



How to take better photos

Photography Tips Suggestions

Instant Improvement - Guaranteed

- Follow these simple transforming tips to create better photographs
- These tips that are tried and true from years of experience by the pros
- Any one of these could lead to a vast improvement
- For use on any camera



Fill The Frame

- Empty space is usually not your friend – Ex. Sky
- Crop to eliminate non-compelling content and to emphasize main subject
- Photos of people are usually more compelling up close
- Can fill the frame by your position, zooming in or cropping



Be Aware Of Light

- Always be aware of the light – Sun location, direct or indirect, intensity.
- Light is generally best in the morning and late afternoon
- Worst light is in the middle of a bright sunny day
- Filters, software and camera settings can compensate for exposure problems



The Rule of Thirds

- Divide image/screen into nine equal parts
- Place subject where lines intersect
- Some cameras have an overlay
- People - Line body up to vertical line, person's eyes to a horizontal line
- Avoid the bullseye
- There are other similar rules like the golden ratio



The Rule of Odds

- Generally use odd numbers of objects in photo – 1, 3, 5, 7
- Example - With one main subject use two minor subjects
- Eye tends to wander to the center of a group
- Don't want eye to find empty space



Focus On The Eyes

- When taking photos of anything with eyes, make sure you focus on them
- Other parts of the photo may be out of focus and still work if the eyes are in focus



Composition Design Elements

- Design elements are the foundation of every photographic composition
- Usually one primary subject is aided by one or more of these elements
- As you become aware of and use these elements your photography will improve.
- The design elements are
 - Line
 - Shape
 - Form
 - Texture
 - Pattern
 - Color
- Every compelling photo uses one or more of these elements to grab the viewer's attention



Line

- Line can take you in a direction – leading line
- Line can have an emotional impact – crosshatch
- Lines can be crooked, straight, curved, diagonal, etc., etc.
- Use line to help tell your story



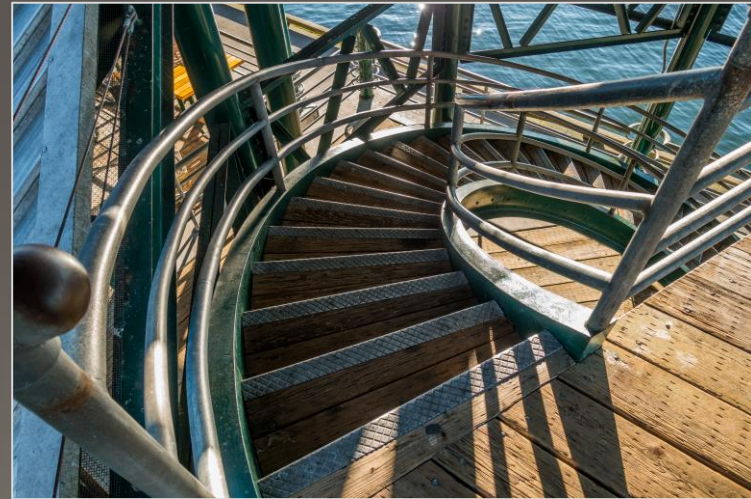
Shape

- Helps you recognize what you are seeing
- Use strong contrast with shape - silhouette
- A fundamental element
- Shape with color are a powerful combination
- Two-dimensional



Form

- Object has depth and exists in the real world
- Three-dimensional
- Can represent completeness or remind us of the human form



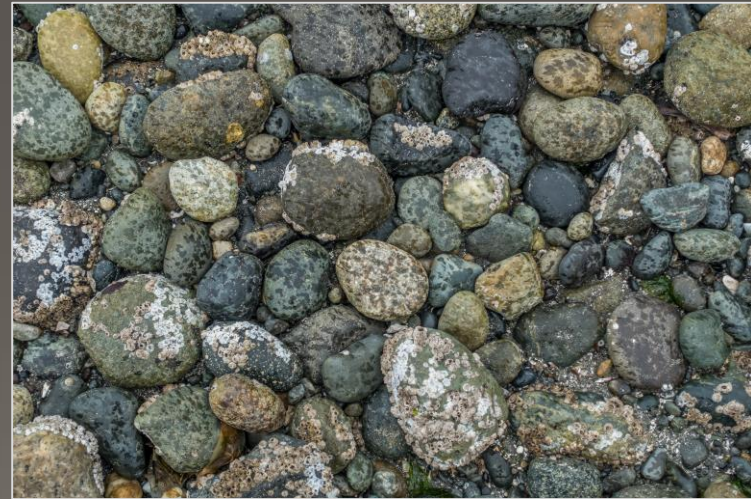
Texture

- Can elicit an emotional response
- May be less obvious than some of the other elements.
- May touch the unconscious mind rather than the conscious



Pattern

- Can evoke feelings of stability
- Although not always obvious pattern is all around us
- Pattern can bring orderliness to your composition



Color

- So obvious that it can be overlooked
- Evokes a wide array of emotional responses
- Unless you are shooting in black and white it is a key element in every photo that you take.
- Manipulate saturation etc. with software to better tell you story



Work The Scene

- If you have a compelling scene then work it
- Take multiple photos
- Change your distance
- Zoom in and out
- Shoot from lower and higher



Eliminate Distractions

- Intrusions – Objects coming in from the side or incomplete objects – Arms, legs
- Excessive busyness not related to the subject(s)
- Excessive bright or dark spots
- Cutting objects off so not complete – Ex. Top of the head of an animal or person.
- Mergers – Objects overlapping
- Too many possible focus points – Ex. Crowds without a main subject



Subject and Background

- Subject should be distinct from background
- Background colors should support the subject
- If background has similar colors, or other distractions, blur it. Bokeh
- Anything in the background that distracts from the subject is bad



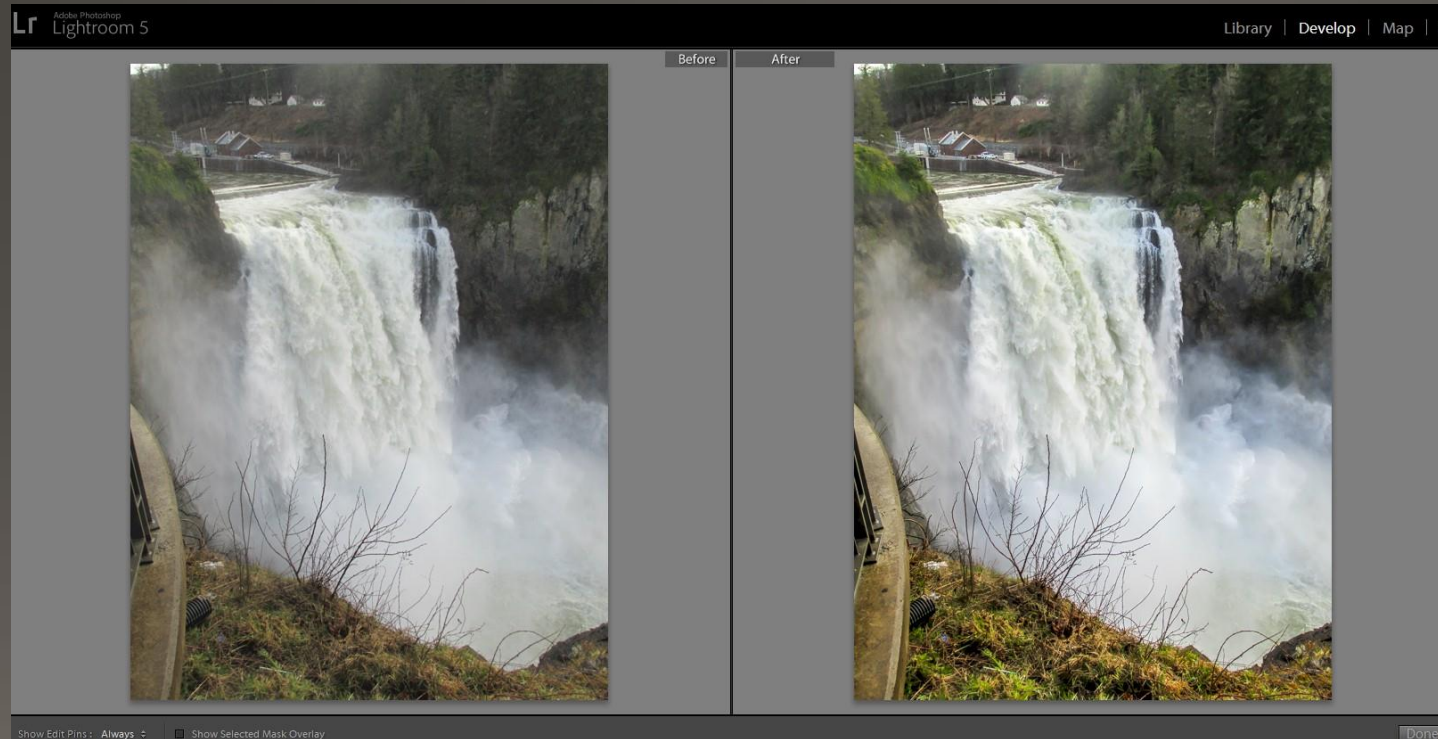
Certain Mistakes Are Not Correctible

- Focus, focus, focus. You will just throw away out of focus shots
- Bad lighting – Not all exposure problems can be corrected
- Always ask yourself “Is this boring?”
- Are there one or more design elements in the shot? – line, shape, pattern
- Did you consider composition or just point and click?



Editing Software Is Your Friend

- Most if not all photos can be improved with editing software – picassa, gimp, Lightroom, Topaz
- There are free programs and ones you pay for
- There are limitless possibilities with these programs
- Most serious photographers use post-processing editing software
- More possibilities with RAW format but you need a camera that can do it and it is more work



Recap And Questions – Happy Shooting

- Fill The Frame
- Light Awareness
- Rule Of Thirds
- Rule Of Odds
- Focus On The Eyes
- Work The Scene
- Eliminate Distractions
- Subject And Background
- Un-correctible mistakes
- Editing Software Is Your Friend

