

LANDSCAPE PHOTOGRAPHY

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The obvious focus should be on LAND, but may include man-made features if secondary in role.

Cityscapes, Seascapes & Skyscapes can also be considered landscapes.

Many snap shooters are disappointed with the loss of splendor in their shots. With experience, you will learn you must convey emotion and feeling along with a technically good image for impact.

Factors to archive emotion & technical impact include: camera position, lens choice, filters, film choice (white balance), exposure and type & direction of light.

Camera Position: Is putting the camera in the best location to for the best image possible. Ground level to include a foreground plant, or high on an overlook cliff to evoke an open aerial sense.

Lens: Wide-angle lens will expand space and shift perspective to give close subjects dominance while far subjects are diminished in importance. Telephoto lens compresses space emphasizing distance subjects and eliminating close subjects from view. Zoom lenses make composition & framing easier. Lens hoods prevent light from shining on front of lens causing flares & haze.

Depth of Field: A must for landscape images. Learn to shoot at the smallest aperture and ideal focus point 1/3 into image. A tripod is needed for small apertures and slow shutter speeds.

Film: Different films have different color palettes. Fuji is a cool film for blues & greens. Kodak is a warm film for yellows, oranges & reds. Slow ISO film for steady subjects, fast ISO film for windy days. Slow ISO film for cotton candy waterfall effects, and also for fine grain sharpest in images. White Balance is the digital camera version of film choice. Never use Auto-White Balance it will not give you what you expect in certain situations. Auto-white balance will remove to warm orange color of a sunset.

Filters: The polarizer & Graduate Neutral Density filters are necessary for good landscape images. Also a UV to remove haze in the distance, and Skylight to add a little warmth to overcast days.

Exposure: Know what is possible and what is not. Scenes with too much contrast will have to lose detail in the shadows or the highlights. To increase color saturation under-expose slide film 1/2-1/2 stop and over expose print film (over exposure with B&W film will increase contrast). When in doubt BRACKET. Why not bracket so that you have a choice.

Type and Direction of Light: It may be a clear sunny day or a grey overcast day; the two will not produce the same kind of image. Know what type of light you want / need for the image you are shooting for. For the Grand Canyon you would want a clear sunny day, the Smoky Mts. maybe an overcast day. Direction of light can be front, side or back light. All effect landscapes differently. Front light is even and will flatten subjects. Side light increases depth & texture also most dramatic. Back light will silhouette subjects.

Composition: Be aware of static compositions where horizons cutting image in half. Use rule of thirds to place the center of interest.

Perspective: Use it to add depth to image and gain compositional interest. Photographs are 2-D but the subject was 3-D, so the photographer must create the illusion of depth.

Geometric Perspective: Subject's location in image is controlled by camera position. Subject size in image is controlled by lens focal length.

Ground Plane Perspective: Location of subject on ground plane gives a good visual indication of its relative distance.

Diminishing Size Perspective: The farther away an object is from the camera the smaller it will appear in the image.

Light & Shade Perspective: Good side lighting will produce highlights & shadows, which make the subject form & shape more 3-D looking.

Distance Perspective: Due to haze in the atmosphere, subjects farther from the camera will appear lighter, lower in contrast, less sharp & reduced in color saturation.