

RULE OF THIRDS

Camera



ELEMENTS OF
COMPOSITION
IN PHOTOGRAPHY

RULE OF THIRDS

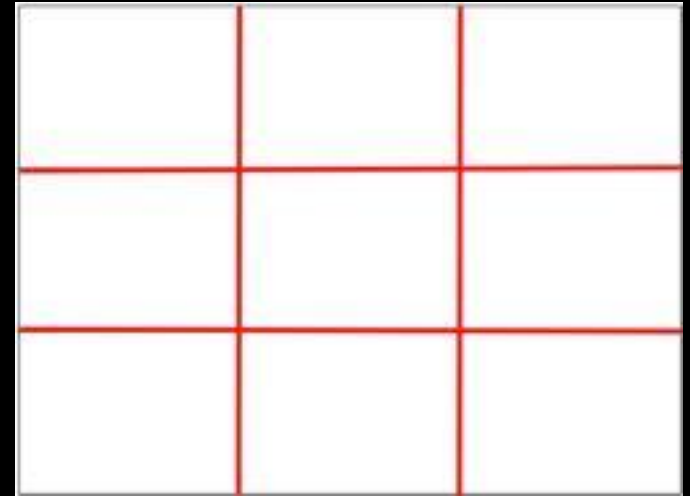
The 'Rule of Thirds' is probably the most well known principle of photographic composition.

The "Rule of Thirds" is one of the first things that beginner digital photographers learn about in classes on photography because it is the basis for well balanced and interesting shots.

It is not a rule! It is simply a guideline.

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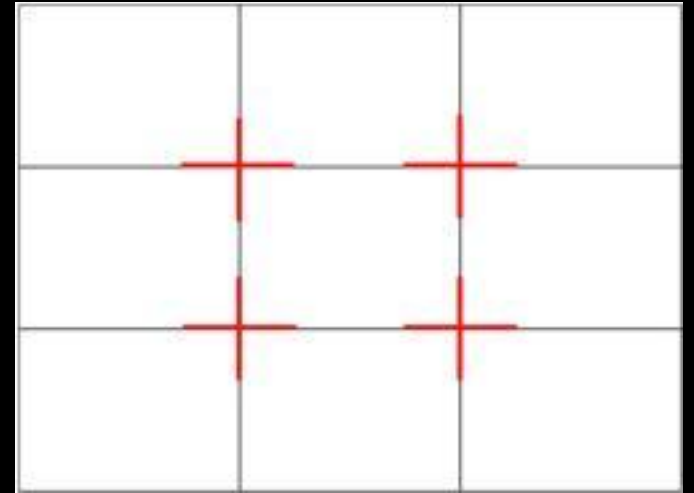
Basically, imagine breaking an image down into thirds (both horizontally and vertically) so that you have 9 parts.



Some cameras have this setting so that you can see the grid lines in your viewfinder or LCD screen.

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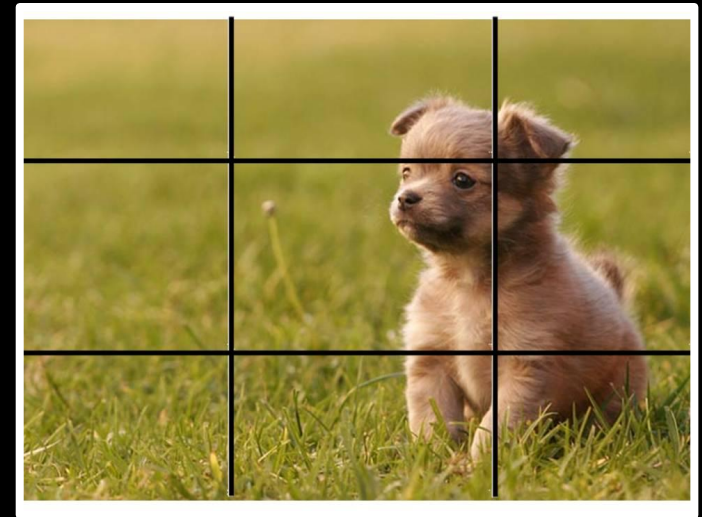
The 'rule of thirds' grid now identifies four important parts of the image that you should consider placing points of interest in as you frame your image.



This is also known as
Points of Power.

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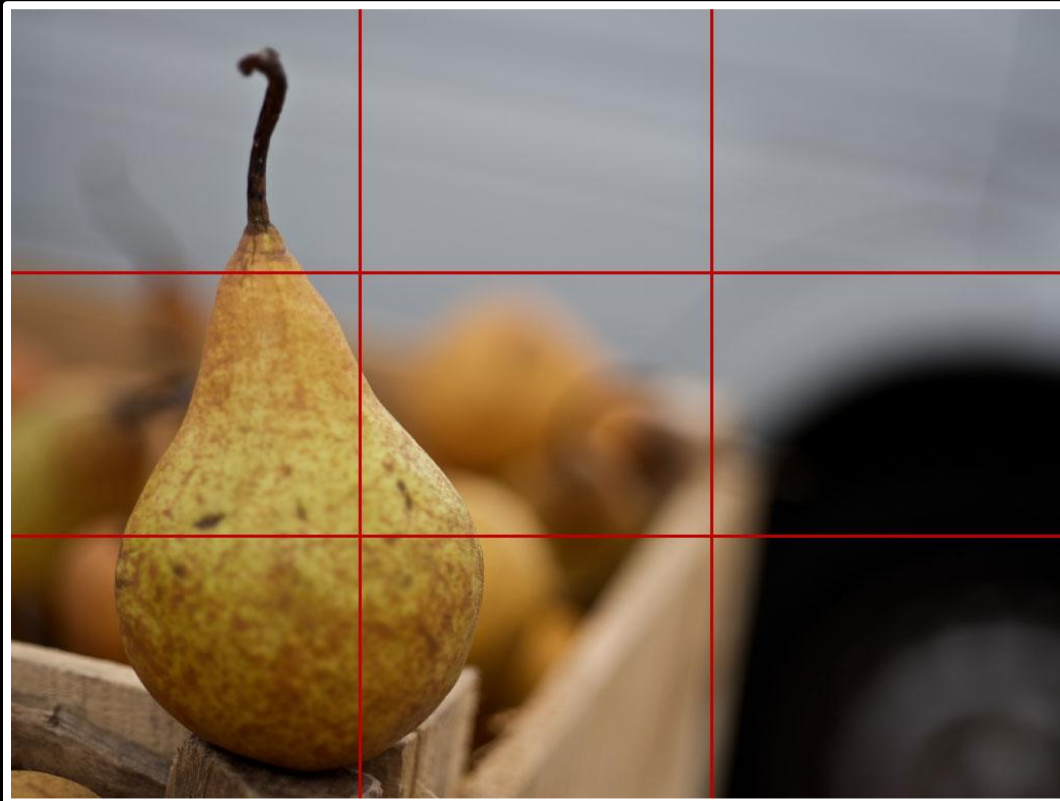
The theory is that if you place points of interest in the intersections or along the lines that your photo becomes more balanced and will allow the viewer of the image to interact with it more naturally.



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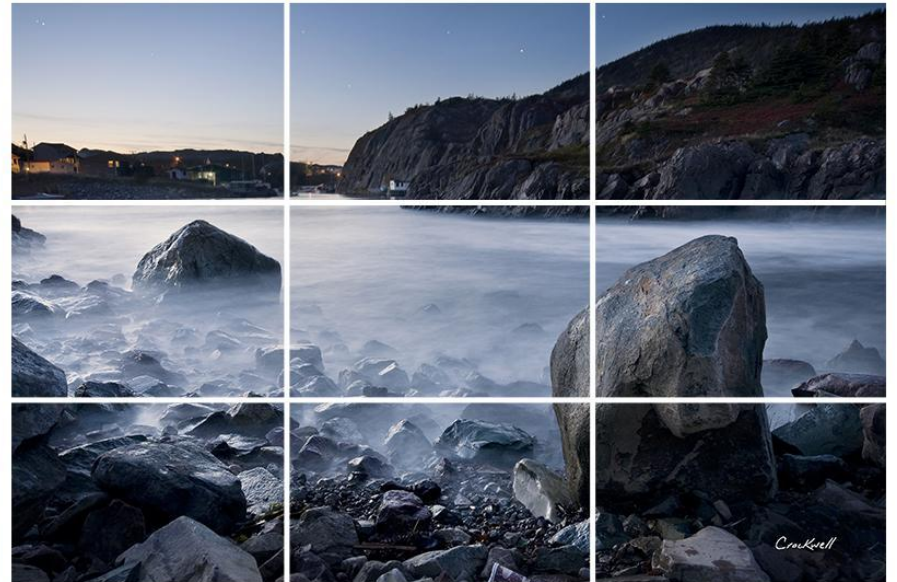
Studies have shown that when viewing images that people's eyes usually go to one of the

intersection points most naturally rather than the centre of the shot.



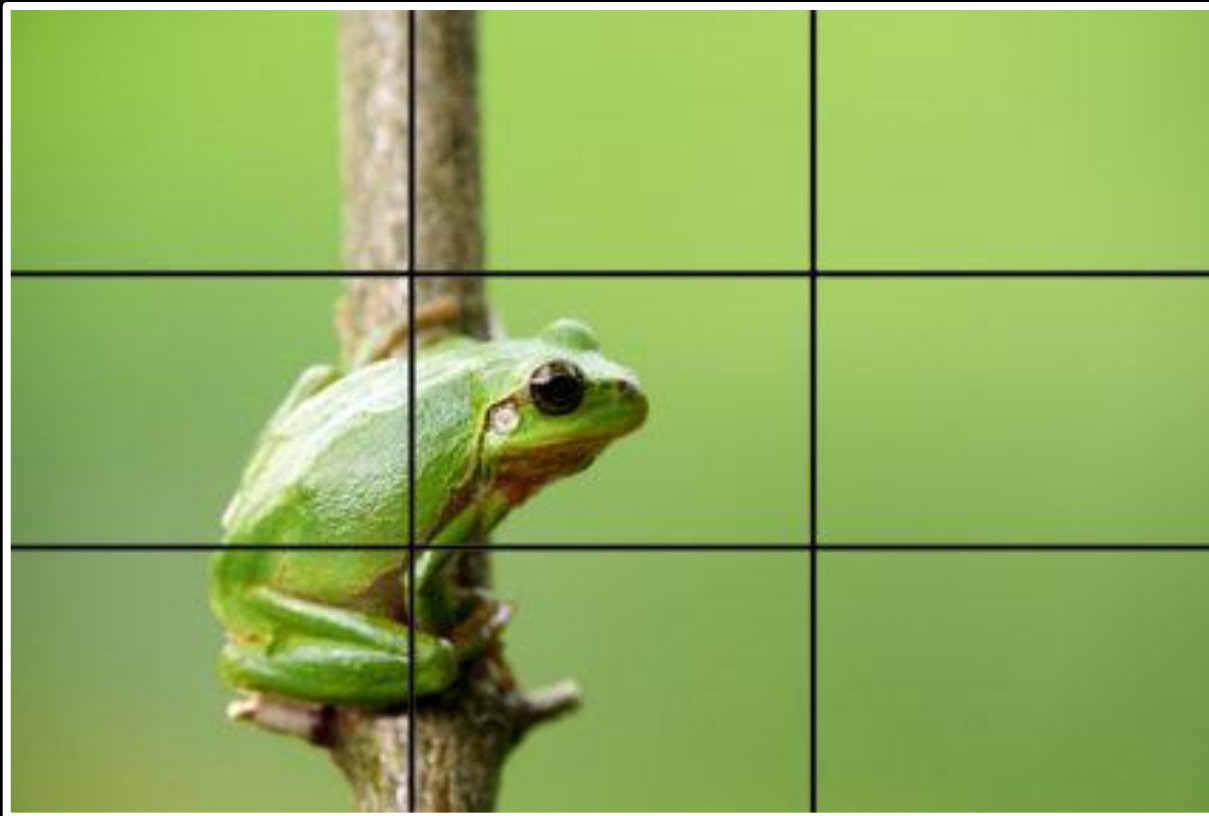
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For landscapes, this usually means having the horizon align with the upper or lower third of the image.



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For subjects, this usually means photographing them to either side of the photo.



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This can make landscape compositions much more dynamic,

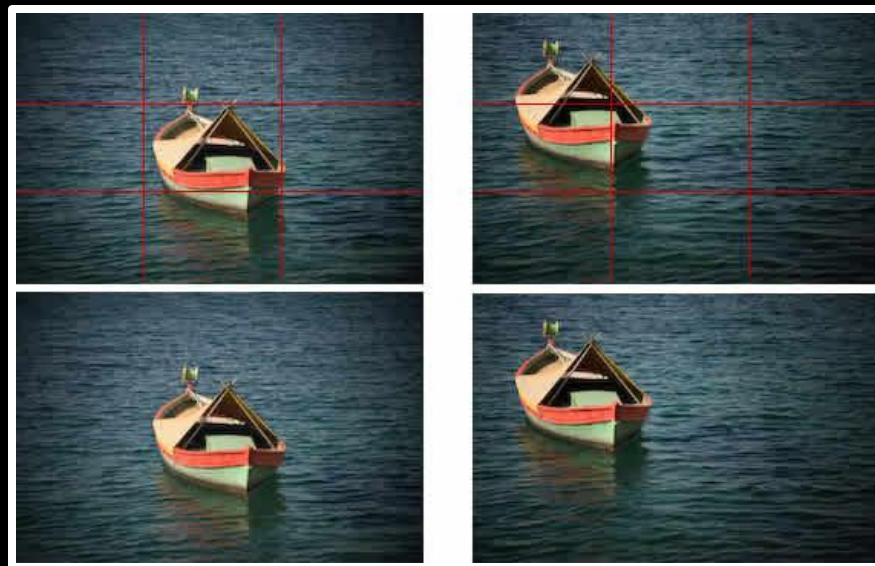


and give subjects a sense of direction.

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In learning how to use the rule of thirds, the most important questions to be asking of yourself are:

- What are the points of interest in this shot?
- Where am I intentionally placing them?



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Here, the centre position of the boat doesn't provide the viewer a 'wow' factor.



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What about this?

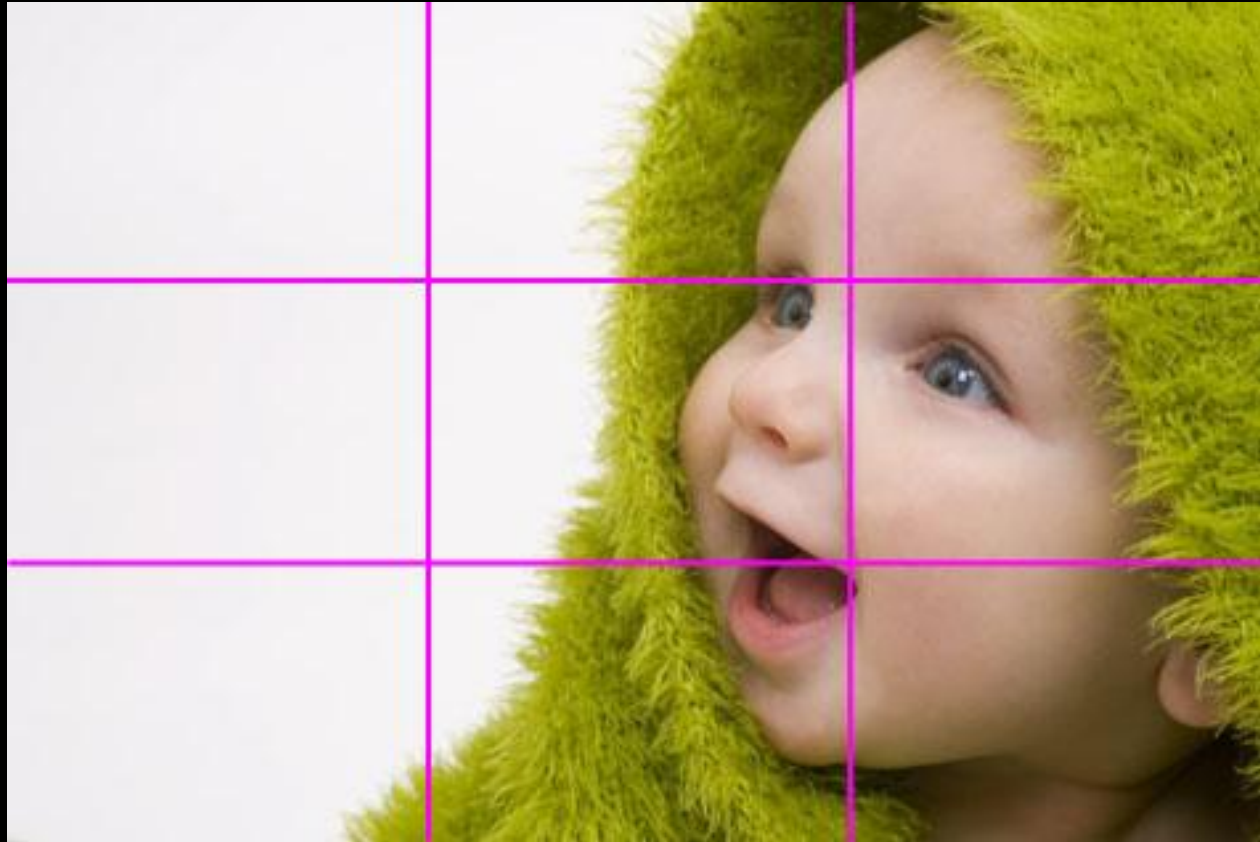


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Or how about this?

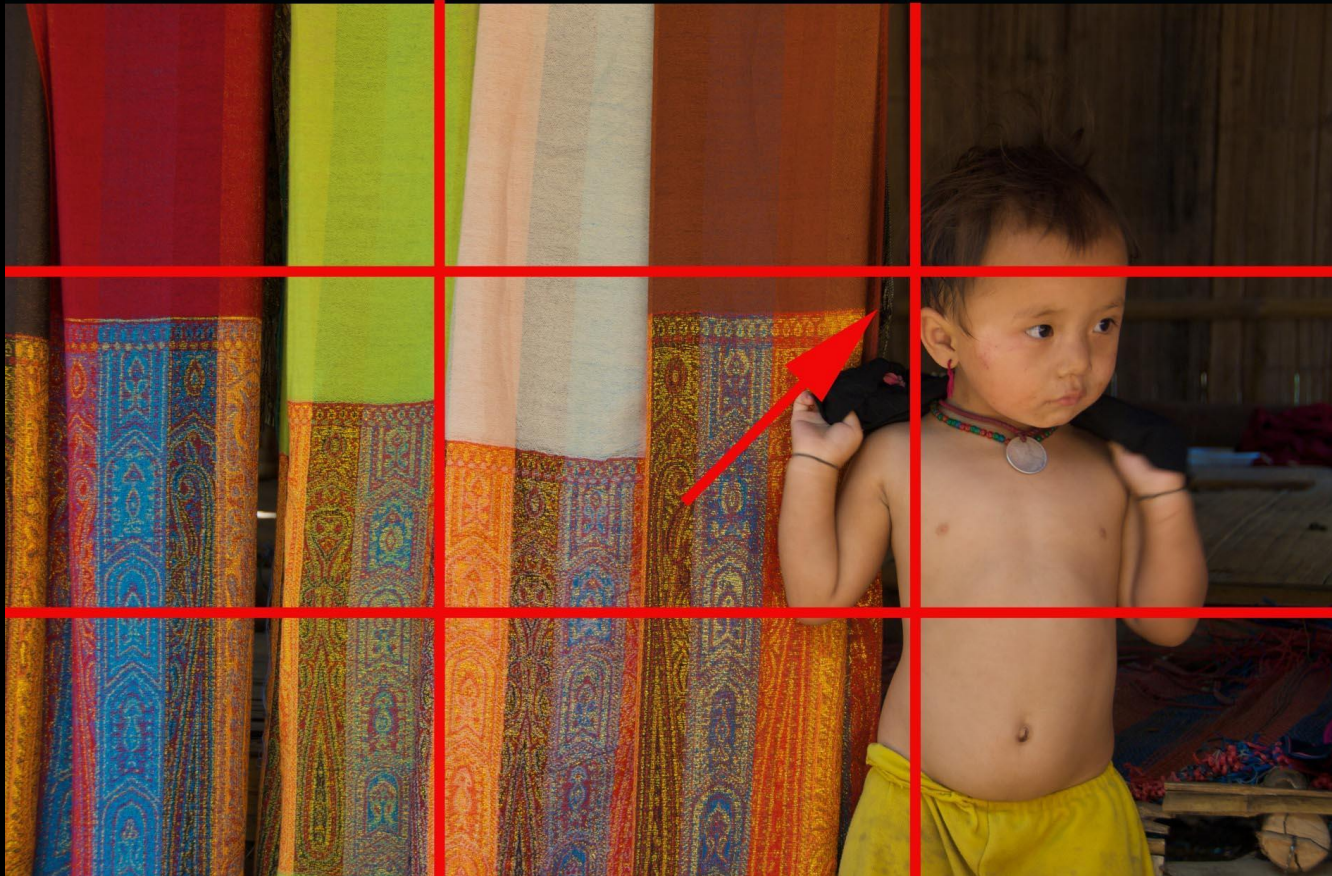


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It's important to give some space between the subject looking or moving towards the end of the picture.

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It's not a bad picture, but the subject could be placed better. Perhaps more the left, so that there is space.

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This rule can absolutely be broken; in fact there are times when it should be broken.

It's called --- Breaking the Rule of Thirds.

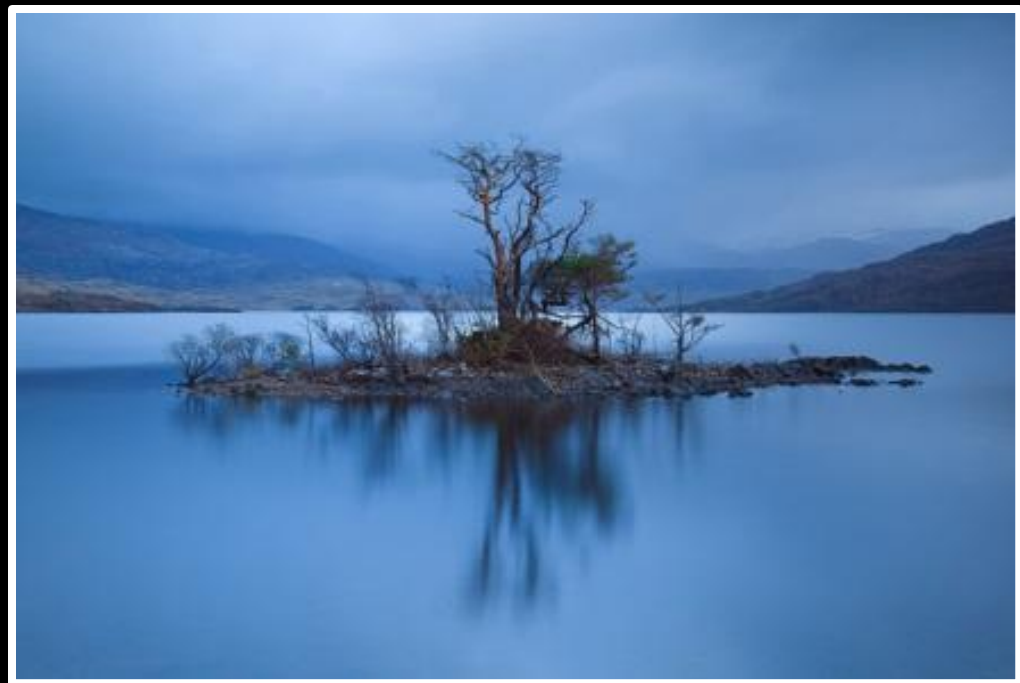
BUT... if you intend to break a rule you should always learn it first to make sure that breaking the 'rule of thirds' is effective!

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Symmetry is the ideal example.

Symmetry works well as composition by itself (more on this later).

So basically, Breaking the Rule of Thirds is when you put your point of interest right in the middle.



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Remember that breaking the rule can result in some striking shots – so once you’ve learnt it, experiment with purposely breaking it to see what you discover.

