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# The Art of Composition

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## About this Community

Composition is the invisible architecture of art. Long before viewers notice subject matter or color, they respond to arrangement. The way shapes, lines, and spaces are organized can make an image feel harmonious or chaotic, balanced or heavy, alive or stagnant. Across centuries, artists have developed guiding principles that help us arrange elements in ways that capture attention, direct the eye, and communicate meaning. These principles are not strict laws but flexible tools. They can be obeyed, adapted, or broken in the pursuit of expression.

## Sample Rules / Principles

### • Breaking the Rules

Composition rules are scaffolding, not cages. They exist to guide, not to imprison. Every rule has been broken by an artist who understood it well enough to subvert it. Cubists broke perspective. Minimalists broke...

### • Contrast for Emphasis

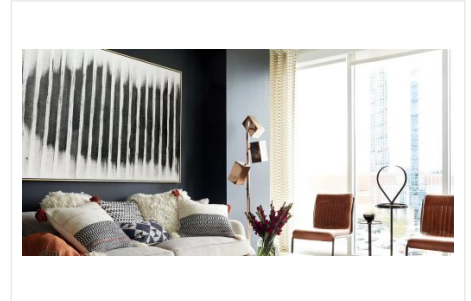
Contrast makes things stand out. Differences in light and dark, large and small, smooth and rough, red and green, all grab attention. Caravaggio used light and shadow to highlight figures emerging from darkness....

### • Framing

Framing focuses attention by creating a composition within the composition. Windows, arches, shadows, and trees can all form frames. Vermeer framed figures with doorways and light. Photographers use natural frames like...

### • Rhythm and Repetition

Like rhythm in music, visual rhythm arises from repeating lines, shapes, or colors. Too much repetition feels monotonous; variation brings life. Van Gogh's brushstrokes in *Starry Night* repeat curves in varied...



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