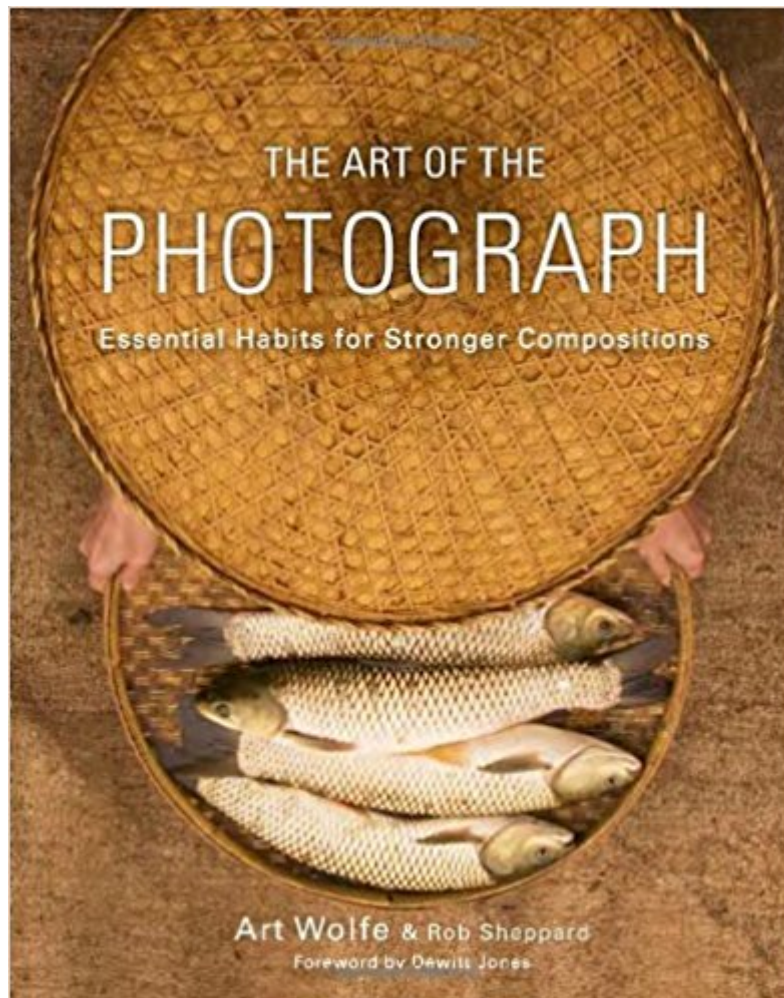




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The Art Of The Photograph: Essential Habits For Stronger Compositions



Synopsis

Learn to take better pictures in this step-by-step, how-to photography guide filled with tips on lighting, equipment, inspiration, and more. Featuring more than 200 of master photographer Art Wolfe's stunning images, *The Art of the Photograph* helps amateur photographers of all levels break bad habits and shatter common yet incorrect assumptions that hold many photographers back. This is Wolfe's ultimate master class, in which he shares the most important insights and techniques learned in four decades of award-winning photography. Along with co-author Rob Sheppard, Wolfe challenges us to stop focusing on subjects we feel we should photograph and instead, to "see like a camera sees," seek out a personal point of view, and construct stunning, meaningful images. You'll also learn how to:

- Reexamine prejudices that define (and limit) what you photograph
- See beyond the subject to let light and shadow lead you to the right image
- Find inspiration, including the story behind Wolfe's own photographic journey
- Use formal art principles to build more compelling images
- Choose the right camera and lens for the image you see in your mind's eye
- Recognize the 10 deadly sins of composition and how to avoid them
- and even get a behind-the-lens look at Wolfe's equipment and workflow.

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Customer Reviews

"Art Wolfe is a virtuoso." —Morgan Freeman

ART WOLFE's stunning images are recognized throughout the world for their mastery of color, composition, and perspective. Wolfe is a recipient of the Photographic Society of America's Progress Medal and the coveted Alfred Eisenstaedt Magazine Photography Award, as well as a Lifetime Achievement award by the North American Nature Photography Association. Wolfe's television series, Art Wolfe's Travels to the Edge, airs on PBS stations throughout the country. He is also a popular speaker for such companies as Microsoft, IBM, and Sheraton Hotels. He can be found at artwolfe.com as well as on Facebook and Twitter. ROB SHEPPARD is a photographer, author, naturalist and nature photographer, editor and videographer. He has written and photographed many books and magazine articles but what is most important to him about them is knowing that he has helped people become better photographers and gain a better connection to nature. Rob is a Fellow with the North American Nature Photography Association, and many people also know him as the long-time, previous editor of Outdoor Photographer magazine. Some of the books he has done: Landscape Photography: From Snapshot to Great Shot, Macro Photography: From Snapshot to Great Shot, The Magic of Digital Nature Photography, and National Geographic Field Guide to Digital Photography. His website is at joyofnatureandphotography.com, blog at natureandphotography.com.

I must admit that I am addicted to photography books. I have more than my bookcases can hold, and yet I continue to buy more, in the eternal quest for the perfect book about photography, while there is no such thing as the perfect book, I am happy to report that many have come very close to this designation. Among my favorites are ALL of Joe McNally's books, several of Michael Freeman's (although his recent Photo School Fundamentals is NOT among them), Ansel Adams' The Print and The Negative, and Light: science and Magic. I am very pleased to report that The Art of the Photograph is the newest addition to my list of favorites. Art and Rob cover all the usual suspects, such as use of line, color, and so on, but they do so in a way which is fresh and engaging. No significant amount of space is wasted covering the usual clichéd content which is predictably found in most books (like the rule of thirds, the bigger the light the softer the shadows, the sunny sixteen rule, and so on), I don't know how to describe the approach they have taken except to say that it is profoundly different and far more effective, at least for me. Virtually every page had some nugget of information that made me slap my forehead and say, "wow." And of course the photography is absolutely stunning. Art Wolfe is a true master, and his photos are a sheer joy to view. This is easily one of the top three books (for ANY skill level) in my library, and I am so grateful to have found it. You will be too.

If you were to buy only one book to inspire your photography and take it to the next level, *The Art of the Photograph* is the book to have. This magnificent book was created by the unbeatable combination of master photographers Art Wolfe and Rob Sheppard—specifically, it offers you photos by Art Wolfe and his stories about how he learned and now approaches his craft, along with Rob Sheppard's text. Having had personal experience of Rob's thorough and enthusiastic teaching, I can say that he is up to form in this book. What makes Art Wolfe's photographs the ideal visual material for this book—aside, of course, from his being one of the most outstanding photographers in the world today—is the amazing variety of subjects he captures. He travels the world, photographing everywhere from the Palouse to Antarctica, photographing people, landscapes, even abstracts. In fact, he advises you not to limit yourself by self-identifying as a particular type of photographer but, instead, to be open to everything. One of the valuable concepts I've learned from the book is to be looking for the photograph, not for the subject. The chapters are titled "Finding Inspiration," "Discovering the Subject," "Constructing the Image," "Camera and Lens," "The Elements of Design," "Color and Black-and-White," "Light and Composition," "Creative Solutions," "The 10 Deadly Sins of Composition," and "Equipment and Workflow." The chapters offer springboards to help you formulate your own philosophy of and approach to photographing; this is not a "how to" book of the technical aspects of photography. One of the great strengths of *The Art of the Photograph* is that it is conceived, in part, as a dialogue between the authors and the reader. This is vitally important. If you're going to teach something as complex as *Essential Habits for Stronger Composition* (the book's subtitle), you have to provide the opportunity for the student to appropriate the material for themselves, to reflect on how it applies to them. This is achieved by questions for reflection at the end of each chapter. So, do keep a notebook as you make your way through the book, not only to jot down your reflections but also to make a note of concepts that pop out at you as particularly important. One of my favorite parts of the book (as well as the most challenging) is Chapter 9, "The 10 Deadly Sins of Composition." Here is your moment of honest reckoning, as you acknowledge which of these sins you are guilty of. Come to terms with those sins of yours, improve your work accordingly, and you're well on your way. One word of caution, and I highlight this because inevitably someone is going to criticize the book for something it wasn't intended to do: Aside from basic exposure information, Art does not go into detail about how he captured and processed each photo.

That's not the point of having the photos in the book: the point is deftly expressed by another master photographer, Dewitt Jones, in his foreword: "Don't analyze them, just experience them. You are in the presence of one of the finest photographers of our time; let his images instruct you. Let your eyes understand the lessons that the text will eventually teach your brain." In other words, make the photos and their individual elements your own; let them help you to be an active learner rather than a passive recipient of information. Not only is *The Art of the Photograph* an indispensable resource for the individual learn-on-your-own photographer, but it would also be an invaluable text for a college-level course on composition for photography majors. Professors in art programs, take note.

I just did not like this book and didn't find it very helpful but it is likely due to personal taste. I just want to take nice photographs and was hoping to learn more about composition and angles, etc. This book does that but all of the lessons seem to involve making things abstract art. Zooming way in on mountain ranges so just the tip of the peak fills the frame, then turning it black and white and flipping it upside down. Taking macro shots of cracks in the ground and turning them black and white. Taking wide angle shots of a single brick in a wall and flipping it vertically. I understand some of the thought process but these are not the kind of photographs that appeal to me and I cannot figure out how to adapt the information to my own uses. I

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