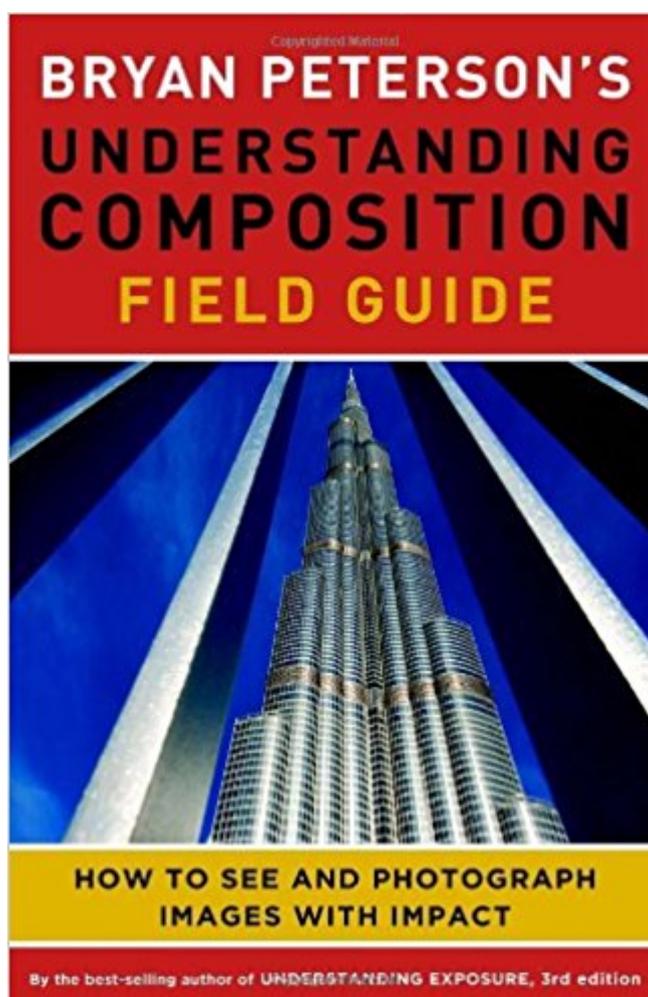


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# Bryan Peterson's Understanding Composition Field Guide: How To See And Photograph Images With Impact



## Synopsis

Learn to “see” more compelling images with this on-the-go field guide from Bryan Peterson! What makes an image amazing? Believe it or not, it is not about the content. What makes a photo compelling is the arrangement of that content—in other words, its composition. The right composition gives your images impact and emotion; the wrong one leaves them flat. In this handy, take-anywhere guide, renowned photographer, instructor, and bestselling author Bryan Peterson frees amateur photographers from the prejudices of what is “beautiful” or “ugly” so that they can instead focus on color, line, light, and pattern. Get the tools you need to show your distinct voice and point of view in every image you shoot. With this guide in your camera bag, you’ll be equipped not only to “see” beautiful images but to successfully shoot them each and every time. Also available as an ebook

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Bryan Peterson is a professional photographer, internationally known instructor, and the bestselling author of *Understanding Exposure*, 3rd Edition; *Understanding Photography Field Guide*; *Understanding Flash Photography*; *Understanding Shutter Speed*; *Understanding Close-Up Photography*; *Learning to See Creatively*; *Understanding Digital Photography*; and *Beyond Portraiture*. He is also the founder of the online photography school *The Perfect Picture School of Photography* (ppsop.com). Bryan lives in Chicago.

I've gotten more out of Bryan's books than any other source and here he has another great one. While it may seem this is a repeat of his *Understanding Photography Field Guide: How to Shoot Great Photographs with Any Camera* this book takes those ideas a step further into composition. Not only is this book full of Bryan's great colorful photos the layout is well designed, colorful, easy to follow and understand. And that's the Kindle version! If you are like me, constantly learning, this is another great one to step up your photography!

I liked this book. I like Bryan's writing style, although I do think in this book it has a bit more of an "edge" than in some of his previous books. However, he always writes in a style that is easy to remember. I found "two steps closer" a refreshing way to remember to fill the frame, for instance, and who would have thought of "crying babies" for background distractions? I have always thought of myself as a "fill the frame" photographer - sometimes too much filling the frame to the detriment of showing the environment. However reading this book that I had gotten lazy and was NOT filling the frame so much anymore - a good mental kick in the butt. I had my wife look at some of my pictures - old and new - and she really gravitated to the ones that "filled the frame." I shall also watch out for "crying babies" in the background when setting up a shot. The last thing I immediately recognized was that I had gotten away from what I used to call "zone focusing." I used to use it all the time to set an area of acceptable focus. I have gotten away from that with newer lenses that only have a distance scale and not a DOF scale as the old manual ones had. However, Bryan reminds that using the distance scale and a few easy to remember distances you can basically set up your lens so you don't have to focus - and thereby work much faster. There is much more of value in this book, and it is a pleasure to read. If you are new to photography, there is a wealth of information. If you've been around the block a few times, there are good reminders. I've been at it since 1959 and, while I now only shoot for pleasure, I still found some excellent reminders, ideas, and energy in this book. It is highly recommended.

Many years ago Kodak published a book "How to make good pictures" which implied that enjoyable photos just don't happen, they are created. In this small book Bryan Peterson will show you how he does it, with some tricks of the trade. (If you want even more tricks read Scott Kelby's "The Digital Photography Book series") Peterson goes through the usual suspects; frame your subjects, rule of thirds, backgrounds, focus (depth of field), arranging items within the picture and many others. Because the publisher printed the example photos on excellent paper, you can really see what

Peterson is talking about and the sometimes subtle differences between pictures. Even though this book can be read by itself, I think the reader would get even more out of it by first reading the author's classic book "Understanding Exposure" which everyone seems to quote. In "Understanding Exposure" he describes better how f stops effect depth of field and emphasis and the differences between Depth of Field in DSLRs and compact cameras. In this book he does list the camera, lens and f stop used for each photo but, to the best of my knowledge he never really explains how to get the same effect with the better compact cameras. "Understanding Exposure" will explain this, especially the 3rd edition. I think that Peterson lifted some of the photos from his other books and on page 251 he points out that our cameras now have the advantage of automatic winders! Really. Peterson's photo examples are usually taken with a full frame DSLR Nikon camera or a professional DSLR camera with a crop factor of 1.5. Even his limited use of the Leica D-Lux (rebadged Panasonic LX-3/5) can do much better than the film rewinders. I'm sure this just slipped by. By reading this book, you can at least get some small idea of the thoughts and creativity of a really great photographer who also enjoys teaching.

"...compelling photography is, first and foremost, not about the content! Compelling photography is about the arrangement of content."--Bryan Peterson

— Bryan Peterson's *Understanding Composition Field Guide: How to See and Photograph Images with Impact*

When I read this I immediately thought of a recent photo\* I had seen of a political candidate speaking to a teacher in a grade school classroom. By any standards this is a typical campaign photo op. Yet the photographer took it one step further. Off in the corner were two children making faces at each other not paying any attention to the adults. The photo was framed with one child on the left smile askew and another on the right rolling her eyes and sticking out her tongue. In between the two in the close distance was the hand shaking politician. What a fresh composition. This is what Bryan Peterson helps us understand. I have read most of Bryan Peterson's books and have always come away with a fresh perspective and a renewed understanding of photography. Through his analysis and experience you can feel him radiate his joy and love of photography. Regarding this book "Understanding Composition" Bryan gives the novice a field of view on "seeing" their image. He gives the enthusiast and hobbyist a fresh perspective and offers the advanced shooter a good read and new ideas. There is literally something for everyone. Whether you "see" new images differently or mine your old images for a fresh perspective Bryan will guide you along that path. For anyone interested in photographic composition this book is a must read.\*Ruth Fremson/NY Times Slide Number 9 (Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg visited a first-grade class at PS 195 in Manhattan Beach,

Brooklyn. [...]

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