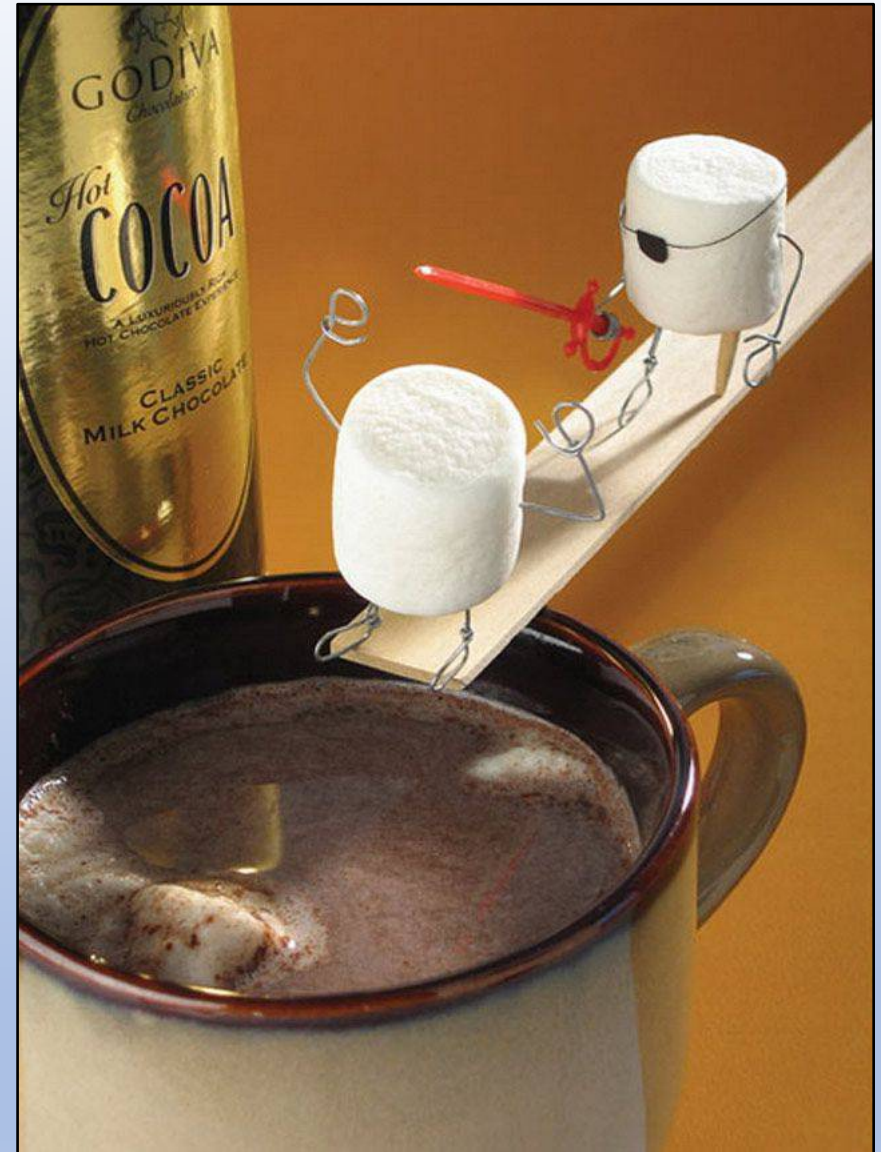


# Still Life Photography



ASOHOM Photo Club, May 6, 2020

# What is still life photography?



Still life photography is a genre of [photography](#) used for the depiction of inanimate subject matter, typically a small group of objects.

It is the application of photography to the [still life](#) artistic style. An example is [food photography](#) or [tabletop photography](#).

This genre gives the photographer more freedom in the arrangement of design elements within a [composition](#) compared to other photographic genres, such as [landscape](#) or [portrait photography](#).

[Lighting](#) and [framing](#) are important aspects of still life photography composition.

## Guiding Principles

### Objects should be complementary

They look natural together

They have similar shapes, colors, textures, uses, etc.

They work together in a common theme



### Try to tell a story

What is happening in your picture?

Did something happen before the photo was taken?

Will something happen after the photo is taken?

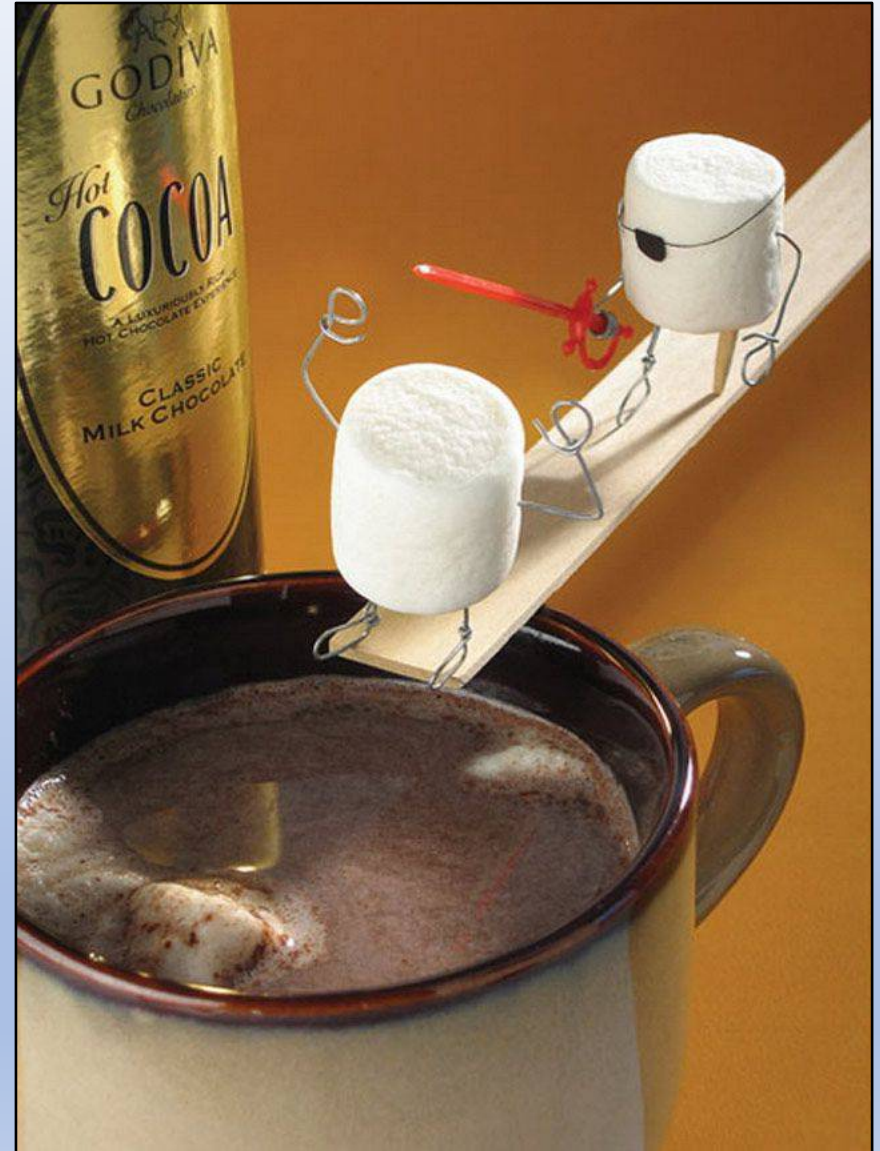




Objects belong together

What's happening in these photos?





## Guiding Principles (2)

q Rule of Thirds

q Leading Lines

q Rule<sup>1</sup> of Odds

<sup>1</sup> Break any rule if you must







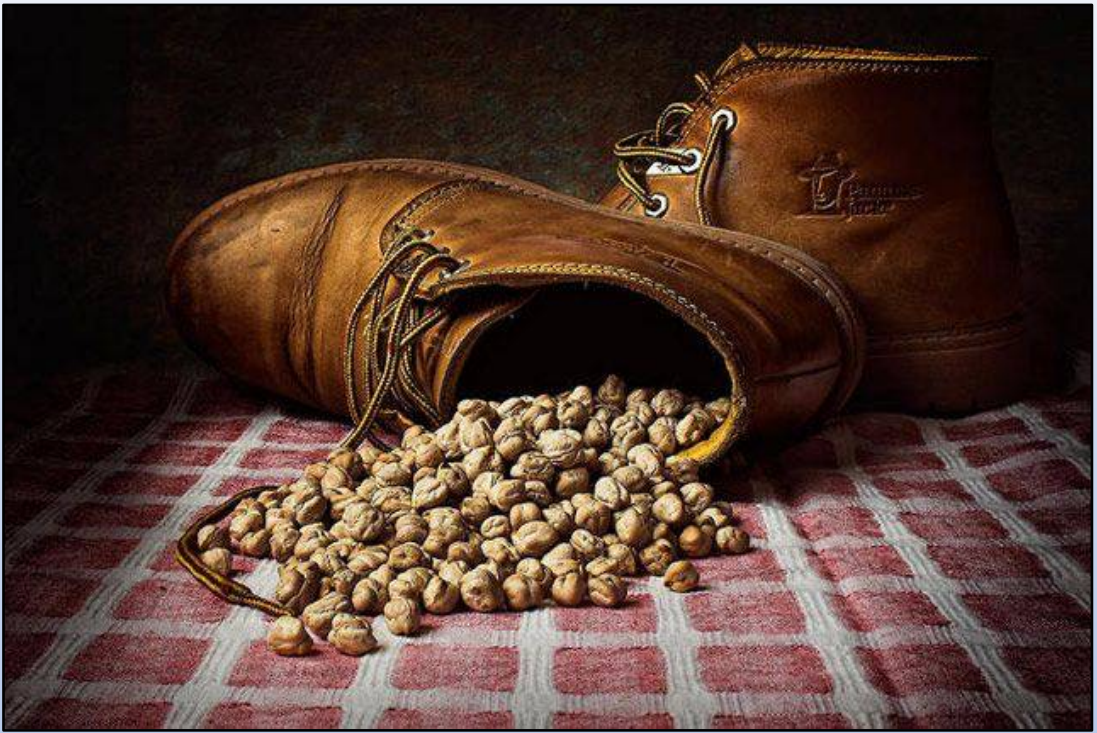




# Rule of Odds

An odd number of objects is generally better than an even number





# Make the Ordinary Interesting



Change the angle or characteristics of an object

Use geometric shapes







# Lighting



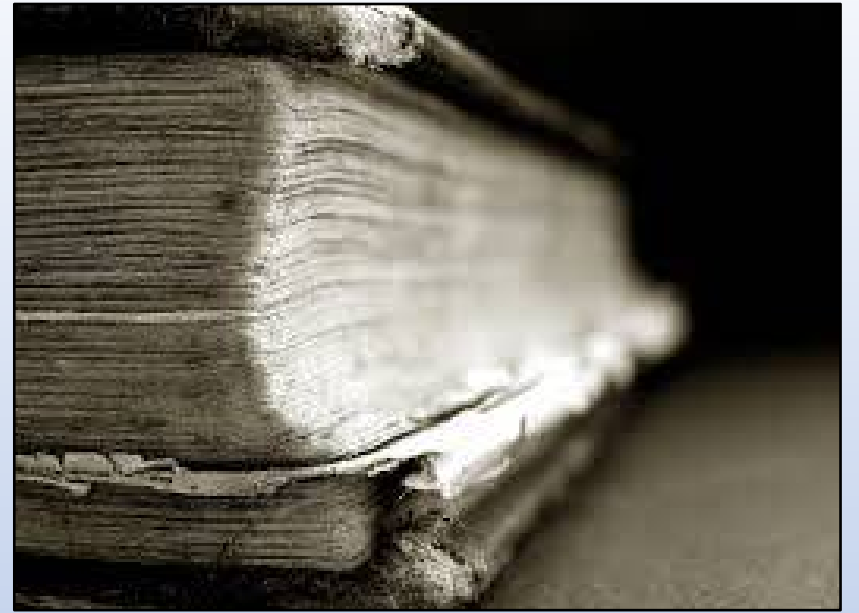
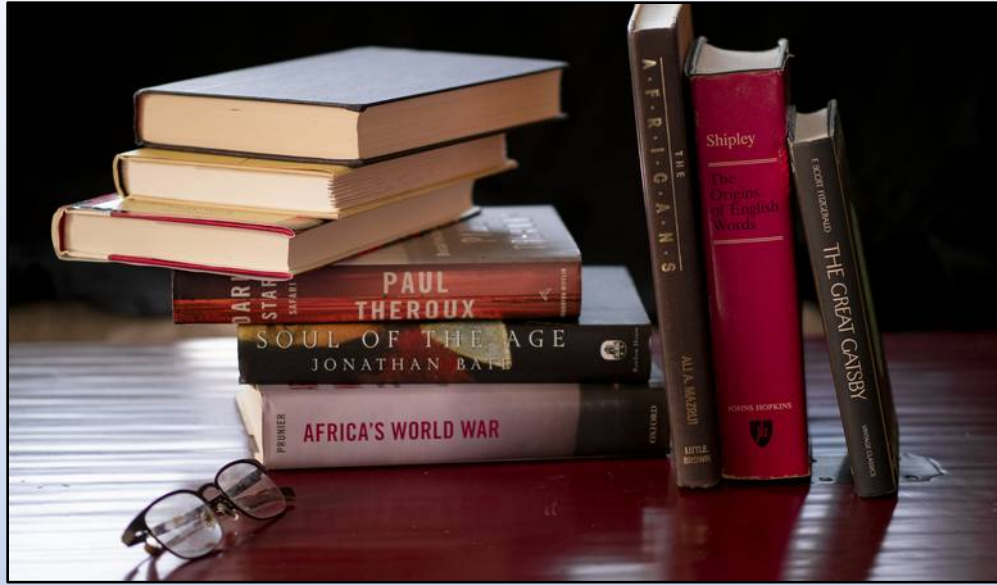
# Control Your Lighting

Use the light to direct the viewer's eyes through the image. Light sources that appear from the left tend to make the viewer's eyes walk through the picture like they're reading a book.

If the shadows are too harsh, add another light source or diffuse the one you've already got.

Light also can accentuate textures in your image. Changing the angle of your light source can lead to dramatic changes in the mood and appearance of the picture.

Take your time. The trial and error phase is half the fun!



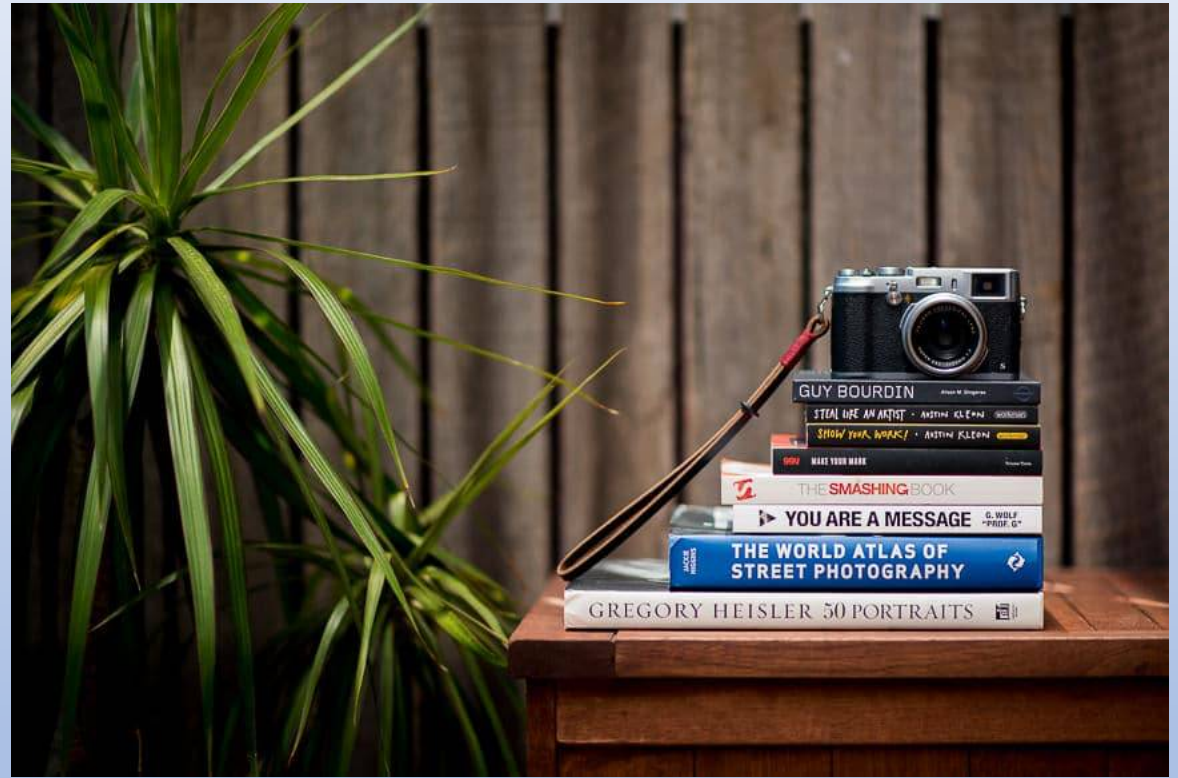
# Low-key Lighting vs. Hard-Key Lighting

**Low-key images** are deeply contrasted and maybe even moody. Use low-key lighting for unique looks. With one light source and a fast shutter speed, you can make objects seem to float on black backgrounds.

Low-key lighting works great in black and white images. It's also a great way to emphasize textures, shapes, and forms.

**High-key images** are bright and evenly lit. Shadows are softer, and the light is usually diffused nicely. High-key images tend to emphasize color and detail.





## The L-Shaped Composition & Negative Space




YOU EITHER SEE THE LETTER OR THE GIRL.

DON'T TEXT AND DRIVE.





MELTING ICEBERGS LEAD TO SINKING SKYLINES





### Think small.

Our little car isn't so much of a novelty any more.  
 A couple of dozen college kids don't try to squeeze inside it.  
 The guy at the gas station doesn't ask where the gas goes.  
 Nobody even stares at our shape.  
 In fact, some people who drive our little

flavor don't even think 32 miles to the gallon is going any great guns.  
 Or using five pints of oil instead of five quarts.  
 Or never needing anti-freeze.  
 Or racking up 40,000 miles on a set of tires.  
 That's because once you get used to

some of our economies, you don't even think about them any more.  
 Except when you squeeze into a small parking spot. Or renew your small insurance. Or pay a small repair bill.  
 Or trade in your old VW for a new one.  
 Think it over.





# Be Creative!

In other forms of photography, you get to choose some of the elements you want to control. For example, a landscape photographer gets to choose where they go and at what time of day.

Still lifes are very different in that you can dream up any photo you want and make it happen. You can be as creative as you like in terms of location, lighting, effects, and post-production techniques.

Go forth and create!

