

A large, chaotic pile of books and papers, representing clutter. The books are of various sizes, colors, and thicknesses, some with visible spines and covers. The papers are scattered and overlapping, creating a dense, disorganized mass. A semi-transparent teal banner is overlaid across the center of the image, containing the word "CLUTTER" in white, serif, all-caps font.

CLUTTER

Two key factors will help you gain a full understanding of photo composition despite any rule I offer in this course. The first factor is viewing other photographer's work. Viewing other photographer's images gives you the opportunity to see firsthand what a photographer captured and how they captured it. You can then make notes of particular ways photographs have been taken then apply these techniques to your own photographs.

And, we will view a lot of other photographer's photographs in throughout this book. In fact, I may ask you to re-create another photographer's images as practice. Do keep in mind I am by no means telling you to copy other photographer's creative work. Instead, be original and create your own unique photos using tested techniques after we learn them.

The second factor to understanding photo composition is putting the rules into practice. You will hear me say this over and over - practice, practice and more practice will lead you to achieving stronger composition.





Above all else the number one rule of photo composition is the most important to remember. *Simplify your scene* the best you can.

Too much unnecessary clutter leaves the viewer of your photographs confused because they don't know where to look. Do you know where to look in this particular photograph? All of the clutter leads to no one particular focal point. It may be fun to look at all these treasures, and perhaps you will even try to find Waldo, but with regard to photo composition, this image is not successful.



This particular type of image has become popular over the last few years especially with the rise of social media and it is called lay flat photography. The idea is to tell a story with various objects in a single photo.

The idea is fine though this image is cluttered and it tells a lot of stories. The person is a writer, a traveler, an explorer and a photographer of the world. Can you be all three in real life? Yes, of course. In fact, I'm all three.

The photo isn't objectionable, but while viewing this, the eye wanders because there is no clear focal point. There is not one place for the eye to go.



What if

What if the only objects left in the photo are: the eyeglasses, the pencil, the map and the blank journal?
The image has been simplified, there is a clear focal point (the journal and pencil) and our eye goes directly there.

Including only these objects makes the photo composition stronger and the image is simple. No clutter.



LET'S REVIEW

- Viewing other photographer's images will help you see how another photographer sees and help you see how a photographer composes their photographs.
- Practice ... a lot of practice ... will lead you to creating images with strong compositions.
- The number one rule of photo composition is to simplify the scene you are photographing.

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