The Classroom Collection

Angle of View

"To me, photography is an art of observation. It's about finding something interesting in an ordinary place… I've found it has little to do with the things you see and everything to do with the way you see them."

— Elliott Erwitt

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Angle of View

wide angle lens

Selecting your lens focal length when creating an image is an aesthetic personal choice.

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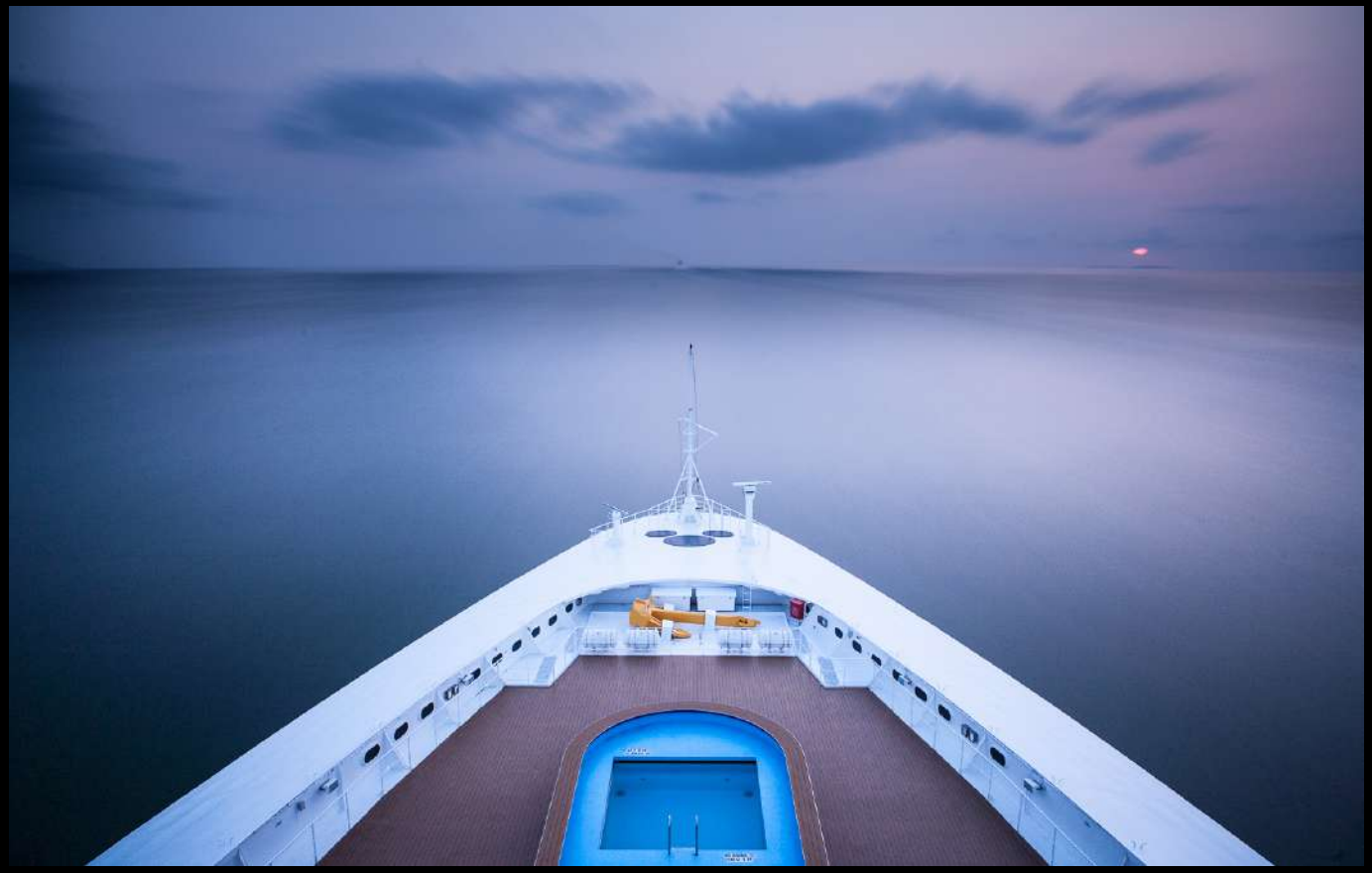
Angle of View



wide angle lens

Lens choice goes beyond just framing your image.

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Angle of View

telephoto lens

The lens selected will impart characteristics specific to the lens's angle of view.

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Angle of View

normal lens

A normal focal length lens captures an angle of view that approximates the impression of human vision. A normal lens captures approximately a 50° angle of view.

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Angle of View

Wide Angle (shorter focal length)

Normal

Telephoto (longer focal length)

Lenses are categorized based upon their angle of view and fall into three basic categories.

Normal - captures approximately a 50° angle of view.

Wide angle - shorter focal length lenses that capture an angle of view greater than 50°.

Telephoto - longer focal length lenses capture an angle of view less than 50°.

Angle of View

Your cameras sensor size determines what the normal focal length for that camera will be. The normal focal length will correspond to the measurement across the diagonal of your sensor.

Full Frame Sensor (24x36mm sensor size) Normal lens range 40-55mm

APS-C Crop Sensor (20.7×13.8 mm to 28.7×19.1 mm sensor size) Normal lens range 28-30mm

Angle of View

telephoto lens

Longer lenses are very useful when you don't want to get close to your subject.

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Angle of View

telephoto lens

Longer lenses because of their limited angle of view help with isolating your subject.

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Angle of View

telephoto lens

Longer telephoto lenses can appear to visually flatten a scene.

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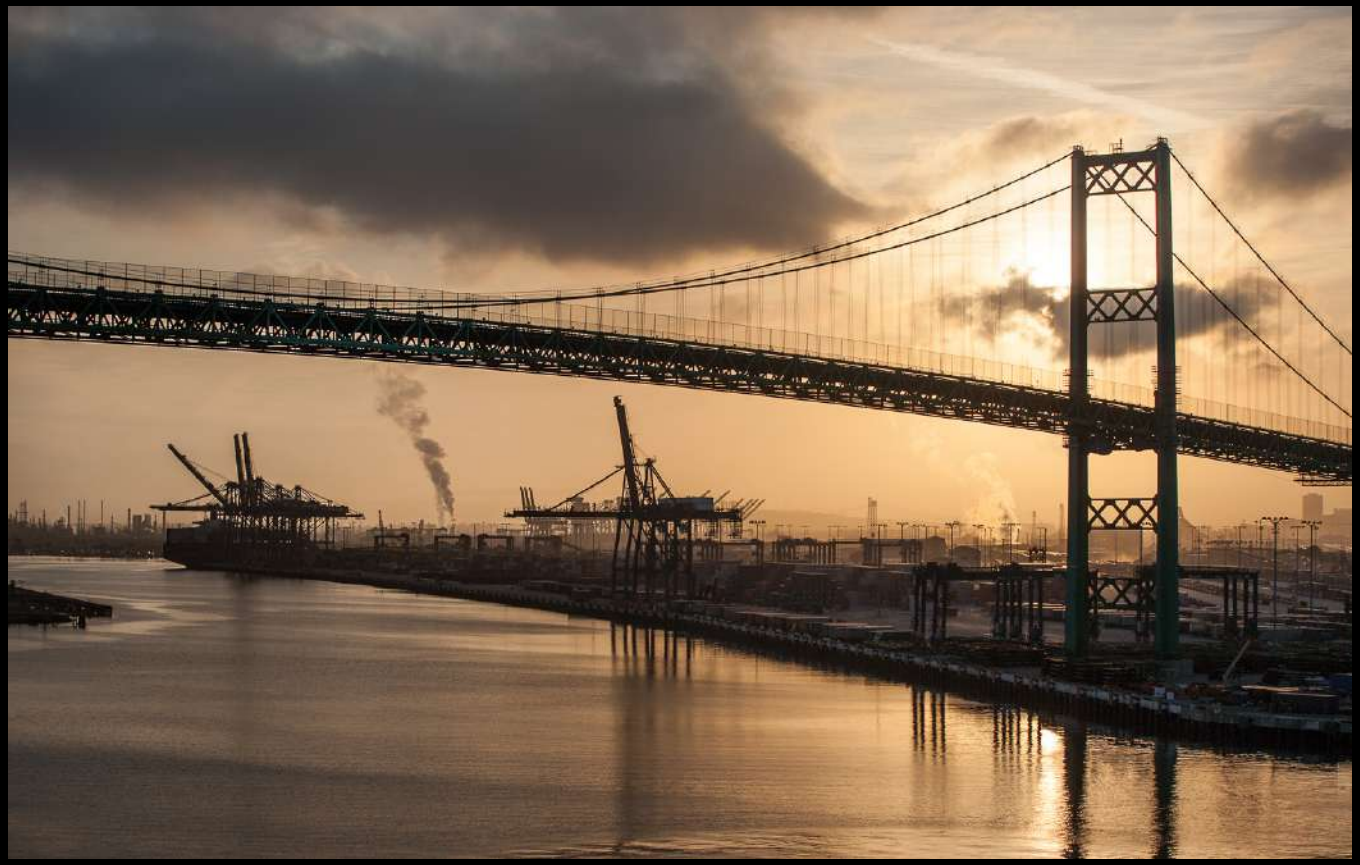
Angle of View

telephoto lens

Longer lenses are very useful for increasing your subject magnification and bringing distant objects closer.

Angle of View



telephoto lens

Longer lenses can make the distance between objects appear visually compressed.

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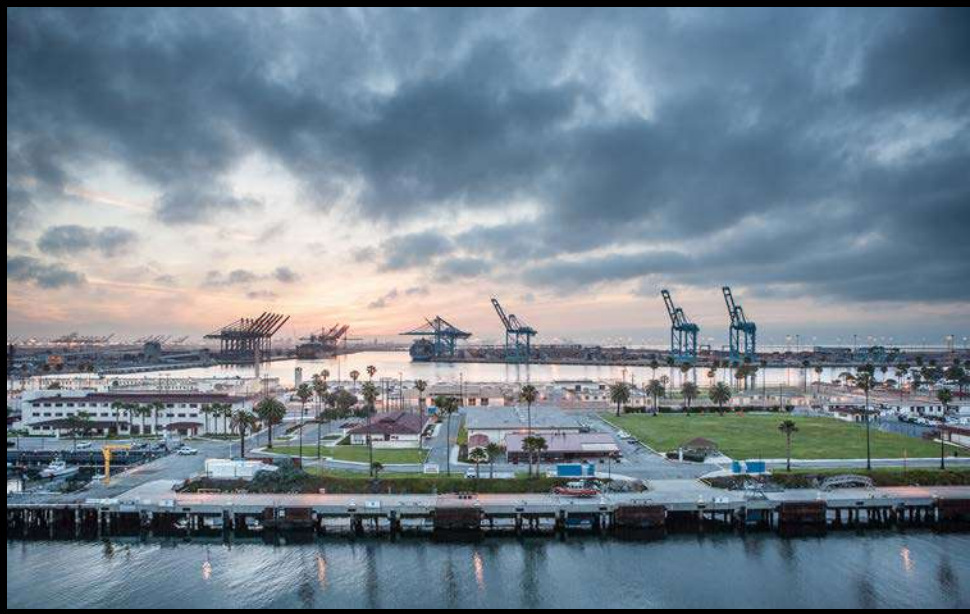
Angle of View

telephoto lens



wide angle lens

Because a telephoto lens captures a narrow angle of view objects in the background will not appear as small or as far away as with a wide angle lens.

Angle of View

wide angle lens

Wider angle lenses show more of the scene from the same position as a normal lens.

Angle of View

wide angle lens

Wider angle lenses can decrease subject magnification and can be used to deemphasize the subject size.

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Angle of View

wide angle lens

Wider angle lenses can exaggerate depth, distances, and relative sizes within the image .

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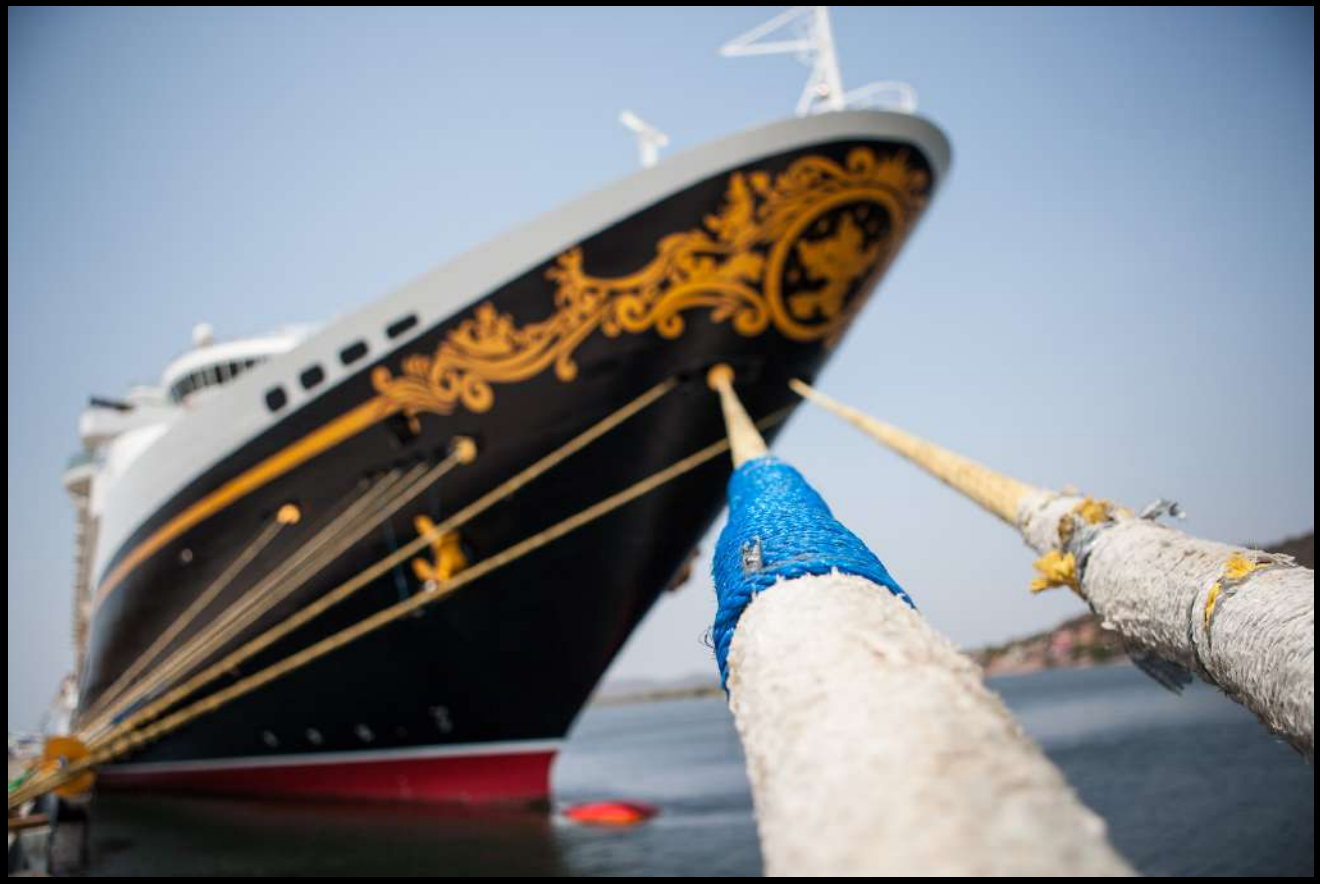
Angle of View



wide angle lens

Wider angle lenses can be used to create a visual distortion of perspective.

Angle of View

wide angle lens

Wider angle lenses when pointed above the horizon can cause parallel vertical lines to appear that they converge.

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Angle of View

17 mm

20 mm

24 mm

28 mm

35 mm

50 mm
Normal Lens

70 mm

100 mm

135 mm

200 mm

Angle of view / Focal Length. Photographed with a Full Frame Camera.

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Angle of View

wide angle lens

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Angle of View

wide angle lens

Wide angle lenses can be used to emphasize the size and visual weight of objects in the foreground.

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Angle of View

wide angle lens

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Angle of View

telephoto lens

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Angle of View

telephoto lens

Angle of View

Review – Angle of View

Normal Lens Approximates angle of view of human vision ≈ 50°
Wide Angle Lens See greater angle of view than normal lens
Telephoto Lens See narrower angle of view than normal lens

Angle of View

Vocabulary Study Words

Focal length
Normal lens
Wide angle lens
Telephoto lens
Full Frame sensor
APS-C sensor
Perspective

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Angle of View

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Christopher is a faculty member at Brooks Institute teaching courses in both the MFA and BFA Professional Photography program specializing in the History of Photography, Optics in Fine Art, Digital Photography and the Zone System. More of his work can be viewed at www.christopherbroughton.com

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