



Horizontally Challenged

One of the earliest rules photographers are forced to learn is don't put the horizon in the middle of a frame. This is a great rule to break if you understand the rules about breaking rules.

Breaking rules must be purposeful. Breaking rules just because they are rules is anarchy. Although there is a place for anarchy in photography (see Robert Maplethorpe) breaking the rules has dangers and benefits.

A friend of mine once told a newly hired photographer to remove his shoes for inspection. The examination revealed the photographer's shoe's heels were evenly worn so they could not be used as the excuse for photos with tilted horizons.

His lesson was that content drives composition. Not some trendy technique blindly followed by photographers who use an oblique angled horizon as a replacement for composition.

The same applies to adhering to rules without reason. Photographic rules are made to be broken. Let content determine any necessary rules.

The horizon in today's photo nearly bisects the image. Its line is broken by the large graphic element of corn rows creating a set of perspective lines leading to the horizon. At the end of that line are smaller graphic objects that break the horizon line just enough to hold the eye. Its also a nice touch that the combine's auger matches the perspective line.

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NOTES

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