Photography Concepts
The sequel
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Outline
I. Composition
II. Tips and technologies

Composition:
• Composing: How your picture is put together
  – Objects in the picture
  – Boundaries of the picture
• Old saying:
  “Pictures are taken with a camera
  but made in the darkroom”
• You can plan for good composition in the camera and perfect it on your computer

Composition: Terms
• Any given pictures “wants” to be vertical or horizontal.
• Don’t fight it.
• Portrait = vertical
• Landscape = horizontal
Composition:
Most common finished aspects

• For computer (web) use, any aspect goes
• For more money (print), any aspect goes

Composition:
Rule of thirds

• Most basic principle of composition
• Divide image in thirds
• Place point of interest on one of the four intersections
• Or along a complete vertical or horizontal

Composition:
Rule of thirds

Original
Rule of thirds? Feh!
Aligned with right column

Composition:
Rule of thirds

Original
In center square - feh
Aligned on intersection point
Composition: Triangles

- Are aesthetically pleasing
- Used for hundreds of years
- Draw your attention in a specific direction
- Equally applicable to people, landscapes and things
- Use gaze if possible if picture is of people
- Don’t forget to use the boundaries of the image as part of the triangle

Composition: Triangles

Rules of thumb: Don’t center

- Don’t center your point of interest (in final)
- For most cameras:
  - Center point of interest in view finder
  - Press shutter release **half way**
    This usually locks exposure and focus
  - Recompose the shot to put point of interest off center
Composition:
Rules of thumb: Don’t center

Don’t be afraid to put your subject off-center!

Composition:
Rules of thumb: Heads and feet

- Leave some head room for later cropping
- Don’t cut off feet unless you intend a head or chest shot / portrait
- In general, if you can see the subject’s belt line, you should include their feet
- With very high resolution cameras you can shoot the full body and then crop to a head shot later

Outline

I. Composition
II. Tips and technologies

Tips and technologies: Camera shake

- Among novices camera shake is the number one cause of blurry images
- Even among pros certain conditions make camera shake difficult to avoid
- Camera shake = length of exposure exceeds your ability to hold still
Tips and technologies: Camera shake

• Instructor will now demonstrate how to push the shutter release
• Instructor will now demonstrate how to hold the camera for longer exposures
• Use **anything** you can to prop up camera during longer exposures (like a tripod or lamppost)

Tips and technologies: Camera shake: VR

• **VR is no substitute for a faster lens**
  – VR lets you take longer exposures, but what if you want to freeze action?
• VR fights against intentional camera movement

Tips and technologies: VR

• VR = Vibration Reduction
• Called many things – Steadyshot, VR, etc.
• Technology to compensate for camera shake
• Either in the lens (e.g. Nikon) or in the camera body (e.g. Canon, point-and-shoots)
• Get this if you can

Tips and technologies: Face detection

• Most point-and-shoots have this now
• Determine if faces are present
• Set focus and exposure to make detected faces come out right
• Very helpful for snapshots

• Smile detection? Feh – anything that introduces shutter lag is bad
Tips and technologies: Dust reduction (DSLR)

- Changing lenses introduces dust
- Without built-in dust reduction, removing dust is
  - hard to do physically
  - tedious to do digitally
- If you can, get built-in dust reduction

Tips and technologies: Shopping tips

- dpreview.com – best site for camera reviews
- Shutter lag
  - as close to zero as possible
  - doesn’t matter how good the camera is if you missed the shot
- Weight and size
  - doesn’t matter how good the camera is if it’s a pain to lug around

Tips and technologies: Choosing an all-around lens for a DSLR

- Changing lenses introduces dust onto the sensor – so change infrequently
- Remember most DSLRs have sensors smaller than 35mm film
  - a 50mm “normal” lens becomes a 75 zoom
- Best all around lens is a wide-zoom
  - I use an 18mm to 200mm
- Zooms often aren’t as sharp as “primes”
  - I also use a 30mm – becomes a 45
Tips and technologies: Printing sizes

- Printing images to be viewed close up should be around 300 ppi or higher
- Prints to be viewed at arm’s length or larger should be greater than 150 ppi
- Outdoor highway signs are sometimes as low as 15 ppi!