

# Photojournalism photo editing

Editing is a vital part of the photojournalism process, and anyone who takes or works with pictures must know some of the basic principles and procedures. These include selection, cropping, enhancing and sizing.

## Selection

*Two major purposes of publishing photographs are to capture the attention of the reader and to illustrate the editorial content.*

Photographic elements to consider when selecting photos:

- **Drama.** Pictures that have high dramatic quality are those in which readers can clearly tell what is happening; in fact, there may be several things happening, as in an accident scene with someone standing nearby with an anguished expression.



Arroyo Grande Hotshots are silhouetted as they watch a backfire at Carter Street and Bears Den Ranch Road in Yucaipa on Sunday, September 6, 2020.

- **Emotion.** Like dramatic pictures, those with emotional qualities often tell a story. Yet they may also be the type that do not contain highly dramatic or story-telling qualities but rather evoke some emotion in the mind of the viewer.



The workers of the San Carlos de Celanova residence celebrate the birthday of Elena Pérez, 98, two weeks after having overcome the coronavirus. Nine residents died at this residence and more than forty tested positive for COVID-19. Older people have been the most vulnerable group to the coronavirus pandemic that has shaken the entire planet.



- **Action.** Pictures suggesting movement will be seen and studied by readers more readily than still-life pictures. Even though a photograph by itself cannot move, if its content indicates movement, it can serve as an extremely good attention-capturing device for the editor to use.



Motorists are ordered to the ground from their vehicle by police during a protest on South Washington Street, Sunday, May 31, 2020, in Minneapolis, following the death of George Floyd.

- **Technical quality.** The photograph is sharp, clear focus, good framing and lighting and or presents a subject in an unusual or pleasing manner.



Students from New York University, right, dine outdoor under a heavy snowstorm at a restaurant in Manhattan, New York, December 16, 2020. Indoor dining was once again barred in New York City restaurants on December 14 in a significant reversal of the city's reopening that comes as officials try to halt the escalation of a second wave of the coronavirus and avoid a broader shutdown.



- **Bizarre or unusual subjects.** Photos of something unusual, something not likely to be seen by readers in their everyday lives. Unusual subjects may be something a photographer has happened upon or heard about, such as a twelve-pound tomato or a person stuck on a roof without a ladder.



Seattle Mariners' Tim Lopes falls into the stands while chasing a foul ball by San Francisco Giants' Wilmer Flores during MLB game at Oracle Park in San Francisco, Calif., on Wednesday, September 16, 2020.

- **Prominence.** Pictures of well-known or famous people. Readers will look at pictures of well-known and famous people.



Reverend Al Sharpton (center with glasses) helps hold up U.S. Representative John Lewis as he addresses Democratic presidential candidates.





*A good picture editor must have a “feel” for spotting the good photograph, one that will capture the attention of the reader, illustrate the editorial content and enhance the overall quality of the story.*

## Cropping

Cropping means taking out parts of a picture. It has two purposes: eliminating unnecessary parts of a picture and emphasizing or enhancing parts of a picture.

<https://youtu.be/mjeDctPKils>

**Eliminating unnecessary parts of a picture.** Some elements of a picture may simply be unnecessary to the subject and purpose of the photograph, and they should be eliminated. Often these parts are not only wasteful but also distracting.





**Emphasizing or enhancing parts of a picture.** One photograph may contain many pictures within it. Cropping is a way of emphasizing the part of the picture that readers should notice. A picture that seems ordinary at first glance may be made dramatic by good cropping.



## Enhancing

*Photo editing software allows photojournalists to change the brightness, enhance the color or even increase the sharpness of a picture.*

1. It's better to do too little to a picture than too much.
2. The basic subject matter of the picture should never be changed.

