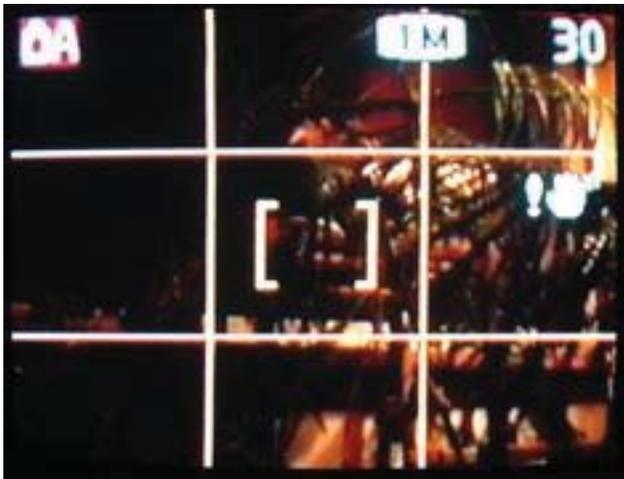




August, 2008

## Tic Tac Toe? I Think Not!

Your digital camera has one of the best tools for improved pictorial composition and it probably goes unused - the grid screen. Most digital cameras have a user selectable grid screen feature as a menu option. Depending upon your camera, it may be black or white (as in the illustration below). If you see the on screen grid as you view your subject be assured that it will not show up as part of your photo. If you use the grid, you will discover 3 great benefits you never knew you had.



First, you've been shown time and time again that having your subject dead center in the picture is the most static, boring place for it. In our western culture, the best places would be where the grid lines intersect. This follows the Rule of Thirds as each of the four points is a third of the way into the picture from any edge. This is true for both horizontal and vertical formats.

Second, you'll be able to have straight, level horizons in all your photos. Having horizons that appear to go uphill or downhill always looks silly and distorts other items in the picture. Because your brain makes horizons look level through your eyes, your camera is not that smart.

Third, The vertical axis lines will help you keep your camera level. Door jambs, windows, walls, buildings, etc. won't look they are falling in or out of your photo if they go straight up and down instead of tilting.

Using all three of these assets will automatically improve the composition of your photos - you'll like your photos better, and will be prouder of them. You'll be even more proud when others compliment your pictures.

## How Long is Your ... Zoom?

The great majority of amateur photographers use cameras with 3X zoom lenses (all discussions of zoom lenses in this article refer to optical zooms). This means that as the zoom lens is adjusted, its angle is modified by a factor of 3. Numerically, this means that a zoom lens from 3mm to 9mm and 25mm to 75mm are both 3X zooms. The lower number always refers to the widest view the lens can see (widest angle); the higher number the narrowest view (most telephoto). The numbers themselves are not the actual angles, but indicate a ratio.

By popular convention, a 50mm lens sees about what your eye can concentrate on (discounting peripheral vision). A 35mm lens is about the slightest wide angle available - for some people it is not even considered to be a wide angle. Any lens which sees at a narrower angle than a 50mm lens sees is referred to as telephoto. The higher the number, the narrower the angle, the more telephoto. As an example, a 100mm lens sees about half the angle of a 50mm, a 200mm lens sees about a quarter.

Cameras with interchangeable lenses typically come with a "starter" 3X zoom, with moderate wide angle to very slight telephoto if they come with any lens at all.



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If the camera is supplied body only, you can select just about any lens you want. In recent years lens makers have designed and manufactured excellent, affordable 10X zoom lenses encompassing both wide angle and true telephoto angles.

Compact camera (with permanently built in zoom lenses) no longer are limited to 3X - 5X zoom lenses and zooms lacking wide angle. Fuji, Olympus and Nikon each offer small cameras with astounding 18X to 20X zooms. Not only are these cameras fantastic for tourism, but also they are extremely versatile family cameras. Think of it, with one little camera you can take a picture of the entire family at the Thanksgiving table or a sports photo where the player dominates the picture instead of just being a small speck in the background.

The Nikon P80 with 18X zoom, incidently, will have \$30 Instant Savings (in store rebate) between August 17 -23. For additional information on this



fine camera, go to <http://www.nikonusa.com/Find-Your-Nikon/Product/Digital-Camera/26114/COOLPIX-P80.html>.

One of the most exciting things about these high ratio zooms is that there's nothing new to learn to be able to use them. Everything works the same way as before!

## Snap Shots

Eric has completed the syllabus for this fall's workshops. Please refer to the attached schedule. Tickets for the entire season will be available to the public on August 25, but as Newsletter subscribers that are available to you beginning today

### Taking you into the light!



by calling or visiting Madison PhotoPlus or the Photo Summit.

So we can all feel old... Kodak and Fuji recently sent new price catalogs for their 35mm films. These catalogs used to be 30-40 pages each. A complete selection of both companies offerings now can fit on one side of one sheet of letter size paper!

MadisonPhotoPlus  
the Photo Summit



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During July, Lynne, Bret, Rob and Jerry went back to Photo School at the Photographic Research Organization. It was long hours, workshop after workshop, living photography all day long for close to a week. As this year continues, we'll be sharing what we learned with you.

While there, during an afternoon thunderstorm, Jerry captured these images with a point and shoot 7X zoom camera.

Thanks for inviting us into your day. Enjoy making your photos, and we hope to see you soon.



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