

The Basics #1: Rule of Thirds

- The **rule of thirds** is a **principle** of the **Golden ratio**.
- Applies to the process of composing **visual images** and **photographs**.
- An image should be imagined as divided into nine equal parts.
- Important compositional elements should be placed along these lines or their intersections.
- Aligning a subject with these points creates more tension, energy and interest in the composition than simply centering the subject.
- Break the rule of thirds! See what you get.



This photograph of a sunset taken in the [Thousand Islands](#) region demonstrates the principles of the rule of thirds

See how this photograph lines up the tree along the lines and intersections.



A picture cropped without and with the rule of thirds



The Basics #2: Play with Light

Think about:

- **Exposure** is the amount of light that your camera picks up. It determines the overall lightness or darkness of the photo.
- **Quality** – how “soft” or “hard” the light is and the difference between “warm” and “cool” light.
- **Direction** – the position of the light source relative to the scene.
- **Shadows and highlights** – the darkest and brightest regions in a photo.



The Basics #3: Focus

- Choose your **point of focus** – where you want the viewer's eye to rest.
- Decide on the **depth of field** – how much of the photo will be in focus.



The Basics #4: Perspective

- Think about the camera's position in relation to the subject of the photograph. You don't have to shoot from a typical perspective!
 - **Get high.**
 - **Look up.**
 - **Move.**
 - **You don't have to shoot straight ahead.**

