

Cropping

Objective: To help members improve a photograph by cropping out distracting portions of a scene.

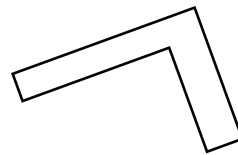
Size of group: can be done with an individual or a group.

Time required: 15-30 minutes.

Location: Indoors.

Materials needed: old photos, magazine or newspaper pictures, cardboard cropping brackets (two brackets per person). The brackets act as movable frames to experiment with cropping without actually cutting a picture.

Cardboard brackets
(8-10" on a side)

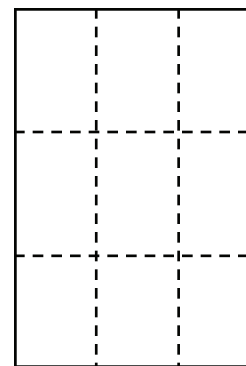
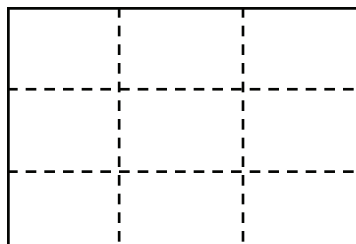


Procedure:

1. Provide a pair of cropping brackets, a few old photos, newspaper or magazine pictures for each member.
2. Instruct the group to use the brackets to frame the subject. If the subject is tall, crop to a strong vertical format. If the subject is horizontal, find what can be cropped out of the top and bottom of the photo to emphasize to horizontal format.
3. Use the brackets to compose the photo so that the point of interest is located somewhat off-center. Follow the "rule of thirds" to position the point of interest.

Mentally divide pictures into thirds, both horizontally and vertically. Note that you have points where the lines intersect. Photos will usually have more impact if the point of interest falls near one of the intersecting points.

"Rule of thirds"



4. After some practice with cropping brackets, young photographers should begin to crop with their camera viewfinder as they are shooting.