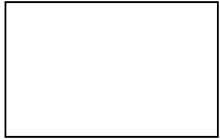


Composition means *the arrangement of the shapes, colours and tones within a specified area to create balance within the design*. In a painting, drawing or photograph recognising good composition is often an instinctive reaction to whether it looks right or wrong. During the **Renaissance Period** (14th to 17th Centuries) the structure of art and architecture was calculated on the **The Golden Section (Divine Proportion)** This a mathematical calculation. However the **rule of thirds** can be used for compositional purposes using the diagrams below either **horizontally (landscape)** or **vertically (portrait)**

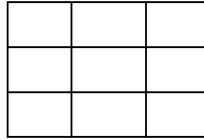
Traditionally, the focal point of an image would be on either one of the intersecting points for a well balanced work. In a **landscape**, if the horizon is placed on the upper horizontal line, the main area of interest would be the foreground, whereas if placed on the lower line, the emphasis would be on the sky area. Similarly, in a **portrait**, the head would be on one of the upper intersecting points.



Landscape



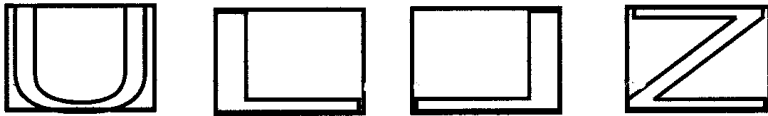
Portrait



Rule of Thirds – you can choose a high or low horizon level

In abstract painting, these might be interpreted as colours and shapes rather than pictorial objects. Also consider placing these colours or shapes on the diagonal. This will create balance. However a larger shape or stronger colour on the bottom will create an optical illusion of the image being top heavy.

Artists also used other systems which are evident on many historical paintings



These systems of composition fall into the above categories.

Artists now have the opportunity of working in other format i.e. landscape/portrait panoramic and square layouts. This can pose a problem with composition and design because it is not a traditional method that we are subliminally familiar with.

In these instances consider the following

Horizontal

Vertical

Diagonal

Cruciform

Triangular

Circular

Vortex

