

# Camera club Communiqué

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The *Camera Club Communiqué* is part of a newsletter sent to members of the “Camera Club” and “PhotoGroup” which are year-long courses run by the University of the Third Age here in Canberra. For privacy reasons, class notices have been omitted from this public version. To contact either class, please email [u3acanberracameraclub@gmail.com](mailto:u3acanberracameraclub@gmail.com) or [u3acanberraphotogroup@gmail.com](mailto:u3acanberraphotogroup@gmail.com) respectively.

## How to Help Viewers Connect with your Photos

Photographs are made to be looked at and so, we as photographers, need to learn how to facilitate communication between our images and the



people who look at them. Most of what we do in class is, in fact, teaching techniques which optimise the chances that our viewers will be able to understand what it is we are trying to say in our photographs.

William Beem, writing on *Picture Correct* passes on “Five Tips for Viewers to Connect with Your Photos”. He writes about Patience; Timing; Intimacy; Light and finally, Story. The article is wonderfully illustrated, including with

this photo of an intimate moment between elephants....

<https://www.picturecorrect.com/tips/5-photography-tips-for-viewers-to-connect-with-your-photos/>

## Can You Break the Rules of Composition?

We all know about the “rules” of composition, including the “Rule of Thirds”, “Rule of Odds”, and so on. Elizabeth (she only has one name) in a post in *Photography Life* argues that of course you can break those “rules” and often to advantage. Apart from the “Thirds Rule”, others she cites (and illustrates their breaking with marvellous images) include: “Never Amputate Your Subject’s Limbs”; “Make Sure Your Horizon is Level”; “Fill the Frame with Your Subject”; “Simplify”; “Make Sure You Correctly Expose



Your Photo”; and “Make Sure Your Subject is Sharp”. On this last “rule” – or “Myth” as Elizabeth call it - she quotes Henri Cartier-Bresson as saying *sharpness is a bourgeois concept*. Now, that is food for thought!  
<https://photographylife.com/breaking-the-rules-of-composition>

## Hyperfocal Distance Explained

It might seem an arcane idea to grasp, but understanding hyperfocal distance and how to set your camera accordingly is pretty much an essential technique if you are interested in street photography, action shots (and that includes photographing kids and pets), close-up and macro photography.... and just about everything else. Basically, the hyperfocal distance is *the focusing distance that gives your photos the greatest depth of field*. This makes use of the fact that there is a zone both in front of, and behind, the subject of a photograph which will appear in acceptably sharp focus if the camera is set to the hyperfocal distance which is not necessarily the same as the distance of the camera from that subject. Confusing? Read Spencer Cox’s post on *Photography Life* at <https://photographylife.com/landscapes/hyperfocal-distance-explained?>



One of the illustrations Cox uses shows a landscape in which both foreground and background are in apparently sharp focus. It is often a problem to get both in focus in landscape photography where including the foreground helps give depth and often, contributes to the story.

Photographing flowers close up is another situation in which there is usually some difficulty: it seems without resorting to hyperfocal distance (or of course, focus stacking) it is impossible to get both the petals and the stamen in acceptable focus.

## Tips for Photographing Children

Christi Pennington, posting on *Picture Correct* says *Photographing children can be one of the most challenging yet beautiful aspects of photography. They won't be still. They won't smile. They are tired. They don't listen...* But there are ways: one tip which she offers is *Don't pose them (much)*. This is



probably good advice for any kind of portraiture, but with kids, posing just guarantees stiff, awkward and self-conscious images. Instead, Christi suggests: *Candid moments are the best. Let the child wander, explore, and be free. You have much more opportunity to capture raw emotion and really see their personalities.*

*From my experience, children are much happier to go along with your photography when they have freedom of movement.*

<https://www.picturecorrect.com/tips/7-crucial-tips-for-photographing-children/>

## Teleconverters

Teleconverters are devices which are placed between the lens and the body of the camera in order to extend the range of the lens. So, for example, if



you are interested in nature photography where a long focal length telelens is desirable, a teleconverter on your 300mm lens can boost it up to 420mm zoom. That is handy if you can't afford a bigger lens and also, if you don't want to carry a much larger lens. Although teleconverters can be a handy addition to one's lens kit,

they also have disadvantages and you have to be careful when buying them.

Niall Hampton, Editor of *Digital Camera Magazine*, in a video at

<https://www.digitalcameraworld.com/features/what-is-a-teleconverter-and-how-do-i-choose-the-right-one> walks viewers through the advantages and disadvantages of teleconverters while Rod Lawton does the same in text at the same site.

## Camera Basics 101

What is "ISO" and how do you use aperture and shutter speed to help create the best-looking photos? These three things are basic to using a



digital camera and if you don't understand them, you will be stuck on "auto" forever. That's OK if all you want to achieve is "likes" on *Facebook* but "auto" is not enough to make you a fine art photographer.

Richard French from *Picture Correct* <https://www.picturecorrect.com/tips/camera-basics-101/> explains these terms and how you can adjust them to help make better pictures. He also has some very timely tips: for example, although many modern cameras/lenses have excellent stabilization built in, when hand-holding a camera, a shutter speed of no less than 1/60<sup>th</sup> of a second is advisable to avoid ending up with a blurred image.

Other posts on-line recently are on similar subjects. For example, Rick Ohnsman from *Digital Photography School* writes on *A Beginners Guide to Auto ISO and other Camera Modes* at <https://digital-photography-school.com/a-beginners-guide-to-auto-iso-and-other-camera-modes/>

## You Know You are a Photographer When....

Cole Dunn, writing on *Picture Correct* says *Being a photographer is more than just a hobby or a career choice—it's life. Something you feel you literally could not live without. Every instant of your waking moment, you feel the dire need to pull your camera out and take a picture of the beauty of your surroundings. Sound familiar? I have compiled a list of eight ways you know when you're a photographer. You be the judge!*

<https://www.picturecorrect.com/tips/you-know-youre-a-photographer-when/>

## 5 Things You Should Know About Composition

If you are one of those people who like pottery flying ducks on your lounge-room wall, think how important it is you arrange them so they look pleasing. That is composition.... Transfer that idea to photography: composition in a photo is all about how things are arranged *viz-a-viz* each other. Of course, we photographers usually have to take things as they are — we are not free as a painter would be to move them around at will. The secret in photography is to spot a good composition when you see it... Often too, by moving around a subject we would like to photograph, we can improve the way things appear to be arranged in the frame of our camera viewfinder.

The way things are arranged in a photo is important, firstly because some



arrangements are more aesthetically pleasing than others, but secondly and more importantly, the arrangement can facilitate the viewer's understanding of whatever it is we want our photo to say. In a sense, composition is a pre-sorting of the bits and pieces making up an image so that they are more immediately

meaningful to the viewer. A photo in which the elements are all jumbled up amid lots of irrelevant clutter fails in the primary purpose of a photograph — to communicate.

Ever since the invention of photography almost 200 years ago (the bicentenary will be in 2026), the world has come to rely more and more on photographs to inform us about the world and what is happening in it. Imagine how long a TV station would last these days if all the viewers saw was a person reading the daily news! More and more we understand the world based on the pictures we have seen. Furthermore, engulfed in a tsunami of images as we all are, we have also perforce become highly sophisticated at reading photos. Even so, we are inclined to turn away from those images which are not readily comprehensible. In fact, although focus, exposure and others technicalities are important, we tend to be more tolerant of faults in these than we do of poor composition.

Andrew S. Gibson is a New Zealand based photographer whose post on *Picture Correct* at <https://www.picturecorrect.com/tips/5-things-all-photographers-should-know-about-composition/> considers some other interesting aspects of composition which we should all take to heart.



## A Short Introduction to Basic Photo Editing for Beginners

Lily Sawyer writing on *Digital Photography School* says: *If you're a beginner, using editing software can be a daunting prospect. What if you can't get a handle on the technology? What if it's too complicated a process?*

*What if it's just too time-consuming? What if the images turn out horrible? So many what ifs! I get it; I've been there.* Her very readable article can be found at

<https://digital-photography-school.com/basic-photo-editing-for-beginners/>

## Five Easy Steps to Improve Your Photos via Post-Processing



Nasim Mansurov frequently writes for *Photography Life* on-line and what he has to say is always worth reading. <https://photographylife.com/five-easy-steps-to-improve-your-photos-in-post-processing>

In this post he looks at common problems which need correcting in post-processing and then ways in which such short-comings can be

corrected. In the article he makes the point that RAW photographs all need some degree of post-processing so, to make successful images, it is necessary to learn how to work on them to bring out the beauty inherent in them. And if you're not using RAW then you are missing out on one of the big advances of 21<sup>st</sup> Century technology...



## Here's How to Decide Whether to Make your Photo Black and White

Robert K Baggs is a young English portrait and commercial photographer who, incidentally, is also an expert on plagiarism in photography. His article is primarily aimed at newer

photographers but even the more experienced will find food for thought here.

<https://fstoppers.com/education/heres-how-decide-whether-make-your-photo-black-and-white-355365>

## The Multi-Camera Smartphone: Fad or Fantastic?

Modern smartphone cameras are amazing in what they can do: gone are the days when they output images not much better than large thumbnails

because these days you can confidently expect to get a picture which can be enlarged up to A3 at least and often to even greater blow-ups. But if we are impressed with the most recent technology then we must be prepared for greater advances, not just in the next decade, but even next year. One of the elephants in the room however, is the fact that competition is pushing these rapid advances in smartphone camera technology. The question we need ask is do we really need a foldable screen or five cameras rolled into one? Whether we do or not, the fact remains that inevitably these eminently portable, “carry it everywhere” little cameras which just happen to have the advantage of being coupled with a telephone, will go on advancing and in the process, eroding the market for the kind of cameras we currently believe are essential for good photography.

Another question we need to ask is: how is the world-wide adoption the camera-phone changing how and why we take photos. We saw a major shift with the mass-marketing of the 35mm camera back in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century which meant that not only were these little cameras more portable than the larger format we had been used to, but also they were less obtrusive in their use so we gained a more “candid” view of the world. Then the invention of the SLR literally changed our perspective because they allowed us to change lenses and with that, focal length.

The lesson of history is that as these smartphone cameras become more potent and complex, we will need to study how to use them to best advantage with the same enthusiasm we have for our beloved dSLRs and CMCs. Already there are specialised web sites where the minority of “true believers” using smartphone cameras can display their impressive images and there are apps and lens attachments which allow the basic camera to be extended. As with all technology, we don’t know where it will end up, but one thing is sure, it will all happen much sooner than we believe.

For more thoughts on the subject, go to Roger Lee’s article on *Picture Correct* at <https://www.picturecorrect.com/tips/the-multi-camera-smartphone-fad-or-fantastic/>

A post by Sandra Roussy called *How to Take Great Photos with Your iPhone* at <https://digital-photography-school.com/how-to-take-great-photos-with-your-iphone/> is a step in the right direction for getting to be more familiar with — well, an iPhone. If that’s not your smartphone of choice, then hunt around for similar posts and videos... consider it “future proofing” your hobby.



## Make Your Subject Really Stand Out.

It is good to see locals sharing their knowledge and experience on the on-line photo resource sites. Andrew Goodall is a nature photographer based in Australia who shows several ways in which the subject of a photograph can be made to stand out. This duck, for example, was photographed using a wide-angle lens close-up.

<https://www.picturecorrect.com/tips/emphasize-main-subjects-in-photos/>

Andrew also runs several training courses and photo-safaris which might be of interest to those looking for tuition coupled with travel. <http://www.naturesimage.com.au>

**Bob Hay**  
**Presenter**