leading lines.

SUMMARY

Compositional guidelines are the basis to creating powerful and visually appealing photographs. These guidelines can be used on their own or by combining more than one in a single frame. Depending on the scenario, combining compositional guidelines can lead to better results and in this project, we will look at how to combine rule of thirds and leading lines to create interesting photographs.



There are dozens of compositional guidelines that can be used in photography. They can be used on their own or by combining more than one guideline for powerful results. Sometimes we may unintentionally combine compositional guidelines in a photo, but intentionally doing it can lead to interesting photographs.



Photo by James Orr



Photo by Gil Ribeiro

THINGS TO REMEMBER:

1. COMBINING



You may have mastered compositional guidelines on their own or you may have put your focus on using only guideline. You can try combining compositions in a single frame.

2. RULE OF THIRDS



In the rule of thirds, a frame is divided into three equal parts horizontally and vertically. You need to compose your image in such a way that the most important element is placed on one of the four intersecting points.

3. LEADING LINES



Leading lines is a powerful and dynamic compositional guideline and it helps draw the viewer's attention into the scene or the main subject in the frame. It guides the viewer's eyes through the frame.

4. TYPES OF LINES



Humans are naturally drawn to lines and hence leading lines can be a powerful compositional tool in photography. These lines can be vertical, horizontal, diagonal, converging, curved, etc.

5. PERSPECTIVE



When combining the rule of thirds and leading lines in a frame, you will have to move around to get the composition and perspective right, so they work together to give a powerful resulting image.

6. VARIETY



Do not make use of lines that do not take the viewer to the subject or point of interest. Try different focal lengths, perspectives and angles and choose the one that works the best.

- Scout for a location where you can find interesting lines to compose the shot. Also look for a subject that can be used along with these lines for perfect composition.
- The subject can be a tree, person, building, etc., anything that interests you.
- Set up your camera and it is good to have one that can shoot in manual mode, so you have better control over the exposure. You can even use your smartphone in manual mode.



Photo by Sam Poullain

Photo by Stefan Grage

TIPS:

1. PLACING THE SUBJECT



Photo by Mei-Ling Mirow

Since we are looking at the rule of thirds, you need to make sure that you have the subject or the point of interest in one of the intersecting points or lines of the rule of thirds grid. Now when incorporating the leading line, make sure that the line also directs the viewers' attention to the main subject or point of interest. This will give rise to a very powerful composition.

3. SHADOWS



Photo by Siora Photography

Even long shadows can be used as leading lines and these kinds of shadows form only when the sun is quite low in the sky and this is also one of the best times for photography.

2. HORIZON



Photo by Michael Fousert

If you are photographing a scene or a landscape, make sure the horizon is on the one third line and look for foregrounds that have lines leading into the horizon. This could be rivers, streams, paths, fences, patterns on the landscape, etc. If photographing architectural structures or cityscapes, place the most important part of the structure or a prominent building of the cityscape on the rule of thirds.

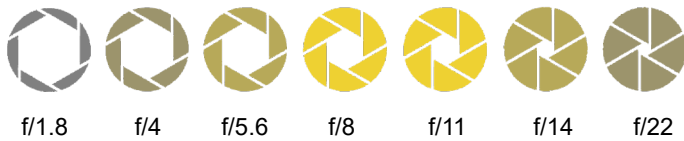
4. PORTRAITS



Photo by Ben Lambert

Scout for a location where you can find interesting lines to compose the image. You may even find some in your house or in your backyard. Look for long shadows, especially during the golden hour, that can be creatively used as leading lines.

CAMERA SETTINGS:



Wide Aperture (more light)

Narrow Aperture (less light)

- Aperture value again depends on what you are photographing. For landscape and other shots that require a greater depth of field, use narrow aperture values like f/7 to f/11. For portraits, use wider apertures.

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

Lower

LIGHT SENSITIVITY

Higher

- Set your iso to a low value to avoid noise.



Blur Motion

Tripod
Recommended

Handheld Ok

Freeze
Motion

- For hand held shots, set shutter speed to faster than 1/focal length taking into account the crop factor.



Photos by John Rodenn Castillo and Harry Shelton

ADDITIONAL TIPS:

1.

Usually wide angle shots are best and give more emphasis to leading lines. So choose the focal length wisely. It is better to have a focal length wider than 35mm.

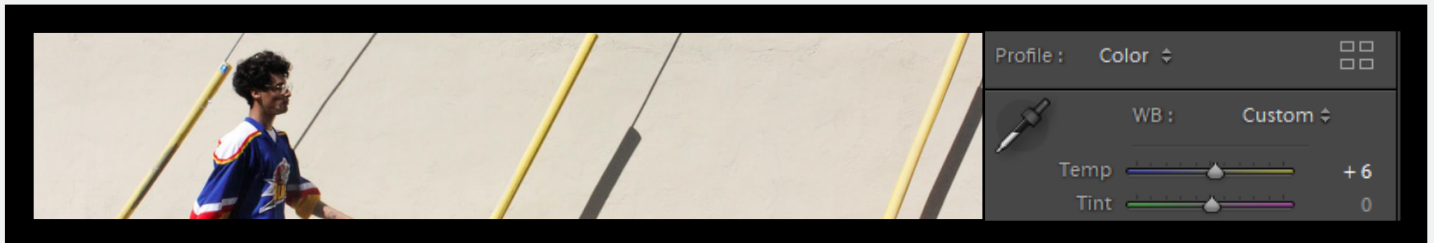
2.

Depending on what you are photographing, you may need a tripod or not. If using a tripod, turn off image stabilisation.

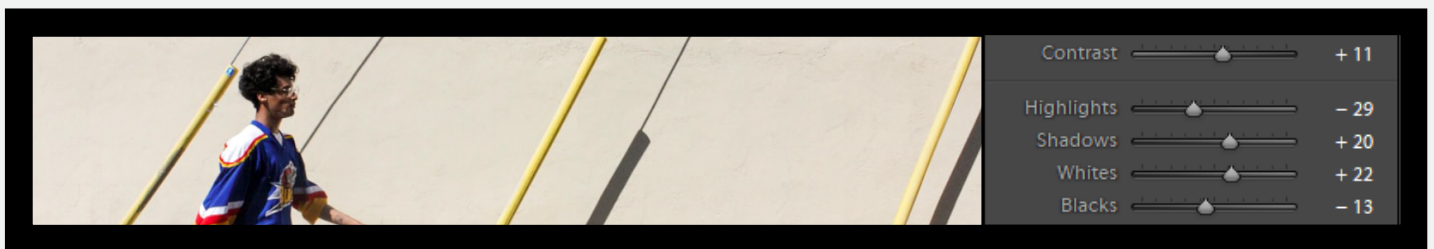
EDITING:

Import the image into your post processing application. Crop and straighten the image if necessary.

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



2. Make basic adjustments like exposure, contrast, highlights, shadows, whites and blacks. Use the heal or clone tool if necessary to remove dust specks and unwanted elements in the frame.



3. Increase clarity and vibrance if required and experiment with the dehaze tool. If required, you may need to make specific edits locally based on the genre of photography.

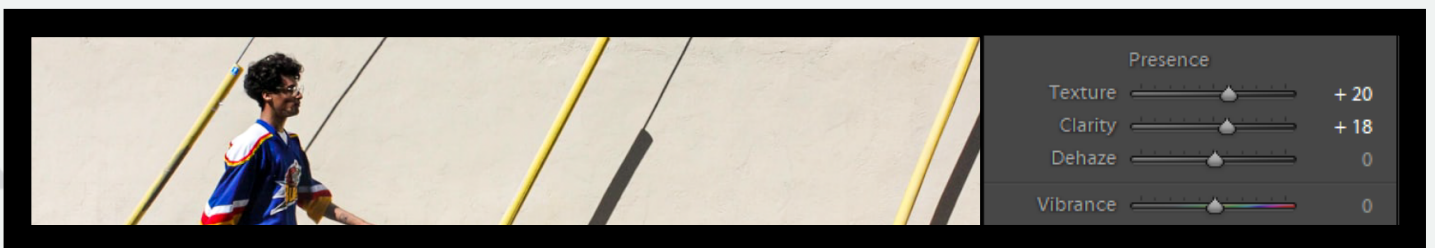


Photo by Mei-Ling Mirow



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

