

Some Photoshop Elements Composition Basics

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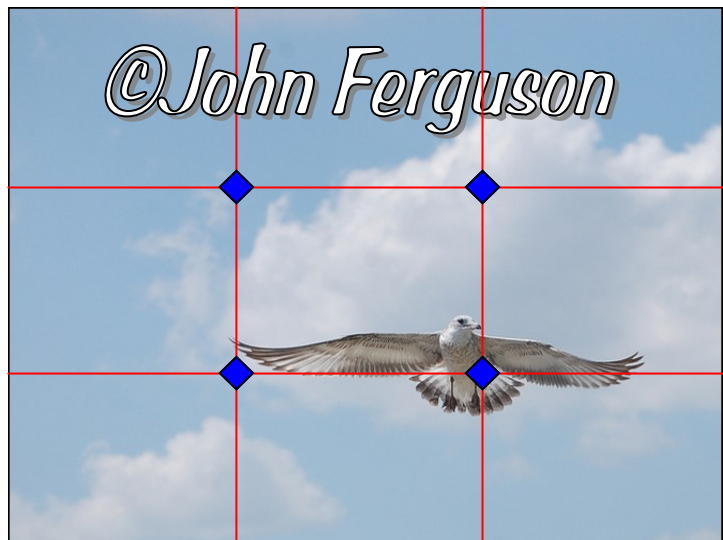
Step 1. select the best possible pictures. This photo by John Ferguson is nothing short of unforgettable. Still, what are the strengths and weaknesses to be found in the photo? What is within our power to fix? Should we sharpen or adjust lightening or color? Is there any way to crop the picture for optimum detail while cleaning up distractions? Probably yes! Almost any photo can be improved with some *cautious* enhancement.



Step 2. use the <crop> tool to crop out that Tree in the lower left and the two areas on the right with twigs Intruding into the image. If the Image has serious alignment issues (crooked building, water not level, etc.) these need to be fixed prior to cropping. See Rule of Thirds below for allignment of horizontal and vertical elements. *If whatever you are doing does not truly improve the picture, stop doing it.* Use the <Reset> or back function, or just close without saving and reopen until you get things right. As Aristotle once said, "Too much of even a very good thing is apt to be very bad."



Step 3, Rule of Thirds. This rule of composition is not ironclad, but many pictures are improved when cropping by not centering the subject. Some pictures, such as portraits, may not permit this type of composition. Some pictures have multiple subjects and require more unique composition. Invision four lines dividing the picture into horizontal thirds, vertical thirds, and four focal points of interest. Enlarge the subject if gaining detail and position subject to its best advantage in the finished picture. Buildings or trees may be aligned vertically along a 1/3 line. Beaches or mountains may be aligned to 1/3 or 2/3 horizontally to give emphasis to the stronger element in the picture.



Our seagull has been aligned to an optimum position to emphasize the motion and apparent direction of the subject away from the scene, thereby adding tension and drama to the final picture. It is positioned along the lower third, and centered on a focal point.