

## 5. Cropping an image using the “rule of thirds”.

At the end of this lesson you will be able to demonstrate how to crop a photograph using the 'rule of thirds' by creating a new blank document using a 3 x 3 imaginary grid, opening the image you want cropped and moving this image onto the new blank document. This image can then be cropped with the crop tool to your liking.

The “rule of thirds” is used to help improve the composition of your image. Using this method the image is divided into a 3x3 grid and when the subject (focal point) is positioned at the centre of one of the intersection points of this imaginary grid it leads to a more appealing composition.

Step One:

Open the photograph you want to apply the “rule of thirds” cropping technique to.

Step Two:

Open a new document that is smaller than the photo you are going to crop. Go to **File > New** and select International Paper with a size of A6 as shown in figure 5.1

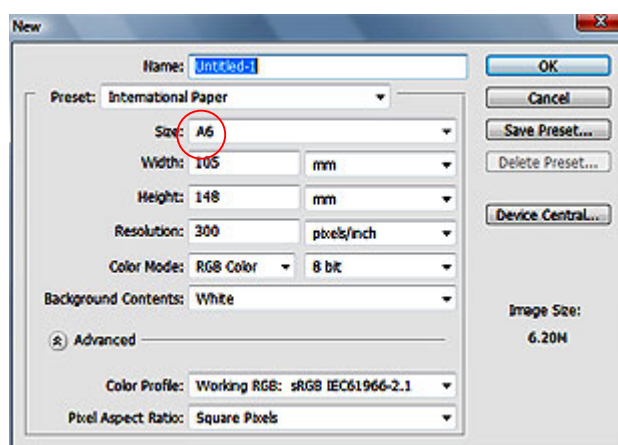


Figure 5.1 Dialog box for new document

Step Three:

With the new document active go to **Edit > Preferences > Guides, Grid & Slices**. When the dialog box opens use the following settings:

- Gridline every 100 percent
- Subdivisions 3
- Click OK

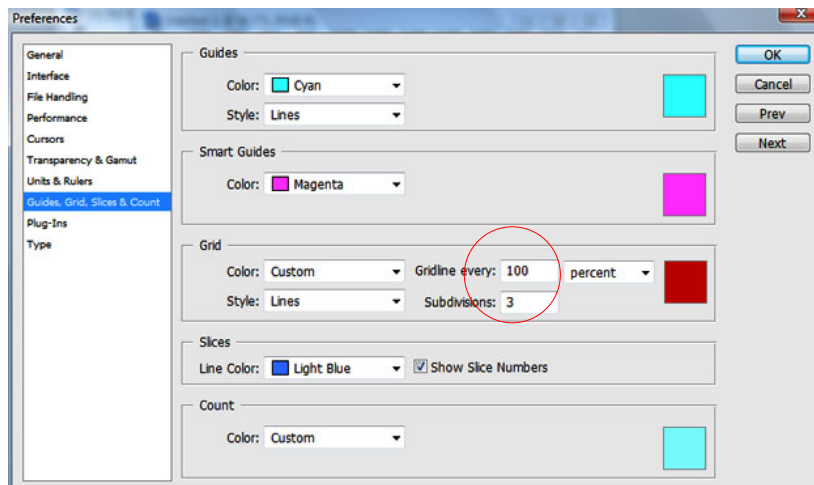


Figure 5.2 Preferences dialog box

Step Four:

To ensure your grid is turned on go to **View > Show > Grid**. The nonprinting grid now appears in your image.

Step Five:

Return to your image and select the **Move** tool or press **V**, click and drag this image onto your blank document.

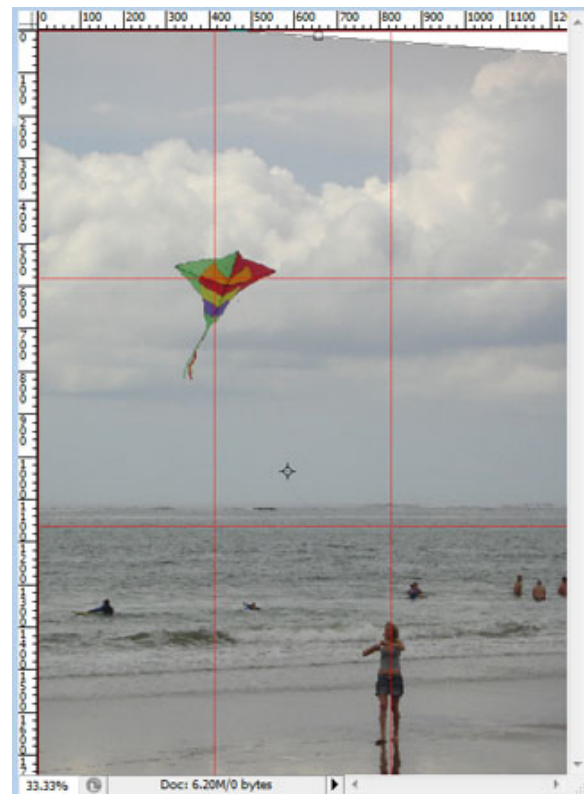
Step Six:

Using the **Move** tool position your image’s horizon along one of the horizontal grid lines and ensure your subject (focal point) falls on one of the interesting points.



BEFORE:

Image with horizon crooked.



AFTER:

The horizon has been straightened using the move tool.

Figure 5.3 Before and after the image is straightened.

Step Seven:

You can now crop away the sides of your image. Select the **Crop** tool and click and drag around the entire image. When the crop border is in place press Return and the process is complete.

Step Eight:

For the purpose of this exercise we will save this file as a Jpeg. At the moment the image is in PSD format and it contains two layers as shown in figure 5.4.

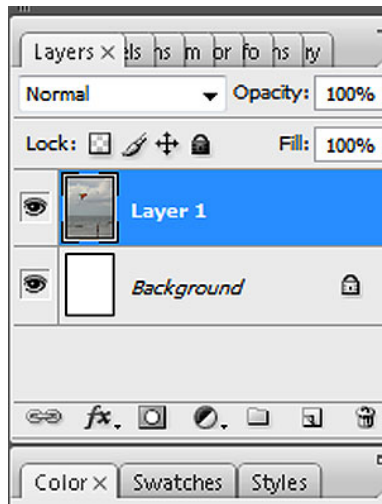


Figure 5.4 Layer palette.

We now need to flatten the image. Select **Layers > Flatten image**.

The image contains only one layer now as show in figure 5.4.

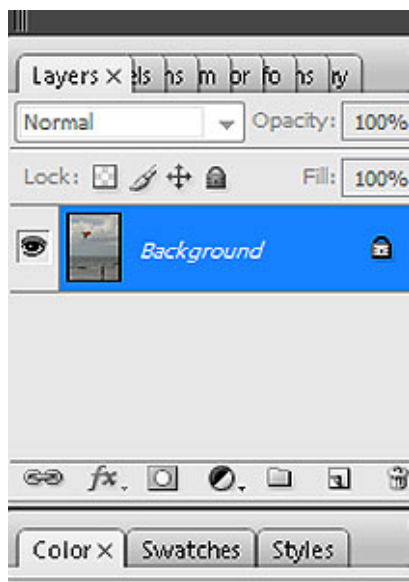


Figure 5.5 Layers palette

Step Nine:

Select **File > Save** and give your image an appropriate name.

Note:

If you want to keep the original image without any changes the select **File > Save As** and give it a new name.

In the next lesson we will be cropping an image to a specific size.