

Total time:
2-3 hours



THE IMPORTANCE OF LINES OF SIGHT



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Skill Points:

- Discovering how sight lines work and why
- Learning how to apply sight lines into your images

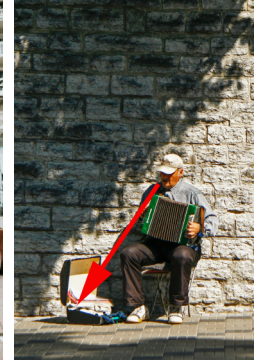
Sight lines or *Line of Sight*, incorrectly referred to as Eye-Lines, compels us to look in a direction. Sight lines are very important, and you should understand them, and look for them in your photography.

KEY LESSON: : When you look at someone, and you notice that they are staring intently in a different direction, what do you do immediately? You look to see what they are looking at! That's exactly why "Sight Lines" work in photography. They create a strong impulse to "look" in a direction within the frame.

Buskers

Left: The photographer attempted to set up their composition so that the large foot and hat in the foreground attracts attention. The leg then was to be a leading line up to the man's face; the intended subject. However, the man's intense stare to camera left forces a viewer's eyes away from the subject.

Right: Here, the *Line of Sight* helps the image, as it does not lead out of the picture, and it adds to the story through viewer direction.

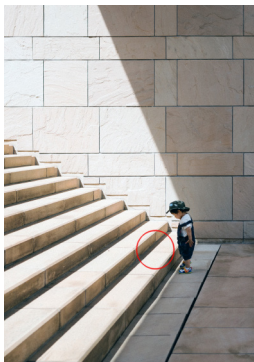


Fighters

Left: Sight lines can make or break a shot. In this example, it's a compromise. The right fighter is looking past his opponent; however, the sight line for the Referee keeps the viewer centered in the picture. The key lesson is that you can have more than one line of sight in a picture, and each one will carry visual weight depending on the overall composition.



Right: Line of sight was critical here: it prevents the bright lights from overpowering the photo.



Boy and Steps

There are two lessons to be learned from this image. First of all, you don't need to see the eyes for "Line of Sight" to work. Secondly, sight lines are so powerful, that even when they are miniscule in a composition, such as this toddler's gaze, it STILL attracts immediate attention!



ACTION ASSIGNMENT!

- 1- Organize a photo shoot where you take a friend or two out for an afternoon to shoot pictures.
- 2- In each photograph that you create, incorporate sight lines as a key element in each composition.
- 3- Try different angles. Sometimes blatantly show the eyes, and then, barely show them or don't show them at all.
- 4- If you brought two friends, try setting up a shot where the "Line of Sight" on one friend overpowers the other, and then try again with both sight lines working together.

HOW DID YOU DO?

- Did you create strong compositions that utilized sight lines?
- Were you able to set up two "Lines of Sight" where one dominated over the other?
- Do you now have a complete understanding of how sight lines can help or break your composition?



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