

## CENTERING IMAGES



The areas of greatest interest in the photo are centered. Vermilion Cliffs National Monument, Arizona USA

How often have you been told not to place the subject of your photo in the middle of the image frame?

Centered compositions are just fine under several circumstances. Here are some instances where a centered composition can produce striking and impactful results:

1. **Symmetry:** When the subject or the scene exhibits symmetrical qualities, a centered composition can help emphasize this balance. This is common in all types of photography.
2. **Portraits:** For certain types of portraits, particularly headshots of wildlife or full body shots, centering the subject can create a powerful and direct connection with the viewer.
3. **Single Subject:** If there is a single, dominant subject in the image, centering can highlight its importance and remove distractions. This is especially true when the background is minimalist or doesn't contain competing elements.
4. **Isolation:** Centered compositions can help in emphasizing the isolation of a subject, especially in a large environment. The rule of thirds may place your subject in a more dynamic relation to the surroundings, but a centered composition can underscore the isolation or loneliness of the subject.
5. **Circular or Radial Elements:** If the main elements in the photo have a circular or radial structure (e.g., a spiral staircase or a flower), a centered composition often works best, as it naturally fits the shape and flow of these elements.
6. **Break the Rules:** Sometimes, simply breaking the 'rule of thirds' can make an image more interesting and unique. Rules are meant to be broken (once you know them) so if a centered composition feels right, regardless of what you've been told you *should* do, use it.

Remember that while these are guidelines. Using centered compositions can sometimes go against traditional compositional advice but it can also result in stunning, impactful images. It's always good to understand the rules first and then know when to break them for creative reasons.

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Creative Vision Newsletter, July 3, 2023  
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