

EFFECTIVE STORYTELLING PHOTOGRAPHY CHECKLIST



GET STARTED

Do I have time to reflect on the storytelling aspect of this shot?

Yes!

Examine the scene. Determine as specifically as possible the story that you wish to tell with this image.

No!

Shoot your picture and then move to the next step. Attempt a 2nd shot with a story.



What camera position will best convey your story?

Explore...

- Raise the camera position
- Lower the camera position.
- Examine the scene from all possible sides and angles

Pick the camera position



What lens should you use? Ask yourself: Can you change your lens?

Yes!

- Consider these possibilities.
- Compressing the scene – telephoto
- Expanding the scene – wide angle
- Normal field of view
- Depth of field
- Including or excluding background elements

No!

Re-evaluate the camera position, and then move to the next step.



What camera settings should you use?

- ISO:** Is your story better told with a super crisp image or with some noise?
- Shutter Speed:** Is your story better told with some blur or should it be tack sharp?
- Aperture:** You have already considered depth-of-field
 - How does your choice of aperture affect the shutter speed and ISO options?
- Color Balance:** Could a color balance adjustment enhance your story?

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What composition considerations can you employ?

- Have you directed the viewer's eyes right toward your subject?
 - Is the subject placement within the frame the best it can be?
 - Can you make use of leading lines, frames, or contrast to further highlight your subject?
 - Is the story surrounding your subject clear and concise?
 - Is the story surrounding your subject simple- so that the vast majority of viewers will understand your story?



Do you have storytelling concepts in your image?

- Does my shot include a dramatic element?
- Am I addressing one of the storytelling needs of humanity?
 - Entertainment
 - Explain the physical world
 - Belief in a higher power or supernatural forces
 - Communicate an experience
 - Fulfill an aesthetic need for beauty, regularity, and self-expression
 - Record history



How can I use post-production to enhance my story?

- Have I employed localized selective focus?
- Does increasing or decreasing color saturation help reveal my story?
- Could I crop my image to better place my subject for the story?
- Does the contrast in my image support my subject, composition, and story?
- Could advanced photo editing such as grunge effects or compositing increase the story value of my shot?



Have all of decisions above produced the simplest story possible?

- Yes!
You rock!
- No...
Don't worry. Start over!