

Cropping

A Presentation to the Cary Photographic Artists Organization

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Agenda

- What is cropping?
- Cropping in the field/studio
- When cropping is not cropping
- Cropping in the digital darkroom
- Cropping and file size
- Avoiding the mat crop when framing
- Homework
- Q&A

What Is Cropping?

Cropping is the removing of edges. There are two reasons why we crop.

- To remove one or more undesirable or distracting edges to better portray the subject.
- To make the image fit a predetermined size, such as 8 x 10.

Field/Studio Cropping

The techniques we use in the field or studio to crop are as follows.

- Composition: arranging subject in viewfinder
- Camera-to-subject distance
- Focal length
- Orientation: Landscape or Portrait
- Circumnavigate your viewfinder

Field/Studio Cropping



The image on the right better portrays the water lily flower through cropping, orientation and increased focal length.



Field/Studio Cropping



Field/Studio Cropping

Will you ever be able to do all cropping in the field or studio?

Every camera has a fixed aspect ratio (film or sensor dimension). Therefore, your camera may force you to include unwanted edges.

The captured image may contain more than what you saw in the viewfinder because viewfinders on most cameras show less than what is recorded.

When Cropping Is Not Cropping

As stated earlier, cropping is the removal of one or more edges to better portray the subject.

It is a compositional 'task' we do to fine tune our subject.

The following examples are NOT cropping. There are a more creative process than the mundane task of cropping.

When Cropping Is Not Cropping



The subject on the left is plant specimen.

The subject on the right is shape, form and pattern.



When Cropping Is Not Cropping



Cropping to Best Fit Image

Step 1 – Create a ‘crop area mask’ in the master file.

Create a new layer, Select > All, Select > Transform Selection, drag the handles, press Enter, Select > Inverse, then paint.



Details at ZuberPhotographics.com. Navigate to All Topics > Photoshop > Techniques > Create Crop Area ... Using a Normal Layer.

Cropping to Best Fit Image


Step 2 – Make a copy of the master file

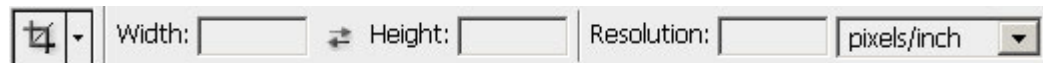
Step 3 – Crop and resize as follows

1. Ctrl-click (Cmnd-click) crop area mask layer
2. Click Select > Inverse
3. Click Image > Crop
4. Click Select > Deselect
5. Use Image > Size to resize image

Details at ZuberPhotographics.com. Navigate to All Topics > Printing > Crop and Resize ... Crop, Enlarge and Resample Based on a Normal Layer.

Cropping to Fit Specific Size

1. Make a copy of the master file
2. Ctrl+zero (Cmnd+zero) to fit image on screen
3. Type f until image is full screen mode
4. Type c to activate Crop tool 
5. In Options bar, enter width, height and resolution



6. Drag crop tool over image
7. Adjust by moving and/or dragging corner handle
8. Press Enter

Details at ZuberPhotographics.com. Navigate to All Topics > Printing > Crop and Resize ...Crop, Enlarge and Resample to Fit Pre-defined Output Size

Cropping and File Size

By definition, cropping in the digital darkroom is the removal of pixel-containing edges. Therefore, cropping, by itself, will reduce a file's size.

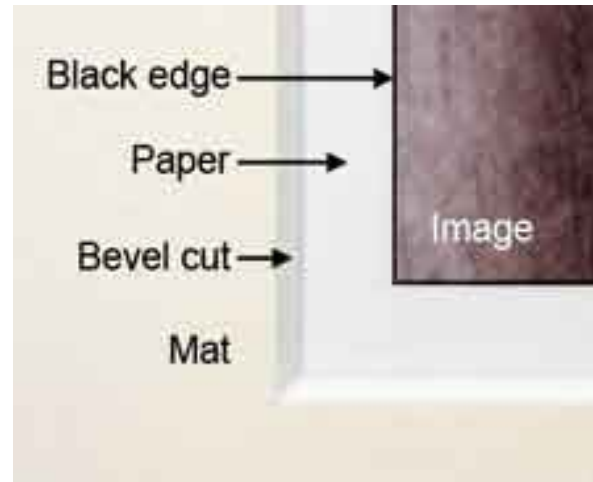
However, other activities performed at the time of cropping could increase file size. Some of these activities include the following.

- Cropping while resampling and enlarging.
- Adding adjustment layers.
- Other pixel creating or retaining action.
- Shoot in jpeg, open in image editing software, crop, and save as PSD or TIFF.

How I Avoid Mat Cropping

Often, when a print is matted, the mat overlaps the image by a small amount. Since the amount of coverage varies by the person doing the matting, I mat as follows.

How I Avoid Mat Cropping



- After image has been resized for printing, enlarge document size (not image size) by a few pixels.
- Create a black edge.
- Mat within a quarter inch of the black edge.

Details at ZuberPhotographics.com. Navigate to All Topics > Photoshop > Techniques > Add Edge ...use any of the Outside Edge techniques.

Homework

Do two of the following.

1. Crop to fine tune the image
2. Create a new subject
3. Crop to 8 x 10



End

Q&A

www.ZuberPhotographics.com
www.caryphotographicartists.org