

# Pagham Photographers

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## COMPOSITION CHECKLIST

Here is the checklist of things to look for in your composition as a starting point

### **AFTER you have checked your SETTINGS**

1. Is the horizon straight?
2. Is the subject strong and obvious within the image?
3. Are the edges of the frame clean? Is anything poking into the frame that distracts the viewer? Are there elements of the image that lead the eye out of the frame that could be positioned better?
4. Is the background clean – are there distracting elements like a car parked in the background or a fence or a house that doesn't fit? Can you move or change the angle to remove that element?
5. Is the foreground tidy? Are you shooting a landscape or natural scene where there might be branches or leaves or twigs in the foreground that could be tidied away?
6. The position of people in the shot. Do they have a lamp post or a tree growing out of the top of their head? Have you chopped heads, feet, arms or legs off?
7. Eye contact – when shooting a group of people, do we have eye contact with all your subjects?
8. Camera position – are you at the right height/angle for the best composition?
9. Point of focus – when taking photos of people/creatures/animals have you focused on the eye? Do you have a catch-light in the eye?
10. Is the Rule of Thirds being used effectively?
11. Do you have a sense of scale – particularly valid for large landscape scenes?
12. How does the eye travel around the image? Where does it go first? Where does it end up? Is that the story you want to tell the viewer?
13. Lens choice – does the lens you are using affect the composition in a positive or negative way? Would a different lens be worth considering?
14. Less is more – what truly needs to be in the frame? What can you leave out?
15. Is it sharp? Do you want it to be?