

# How To "Wow!"



The Friedman Archives Guide to Great Classic Car  
Photography using ANY camera

by  
*GARY L. FRIEDMAN*

*[www.FriedmanArchives.com](http://www.FriedmanArchives.com)*

# FORWARD

What you're about to read will change your thinking, forever, about how to take a picture.

Gary Friedman has been my friend since 1999 when we worked together. What endears him to nearly everyone I've ever introduced him to is his capacity to explain something very difficult in a way that anyone with any educational background can understand.

Gary lives in southern California and each year he travels to Henderson, NV to be our official photographer for our Cadillac Through The Years annual car show. In 2019, it will be our 14<sup>th</sup> show.

I'm so grateful that Gary consented to lend his considerable talents to the subject of **WOW** when photographing cars.

What Gary doesn't mention in this fantastic eBook is that those that attend his seminar will be able to put their newly developed skills to work immediately at our annual car show held at the Town Square on Las Vegas Boulevard on the 28<sup>th</sup> of April, 2019.

I'm so fortunate to have a friend in Gary. Believe me when I say, you'll feel the same way after taking his seminar and then using his *Tips and Tricks* to produce photos that **WOW**.

Here's a special offer for those of you thinking of taking his seminar. On Sunday, April 28<sup>th</sup> starting at 10:00 am and going till 4:00 pm you can take pictures at our Cadillac Through The Years car show.

If you participate, our club will publish your submitted photos on our website. You can see some of Gary's work from previous years by [clicking here](#). And the work you submit to us will be posted along with Gary's [work here](#). You will be the students of WOW, taught by Gary Friedman.

Take Gary's course offered on page 36 and allow us to publish your work. Please enjoy this very special eBook.

Till then . . .

DR Rawson

*President*

The Las Vegas Cadillac Club

# INTRODUCTION

Hi. My name is Gary Friedman. I take a lot of pictures, including those of classic Cadillacs. I sell some of them on my stock image website

[www.FriedmanArchives.com](http://www.FriedmanArchives.com).



Most people think that it takes a big camera to make great photos. That's not true. The real secret is great light. Great light and strong composition. Combine great light and strong composition and you can get "Wow!" images with any camera - even with your smartphone.

I share the secrets of taking great pictures in this short e-book, which is aimed at classic car enthusiasts. There's nothing difficult about it – just learning to see light and imagining the picture you want to take before you turn on your camera or your smartphone.

At the end of this book you may ask yourself, “Is that really all there is to it?” The answer will be “Yes, that’s all”.

**TIP:** *If light and composition are the real secrets, then why do professional photographers waste their money on big, expensive cameras? I’ll answer that question at the end of this ebook.*

So, let’s get started with something so essential that hardly anyone knows about it.

## LIGHT

Most people take this for granted, but you should know that the camera cannot see as much light as your eye can. In the illustration below, the short line on the top shows how much light your camera can see, whereas the line on the bottom shows how much light your eye can see. Camera manufacturers do that on purpose, (for good reason), but if you don’t know this it can lead to frustration.

How much light your camera can see



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How much light your eye can see

See that skateboarding image below? It didn't look that way to my eye. I could see the clothes he was wearing and I could read the stickers on his skateboard.



But the camera couldn't see what I could see. It could either capture the sky, or the skateboarder, but not both.

Because I knew this, I told the camera to make the sky look normal, knowing the skateboarder would come out black. Knowledge is power!

Right away this explains a lot. It explains why a scene can look completely normal to you yet completely awful to your camera.

It explains why a normal camera might need a flash while it looks perfectly fine to your eyes.

It explains why Hollywood studios need such huge lights, only to have the scene look perfectly normal to movie audiences.

It explains why both of the pictures below looked fine to my eye, but only one came out as a good photograph.





And that's why so many pictures can look worse on your smartphone than they do to your eye. (Like the image below).

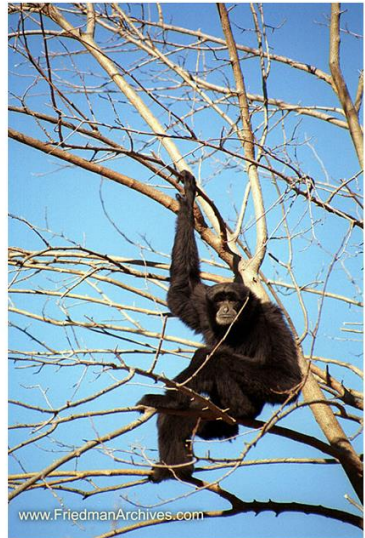


The trick is to seek out the light that will work well with your phone's camera. Light is everything in photography.

Here are a few more examples to drive home the point. Both the examples below looked perfectly good to my eye – yet the one with better light (the right image) looked better to the camera.



Sometimes you have to come back at a different time of day in order for the light to be good for your camera.



**TIP:** Would an expensive camera be able to make bad light look better?" The answer is "probably not". Look at the pictures below and decide which is better:



*Bad Light*



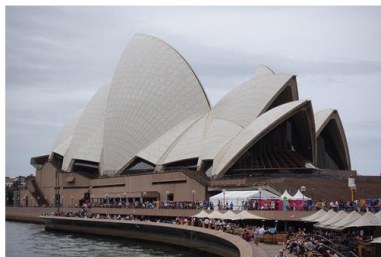
*Bad Light with  
expensive camera*



*Good light*

So, just like there is no substitute for good focusing, there is no substitute for good light. (None!)

Sometimes it pays to wait until the natural light is right for the camera:





If you're taking portraits, good light from an open window is essential to make it look good for the camera:



From now on, as you are out exploring your world, be aware of light that will look good for your camera. You can know if it's right because your digital camera gives you instant feedback – just take a picture and look at it immediately. If the light is good the image will look great in the display.

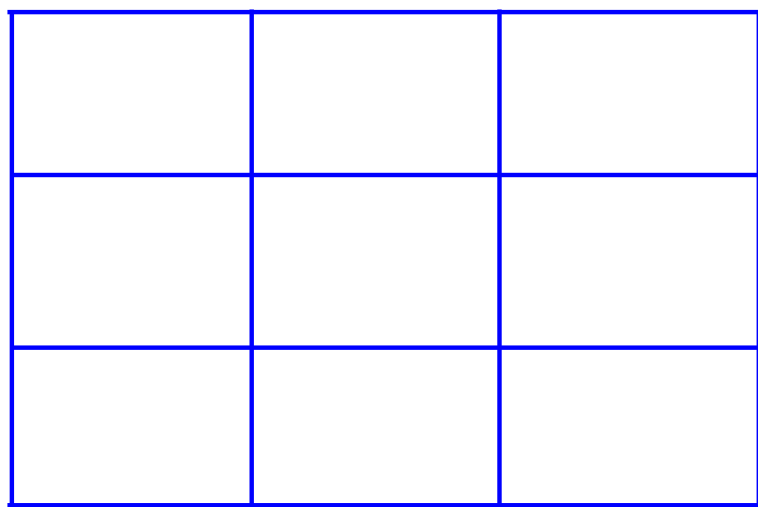
If your light is bad, nothing in the rest of this book will help you. So make sure you always have strong light, and keep reading!

# COMPOSITION

The world of art figured these out these rules of composition hundreds of years ago. Here are the only 8 rules that I use. All of these rules require good light to make them work.

## 1) THE RULE OF THIRDS

Instead of placing your subject in the center, the world of art discovered that your composition would look more interesting if your subject were placed according to the “Rule of Thirds”.



What is the Rule of Thirds? Imagine that your image is divided up into thirds, both vertically and horizontally. The Rule of Thirds says that you should



place your subject along any line, or anywhere two lines cross.





Every photographer does this. Except for when they employ Rule #5. More about that shortly.



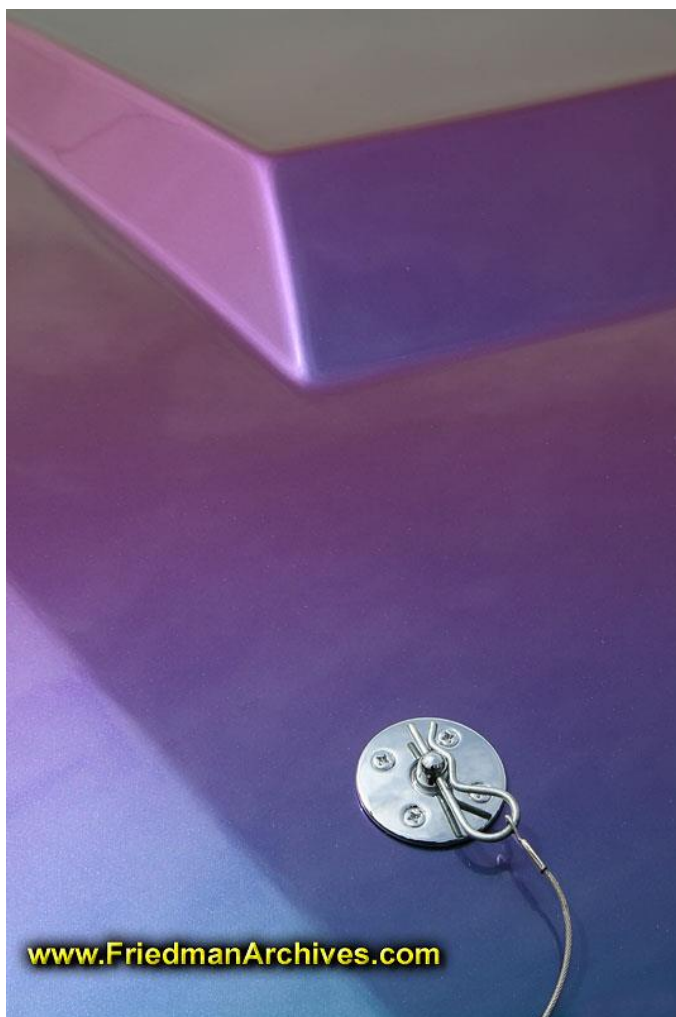
## 2) STRONG SUBJECT, NO DISTRACTING BACKGROUND

Easy to say, but hard to do. Usually we are so busy concentrating on our subject that we don't think about the background until we see our pictures later. So this takes some practice. But what a strong impact your images will have!



## *LITMUS TEST*

So far we've learned only two rules. Can we use them to make a boring subject look interesting?



This first image takes a boring subject (a hood lock), places it according to the Rule of Thirds, and ensures no distracting background. It works. Below is the car from which this close-up composition was taken:



Yup! We're on the right track. Any camera or smartphone could have taken these shots. It's the light and composition that makes it work.

### 3) USE OPPOSITE COLORS



In school you might have learned about opposite colors. Opposite colors (purple / yellow, blue / red) are the most striking to the eye, and the more opposite your subject is compared to the background, the more “wow!”-worthy your image will be. Here the yellow contrasts with the purple reflection in the chrome. Grabs the eye!



#### 4) REPEATING PATTERNS

Instead of finding a subject and placing it according to the Rule of Thirds, you can have no subject at all – instead, fill the frame with a pure texture or repeating pattern. (And make sure it's illuminated by good light for extra drama!)





## 5) "HEY, LOOK AT ME!"

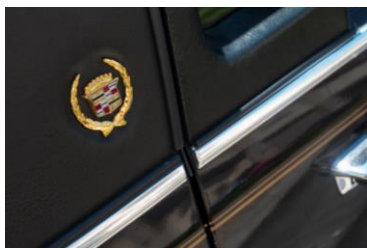
This one is the opposite of Composition Rule #1 (the Rule of Thirds). In the "Hey, Look at Me!" composition, you CAN place your subject in the center of the image – as long as the back of your camera is parallel to your subject – that is, don't point your camera up or down, but straight on. Magazine photographers use this technique a lot.







## 6) SMALL DETAILS



## 7) CAR AND OWNER SHOT

Here's the standard composition: Owner placed according to the rule of 3rds, standing between the door and the front tire. It's your call whether they stand in front of the car (blocking the car!) or behind it – One pays tribute to the owners, the other to the car.



## 8) WATCH OUT FOR HATS!

Our eyes can see people wearing wide-brimmed hats, but the camera all too often can't. Your best bet is to have the owner remove their hat; your 2<sup>nd</sup> best bet is to use a flash to lighten the shadows so you can see the owner's eyes.







# IS THAT REALLY ALL THERE IS TO IT?

Yes. If you don't believe me, have a look at some of the images I sell on the [www.FriedmanArchives.com](http://www.FriedmanArchives.com) photography website and see if you can tell which rules I used to make a given shot.



*Rule of Thirds (two subjects), no distracting background.*



*Texture / Repeating Patterns*



*"Hey, Look At Me!"*

## TRY IT YOURSELF!

Now I challenge you to go outside and try to take a picture using each of these compositional rules. It may not be easy at first but as with most things, with practice applying these rules will become second nature.

## WHY BIG CAMERAS, THEN?

So if Light and Composition are all you need, then why do professional photographers have such expensive cameras? The answer is that the bigger cameras let you control things:

- \* They let you control whether your backgrounds are fuzzy or sharp.





- \* They let you control whether a moving subject is frozen in time or a big blur.

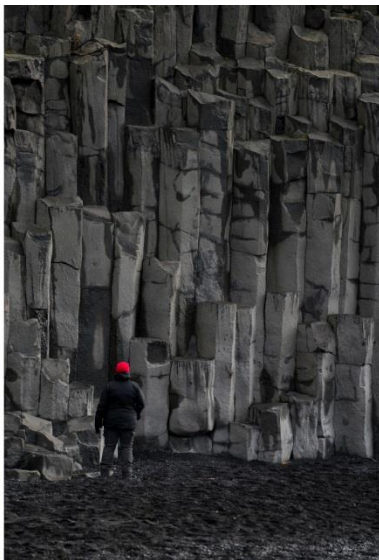
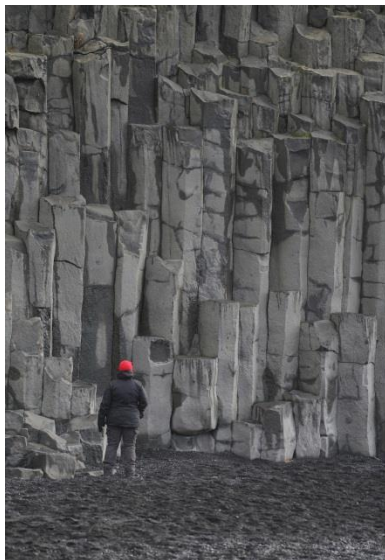


\* They let you change lenses to allow you to zoom in a lot:



Big cameras can also make a picture brighter or darker. This is especially important for subjects that are mostly dark or subjects that are mostly white, for

all cameras from all manufacturers tend to get this wrong.



**TIP:** Actually, your smartphone CAN make the image brighter or darker. I can't tell you how to do it because every phone does it differently. But if you could only learn one advanced control for your camera app, this "exposure compensation" feature would be it.

So that's the reason for big cameras. Every photographer who owns them already understands the secrets I've outlined in this ebook - that if their light and composition are not great, then their big expensive camera can't save them.

## WANT TO LEARN MORE?

What you just read is essential, but it's also just the beginning. You may find that this knowledge plus your smartphone may be all you need to impress your friends with your talent.

But if you want to learn more, in an easy-to-understand and non-intimidating way, then I invite you to join me April 26-27, 2019 in Las Vegas as I conduct one of my world-renown Friedman Archives High-



Impact Photography Seminars, where I teach you more of the secrets to taking "Wow!" images with any camera you own.

Let me share with you some of the things you will learn:

**Day 1** ("The Creative Class", or "The camera can do quite a bit by itself. Teach me about creativity, composition, and light and things that only the human can do!")

- The compositional secrets of the National Geographic photographers
- What the Kodachrome shooters knew about high-impact images (hint: they never needed Photoshop!)
- How to "see" light like the Hollywood Cinematographers do, and make the most of available light
- Compositional rules derived from the world of fine art
- The difference between snapshots and photographs (and why both are important)
- Add drama to your images with wireless flash (with live demonstrations)
- The secrets to outstanding travel photography
- Making the most of available light
- In-class exercises for creativity and composition
- How to get compelling images without having to get bogged down in technical stuff

## Day 2 ("The Technical Stuff")

- How your exposure meter thinks (or "Why can't the camera just make it look the way I see it?")
- The four variables of exposure, explained intuitively.
- The three types of metering, and which ones are actually useful.
- Color balance and Human Perception
- The RAW vs. JPG dilemma explained without religious fervor
- How to avoid horrific .jpg compression artifacts
- The important problem of print vs. screen resolution
- The only eight Post-processing functions I use
  - How to cut through haze
  - How to clean dirty windows
  - Saving Lenin with Curves
  - Make Stuff Go Away
  - Recommended Unsharp Mask values
  - Expanding Dynamic Range using RAW.

There will also be ample discovery exercises to allow you to become familiar with your camera's operation.

You can sign up for either Day 1 or Day 2 (or both!). Neither day has a prerequisite.

All of this knowledge and wisdom presented in a fun, friendly, and nurturing environment. Your photography will improve overnight. I guarantee it.

More information, what makes these seminars different from any other way of learning photography – can be found here:

<https://friedmanarchivespress.com/seminars/vegas/>

Can't make the live event? A streaming version of the seminar is also available:

<https://gumroad.com/l/FriedmanArchivesSeminars>

Enjoy, and hope to see you there!

Sincerely, Gary Friedman

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Gary L. Friedman is a professional photographer who has traveled the world with his cameras and runs the stock image website [FriedmanArchives.com](https://FriedmanArchives.com). He has also written several highly-acclaimed e-books on digital imaging, all aimed at specific digital cameras. His photography and writing has been published in magazines, newspapers, and books worldwide, and he is associate editor of [CameraCraft magazine](#) in the UK. He was also listed in the Guinness Book of World Records for building the world's smallest telephone way back in 1980 (before cell phones or cordless phones were around).

Before graduating to photography he was a rocket scientist for NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory, where he patented the image authentication system now used in high-end digital cameras from Canon and Nikon.

He also pens a highly regarded photography blog where he shares his adventures and always provides a teachable moment:

[www.FriedmanArchives.com/blog](http://www.FriedmanArchives.com/blog)

You can reach Gary at [Gary@FriedmanArchives.com](mailto:Gary@FriedmanArchives.com)

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