

Staff Tips

Improving Your Supporting Photos
—by John Petersen



I've recently been looking through a lot of my old pictures and I've noticed that my favorite photos have people in them. Even when it's a scenery shot I love it when someone I was sharing the experience with is in the photo. In this article I have gone through some of my favorite techniques to get you and your buddies in your hunting photos. Look at each example and think about how the photo makes you feel. Each photo in this article made me wish I was on the hunt—that's what good supporting photos can do. Whether your story gets published or not, when sharing the experience with others, these type of photos are priceless. When you are making memories this fall, don't forget to capture the main characters.



Photo By Roman Erreit

HUNTIN'FOOLS IN THE FIELD

Every year Huntin' Fool members experience hunting like no other collective group on the planet. Our hunts take us places few others go. One of my favorite types of photos feature a hunter in the field combined with hunting terrain or awesome scenery. These types of pictures add "a thousand words" to your story when space is limited. They instantly portray the mood and feel of the hunt and immediately draw the reader in.

Make sure you take the picture so the hunter is at one side of the frame and faces the center of the picture. Having the person in the photo look at the scenery draws your attention to what he is looking at and makes the hunter an accessory to the scenery, not the focal point of the photo. If your subject is glassing give him somewhere in the picture to look. Don't frame him so he's looking off the page.

If you want the hunter to be more of the focal point have

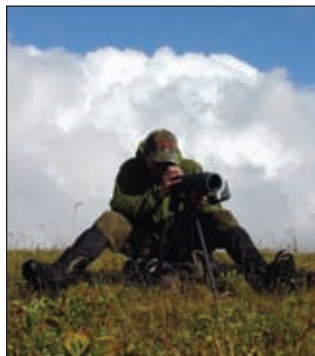


Photo By Chris Culbertson



Photo By Wayne Brown



Photo By Michael Burrell



Photo By Todd Cook

Good Subject Placement



Bad Subject Placement



him look at the camera—try these photos with the subject both looking at the camera and looking away. Some of the best “Huntin’ Fools in the Field” photos are taken as a panoramic series of photos with the hunter featured in the last photo usually enjoying the scene or glassing. Make sure

you include as much of the area the hunter is looking at as possible. This will ensure you get a lot of terrain and the hunter becomes a secondary element. These photos make the viewer feel like he is almost there on the hunt!



SILHOUETTES

One thing you should generally try to avoid while taking pictures is putting whatever you are taking a picture of directly in front of your light source, but to create a silhouette you do just that. With the right setup silhouettes can make awesome photographs and look great in *The Huntin’ Fool* if you decide to submit a story. Many photos that I use in our story layouts combine beautiful skiescapes with silhouetted mountains.

Silhouettes are created when the light behind an object is much brighter than the object. To produce the silhouette effect you force your camera to set its exposure to the bright background and underexpose the object. Optimal times for silhouette photos are at sunrise and sunset, but you can also create this effect when objects are covered in shadows and are set against a bright background. Dark

subjects like a treeline or ridge that make a continuous line across the bottom of the photo or a hunter on the skyline usually make good silhouettes. If you want vivid color in the sky shoot these type of scenes closer to dusk and dawn.

To get proper exposure using an SLR or a fully manual camera, meter the scene on the sky. To force the proper exposure using a point and shoot camera, set up your shot then move your camera slightly so sky fills most of the viewfinder, press and hold the shutter button half way down to set the exposure, then move your camera back to what you want in the shot, and press the shutter button the rest of the way. If your camera has trouble focusing, try setting the focus to infinity or on some models, choose landscape mode. With a digital camera you will be able to view the picture and see if you got the right exposure and if your camera focused properly.



Photo By Jason Leonard



Photo By Michael Joos



Photo By Kenneth Cain

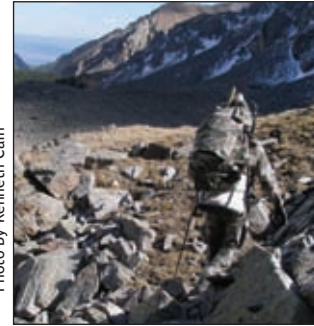


Photo By Kris Kohlthoff

THE JOURNEY

Another major component to many big game hunts is the journey—getting to and from where the animal lives can be an adventure in itself.

Don't miss an opportunity to snap a few photos of your trip. Obstacles, trails, and modes of transportation can make for great supplemental photos especially on extreme, remote, or wilderness hunts.

Once again it's a good idea to "lead" your subject. If your subject is moving give him somewhere to go within the

photo. Don't have him walking out of the picture, rather walking into the picture.

Hunting takes us to some of the most beautiful places on earth—being in the outdoors is a major component to an unforgettable hunt. It's really unfortunate if you get to hunt some of these areas and don't snap a few pictures while you are there. Keeping your camera handy and remembering these tips will ensure you return home with photos to prove how awesome your adventure truly was. Don't forget to take your camera and make a memory!

Good Subject Placement



Photo By Garth Carter

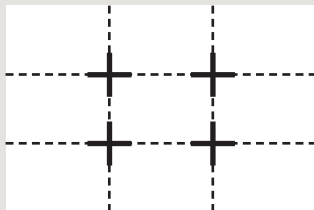
Subject is walking into the picture

Bad Subject Placement

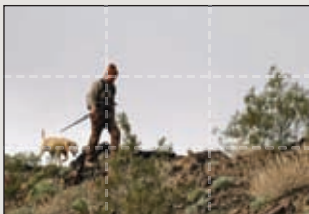


Subject is walking out of the picture

THE RULE OF THIRDS



Good Alignment



Bad Alignment



The rule of thirds is a compositional "rule of thumb" in photography. When taking a photo, imagine it is divided into thirds both horizontally and vertically (see the diagram to the left). Place important features in your picture where these imaginary lines intersect. This technique will often create more tension, energy, and interest in the photo than simply centering the feature would.

You can also use the lines themselves to position major objects in your photograph, like horizon lines, cloud formations, or a person. In the "Good Alignment" example the horizon and the man walking are on these dividing lines. They are not centered in the frame.

This rule can often improve your supporting type photos, but as with any "rule" use this more as a guideline, since great photographs can be taken while ignoring this rule. One case where it's generally better to ignore this rule is with your actual kill photos—but not always.

ADVANCED TECHNIQUE