

# Tips for Judging, Critiquing and Self-Assessing Photos

## Impact & Interest

Does the image grab your attention and hold it?

Does the image appeal to the senses?

Does the image suggest mystery or intrigue?

Does the image provide a fresh and original view of the subject matter?

Does the image express a unifying thought or idea?

Does the image focus on one simple subject?

Does the image make the most of the available subject matter?

Is the image more than a mere snapshot?

Does the image achieve the creator's objective?

Does the image avoid being too busy or confusing?

If the image breaks with tradition, does this enhance the experience?

## Viewpoint

Is the horizon level; are the verticals vertical?

Is the image free from unwanted perspective distortion?  
*Caused by tilting camera*

Has the creator used a fresh viewpoint?

Does the viewpoint highlight the important features of the subject?

Does the viewpoint avoid unfortunate juxtapositions?  
*Lamp post sticking out of head*

Has the best choice of low, normal or high viewpoint been made?

Does the viewpoint make best use of light and shadows?

Does the viewpoint minimize clutter and distractions?

## Composition

Is the cropping appropriate for the subject?

*Should the crop have been tighter?*

Has the best format been used (vertical, horizontal, square, panorama)?

Is there space in front of animals, faces or transportation?

*Space to move to*

Does the composition lead the eye to the main subject?

*Through the use of lines and curves*

Does the main subject stand out from the background?

*Contrasting color, brightness or focus*

Does the composition avoid the "bull's eye effect"?

*Main subject offset from center*

Does the image make good use of forms, patterns and textures?

Does the image convey a sense of depth?

*Shadows, perspective, selective focus*

## Color

Was the best choice made from color, black-and-white or sepia?

Is the white balance correct?

*No yellow, orange or green cast*

Are color saturation levels appropriate?

Has appropriate use been made of contrasting and complementary colors?

## Technique

Is the image free of barrel and pin-cushion distortion?

*Common with very wide angle lenses*

Does the image avoid lost detail in blown out highlights and dark shadows?

Is the image free of distracting reflections?

Is the main subject in sharp focus?