composition	description
subject/resting point	include a clear or obvious subject. providing a visual resting point helps enforce visual flow through the image.
foreground	include strong foreground element when it relates to the rest of the scene. avoid weak or obligatory foregrounds just to follow the 'rule'.
fill the frame	closing (or zooming) in on your subject and immediate surroundings eliminates distractions.
simplicity/isolation (see fill the frame)	take note of the features in a scene you find most interesting and zoom in to isolate them from distracting elements. simplifying a composition strengthens the visual flow and subject identification.
negative space	fill area around subject with 'empty' space. emphasizes isolation, scale. empty space is not usually totally void, will often contain some detail/texture. dark against light or low detail against high detail.
leading lines/visual path	directional features in landscape. leads eye through the scene into subject. look for S and Z curves - walls, paths, rocks, light, motion…
zig zag (see leading lines)	leading lines with strong directional break points or lines that switch dramatically from side to side of image leading to subject.
left to right	look for visual flow that mimics natural reading of L to R (note, L to R reading is a cultural norm not all cultures follow, know your audience).
center	place subject in the center of your composition. reduces visual tension. best for for minimal/abstract subjects and symmetrical compositions. consider I:I ratio.
balance	balancing the visual weight of different subjects and features in an image. balance is not necessarily symmetry.
framing	natural frames in composition like doorways, arches, branches. framing helps focus the visual flow of an image inwards and prevent the eye from wandering off the image.
blocking	anything that prevents your eye from leaving the frame. similar to framing but can be less obvious, or more directly related to a single part of an image. vignettes provide 'blocking'.
right way in	perceived "front" of subject faces into image space, not out of frame. your eye will tend to follow the line of sight of subjects or structures in the direction they are 'facing'. eyes, doors, windows. breaking this 'rule' is great for creating tension or adding mystery.
edge scan	check the corners and edges of your frame for any distracting elements, re compose to eliminate.
break the horizon	compose strong subjects so they break horizon to reduce horizons dominance in the image.
seperation	separate major features from their background. e.g. leaving water between rocks or islands instead of allowing them to overlap.
rule of thirds	c'mon, you know this one… right?