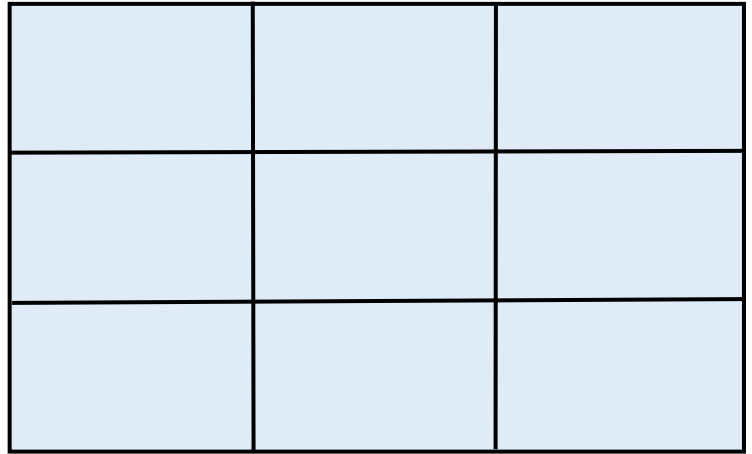


# Rule of Thirds

## 1/3's Composition Simplified

The basic concept of the rule of thirds is to create a pleasing visual balance of arrangements of elements within the format to attract attention and hold the viewer's interest.

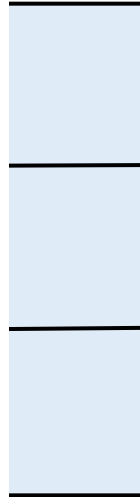
The following examples will demonstrate how the basics of this rule are employed to this end.



Here is an example where the horizon is 1/3 down from the top of the picture.



This photo I took in the Boston, MA area has been cropped to demonstrate the rule of 1/3 in composition. Although the ferry boats are the same size, the optical illusion of depth is changed due to where the horizon is placed. Additionally, placing the horizon in the center, top to bottom, is a bit more boring to look at.



The major elements of the background and water are composed to where the water line is 1/3 up from the bottom.



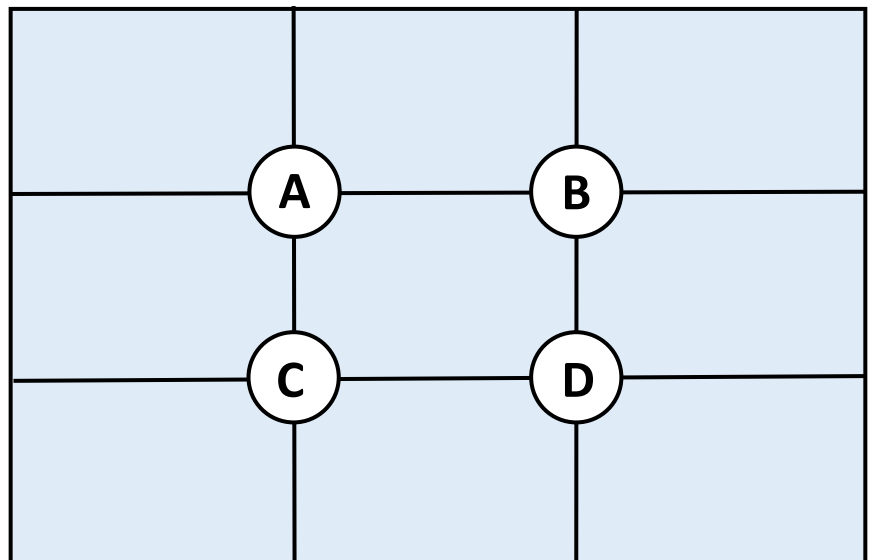
The rule of thirds also applies to vertical formats as well.

Modern digital cameras and cell phones have the feature available to show a grid in the viewfinder to aid in composing photographs.

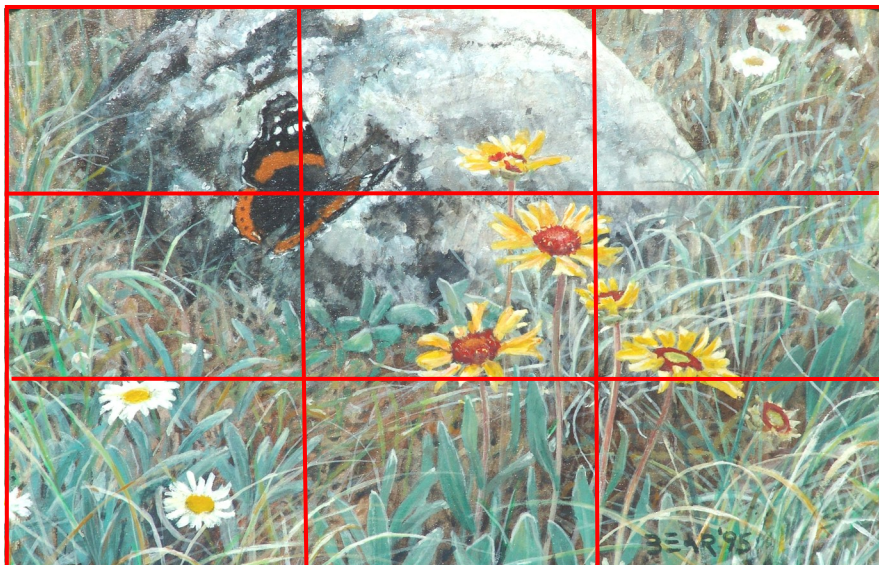
As you watch movies, you will notice that the rule of thirds in composing a main subject on the left or right third is used extensively in cinematography.

## Center of Interest

Another principle of the “Rule of Thirds” is to place the main focal point, center of interest, in the general area of one of the intersections of the thirds divisions.



Here is an example where I put the Red Admiral butterfly in the “A” intersection of this 6” X 9” gouache painting.



In this 54” X 84” oil painting, *The Return*, I designed the entire canvas into thirds, vertical and horizontal.

