

Active Choices



The intentional decisions that photographers make.

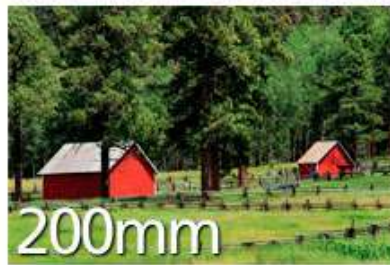
5 ACTIVE CHOICES

- Focal Length
- Distance
- Angles
- Orientation
- Space (background, midground, foreground)



Focal Length (aka Scope of Image)

From wide angle to zoomed in,
these are choices made
having to do with the lens.



Focal Length

LOWER Numbers = Wide

HIGHER Numbers = Zoom



Wide-angle to telephoto

Understand the difference between focal lengths, from 10mm to 400mm

Your lens focal length affects the angle of view you can see through your camera's viewfinder. To really see the difference focal length can make to the angle of view, it's good to compare a sequence of shots of the same subject taken at different focal lengths. See our examples for how much or how little of the scene you can capture in your frame, depending on your effective focal length (EFL).



125mm (EFL: 200mm)



35mm (EFL: 55mm)



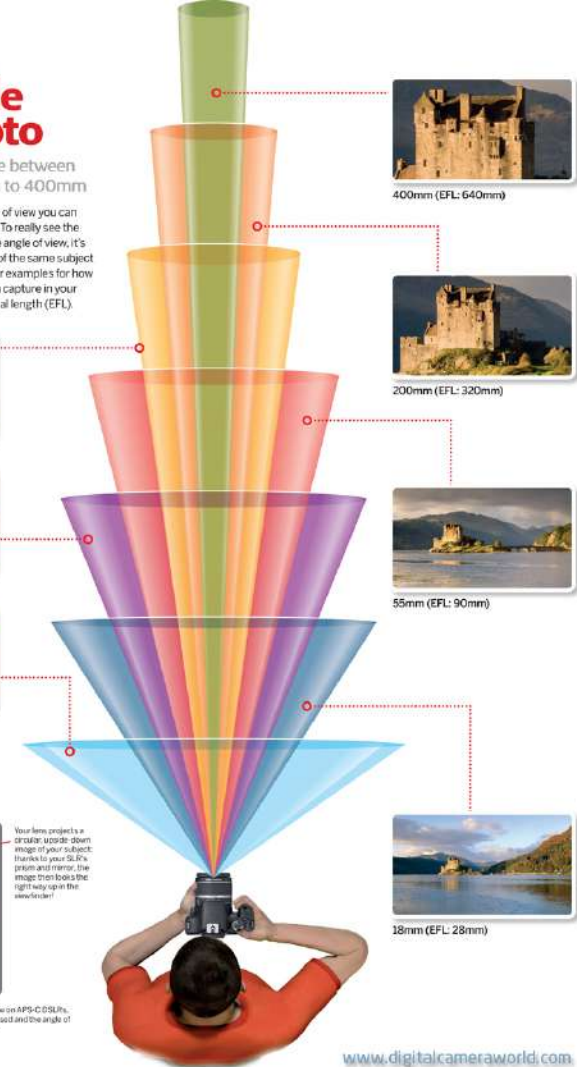
11mm (EFL: 18mm)

Effective Focal Length (EFL)



The view on a full-frame camera sensor size 36x24mm, same size as 35mm film

The cropped view on APS-C DSLRs, the EFL is increased and the angle of view decreased



400mm (EFL: 640mm)



200mm (EFL: 320mm)



55mm (EFL: 90mm)



18mm (EFL: 28mm)

Photos: iStockphoto, Shutterstock, iStockphoto



Focal Length

Wide Angle

- Shows more of the scene
- Causes distortion if close (like looking into a spoon)



Focal Length

Mid Length

Human Eye Equivalent



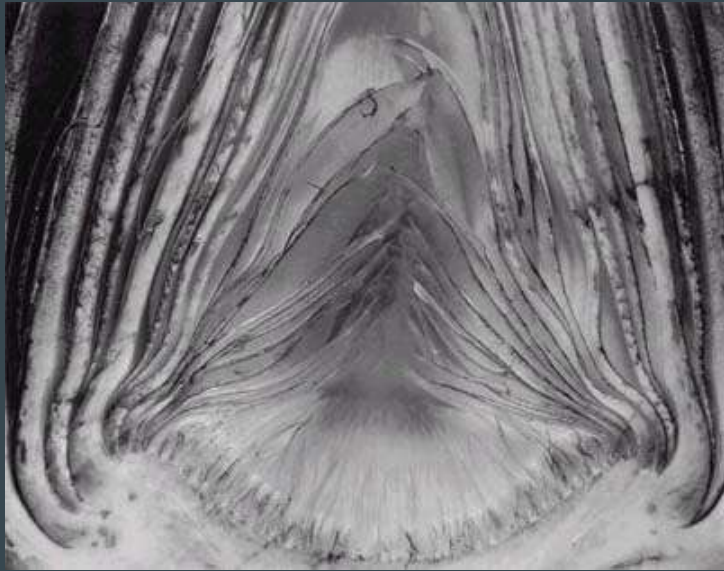
Focal Length

Zoom on bottom



Focal Length

Macro 



Distance

A mix of the photographer's physical distance from the subject and the focal length.

Far Away images depersonalize humans



Distance

Mid Distance

People are recognizable



Distance

Close Up

When subjects are very close, they can be abstracted.

If it is of people or animals, the viewer can connect with them.



Angles

Canted upwards



Angles

Eye Level



.diane arbus.

Angles

From above looking down



Angles

Unusual



Orientation

Horizontal



Orientation

Vertical



Orientation

Skewed (Dutch Angle)



Space via Fore/Mid/Background

When images have objects in the foreground, midground, and background, it creates a sense of space that the viewer feels they could enter



Space via Fore/Mid/Background

The background doesn't have to be miles away.

Even 5-10 feet can make a difference.

It is more important to have things different distances away from the camera.

