

# Eyeline (AKA Visual Center) in Design

- Horizontal and vertical eyelines assist in making a great spread. The dominant photo aides in choosing the placement of these eyelines, which should be thought of as “no crossing zones” for the spread. All elements should “hang” off of this line except the dominant photo, which should be crossed by it. The top or bottom of the dominant photo will create the horizontal eyeline, while the left or right side of the photo will create the vertical. Once the eyelines have been established, everything else will either hang down from the eyeline, or grow up off of the eyeline. Eyelines should be at least 1 pica wide, and the wider the eyeline, the more dramatic and intense the look of the spread will be. One additional note: the horizontal eyeline should NEVER be placed directly in the center of the spread, and the vertical eyeline will never be the same as the gutter (it must be on either the left or right side of the spread).

Here are the 3 rules for the dominant photo/element.

1) A dominant element should be included on every spread. In beginning design, that element is usually a photograph. Dominance is achieved usually through size (two to three times larger than any other photograph on the spread) and/or shape.

2) The vertical dominant photo should be placed off center, cross the gutter and touch at least one external margin.

3) The dominant photo is the one element allowed to cross the eyeline by at least 1 pica or more.