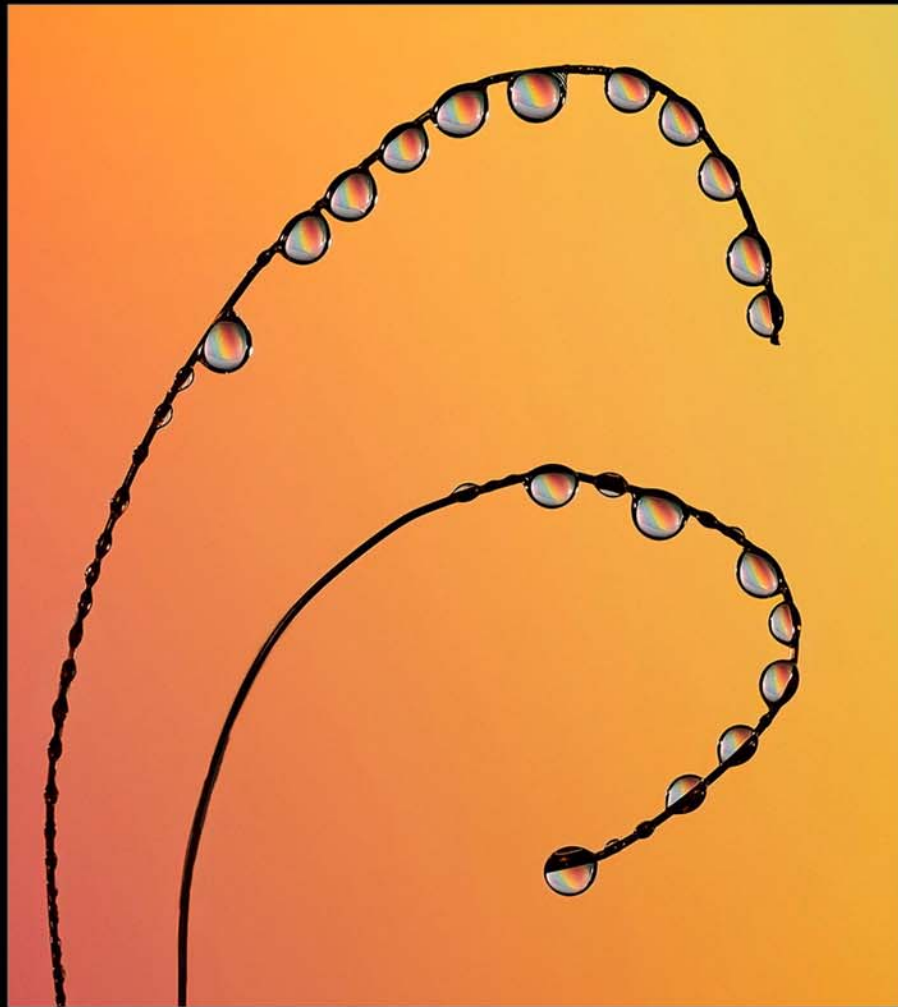


PERSPECTIVE

AMBER CAMERA CLUB

MARCH 2025



RAINBOW DEWDROPS
BY
SHIRLEY SWINGLER



CHAIRMAN'S CHATTER

Chairman's Chatter February 2025

The committee is endeavouring to get **interesting speakers**. Rose Douglas organized the January speaker to be **Tim Drimmon**, an experienced wildlife photographer.

In February, **Leon van der Merwe** shared his passion with us, this being flying helicopters and taking wildlife photos from them.

In March, **Jill Sneesby**, a long-time member of the PSSA organizing committee will judge for us but will also show her photos from her recent trip to China. Both these 2 latter activities, us ordinary folk are unlikely to ever experience.

We need to organize speakers for April to October so if any members have ideas, please let the committee know.

If we are stuck for speakers we may ask one of the judges to show some of their own pictures before tea. This was standard procedure before ZOOM in the pre-digital Dark Ages!

Jenny Kruger reports that there were **3493 entries into the Amber Camera Club salon**. We will use salon money towards buying a **new laptop**. The current one is 12 years old, cannot update to windows 11 and soon we will not be able to update ZOOM or other software.

Jenny is recording the club evening's proceedings and judging and these large files will be put on the **ACC Google Drive for two weeks**. A link will be sent to members allowing you to view or listen to the judge's comments. The recording will be removed from the Google Drive after two weeks as we do not have enough space.

We have learnt from the Westville club who have stopped sending out ZOOM meeting links to members as they found that people simply stopped coming to the meeting.

We will only send out ZOOM links to country members plus those people who advise Jenny that they cannot attend.

We do prefer members to attend club evening to ensure that there is some social interaction and cross fertilization of ideas between members. I will learn to handle **ZOOM meetings** as soon as we are passed stage 6 load shedding! This will allow individual training and communication with members living overseas. We value these members.

My finding in obtaining experienced judges for the 6 months up to June is that none were prepared to write comments but were happy to judge via Zoom. We must just get used to this new reality although the occasional judge may still be prepared to write comments.

The **Technical Interest Group** kicked off on Saturday afternoon, 22 February 2025 with a PowerPoint presentation on **Photo Composition** for cellphone and ordinary cameras. There were 7 people present, which included ordinary ACC members with one apology for sickness.

The training went well with new members saying that they had definitely learnt something. Some members asked searching technical questions which will be handled in greater detail when moving on from the "arty" aspects of photo composition. The presentation will be repeated on Thursday morning, 27 February at 10:00 for those who prefer week day meetings. It was interesting to note at the presentation that at least 3 members get **out of focus photos with a long lens, especially old, large heavy lens**. The solution is that your camera speed must be at LEAST the same or greater than your telephoto setting.

For example if you are using a 400mm lens, then your speed must be at least 1/400 of a second or preferable greater. Long lenses magnify camera shake, especially at a lower speed. (This is advice from the dark ages!)



CHAIRMAN'S CHATTER

The presentation will be panel beaten into a better shape and ultimately put onto the ACC Google Drive for members to access for their own training.

I am concerned that we only have Jenny Kruger officially capable of handling the **Competition Steward Job**. If she is not available the club will come to a crashing halt. I ask for somebody to come forward to learn the job. It will not be necessary to actually do the job but to be trained as an insurance back up.

Happy Snapping
Mark Preston-Whyte



ABOUT THE CLUB

Amber Camera Club was established in 2011 by a group of passionate photographers. It has grown from strength to strength in the time it has been running thanks to a hard-working committee.

We welcome photographers of all ages and all levels to join our club in the hopes of helping them grow and creating an environment for likeminded people to meet and socialize.

There is a meeting every month - on the 3rd Tuesday of the month in the evening at the Amber Valley Auditorium at 6:30pm. Everyone and anyone are welcome to join. We also host an outing on the Saturday following the meeting to practice some photography.

If you would like to find out more information – please contact us on ambercameraclub@gmail.com or contact one of our dedicated committee members, details, of which, are below.

Chairperson: Mark Preston-Whyte 082 564 0729

Secretary: Sue Grills 073 571 4971

Competition Steward: Jenny Kruger 082 871 1782

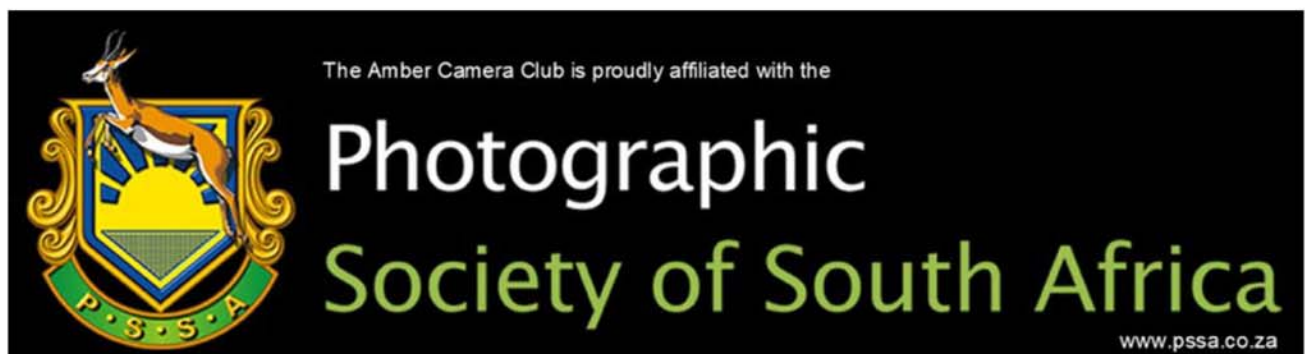
Treasurer: Bidy Jung 072 259 3809

Membership: Helga Holst 076 816 6454

Editor: Rose Douglas 076 402 6020

Tea: Gill Ainslie 083 789 2642/Penny Shaw 082 564 3144

E-mail: ambercameraclub@gmail.com



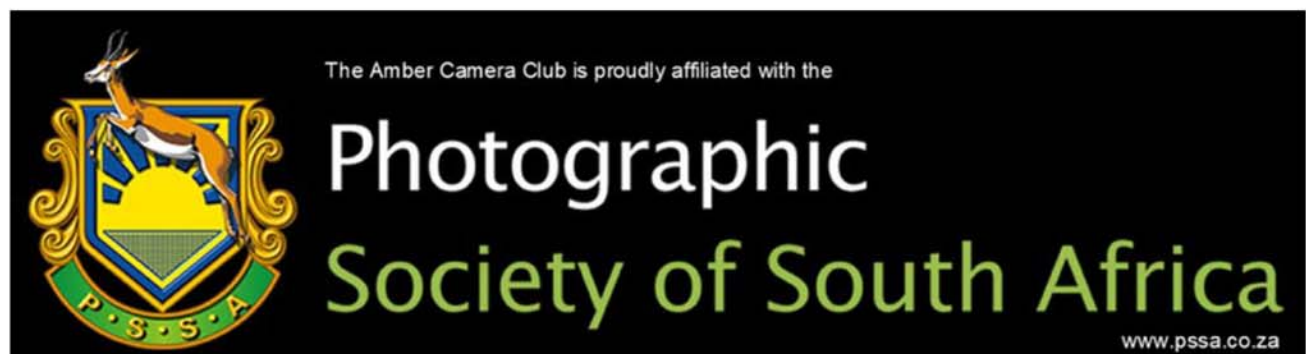
MEMBERS WEBSITES/VLOGS/ BLOGS/UTUBE CHANNELS

Paul Bartho: www.bartho.blog

Mark Preston-Whyte: www.markpw6.wixsite.com/website-copy

Rose Douglas: U-Tube channel — Rose Douglas Explore Africa

IF YOU WOULD LIKE YOUR OWN SITE LISTED, PLEASE SEND YOUR DETAILS TO THE EDITOR.



FEBRUARY CLUB COMPETITION

This month's JUDGES

PAULA RUTHERFORD - BENONI CAMERA CLUB

ERROL WAGG - BOKSBURG CAMERA CLUB

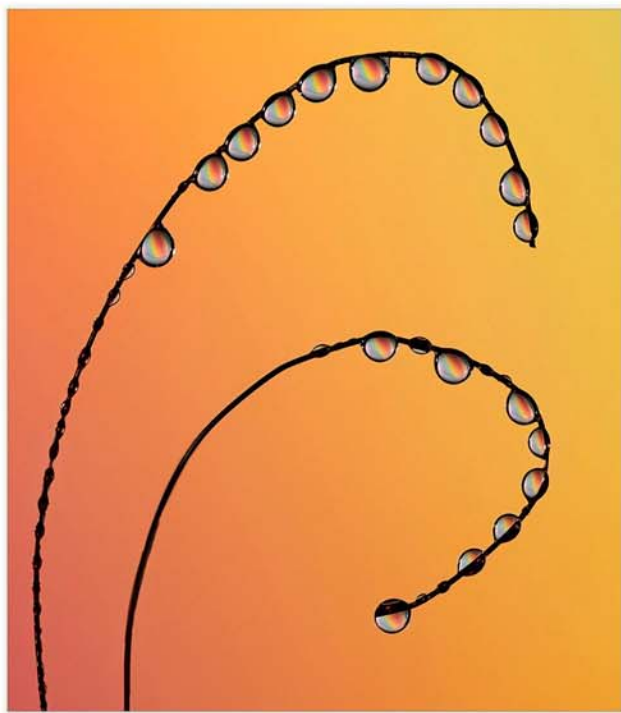
Judges Choice Junior

TORSHAVN BY IAIN KERR



Judges Choice Senior

RAINBOW DEWDROPS BY SHIRLEY SWINGLER



FEBRUARY CLUB COMPETITION

SET SUBJECT - SMOKIN' HOT

**Judges Choice Junior
DANCING FLAMES BY BIDDY JUNG**



**Judges Choice Senior
FIERY MARTINI BY SHIRLEY SWINGLER**



2025 CLUB COMPETITIONS

SET SUBJECTS

JANUARY - MIST/FOG closes 1ST JANUARY
FEBRUARY - SMOKIN' HOT closes 1st February

MARCH - NATURALLY FRAMED

APRIL - LOOKING DOWN

MAY - REFLECTIONS

JUNE - SERENITY

JULY - EYES

AUGUST - OLD (PEOPLE, THINGS, ANIMALS)

SEPTEMBER - PET PORTRAIT

OCTOBER - WINTER WONDERLAND

JANUARY 26 - MOUNTAINS

At least 1 of your 4 entries should be entered in our Set Subject for this month, the balance may be entered in this category or across any of the remaining 5 categories on PhotoVault. If you are unable to enter anything in the set subject, you forfeit that image and enter only 3 in other categories.

NOTE: Remember to size correctly: at least one of the image dimensions must be exactly 1920px wide or 1080px high and sized up to 2Mb



SALON CALENDAR 2025

Calendar for year ending June 2025

No	Club	Salon Name	Closing Date
1	Nelspruit Photographic Society	Nelspruit Salon	06/07/2024
2	Edenvale Photographic Club	8th Danube Summer Circuit 2024	15/07/2024
3	Benoni Camera Club	3rd Benoni Camera Club Digital Salon	20/07/2024
4	Witzenberg Photographic Society	4th Witzenberg Photographic Society National Salon 2024	03/08/2024
5	Durban Camera Club	2nd Durban Camera Club DigitalSalon	17/08/2024
6	PSSA Youth	5th PSSA YOUTH National Salon 2024	24/08/2024
7	Centurion Camera Club	8th Centurion Camera Club Digital Salon	31/08/2024
8	AV Makers South Africa	AV Makers National AV Salon 2024	08/09/2024
9	Randburg Photo Club	6th Randburg National Digital Salon	14/09/2024
10	Hibiscus Coast Photographic Society	6th HCPS National Digital Salon -2025	28/09/2024
11	Tygerberq Photoqraphic Society	9tn Tygerberg Digital Salon	12/10/2024
12	PSSA Up and Coming	PSSA 26th Up and Coming	19/10/2024
13	Krugersdorp Kamera Klub Camera Club	Krugersdorp Camera Club 19th National Digital Salon	26/10/2024
14	Springs Photographic Club	3rd SPC National Digital Salon	09/11/2024
15	Bethal Camera Club	4th Bethal National Salon	11/01/2025
16	Western Cape Photographic Forum	WCPF Salon for Projected Images	25/01/2025
17	AFO Fotografieklub	13th National AFO salon 2A25	08/02/2025
18	Amber Camera Club	ACC 3rd Digital Salon	22/02/2025
19	PSSA International Salon	PSSA National Salon of Photography 2025	08/03/2025
20	Bosveld Fotografieklub	8th Bosveld Fotografieklub Salon	15/03/2025
21	Hillcrest Camera Club	1ST Hillcrest Camera Club Digital Salon	22/03/2025
22	Paarl Photographic Club	7th Paarl National Salon of Photography	05/04/2025
23	Magalies Foto Fun Club	9th MFFC DPI Salon 2025	19/04/2025
24	Southern Suburbs Camera Club	SSCC 8th National PDI Salon	03/05/2025
25	Port Elizabeth Camera Club	PECC National Salon	17/05/2025
26	Kriel Foto Club	3rd Kriel Foto Club Salon	31/05/2025
27	Ballito Photo Club	1ST Ballito Photo Club National Salon	07/06/2025
28	Tafelberg Fotografie Klub	TAF 14th Print & PDI Salon	14/06/2025
29	PSSA Up and Coming	PSSA 27th Up and Coming	21/06/2025

MIDLANDS MEANDER CATEGORIES

**Please note that we have changed the submission dates
to allow more time to enter.
2025**

January - Inside the Shop - Closes MID January
February - Working Outside - Closes MID February

March - Kids in Action - Closes Mid March

April - Delicate flower

May - Artistic Hands

June - Frozen

July - Sport

August - Pathways in Forests

September - Lost in Time

October - Natures Power

Remember 3 entries per month and the same
guidelines
apply with regards to sizing.

LOOKING DOWN

What view is looking down?

High angle shot - The camera looks down, making the subject look vulnerable or insignificant. It can give the audience a motherly feeling toward the character.

How often do you take photographs with the camera pointed straight down at the ground? There are two main reasons why one would want to do this.

1. Shallow depth of focus is an inherent challenge when photographing subject's close-up. While I don't always want to have everything in a photograph sharply in focus, there are scenes which benefit from having everything in focus, particularly when there is a lot of intricate detail present. With the camera pointed straight down the focus plane of the camera is parallel to the ground, making it easy to get everything at a given height off the ground nicely in focus.
2. As a compositional tool looking straight down on a subject often provides a unique and interesting view. This can be used to reveal otherwise difficult to spot symmetries, repeating geometrical shapes and other interesting abstract patterns.

Photos from above: get a fresh perspective with a top-down point of view

Shooting from above your subjects can give you a fresh perspective of your world, no matter how limited the scenery below. Whether you're shooting with a phone, a DSLR, or a drone, there's so much detail to be seen from the top down. Another reason to love the top-down point of view: It transforms, even hides, the clutter to create a clean, simple frame.

Shooting aerial photography with a drone. There's something about the bird's-eye view that reinforces the impact and beauty of nature, the art of infrastructures and architecture, and the incredible scale of our beautiful Earth.

Composition.

The principles of composition are the same as with other points of view. The use of layering, the rule of thirds, the framing, and the incorporation of leading lines can all enhance the photograph, perhaps even more so: As the faces of the living subjects aren't necessarily visible to tell the story, you have to tell it with canny composition.

You'll want to avoid cropping out parts of the subjects' limbs from the frame, so use a wide-angle lens and get up high enough to include everything necessary. Stand on a barstool, ladder, or table to get high enough above your subject. To get even more height, hold your camera over your head.

Actively look for lines, patterns, shapes, and framing to enhance your compositions, because it can be difficult to get depth of field from high overhead.

LOOKING DOWN

Lighting.

Getting direct backlighting with your camera when shooting from a top-down point of view is unlikely, but it's still important to consider the direction of the light source relative to your subject or scene.

Observe where the shadows are falling on your subject as you shoot. Indoors, shoot near a window with the light falling on your subject from the side to get directional light — where the light enters one side of the frame and falls off into shadow on the other. Shooting with the light coming from above or below your subject will give you a moodier image.

With top-down photography, it's really fun to play with shadows. Be mindful of the time of day you're shooting. If you want a long shadow falling through your frame, aim for early or late in the day. If you want shorter shadows, aim for mid-morning or mid-afternoon.

5 Tips for photos from above:

1. Choose a wide-angle lens to get everything in the frame.
2. Get up high. Use a stool, ladder, or drone to get high enough to tell the full story.
3. Close down your aperture to maintain detail, if that's what you desire.
4. Use live view and a tilting screen so you can hold the camera even higher above your head.

... and for a bit of fun!!!...

AI Overview

"Looking down" in photography refers to a camera angle called a "high angle shot," where the camera is positioned above the subject and points downwards, essentially looking down on the subject, often creating a sense of vulnerability or powerlessness within the image.

Key points about "looking down" in photography:

- **Technical term:** High angle shot
- **Effect on subject:** Makes the subject appear smaller, less powerful, or vulnerable
- **Common usage:** To convey a feeling of dominance, inferiority, or a sense of being observed from above

TUTORIALS

As promised here is Part Two of **COMPOSITION IN PHOTOGRAPHY** carrying on with the Rule of space...

For example, if a duck is paddling away, you would put significant space in front, like this:



And according to the rule of space, if you photograph a person who's running to the right, you should place them on the left side of the frame (and vice versa).



But remember that there's an exception to every rule, especially when it comes to composition. So, if you want to add tension or intrigue the viewer, try violating the rule of space!

The complicated thing about composition is that you must choose to apply or break the rules depending on the message you want your image to convey.

The rule of odds



The rule of odds is based on the principle that people find it more interesting to see odd numbers. While even numbers show stability and work well for symmetric compositions, odd numbers allow the eye to flow through the image.

TUTORIALS

So according to the rule of odds, you should include *odd* numbers of items in your compositions.

I recommend you use this rule when it fits the situation, much like you would with shapes. If you want a dynamic composition, you use triangles, diagonal lines, and odd numbers. And if you prefer stability, you can choose straight lines, squares, and even numbers.

In any case, the important thing is to use the rules to your advantage and take control of your compositions.

When you're shooting food or products, it's often easier to follow the rule of odds.

But following the rule of odds isn't as easy when you're photographing a family of four; you can't just decide to exclude one of them!

(Though when you're facing this situation, you can arrange the group so the viewer sees one plus three instead of four.)

Triangular composition

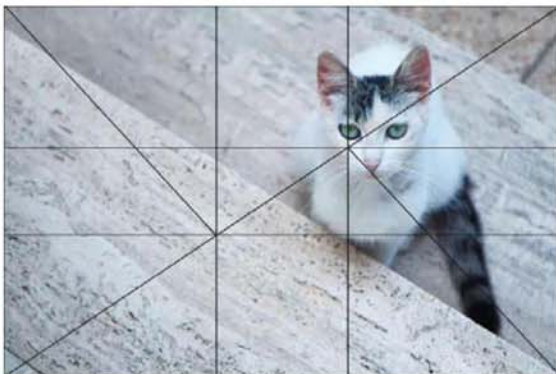
In the first part of the article, I talked about using shapes to compose your images.

But did you know that the most popular shape in composition is the triangle?

You can create triangles with poses in portraits, mountains in a landscape, or a church tower on your travels.

However, if you want to up your game a bit more, you can use *golden triangles*. This composition technique divides the frame first with a line that connects one corner with the opposite one, then adds two smaller lines coming out from each of the remaining corners.

Like this:



Ideally, you would place the most important elements of the composition where the lines intersect. To achieve this, you may have to tilt your camera; this is called a Dutch angle (aka the Dutch tilt, German tilt, or Batman angle).

That's why it's not always possible to use the golden triangle guideline (or, at least, it's not always the best choice!).

TUTORIALS

The golden ratio

The golden ratio is a mathematical term that was later applied to art and eventually photography. It equates to 1.618, and there are two ways it can be applied to photographic composition:

As a grid or as a spiral.

The golden grid (aka the Phi Grid)

The Phi Grid divides the frame into nine blocks, just like the rules of thirds.

However, this grid doesn't follow a 1:1:1 ratio – which means the blocks are not the same size. Instead, the grid is 1:0.618:1, so you get smaller blocks toward the centre, like this:

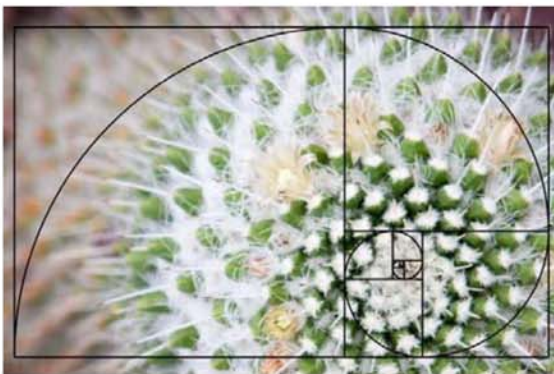


This composition tends to be more natural, as the golden ratio is also found in nature. It also has a better reputation than the rule of thirds, which many consider to be *amateurish* – a first step that should be quickly outgrown for more complex techniques.

The golden spiral (aka the Fibonacci spiral)

For this composition tool, you should follow a spiral whose growth factor is the golden ratio.

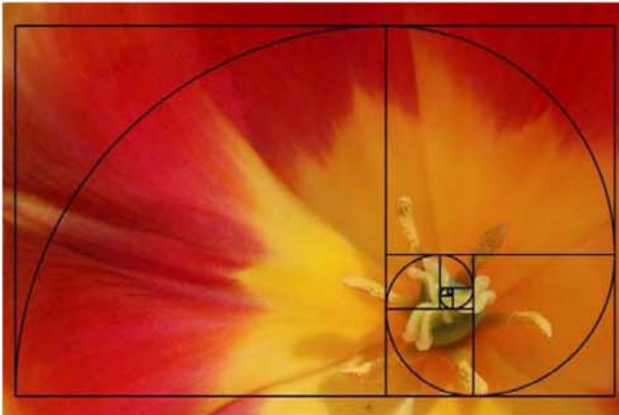
It looks like this (though note that it can begin at any corner of the frame):



TUTORIALS

This spiral is found in natural structures such as sunflowers, pine cones, seashells, etc. You can also find it in many artworks and buildings because many artists have used it throughout the centuries.

To train your eye, you can print or draw a golden spiral, then use it to study the photographs from Irving Penn or Henri Cartier-Bresson, who both used the golden spiral to achieve astonishing results.



Composition in photography: Conclusion

Now that you know most of the popular composition tools, you can use them to dramatically improve your images!

I know it's a lot of information, but composition in photography *will* become more intuitive as you get more practice.

My suggestion is to keep it simple at first and practice the tools one by one.

Once you get comfortable with each composition guideline, you can combine them to achieve a more complex result.

And remember:

These are just guidelines you can use as you see fit to find your own artistic vision.

Now over to you.

Composition in photography FAQs

How do I emphasize my subject?

To emphasize an element in your photograph, you need to draw the viewer's attention to it. You can use composition techniques, such as leading lines, to achieve this.

Is the rule of thirds the most important composition rule in photography?

No, the rules of composition don't have a hierarchy. Instead, rules work better in different situations, and the best technique for one photograph can be wrong for the next one.

Can I improve my composition by photographing with a smartphone?

TUTORIALS

Yes, these rules apply to all types of photography, including mobile and video. If you want some help getting started, most camera phones have a grid overlay that follows the rule of thirds. You can enable/disable it in the settings section. Alternatively, you can install a camera app that supports different types of grids.

How can I improve my composition in Lightroom?

You can use Lightroom's overlays to improve the compositions of your photos. To use these, select the Crop tool from the Develop panel. Make sure that the Overlay is enabled. Then press the "O" key to toggle between all the available overlays.

Can I break the rules of composition?

Absolutely! Even though some of them are called rules, they are only guidelines, tools, and techniques to help you achieve better results. There's always flexibility to experiment. It's important to know the rules before you break them, though!

**That is the study of Composition in depth.
I hope you have, as a Beginner, not been
overwhelmed.... and as
an Experienced Photographer been
able to learn something new from this.**

If there is a specific topic that you would like me to cover in detail please drop me an email and I will do my best to help.

THIS N THAT

HOW TO PHOTOGRAPH BIRDS IN WATER



PHOTZY.COM

When photographing birds that are in the water, you'll need to ask yourself the following questions: Does the background compliment the bird or distract from the bird? Are the water reflections creating a mood or merely creating excessive contrast and distraction from your subject?

Perfect to print A5 size
14cm x 21cm
5.83" x 8.27"

GEAR UP

CAMERA

DSLR or mirrorless with Full Frame sensor

DSLR or mirrorless with APS-C sensor

Smartphone camera
DEPENDING UPON DISTANCE

Camera considerations:

- Interchangeable lenses
- Low noise
- Size & weight

LENS

Zoom lens considerations:

- Focal length range
150 – 600mm ✓
100 – 400mm ✓
70-200mm OK
- Max. aperture f/5.6 or wider
- Weight and length
- Tripod collar

Prime lens considerations:

- 100-400mm DEPENDING UPON DISTANCE
- Max. aperture f/4 or wider

SET IT UP

File format RAW ✓ JPG OK ISO setting ISO 200
ADJUST AS NECESSARY

Metering Mode Spot ✓ Center-weighted OK Matrix/evaluative ✗

Drive Mode Single frame ✓ Burst OK Bracket ✗

Shooting Mode S/Tv ✓ M OK A/Av OK

Focus Mode Single Shot ✓ Manual OK LOW LIGHT / WITH FOREGROUND OBSTRUCTIONS Focus Points All activated

Shutter Speed: Min. 1/180th | Recommended: 1/250th

Image Stabilization: On

White Balance: Auto

Aperture: f/2.8 – f/11

Focus Tracking: On

Back Button Focus: Recommended

Highlight Indicator: On

SHOOT IT

Use side lighting



Side lighting provides detail on the bird while separating it from the background

Polarizing filter



This filter can reduce exposure by 2 stops. You'll need enough light to keep an adequate shutter speed; otherwise, increase ISO.

Monopod



A bird in the water rarely sits still. A monopod offers more flexibility in smooth movements with telephoto lenses.



PRO TIP:

An electronic flash can put a nice catchlight into the dark eyes of a bird - even from a distance. If the bird is close, use caution so a shadow is not created on the background by the flash.

✓ Recommended

OK Acceptable

✗ Not Recommended

! Not unless experienced

HOW TO PHOTOGRAPH BIRDS IN WATER

LET'S NOT FORGET!!

MONTHLY MEETING - 18th March @1830

Our speaker - JILL SNEESBY
from PE Camera Club.

She will be talking and showing some images
from her recent trip to CHINA.

ACC WORKSHOP - 22nd March @ 1400

Photovault Training and Salon Rules

MIDLANDS MEANDER COMPETITION

Closing date Mid March

KIDS IN ACTION

MONTHLY COMPETITION

Closing date 1st March

SET SUBJECT: NATURALLY FRAMED

KZN INTERCLUB COMPETITION

Closing date 23rd May

SET SUBJECT: OUR AFRICA

