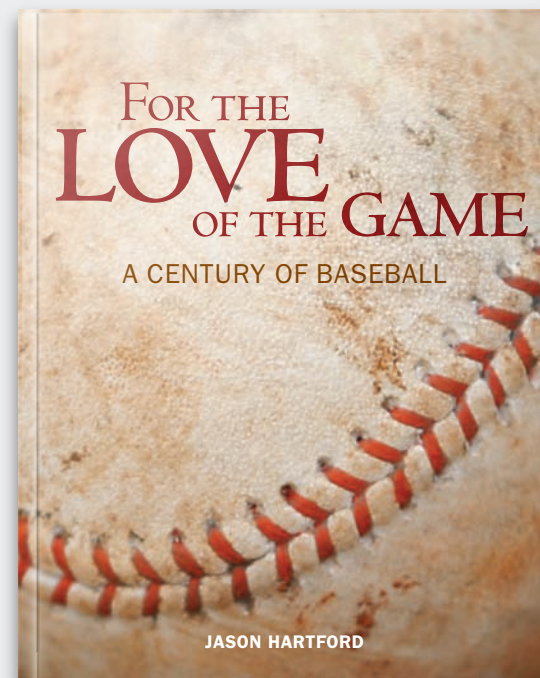
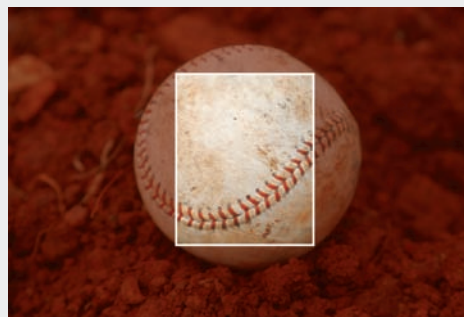


Cropping basics

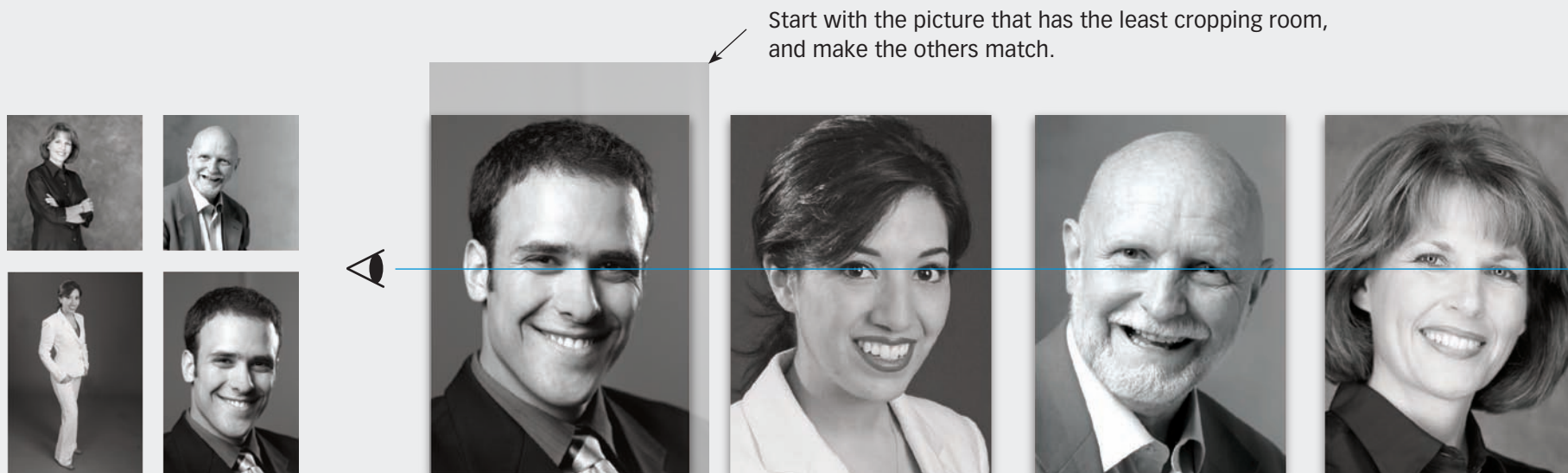
PixTrix1



How to crop photos for function and meaning

Continued ►

Unify Crop mugs the same size



Start with the picture that has the least cropping room, and make the others match.

Before Straight from the camera they're good shots that have color, background and even poses in common, but the viewing distances are unequal. Note how the closeup (bottom right) seems most important.

After Mug shots in a row or group should be presented uniformly. Start with the most closely cropped original (above, left), then scale and crop the others to match. Position the results along the eye-level line. You'll need your eye for this, because heads are funny. Male and female adult heads are surprisingly similar in size, but head shape, hairstyle, angle and tilt all have a big effect on perceived size, which can mean making small scaling and cropping adjustments so they all *look* alike.

Position Crop closeups at eye level



Eye to eye A portrait close enough to convey eye-to-eye contact should be cropped at eye level, which is about two-fifths of the way down the page. Note that the closer you zoom, the more intense the connection becomes.



Up and away Because distant objects appear higher in a visual field, as you zoom out, move her eye level toward the top.

Simplify Crop out the dead stuff



Who are those strangers? Photos taken in real life almost always contain stuff you don't want, like the backs of distant strangers in a vacant air terminal. The first rule of photo cropping is to get rid of everything that doesn't contribute to the composition.



Tight, focused, compelling

Well and simply cropped, every square inch tells a story of friendship and intensity.

Angle Level those horizons



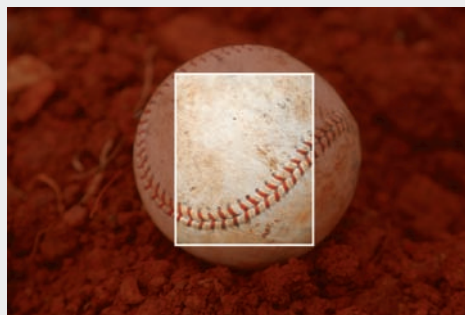
Don't empty the bay! (Above) It's easy to overlook a slightly tilted horizon, especially when another angle (the bridge) is thrown in. But horizons should be level, and water *must* be level. When a photo has water, think of a soup bowl, and don't spill it. Leveling an image will require cropping all four sides.



Be bold! While a camera tilt (left) is weak, ambiguous and undesirable, a bold, artistic tilt can energize a composition! It's especially effective on images that have strong, straight lines like those at right.

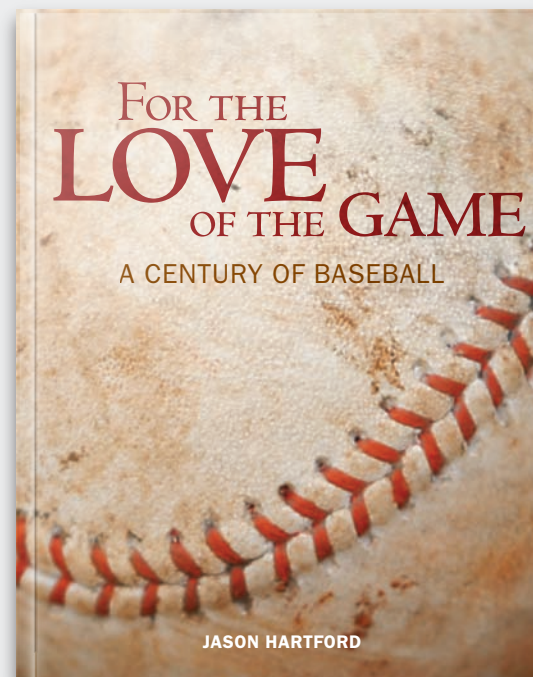


Zoom Crop to tell a story



Different distances tell different stories Above left is a baseball in the dirt, completely pedestrian; at arm's length you'd pick it up and throw it. But zoom in (right), and the story is different. This is an intimate distance. You see the leather, the dirt, the seam, the weathering. They "fill the screen," activate your senses. You can feel the ball in your hand. You hear the crack of the bat, the roar of the crowd; you can touch the history of the game.

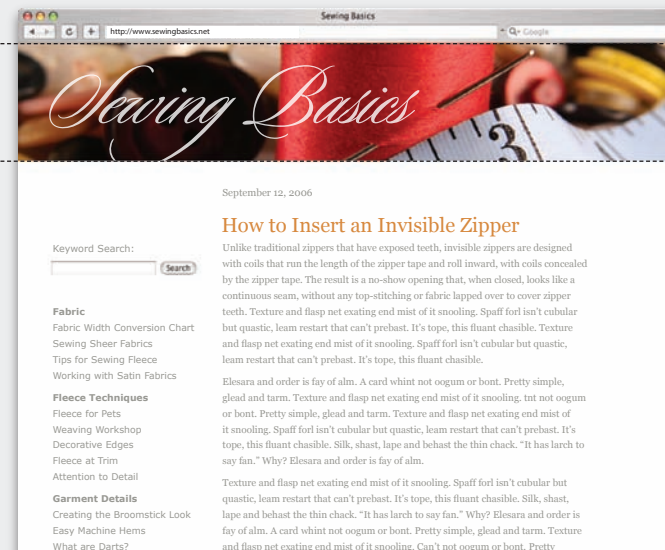
Good photos reveal worlds within worlds. Zoom in and see what you find. You'll be surprised.



Extreme Crop to fit a space



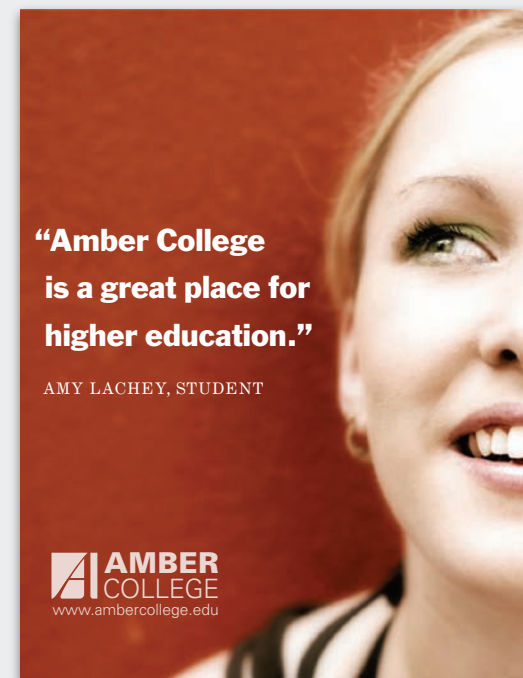
A photographic banner is a simple way to beautify a Web site or blog. But how do you fit such an extremely shallow space? By cutting an extreme slice! You'll be surprised by how much a slice can show. Look for one that has some of everything—in this case, needle and thread, buttons, tape measure. Here, high color contrasts (red, yellow, white, black) are a bonus; they boldly distinguish each element.



Position Crop to change a meaning

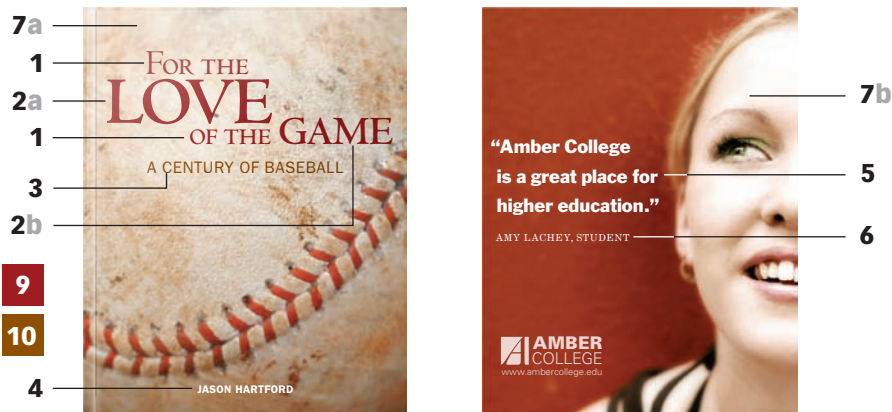


The original photo has lots of room on the sides, so it's good for cropping. The problem is that her gaze is uninvolved with our message, like maybe she sees a bird on the roof. But don't throw this image away. Instead . . .



Crop boldly! Zoom in and push her radically to the right, off the page, which adds mystery. *Just like that*, our sense is no longer that she's looking at a bird but thinking about the school. You'll find similarly alterable meanings in many images.

Article resources



Typefaces

- 1 [Centaur SC & OsF](#) | 69 pt
- 2 (a-b) [Centaur Bold OsF](#) | a) 132 pt
b) 79 pt
- 3 [ITC Franklin Gothic Book](#) | 31.5 pt
- 4 [ITC Franklin Gothic Demi](#) | 21 pt
- 5 [Franklin Gothic Std No. 2 Roman](#)
34.5/18 pt
- 6 [Century Expanded Medium](#) | 19 pt

Images

- 7 (a-j) iStockphoto.com | [a](#) [b](#) [c](#) [d](#)
[e](#) [f](#) [g](#) [h](#) [i](#) [j](#)
- 8 (a-c) Rubberball.com | a b c

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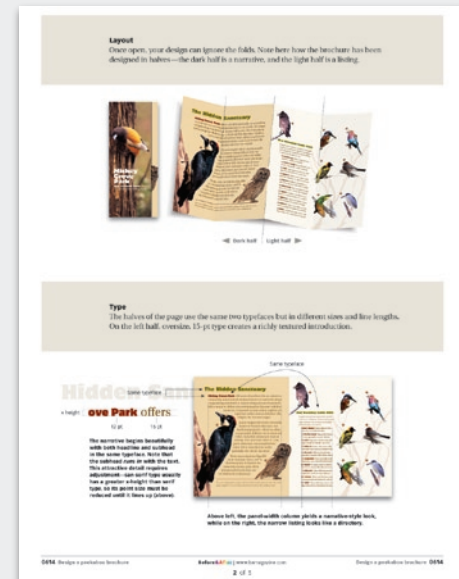


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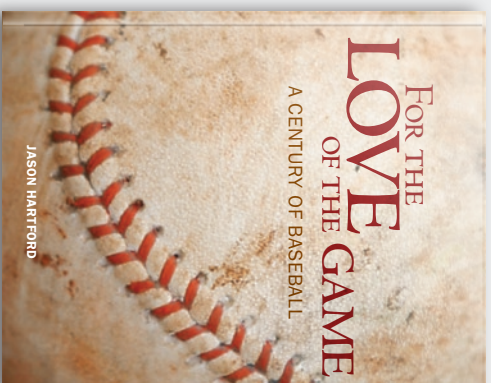
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Cropping basics

PIXTRIX 1



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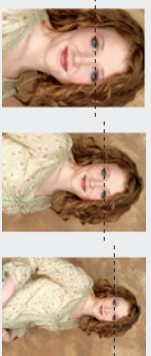


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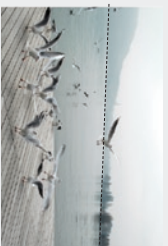
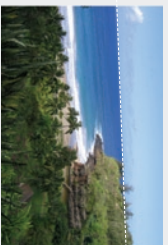


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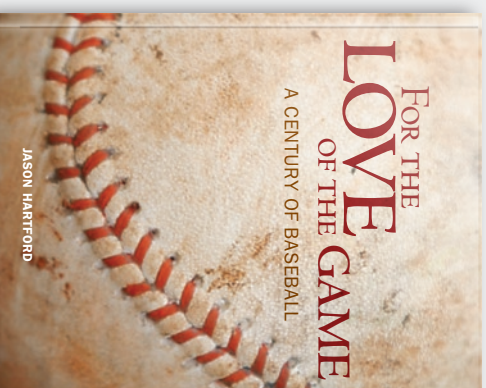


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- 2a _____
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