

Google Photos - Editing Workshop

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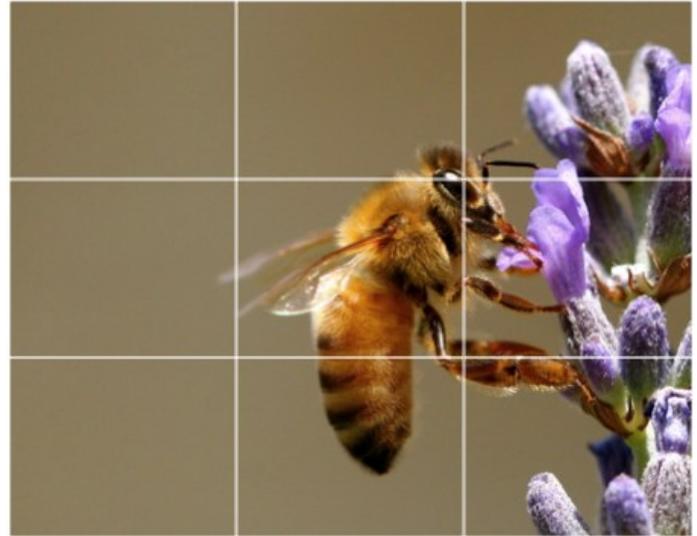
Rule of Thirds

A Post By: Darren Rowse

The Rule of Thirds is perhaps the most well-known 'rule' of photographic composition.

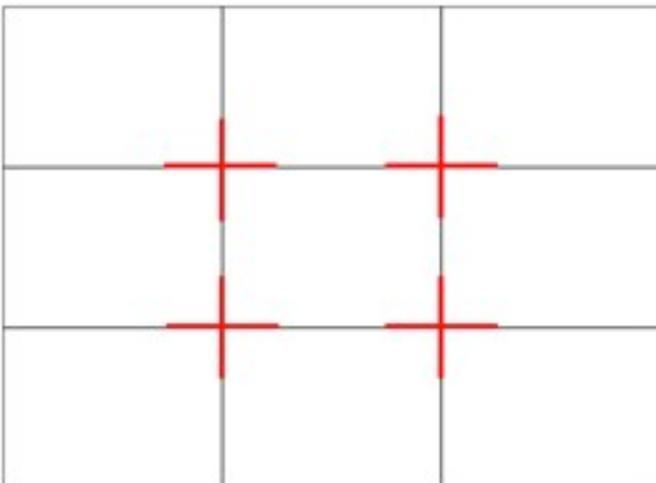
The "Rule of Thirds" one of the first things that budding digital photographers learn about in classes on photography and rightly so as it is the basis for well balanced and interesting shots.

I will say right up front however that rules are meant to be broken and ignoring this one doesn't mean your images are necessarily unbalanced or uninteresting. However a wise person once told me that if you intend to [break a rule](#) you should always learn it first to make sure your breaking of it is all the more effective!



What is the Rule of Thirds?

The basic principle behind the rule of thirds is to imagine breaking an image down into thirds (both horizontally and vertically) so that you have 9 parts. As follows.



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

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 enable a viewer of the image to interact with it more naturally.

Studies have shown that when viewing images that people's eyes usually go to one of the intersection points most naturally rather than the center of the shot – using the rule of thirds works with this natural way of viewing an image rather than working against it.

[Click here to see samples of the Rule of Thirds](#)

[How to Use Leading Lines for Better Compositions](#)

[A Post By: Anne McKinnell](#)

Leading lines refers to a technique of composition where the viewer of your photos attention is drawn to lines that lead to the main subject of the image.

A leading line paves an easy path for the eye to follow through different elements of a photo. Usually they start at the bottom of the frame and guide the eye upwards and inwards, from the foreground of the image to the background, typically leading toward the main subject.

The easiest place to find a leading line is on a road. Roadways are inherently leading because they go somewhere, give us a feeling of motion, and the lines often point so far inwards that they reach a vanishing point – the place where two or more lines converge into theoretical infinity.

More on the topic : [LEADING LINES IN LANDSCAPE PHOTOGRAPHY](#)

[BY ANDREW GOODALL](#)

For your first shot, you photograph the fence running horizontally across the foreground. In this situation, the fence is like a barrier between the viewer and the subject. It does not help the composition; in fact it's probably an annoying distraction. People are likely to think, "Nice photo. It's a pity the fence got in the way.

Imagine the same scene shot from a slightly different angle. Now the fence runs diagonally away from the camera toward the landscape in the distance. This alternate view (if done well) will create a completely different impact. The eye will be caught by the prominent subject in the foreground (the fence), and it will follow the line of the fence posts into the picture.

In this way the two elements of your composition work together to make a stronger picture. The fence is no longer a distraction; in fact, it adds emphasis to the background subject by leading the viewer in that direction.

[Click here to see samples of Leading Lines](#)

Photo Editing in Google Photos

First, Make a COPY.

Tap on the photo that you want to adjust.

Choose (tap) the pencil icon at the bottom.

Choose Auto

At the top, to the right of the SAVE, tap the menu icon (3 stacked dots)

Choose “Save copy” from the list.

Second, Crop the photo.

1. Tap a photo that you want to edit.
2. Below the photo, click on the pencil icon
- 3.
4. Click on the Slider Bar icon. 
- 5.
6. At the top right, click the crop icon. 
- 7.
8. Crop the image to the size and area as you would like. Or, crop the image a tiny small amount.
9. Click Done. Then, on the next page click on the menu icon (three stacked dots)
10. Click “Save copy.”

Now, you are ready to edit the photo! At the top right, you will see the following three editing icons. They are, from left to right, the Filters icon, the Slider bar and the Rotate Icon.



The first option is Filters. A Filter is basically a set of adjustments that can be applied to a photo instantly. To see how they work, click on the second one on the top row, named Auto. (It might take a second or two for the filter to complete.) If that is NOT perfect, then click the next one - West. Notice that a blue slider bar appears. You can use this slider to adjust the strength of the “West” filter by moving the slider from the right to the left slowly.

You can continue through the filters and using the slider bar. Hopefully, you will find the perfect match that makes the photo look EXACTLY the way you remember it. Or, exactly the way you want it to look. (In today’s world of photography, the two are not always the same!)

If none of the filters improve the photo the way you want it to look, it’s time to move to the next level of editing. It’s time to click on the Slider Bar icon as shown in the black bar above.

Google Photos Editor (Online, Apple and Android)

The Google Photo Editor is built into Google Photos. Choose a photo to edit and double click on it. It’s that easy!

Navigation

Top left icons - **Try Each**

1. ← Back arrowl Gets you back to Google Photos
2. Middle right arrow Goes to the prior photo for editing

3. Middle left arrow Goes to the next photo for editing

Top Right icons - **Try Each**

1. Share - Share via email, social media, or **with a link**. You can also share the photo by creating a Shared Album. Or, share it to an already shared album.
2. **Edit (pencil)**
3. Enlarge (magnifying glass icon)
4. Information
5. Trash (Don't do this!)
6. Settings

Editing

First, Make a COPY.

Tap on the photo that you want to adjust.

Choose (tap) the pencil icon at the bottom.

Choose Auto

At the top, to the right of the SAVE, tap the menu icon (3 stacked dots)

Choose "Save copy" from the list.

Let's edit! **Click the Pencil icon.**

The first thing you can try is to click the **Auto (under the slider menu)** to let Google adjust the photo as they believe it should be.

Otherwise, you edit photo manually using the three icons at the top. They are:

- The Slider
- The square with the star
- And the cropping/rotating icon.

Cropping

Although it is the last icon, I advise that you Crop and Rotate first. There is much debate on this subject. Sometimes, it depends on the image.

There are four icons at the top. The first one lets you crop to preset dimensions. This is important if you plan to print the photo. Common sizes are, 4X6, 5X7, 8.5X11, 16X20 and 11X14. Or, you can crop it to any size you want!

Filters

The middle icon brings up a variety of filters. These basically are preset adjustments that can adjust the settings for you. Click on each to see what it will do for your image.

When you are finished, click to either Done to accept the adjustments or Undo Edits.

Photoshop App - From the Windows Store. (Free) and Android

Adobe makes Photoshop in many different plans. The top of the line product is a subscription price which includes editing and storage. It ranges from \$9.99/month to 79.99/month.

There is a popular and less complicated version called Photoshop Elements. You can find this on Amazon for \$39.99. It's a one time purchase. The club has taught a 4 day class on this subject.

They now have a product in the Microsoft Store called the Photoshop App. Since it is free, click to install it. Once it is installed follow these steps.

1. Click Start
2. Click the All Apps icon
3. You might find the App in the "Recently Added." If you do, go to the step 5.
4. If not, click the second icon from the top on the far left and find the App.
5. Drag it to where you want it.

Open the App and you first have to bring photos in from your device storage or directly from your camera. The editing tools are at the bottom starting with cropping and rotating.

Cropping and Rotating.

Open the app and find the controls at the bottom. The first four are standard rotating 90 degrees and flipping. The next icon is a lock. If it is unlocked, you can turn the photo by free hand. Click to lock it and you will see the aspect ratios. They have the popular ones like: 4X6, 5X7, 8X10, 16X20 and square. **Can you find them?**

For editing, there are three major categories, Contrast, Exposure and White Balance. You can see these at the bottom. There are subcategories under each of these. Also, at the bottom are options for fixing Red Eye. Red eye is often caused by the use of a flash. You can also Reduce Noise and Auto Fix. You should probably try the Auto Fix before you go to the other Adjustments. Often this all you will need to do with your photo.

While in the Contrast screen, click on the white square on the bar. Slowly slide the square all the way to the right. Then, slowly all the way to the left. This will give you an idea of what you can do with this

control. With the slider all the way to the left, click the Reset icon on the bottom right. Reset is always available to you.

Do the same with the other two control options: Clarity and Vibrance. You can always reset to the original or you can see how the current image compares to the original.

Now, do the same for the other two icons on the bottom left: Exposure and White Balance.

While in the White Balance category, there is an option at the bottom right called, Auto White Balance. Click it and see what happens. Sometimes this might be the only correction you need!

The Photoshop App has enough features to make some necessary adjustments. It is not as complicated as Polarr, but doesn't have as many features as Polarr.

The Looks icon on the bottom left. Adobe calls them Looks. Other editors call them Filters. They have some Free ones. You can also get other Looks.

Polarr Photo Editor (Windows App, **Online**, Apple and Android)

This product is loaded with features. On Windows, you will find it in the Windows Store. There is a free version and a paid version (\$14.99)

Top Left: Click this icon to load the File Explorer and load your image.

On the right, you can see that there are many more adjustments that can be made. Click the Square on far right for tutorials. The Circle icon show just the image.

Click the Rotate icon (far right, bottom), then click Aspect. You see that they have many more options and popular frame sizes. Click on the image and see the photo divided into thirds horizontally and vertically. Click the Square to return to editing.

On the left, click the triangle made of circles. This brings up the filters. Well, at least The Unsplash Collection of filters. Click the 3 horizontal dots at the top and you will see many more filters. It can be fun just to scroll through them!

You can see that this is for serious photo editor! If you are, you should consider this product. And, you can find out much more about how to use it by visiting their website. <http://polarr.co>

Making a Panoramic Photo

When Google Photos first came out in the Summer of 2010, they automatically converted photos into panoramic photos. You simply had to take a series of overlapping photos, upload them to Google Photos and they would do the rest.

They have since taken that feature away. You are on your own when it comes to making Panoramas. You can make them if you have Adobe Photoshop or Photoshop Elements. It is a fairly simple process.

I am still looking for a good option for creating Panoramas. Two that are simple to use and are free are:

Cleavr and **Dermander** These two are online. To find them, type either Cleavr or Dermander into the search bar of the browser.

You upload your individual images and they put them together. You will then be able to download the results. It's pretty easy. The key is in the taking of the photo. Professionals always use a tripod when taking photos for a panorama. You can skip the tripod if you are not fussy about the results. Here's how:

1. Plan the scene that you want to make into a panorama
2. If you have a viewfinder on the camera, hold the camera tight to your face.
3. Hold your elbows tight on your sides, body facing the center of the panorama
4. Move to where you are looking at the far left, make a note of some elements that are on the right side. Like a tree, bush or building.
5. Take the picture, but don't move your feet.
6. Slowly, swivel to the right, until the above tree, bush or building is in view at the far left. Take another picture.
7. Repeat, remembering to include landmark on the left and right of consecutive pictures. These are important to help the software line up the images correctly.

Both of these have a free version and a paid version. The free version Cleavr will put their logo on the panorama result

A software product that sounds good is Panorama Plus for \$29.00. But, you can buy the latest version of Photoshop Elements for \$39.00 on Amazon. You can make a panorama with Photoshop Elements and also do much more.