



Composition Summary

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- Light:
 - Avoid the harsh light of midday – dark shadows, burnt out highlights
 - Shoot early or late, when the light is warm
 - Overcast is OK, because everything is muted
 - Flash is OK in nature photography (to open up shadows and create a catch light in the eye)
 - Learn to compensate for extreme range of light (e.g., Split half ND filter, HDR, exposure blending using luminosity masks)
- Composition
 - Rule of thirds (avoid centering subject)
 - Get a clean, non-distracting background
 - Leave some room in front of your subject (e.g., bird, animal)
 - Capture an interesting geometric pattern (such as the warning ball and bridge cables above)
 - Cut don't clip (e.g., if you can't get the entire bird, make it a cropped portrait)
 - Don't shoot down at birds or animals – shoot at eye level
 - Isolate your subject: get closer, crop in, use longer focal length lens
 - Determine what your subject is – what is the important element
 - Check edges of frame for distracting elements
 - Place center of interest in focus (e.g., animal's eye)
 - Include less in picture – fill the frame with your subject
 - Control DOF: isolate, be there, storytelling f/stops
 - Use lines to direct viewer's eye (e.g., S curve, leading line)
 - Use light, saturation, and sharpness to direct viewer's eye

- Moment
 - Have your image tell a story
 - Capture action
 - Capture interaction
 - Capture an event in the environment (weather, rainbow, sunrise, dramatic clouds)
 - Be patient—wait for the right moment
 - Know your subject's habits