How to Utilise Negative Space in your photography

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Less is sometimes definitely more. Creating empty space in a composition can make it far more powerful than cramming it full of detail.

• Negative space is a vital element in design. With photography, we're talking about the space around the subject; whether colourful or neutral, graphically bold or understated, it can have texture, dimension, space and graphic strength. With little else shouting for attention in the frame, negative space directs the viewer to the key areas in the image.

• While "get in close and fill the frame" can work in many situations, negative space can make

shots more interesting and compelling. Just move back to leave a little room for your subject to breathe, creating a complementary space.

• You'll need to keep a (wide) open mind for your choices of framing, in-camera cropping, vantage points and viewing angles. A lens along the lines of the AF-S DX 55-200mmf /4-5.6 or the AF-S NIKKOR 70-200mm f/4G ED VR is ideal, as it makes you frame a bit tighter so you naturally have to exclude extraneous detail.

• As a rule of thumb, you'll need twice as much negative space as subject area to balance the shot. For the most impactful results, position your subject to one side of the frame so the negative space takes up the remaining two-thirds, with the subject looking or moving towards that space.

Quick tips

• Use your feet as well as your lens to compose; make a focal length choice, then move to secure the final adjustment.

• To remove further distractions, get rid of texture by shooting silhouettes, or render the image in monochrome for a powerful combination of subject and space.



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