

Scenic Photography Notes

Composing landscape photos?

- **Simplicity** – eliminate communication distractions
- **Center of attention** – something interesting the eye can settle on. Does not have to be in the center. Does not have to be fabulous.
- Better if you can find a **sightline** to point at it.
- **Rule of thirds** – elements off-center tend to imply movement.
- **Move horizons** to one of the thirds lines. Sky important? horizon at lower line.
- Keep your horizons **level**.
- Lines – **look for natural lines**. They add zip to photos, guide the eye, provide patterns, work to balance
- **Balance** – A mobile, dark is heavy. Involves color, shapes, forms (masses) dark/brightness.
- **Framing** – adds balance, interest, connotations. Foreground items add three-dimensional look.
- **Mergers** – Odd visual bonding of elements.
- **Color and texture** – Sometimes the whole reason for the picture. Look at examples!
- Compose portrait for vertical themes, and **landscape for horizontal themes**.
- **Direction of light** –
 - Be prepared to wait or come back later.
- Include the **sky** -
- **Eliminate gray** areas from the image -
- Using a **Polaroid** filter –
- Usually **maximum depth of field**. With tripod this should be easy.

What if the weather is bad?

- If the sky is dramatic, move the horizon down.
- Get out of town a little and take a picture of the nearby Turnbull lakes with ducks loving the wetness.
- Fog or haze is great for drama. Get the columns on Showalter Hall in the picture with haze in the trees.
- Light *reflecting off of wet* pavement in the evening can at least give you a dramatic shot!

Sunset photo tips

- Stop down. Use a tripod for later images.
- Don't let the camera use "sunset" white balance.
- Take a lot of images. Colors change fast.
- Don't quit early. Best may be yet to come.
- Keep the horizon from the center of the image.
- Locking focus at infinity is a good thing. Camera may have trouble focusing.

Stitched Panoramas

- They may be desired for web/multimedia tour tools, but otherwise not as interesting to people as you might imagine. Your cameras probably have a mode to align

multiple images. Your cameras probably came with stitching tools. PS has its own stitching tools.

Tips

- Consider taking a *high res image and crop*, rather than stitching together multiple images.
- Use a tripod for stitched images.
- Pay attention to the *exposure of the first frame*. Generally you can rearrange the images later so perhaps take the middle section first. On panorama setting, the camera will use first image for all others. You wouldn't want it any other way. Otherwise the edges would be different brightness and would not match!

Essential Filters (see the PP)

Polarizing Filter

- 1) Reduces glare
- 2) Increases deep blue sky
- 3) Reduces haze (increase contrast)
- 4) Enriches colors
- 5) Allows you to "tune in" details

Light from the sun travels in all directions and the electromagnetic radiation "waves" vibrate in all directions perpendicular to their path. However, when they bounce off an object they vibrate in a single direction. A polarizing filter favors light vibrating in one direction. By turning the filter, you can filter out particular waves that have bounced off of objects.

Reflecting surfaces generally come in 3 textures: smooth, rough and in between. Reflections off smooth, mirror-like surfaces are termed specular reflections. By happy coincidence, specular reflections are the kind best controlled by polarizers and also the kind photographers most often need to suppress.

Split Neutral Density Filter

UV Filter

Reduces the ultraviolet content of light, short wavelength above the blue range. A must for film cameras, helps some CCDs also but to a lesser extent. Should not affect exposure settings.

Haze Filter

Like a UV but cuts a little into the visible blue range. May require increasing exposure settings a bit.

Color filters for black and white?

Very important because without them all colors of the same intensity are recorded as the same shade of gray! Filters put contrast back in.