

GLOSSARY ON TERMS RELATED TO PHOTOGRAPHY¹

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1. PRESENTATION

Source: <http://www.reframingphotography.com/content/mounting-matting-and-framing>

A **framed** photograph has a frame (i.e. an enclosing case or border into which it is fitted) around it.

Some framed photographs are **matted**, i.e. they are surrounded by a **window mat** or **passe-partout** (Spanish *paspartú*), which is a border of cardboard, cloth, etc, placed around a picture to act as a contrast between picture and frame. The opposite of matted is **matless**.

<http://www.wordreference.com/definition/passe-partout>

<http://www.wordreference.com/definition/mat>

¹ This document is based on a previous resource created by Mauricio Pérez and Carmen Río:
<http://mperjim.webs.ull.es/jquery/index.html>.

2. FORMAT

- **Landscape (i.e. horizontal)** format is a format of printed material of which the width of the article is larger than the height. This is the opposite of **portrait (i.e. vertical)** format.
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Landscape_format
- **Square** format is a format of printed material in which the four sides are equal. Some cameras of the film age were exclusively square format cameras. Nowadays, with digital cameras, you can take a photo and crop it to any aspect ratio you desire.
<http://digital-photography-school.com/the-beautiful-square>
- **Panoramic** format: Panoramic photography uses specialized equipment or software that captures images showing a field of view approximating, or greater than, that of the human eye. This generally means it has an aspect ratio of 2:1 or larger, the image being at least twice as wide as it is high. The resulting images take the form of a wide strip.
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Panoramic_photography
- Other formats: oval, round...

3. THE FRAMING

The framing is the portion of the visual environment (scene) that is selected by the lens during the shooting of the photograph. The framing determines what appears in the final image by establishing how the elements are placed within the picture according to a given composition. The framing depends on various factors: the position of the camera, the location of the viewpoint and the amount of space covered.

Source: <http://mperjim.webs.ull.es/jquery/contex.html#pantalla4>

3.1. THE POSITION OF THE CAMERA

- **Horizontal framing:** The most frequent type of framing, it facilitates the use of the rules of composition (rule of space, rule of thirds, golden ratio). It allows the photographer to take shots in which horizontality predominates, thus creating a sense of balance, tranquility, peacefulness, etc. It is normally used for landscapes and group portraits.
- **Vertical framing:** This type of framing requires a 90-degree rotation of the camera. The verticality achieved enables us to capture more effectively subjects in which this condition predominates (portraits, cityscapes, the human figure, and so on). The dominance of verticality is often associated with meanings of spirituality, strength, firmness, etc.
- **Tilted framing, also known as Dutch angle:** It is possible to break away from the usual horizontal vision by choosing to tilt the camera. Although the outcome always has the format of a horizontal or vertical photograph, the objects are inclined with respect to the real or imaginary horizon line, as if we

were tilting our head to the side. This type of framing enables us to obtain photographs in which oblique lines predominate, thus creating a sense of dynamism, psychological uneasiness, unbalance, tension, etc.

3.2. THE LOCATION OF THE VIEWPOINT (CAMERA ANGLE)

Sources: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Camera_angle,
<http://mperjim.webs.ull.es/jquery/contex.html#pantalla4>

The position of the camera with respect to the subject represents the angle, taking as a reference the level of the human eye. The angle is the inclination of the optical axis of the camera with respect to the horizontal plane.

- In a **neutral** or **eye-level** shot (Spanish *toma neutral*) the camera is level with the subject.
- In a **high-angle** shot (Spanish *toma picada*), the camera is physically higher than the subjects (but not directly above) and is looking down upon them. The viewer experiences a sense of strength and superiority while the subject suggests a sense of weakness and inferiority.
- In an **overhead** shot (Spanish *toma cenital*), the camera is directly above the subjects and faces down on them.
http://www.proz.com/kudoz/spanish_to_english/cinema_film_tv_drama/2633732-toma_cenital.html
 - A **bird's eye view** is an aerial photograph of a large area, with a perspective as though the observer were a bird, often used in the making of maps. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bird%27s-eye_view
- A **low-angle** shot (Spanish *toma contrapicada*) is taken from below the subject. When the angle of the optical axis is oblique and follows a descending trajectory, the camera observes the subject from a higher point, thus creating a high-angle shot. The viewer experiences a sense of weakness and inferiority while the subject suggests a sense of strength and superiority.
- An **extreme low-angle** or **nadir** shot (Spanish *toma nadir*) is positioned right below the subject's feet.
<https://www.nfi.edu/low-angle-shot/>

3.3. THE AMOUNT OF SPACE COVERED

Sources: <http://mperjim.webs.ull.es/jquery/contex.html#pantalla4>,
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Close-up>

The proportion that is taken as a reference is the human one, which enables us to create the following typology depending on how much space the subject occupies in the framing:

- **Extreme close-up:** The shot is so tight that only a detail of the subject, such as someone's eyes, can be seen.
- **Close-up:** the head of the subject takes up the whole picture.
- **Shoulder portrait (or medium close-up).**
- **Half-body** portrait.
- **American shot:** medium-long ("knee") shot.
- **Full-body** portrait.
- **Long shots** allow us to see the entire subjects plus their field of action.
- In an **extreme long shot**, the figure is insignificant within the landscape, there is a predominance of space, of the environment, as opposed to the figure.

4. GENRES in Photography

Portrait, nude, landscape, seascape, cityscape, still-life, fashion, social, war, industrial....

PORTRAITS

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portrait_photography

The genre of **portrait photography** or **portraiture** is photography of a person or group of people that displays the expression, personality, and mood of the subject.

- **Self-portrait**
- **Individual vs group** portraits
- **Environmental** portrait (Spanish *retrato en su contexto*): The environmental approach depicts the subjects in their environment, be that a work, leisure, social or family one. The subjects are often shown as doing something, a teacher in a classroom, an artist in a studio, a child in a playground.
- **Candid** portrait (Spanish retrato espontáneo) vs **posing** portrait:
 - **Candid** photography does not have a posed appearance, but a spontaneous look. This is achieved by avoiding prior preparation of the subject and by either surprising the subject or by not distracting the subject during the process of taking photos.

- o When subjects **pose**, they deliberately adopt a certain physical attitude to be represented by the photographer.
<https://www.joshuanava.biz/memories/the-three-basic-portrait-poses.html>

- o **Profile** view pose (Spanish *pose de perfil*)
- o **Full face** view pose (Spanish *pose frontal*)
- o **Three-quarter** view pose (Spanish *pose tres cuartos*)
- o **Rear** view pose (Spanish *pose de espaldas*)

- o In contrast with candid shots, **staged portraiture** (Spanish *retratos escenificados*) concerns the photographic portrait that has been arranged or set-up. Staging gives the artist the opportunity to make very specific and careful choices, in order to control every element and transmit a given concept in a powerful way.

<https://magazine.artland.com/staged-photography-top-ten>

- o Staged portraits are often taken in a studio. In studio portraits, not only does the photographer direct the pose and position of the subject, but also the background, the lighting and the props.

<http://photography.tutsplus.com/articles/taking-amazing-studio-portraits-on-a-tight-budget--photo-858>

props: small objects such as a book, weapon, etc., used by actors in a play or film. Spanish: *elementos del decorado*

http://www.ldoceonline.com/Theatre-topic/prop_2

- o To a certain extent, all portraits attempt to reflect the personality or state of mind of the subjects, but **psychological** portraits are those in which this dimension is emphasized.

5. SHARPNESS

<http://www.cambridgeincolour.com/tutorials/sharpness.htm>

Sharpness (Spanish *definición*) refers to the clarity of detail in a photo.

- o Two fundamental factors contribute to the perceived sharpness of an image: **resolution** (Spanish *resolución*) and **acutance** (Spanish *acutancia*). For digital cameras, resolution is limited by your digital sensor, whereas acutance depends on both the quality of your lens and the type of post-processing.

- Acutance describes how quickly image information transitions at an edge, and so high acutance results in sharp transitions and detail with clearly defined borders.
 - Resolution describes the camera's ability to distinguish between closely spaced elements of detail.
- Sharpness also depends on other factors which influence our perception of resolution and acutance, such as digital image **noise** (Spanish *ruido*) or film **grain** (Spanish *grano*).
<http://www.cambridgeincolour.com/tutorials/image-noise.htm>
- Film grain or granularity is the random optical texture of processed photographic film due to the presence of small silver particles in the photographic emulsion. The amount of grain depends on both the type of film (the higher the **ISO speed** –i.e. the higher the sensitivity of film to light, the more grain you get) and the definition at which the photo is observed (grain will be more noticeable in an **enlarged** picture).

ISO speed: Spanish *escala ISO de sensibilidad fotográfica*

To enlarge: Spanish *ampliar*

Enlargement: Spanish *ampliación*

- Image noise is the digital equivalent of film grain for analogue cameras. Noise appears as random speckles on an otherwise smooth surface. Noise increases with the sensitivity setting in the camera (ISO speed), length of the exposure, etc.
- Although grain and noise often detract from an image, they are sometimes desirable since at certain levels they can increase the apparent sharpness of an image.

Photographers decide on the **level of sharpness** they need: sometimes they are interested in pictures with **large depth of field**, sometimes in **small or shallow depth of field**.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Depth_of_field

- **Depth of field** is the distance between the nearest and farthest objects in a scene that appear acceptably sharp in an image.
- **Large** depth of field: Practically the entire image has a **sharp definition** (e.g. a landscape).
- **Small or shallow** depth of field: the subject is emphasized at the expense of the rest of the photograph, which appears **unfocused, blurred**. This type of technique is known as **selective focus** (Spanish *desenfoque selectivo*).
- A typical example of a photo with shallow depth of field is a **macro shot**, i.e. a **close-up** of a subject at greater than life size.

How can you **modify the level of sharpness**? By controlling **EXPOSURE**, i.e. the quantity of light reaching a photographic film, as determined by shutter speed and lens aperture. In digital photography "film" is substituted with "sensor".

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Exposure_\(photography\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Exposure_(photography))

<http://www.steves-digicams.com/knowledge-center/sharpness.html#b>

- The **slower** the **shutter speed** (i.e. the **longer** the **exposure**), the **less sharp** the image. There is more time for external factors, such as camera shake, to introduce blur. To avoid camera shake we should use a tripod and a **remote shutter release** (Spanish *disparador remoto*).
- Techniques requiring **long exposure** times (when you open the shutter for much longer than normal):
 - **Motion blur** (Spanish *desenfoque de movimiento*) refers to the apparent streaking of rapidly moving objects in a still image.
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Motion_blur
 - In pictures with motion blur the photographer sometimes captures trails of light (e.g. the lights of moving cars).
 - **Light painting** is the photographic technique of using a moving light source, such as a flashlight, as if it were a paintbrush, to alter an image while taking a long exposure photograph (the camera stands on a tripod with its shutter kept open).
<https://www.masterclass.com/articles/the-best-light-painting-photography-tips#what-is-light-painting>
 - **Panning** (Spanish *barrido*)
In panning the moving elements appear focused or only slightly blurred, while what we see out of focus is the environment, which is usually static in reality
Panning involves swivelling a camera horizontally from a fixed position. When photographing a moving subject, the exposure time must be long enough to allow the background to blur due to the camera movement as the photographer follows the subject in the viewfinder.
Panning is sometimes combined with motion blur.
Sources:
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Panning_\(camera\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Panning_(camera))
<https://photographylife.com/motion-blur-panning-photography>
- Very **high shutter speeds** (i.e. very short exposure times) allow us to achieve **frozen/freeze motion** effects (Spanish *movimiento congelado*), that is, a sharp image that stops the movement that is happening in the photo.
<https://clickitupanotch.com/freezing-motion-photographs>

6. CONTRAST

<http://digital-photography-school.com/getting-better-contrast-in-your-photography>
<http://www.photofairy.net/tutorials/high-key-vs-low-key/>

- o **High contrast:** An extreme difference between dark and light.
- o **Low contrast:** A gradual or lesser difference between dark and light.
- o **High key** (Spanish *clave alta*): A high key photo is overall very bright and has a lot of white and light in it. The typical high key image appears overexposed, but there should be no actual overexposure (such as a complete “white out” or loss of details in the highlights). In high key images, contrast tends to be minimal.
- o **Low key** (Spanish *clave baja*): Appearing “underexposed” or dark, without actual underexposure and loss of details in relevant areas, low key images use high contrast to illuminate contours of a subject in order to emphasize its form.