

# What Makes Powerful Pictures?

## Assignment

In order to better understand what makes for a good photo, your task is to put together a collection of 10 photos with each one representing one of the ten principles on the back of this sheet. Five of the photos should be taken by you, and five of them should be from other sources (magazines, newspaper, internet, etc.). For each photo, include a 2-3 sentence description of how the photo demonstrates that principle. Make sure you site the source of your photos.

## Format

You can choose the format for your collection, but it should be something you can include in your portfolio. It could be a booklet, poster, PowerPoint or whatever you choose.

## Extra Credit

If you would like to challenge yourself to do more, you could:

*Create 5 principles of your own and include a photo and description for each.*

or

*Collect 10 addition pictures that show bad examples of each of these principles.*



# Ten Principles of Photography

## *Tips for Better Pictures*

**Get close to your subject.** Instead of typical tourist shots of family members off in the distance standing directly in front of some fountain, frame the fountain to fill your viewfinder, then have your family stand close to the camera and a bit off to one side of the frame.

**Add a foreground element**—something between you and your subject. That gives depth to your images.

**Keep the background simple.** Distractions draw the attention away from your subject.

**Keep your subject off-center.** That creates much more visual interest. Use the “rule of thirds.” Divide your image into thirds and place the object of interest at one of the intersecting lines.

**Watch back-lit scenes.** Your camera’s autoexposure will set itself for the light behind your subjects, meaning they’ll be silhouettes. Either set the autoexposure on them first and then compose the shot, or use fill-in flash, or do both.

**Use lines to add interest.** Try including S-curves and diagonal lines.

**Use different perspectives.** Try to get interesting perspective that other photographers have not tried, or that you have not often seen. Bend your knees, and tippy-toe whenever necessary. Standing on a bench, chair, ladder, etc. can be an excellent helper.

**Think of your lighting.** Use natural lighting whenever you can. You want to create a mood with your lighting. Watch where you have shadows. Any indoor picture may need a flash.

**Be creative.** Create a new view of a common picture. See things in a way that you never noticed before. Crop your center of interest so that it is telling the whole story - showing faces, expressions, moods, movements, stances, situations, and experiences that we all share at one time or another. Find our likenesses and differences.

**Keep it balanced.** Each picture has its own balance and should be pleasing to look at. It can be formally balanced or informally balanced, but the basic principles of design apply here too. Try not to make something look like it is falling off the page, etc.