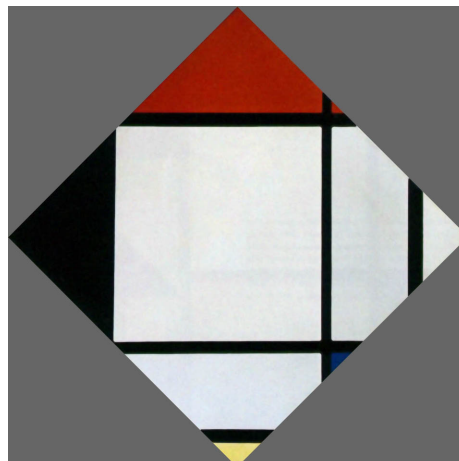


Composition is the division of two dimensional space within a work of art.

My Egypt, 1927 (left) by Charles Demuth and *A Bigger Splash*, 1967 (right) by David Hockney illustrate the way in which two different artists use horizontal, vertical and diagonal lines to break up the surface of the paintings, create entryways into the pictures and maintain the viewer's interest.



“Figure and ground” refer to the relationship between forms and space in a work of art.



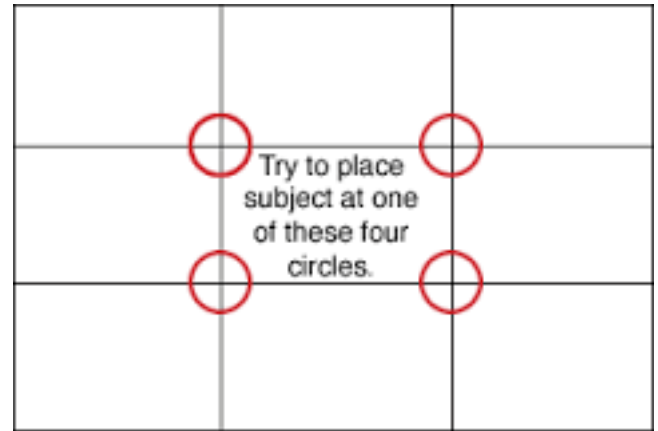
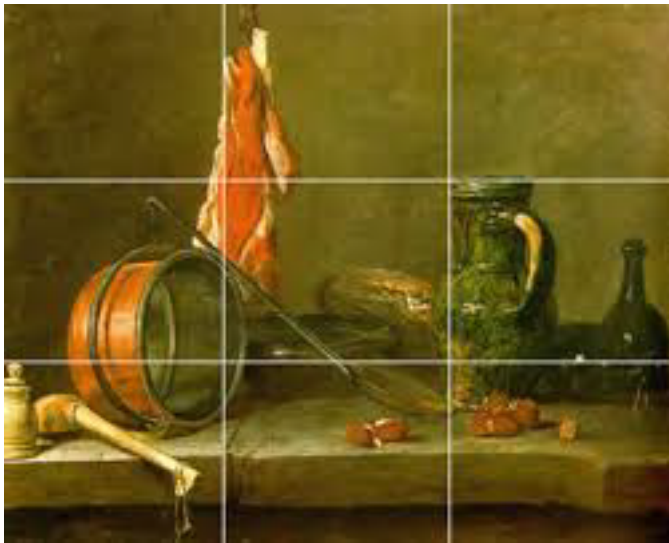
Piet Mondrian's painting is “non-figurative,” meaning there is no clear definition between forms (or figures) and the space they inhabit. In *Tableau No. IV; Lozenge Composition with Red, Gray, Blue, Yellow, and Black*, 1924-5 the artist balances fields of color and contrasts vertical and horizontal lines in order to create what he called “dynamic equilibrium.”



Works of art address their “format” (the edges of the paper or canvas).

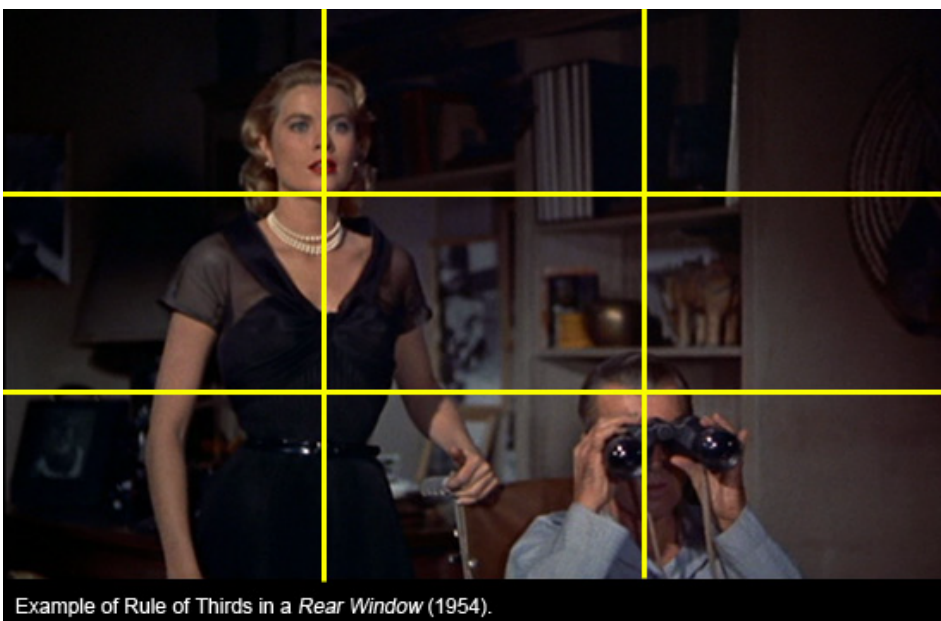
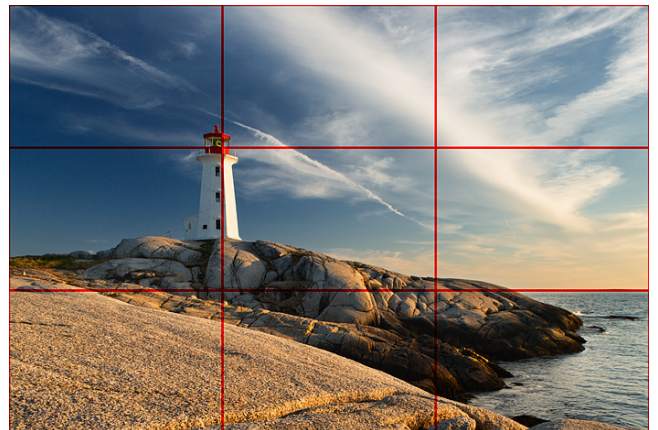
Richard Diebenkorn's *Woman Seated Drinking From A Cup*, 1965 (left) and a print by Jim Dine from his book “Pictures” (right) both take the rectangular format into consideration by creating interesting negative shapes. The artists lend these spaces as much attention as they do the subject matter.





In the image above, notice how the Rule of Thirds lines serve as guidelines. Sometimes the edges of objects coincide with the lines. Other times the lines are very close to an axis running through the object.

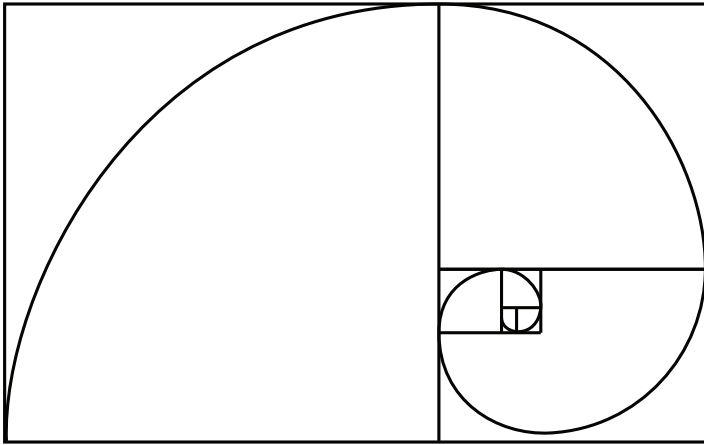
The Rule of Thirds and The Golden Rectangle are guidelines and the only limitation to their use is your creativity



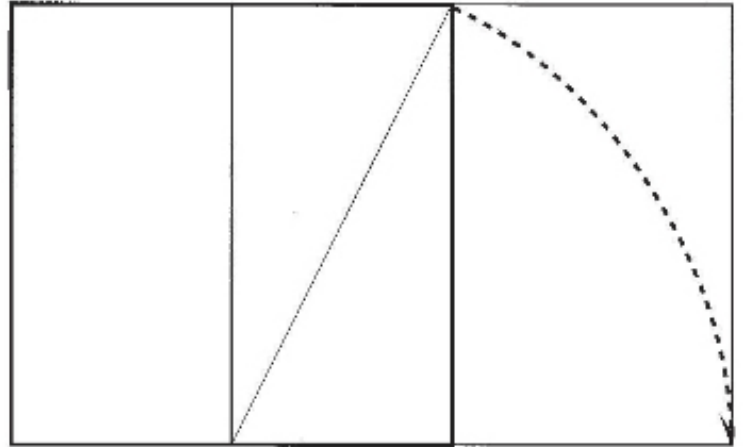
Numerous examples of the Rule of Thirds can be found in photography. The example to the left comes from a film.

Although the proportions differ from one format to the next, this rule can be easily applied by simply dividing any rectangle in thirds.

Example of Rule of Thirds in a *Rear Window* (1954).



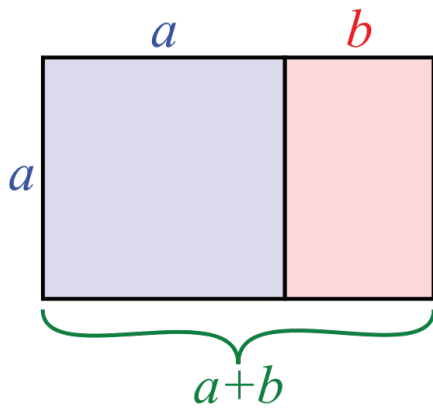
Within a golden rectangle is a golden spiral.



The golden rectangle is created by dividing a square and using the diagonal length of one half to find the length of the rectangle.

The Golden Ratio (1: 1.61803) is expressed this way:

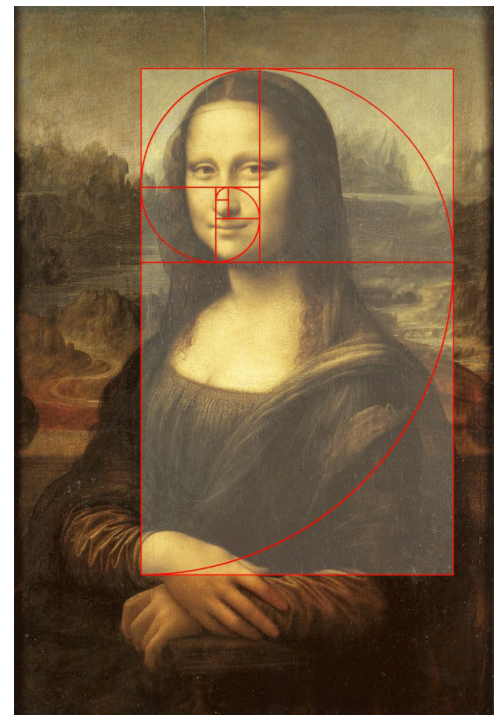
$$\frac{a + b}{a} = \frac{a}{b} \stackrel{\text{def}}{=} \varphi,$$



George Inness, *View of the Tiber from Perugia*, 1872-1874



Death of Socrates, 1787 by Jacques-Louis David



The Mona Lisa, 1503-1504 Leonardo da Vinci