

CROPPING

Several good reasons why not to crop:

SEEING

The main purpose of any art class is to learn to see. With photography this means learning to compose your photographs in the viewfinder before pressing the shutter release button.

If the photograph did not turn out the way you wanted it to, it is because you did not take the time to 'pre-visualize' the shot in the viewfinder before you pushed the button.

COMPOSING

Some people think it is okay to shoot roughly and then crop later to make the 'right' photo. This is **not** the way to go. If you have to depend on cropping to 'fix' your pictures, then you really aren't looking hard enough, carefully enough, when you are shooting.

"Cropping is not a creative tool. Framing is something you do when you *shoot* a photo, and is part of the art of composition."

Depending on cropping produces 'lazy eye'.

SPACING

You have to look at your subject carefully, look at the corners and edges, frame the shot the way you want it, decide what should go where - all *before* pushing the shutter release. You can rearrange the world just by shifting your stance, getting a little closer or waiting another second or two. And then you should take several shots of each subject from which to choose later.

TIMING

"You cannot correct a photo after it has been shoot because you cannot correct the angle or view or the time it was shot. Maybe the better picture would have been shot 1 inch over, 2 inches down, and 3 seconds later!"

LOOKING

Another reason to not crop is that the aspect ration of the frame indicates what type of camera was used for the shot. Each camera has its own 'dance' that is part of how the photographer took the photo. It indicates how the photographer was looking at their subject. If the shape of the frame is altered through cropping this vital component of the photograph is lost.

"If a photo is cropped to some non-standard size, you loose the information of what camera was used and how the photographer approached their subject. Your viewers will never understand how you shoot without this info"

It may be more difficult to resist the temptation to crop when shooting self-portraits. But it is better to deal with what you get and consider the benefits of serendipity. You will have to devise methods to indicate what will be in the frame when you are standing in front of the camera. Or just get so close that it is no longer critical.

It is all a matter of discipline.