

10 Questions to Ask Yourself

<http://flash.pophoto.com/blog/2007/11/tip-of-the-da-4.html> - From the Archives at Digital Photography School, 10 important questions to ask yourself when composing a photo.

1) What story am I telling?

Basically you are asking yourself “Why am I taking this shot? What is its purpose and what am I trying to convey?”

2) What is the visual focal point of this shot?

Once you’ve identified the focal point you can think about where to place it in the frame.

3) What competing focal points are there?

You know where you want your viewer’s eyes to be drawn to and have placed it where you want it in the frame. Now, look over the rest of the shot and see if there are any competing focal points and whether they add or take away from the image.

4) What is in the background and foreground?

Check the background for clutter, and consider if you want the background to be in focus or blurred.

5) Am I close enough?

A lot of photos fail because the subject is too small. Often shots where the subject fills the frame are more dynamic.

6) What is the main source of light?

Without good lighting you’ll lose detail and clarity in your image.

7) Is my framing straight?

Unless you are going for a totally skewed angle, slightly sloping horizons and leaning people can kill an otherwise good shot.

8) What other perspectives could I capture this subject from?

Make your image stand out by finding a creative angle to shoot from.

9) How would holding the camera the other way change this shot?

Many photographers get into the habit of always holding the camera the same way (horizontally or vertically). Experiment with holding your camera in a different way and see how it changes the shot.

10) How will the eye travel through this image?

Your viewer’s eyes don’t remain still when looking at a still image. Think about lines or colors that might lead the eye through the image.