



Photo by ROB MATTSON

# Composition

By Bradley Wilson  
wilsonbrad@aol.com

Just as the writer must find the right words and arrange them in the right order, the photographer must find the right elements and arrange them in a pleasing manner.

**"Composition is merely the strongest way of seeing."**  
Edward Weston

**"Some photographers claim there are no rules for composition or arranging material in the frame. In the final analysis, they may be right. No rule applies all the time."**

John Morris, *Guide to Photography*





Auburn resident Kaye Cantrell, a former Western employee, reflects on the car accident that left her paralyzed. This photo by H. RICK MACH of the *College Heights Herald* (Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green, Ky.; Robert Adams, adviser) exemplifies moving up close to fill the frame.



This photo by HEATHER HOUST of Capital High School (Boise, Idaho; Vicki Francis, adviser) is a good example of how moving up close and filling the frame can increase the photo's impact. In addition to keeping the focus on the subject that dominates the photo, moving up close helps to simplify the background.

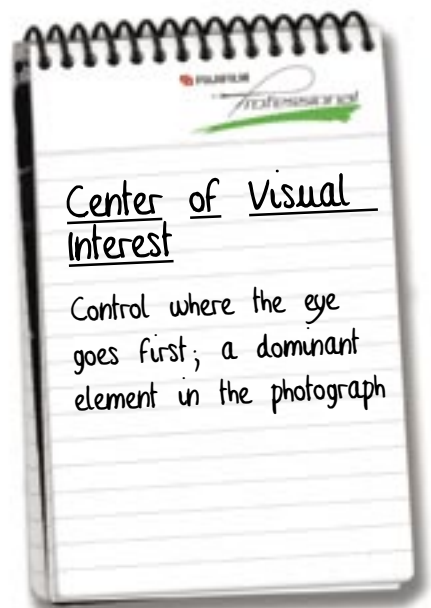




This photo by KODY THOMAS of Bella Vista High School (Marianne Schaffeld, adviser) is a good example of having a strong center of visual interest. Low depth of field helps draw the viewer to the boys on the boardwalk in Santa Cruz, Calif.



This photo by TARA MONROE; Belen High School (New Mexico, Albert Martinez, adviser) shows how a simple background and a foreground element can draw the viewer into the main subject.



### Center of Visual Interest

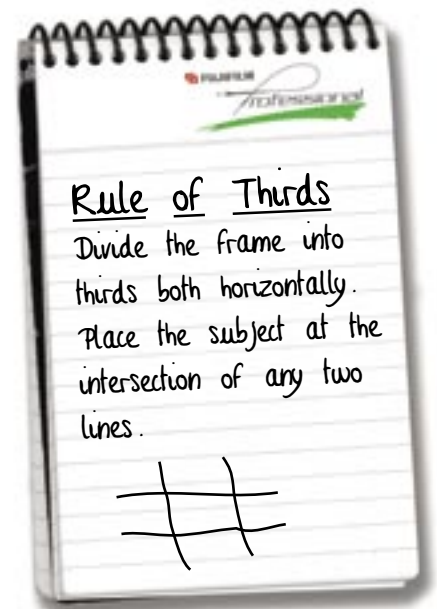
Control where the eye goes first; a dominant element in the photograph



This photo by JONATHAN LEWIS of *The Exposure* yearbook (Scott County High School, Georgetown, Ky.; Steve Traynor, adviser) exemplifies use of the Rule of Thirds with the primary subjects in the upper left corner. The face of the girl in the upper right corner also functions as a foreground element to draw the viewer into the picture.

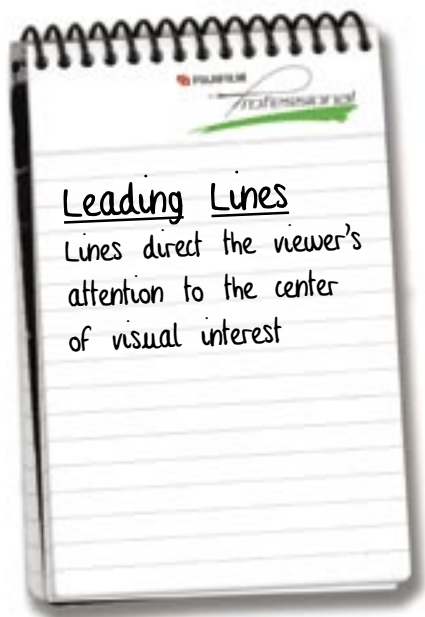


A Muslim kneels in prayer at the Islamic Center of Cleveland after the events of Sept. 11, 2001. This photo by KIM MANSAGER of *Lakewood Times* (Lakewood High School, Ohio; John Bowen, adviser) also exemplifies the Rule of Thirds.



The lines and repetition of the contes pull the viewer into this Salt Lake City Olympic skater.  
Photo by JOSH MERWIN.

In this photo by MATT STAMEY of the *Royal Purple* yearbook (Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kan.; Linda Puntney, adviser), a man walks up the entrance ramp of the Kansas State Fair Grandstand to get a better view of the Midway. The ramp functions as a series of leading lines. The viewer's eye follows the ramp up to the man in white. Because the eye is drawn to light areas, the lines and light shade draw the viewer right to the subject.





Firefighter Dale Skiles checks for hot spots after the fire had been put out. The financial losses made this blaze the worst in Modesto City School district's history. It began in the wall between a classroom and a restroom. This photo by ANDREA SCOTT of *The Shield* (Thomas Downey HS, Modesto, Calif.; John Haley Scott, adviser) illustrates good use of framing.

Senior Shannon Howard reads from the teleprompter while being taped for the Veteran's Day video. The video was a combined effort between the video productions class and the newspaper production class. This photo by LINDSEY NELSON, of Hoover High School (North Canton, Ohio; Pamela McCarthy, adviser) illustrates excellent use of a foreground element functioning as a frame.



Photographer EMMA JUNEKE of Torrey Pines High School (San Diego, Calif.) had to get down low to photograph this biker.

Likewise, photographer CHRISTINE DRUD shot this picture of Mate Lusic repairing his car in Vrbanj, Croatia. Getting down low and shooting up through the car made the subject more dramatic.

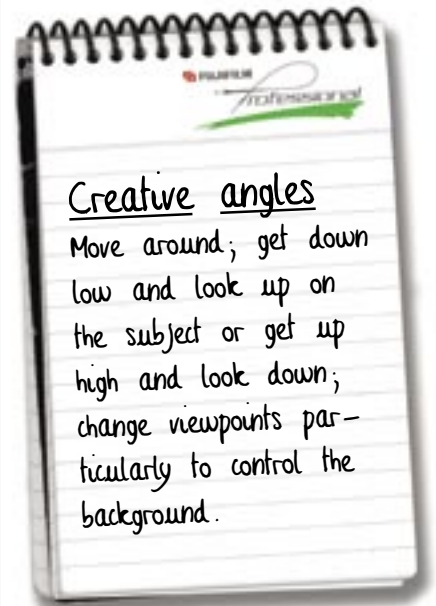




Photo by MIKE SHEPHERD, *Topeka CapitalJournal*



The repetition of the winning swimmers in this photo by CHRISTINA SANTILLI of JW North High School (Riverside, Calif.; Kathy Rossi, adviser) draws the viewer in as does the emotion in the swimmers' faces.



Thomas Clay, 9, lines up for the national anthem with the Hays Larks prior to the start of the 2000 National Baseball Congress World Series championship game in Wichita, Kan. The Liberal Bee Jays defeated Hays in the first all-Kansas championship matchup in the NBC history. Photo by MIKE SHEPHERD, *Topeka CapitalJournal*.

