



The Rule of Thirds

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What is Rule of Thirds

- The basic idea behind Rule of Thirds is to think of a photo divided evenly into thirds like a tic tac toe.
- Three areas horizontally and then three areas vertically.





The photography rule of thirds is everywhere

- Unconsciously, a person's eye naturally goes to one of the thirds in the image.
- Take time today when you watch television or a movie. You will notice that the subject is often placed in one of the thirds of the frame, mainly the right or left third.
- This is especially noticeable when you watch a documentary or any program where a single person is being interviewed alone on camera.

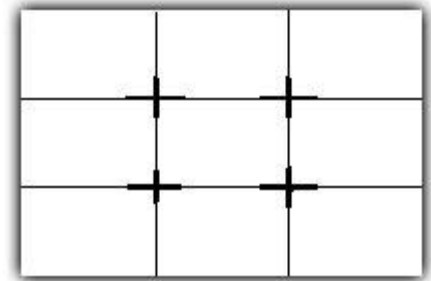


A Quick History Lesson

- The Rule of thirds was not developed by photographers.
- In fact, it was the creation of painters in the Renaissance period.
- It was the Renaissance painters who found that the eye doesn't rest on the center of a painting. Instead, the eye wants to roam with the subject.
- Their aim with this style of composition was to provide a bit of background in their paintings to allow it to tell a story.

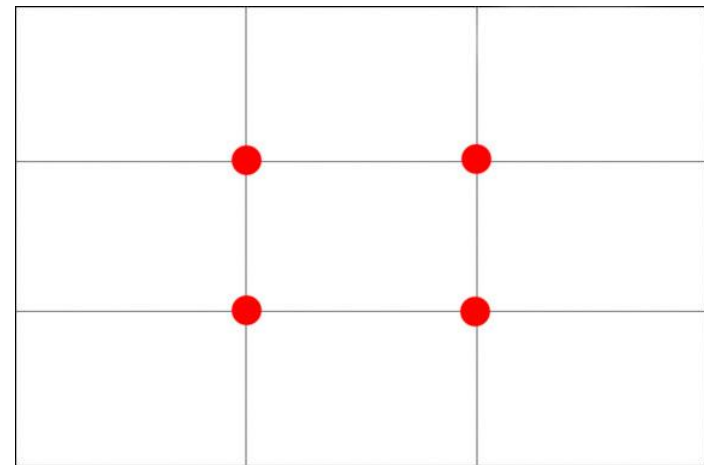
How it Works

- You may have noticed your camera has an option to show its grid.
- When shown on your display, it breaks the horizontal screen down into 9 even squares.
- This makes three horizontal and three vertical spaces.



Where to Place Your Key Subject

- The Rule of Thirds tells us to place main elements where the lines intersect, so where the red dots are.
- Those intersection points are referred to as power points.



Why it Works

- If your subject is in the middle of the image, it's considered static. Your eye is drawn to it then has nowhere to go from there because the object is equal distance from all sides.
- Therefore when your subject is positioned on one of the third lines, it forces your eye to follow it...to find it.
- This allows the viewer to linger on your image longer.
- It makes for a more captivating photo because it's almost interactive.





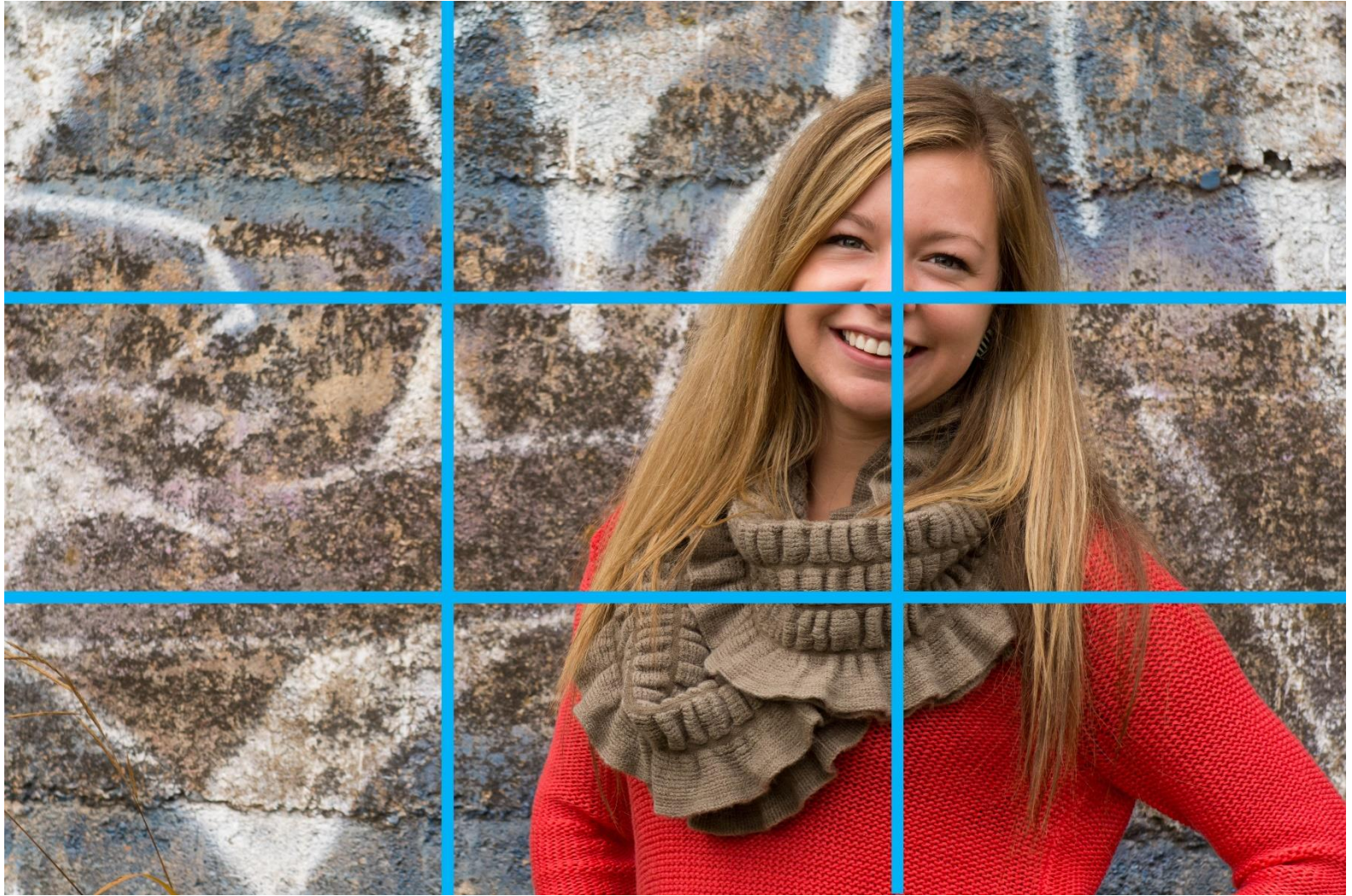
Landscapes and The Rule of Thirds

- In landscape you give either $\frac{2}{3}$ importance to your sky or $\frac{1}{3}$ to the land or vice versa $\frac{1}{3}$ to the sky and $\frac{2}{3}$ to the land.
- So your horizon should either be on the top thirds or the bottom thirds



Portraits and The Rule of Thirds

- With people, you should try to put the more dominant eye on one of the power points.
- If the person is looking straight at you, you can place them on the right or the left on the third line, Place on the line the leave the more interesting elements on the 2/3 of the screen.
- If the person is looking to the right – there should be more space on the right than on the left in order to create space. You want to leave space to breath.



Outgrowing the Rule

- Some photographers defend the rule of thirds by saying that it is a helpful learning tool for beginners – over time, good photographers will stop relying on it to compose their photos. The suggestion here is to learn the rule of thirds, then abandon it later as you grow as a photographer.

