

Assignment

Minimalism

Why does minimalism work?

To start with - this is NOT Miksang... that's a whole new world of minimalist pictures but they follow some rules. I can understand a discipline which sets itself rules but I've never studied it and I'm not sure I like to stick by rules unless I'm being paid to do so.

Minimalism quite a simple task (or, at least, it sounds like it should be!) It's the simplification of an image by the reduction of elements.

The minimalism we'll set as an assignment is a more natural version than Miksang, but if you submit an image that's influenced by Miksang then it will certainly work. A lot has been written on the topic by much more learned people than myself - however the main thing about minimalistic images is that by creating 'empty' spaces in the photograph you actually accentuate the subject that you do include.

The eye of the person looking at the image can't help but be drawn to the main element of the image.

How to work with minimalism:

Make your subject the strongest point of your photo even though it might take up only a small part of the overall image.

When attempting to take a shot with a minimalist feel to it, keep those words in mind.



There are many ways to do it - here are some:

- **pick subjects wisely** - obviously for a subject to dominate an image even when it's relatively small in the scheme of the overall shot it will need to be a fairly striking or

contrasting one.

- **experiment with colour** - contrasting colours between your subject and the rest of the shot are one way to make it stand out. Alternatively, making the subject the same colour as your background can give a minimalist type feeling also. Another strategy that photographers use is to strip the colour out of shots - often in post production.
- **use depth of field** - another way to focus the eye on your subject is to strip out detail from the background (and foreground too, but that's not so noticeable) of your shot by making it blurry. The best way to do this is to use your aperture settings (More about this on this on the Learning page of the website - "F Numbers" and "Depth of Field").
- **crop out distractions** - perhaps the most effective way to rid your photos of distracting details and to leave shots with a feeling of space is to crop your shots in a way that edges out the details. This is not always possible of course if the details are in the middle of your images (or without some drastic photo-editing) but can often be useful.
- **Zoom In** - in framing your shots utilize your zoom to eliminate distractions
- **Zoom Out** - alternatively zooming out to a wide angle can also give a feeling of space as it decreases the size of distracting elements.

The key to getting great minimalist shots is to take a lot of shots at different exposures, different focal lengths and from different angles. It can sometimes take moving your position as the photographer or tweaking some of your camera's settings to get things just right.