

# SIMPLICITY



The simplest things are often  
the truest. - RICHARD BACH

# SIMPLICITY AS COMPOSITIONAL STRATEGY

Your “job” as a photographer is to convey your idea(s) to your viewer.

You are the “director” of your viewer’s attention.

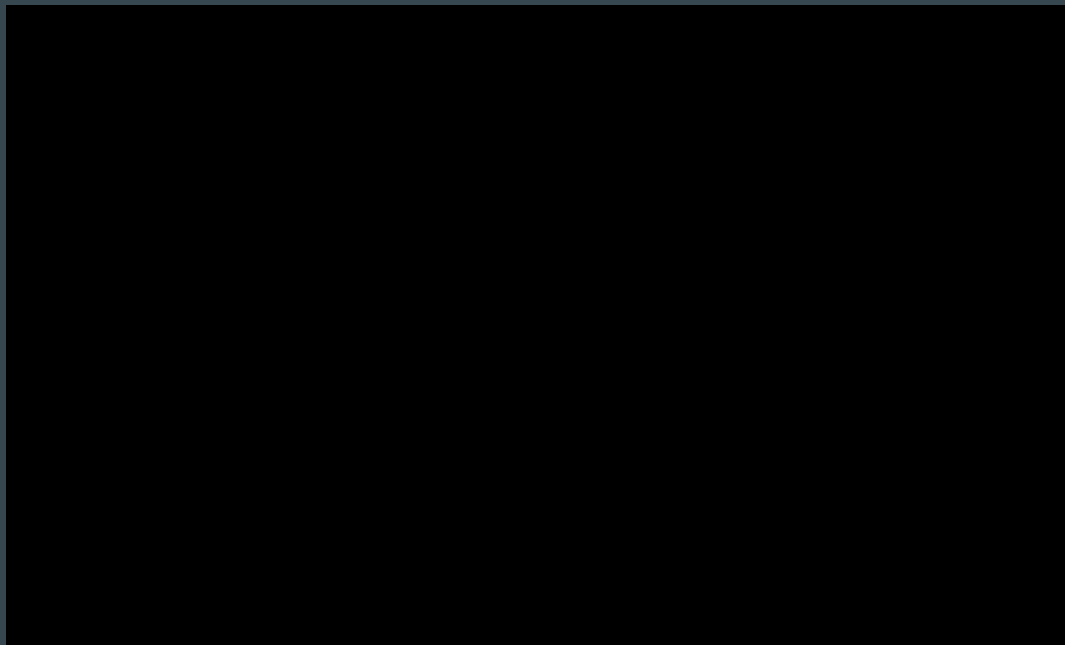
WHAT IS YOUR PHOTO ABOUT?

WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO SHOW THE VIEWER? (i.e., Where do you want them to look?)



# DISTRACTIONS ARE JUST THAT – DISTRACTING!

They distract your viewer by detracting from your subject, and from your intention.



# WHAT IS THE SUBJECT OF YOUR PHOTO?

What do you want the viewer to see?

Why are you taking the photo?

(Not “because Miss Carbone said I have to”)

Remember that every time you press the shutter, you are telling a story.



# Keeping it Simple:

While shooting you might have to:

- **MOVE** Offending objects
- **MOVE** Your subjects
- **MOVE YOURSELF** (Change your **ANGLE** or **GET CLOSER!**)
- **Use Shallow Depth of Field** (wide aperture aka low f/stop number)

**“EDGE PATROL”**: Check the edges of your “frame” before you snap!

**CONSIDER COLOR** - Limiting the number of colors can help add simplicity to your composition.

Also consider **black and white** to remove color as a potential “distraction” entirely!

# Removing Color for Simplicity

Same photo, converting to black and white draws attention to form over color



**What is “Depth of Field” and how do we change it?**

# What is “Depth of Field” and how do we change it?

The “field” in photography is like your field of vision.

Depth of Field refers to the amount of the image that is in focus.

A “SHALLOW” depth of field means there is blurring behind and in front of the subject you have focused on. (Often used in portrait or macro photography)

A “DEEP” depth of field means that much or most of your image is in focus.

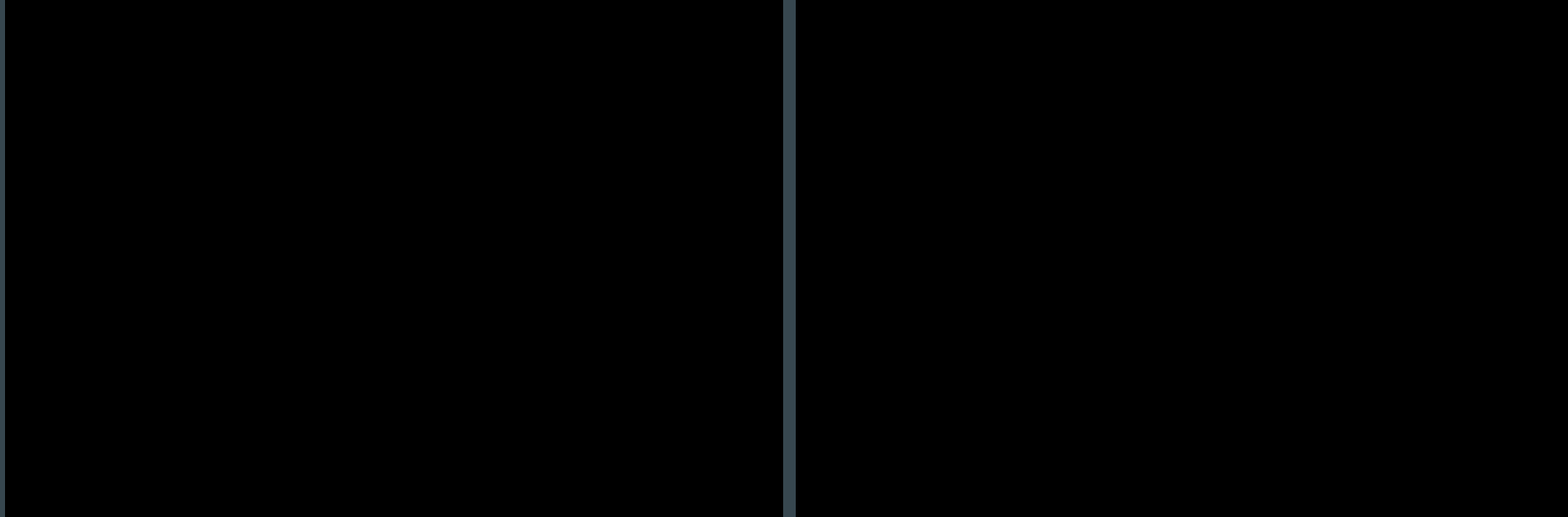
(most often used in landscape photography)



# What is “Depth of Field” and how do we change it?

Depth of Field is controlled by your APERTURE. The lower f/stop number, the more shallow your depth of field (and the more blur/”bokeh” you will get.)

This is limited by the LENS of your camera. (Our kit lenses only go down to f/3.5)



# WAYS TO ACHIEVE SIMPLICITY AFTER THE FACT (Oops...now what?)

After the fact, what can you do?

- CROP distractions from the edges of your photo
- CLONE/HEAL out any distracting objects from the background (we did this earlier in the year!)
- CREATE Depth of Field/Blur in Background in PS

(We will do this as a separate exercise)

[Image source](#)



# Cropping

as shot vs. cropped version

Notice that nothing of importance has been removed from the photo, but the subject has become more prominent.

Simplicity does NOT mean the background must be totally blank.

It means your subject should be clear and distractions reduced.



# YOUR MISSION:

Shoot at least 10 images with SIMPLICITY in mind.

Subject matter is up to you, but make sure you are creating interesting images that are free from distracting elements.

Try shooting in Aperture Priority (A on Nikon, AV on Canon)

**\*CHECK FOR DISTRACTIONS\*** Remember “edge patrol,” etc. Move your subject if you need to. Move things from the background if you need to. **MOVE YOURSELF** if you need to. (Zoom with your feet!)

“If your pictures aren’t good enough, you’re not close enough.” - Robert Capa