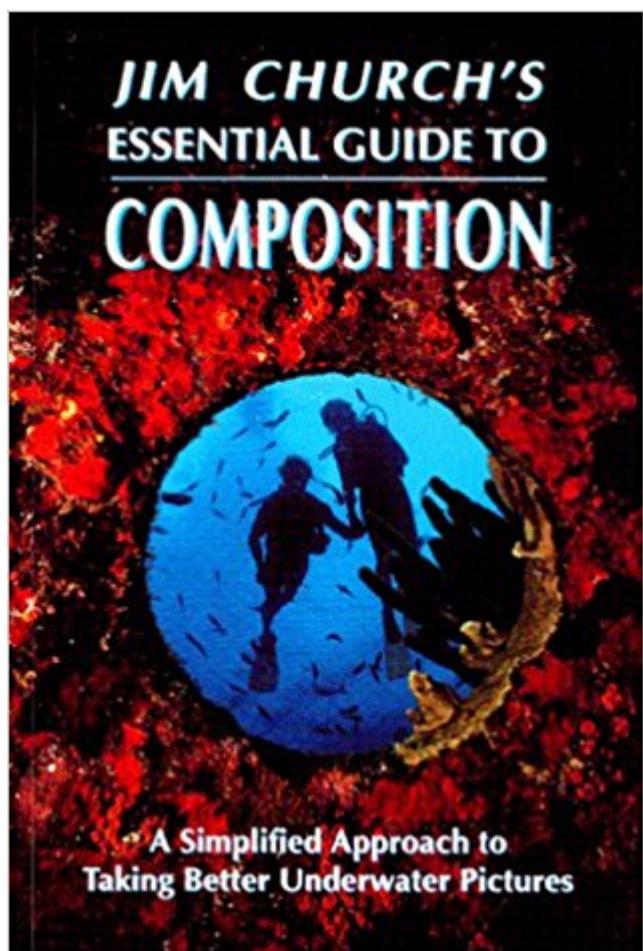


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# Jim Church's Essential Guide To Composition: A Simplified Approach To Taking Better Underwater Pictures



## **Synopsis**

The author shows how to find and choose subjects, position and guide models, and take the pictures.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Jim is not only a master of his craft, but also a master teacher of it. -- Testimonial This guide first teaches the rules of underwater photography and then tells how to bend them for extraordinary results. -- Heather Brown This volume of valuable information is a must-have for all underwater photographers. -- Photo Trade News

Jim Church is one of the pioneers of modern underwater photography. Many of today's professionals got started with a camera in one hand, and Jim's articles and books in the other. Jim's articles and photographs have appeared hundreds of times during the past 40 years in photography, travel and dive magazines, newspapers and books. He is the author of eight previous books on underwater photography. Jim is a co-recipient of the NOGI Award for the Arts for his contribution to underwater photography. He resides in Miami Lakes, Florida.

I am relatively new to UW photography, but it seems clear that Jim Church is universally regarded as a pioneer in the field. This book was written before the digital age, but the principles of good

composition have not changed. My only hesitation in recommending this book is that his work is so important that it has become incorporated into all modern texts, and there is little need to go back to the original source. The book is concise, well written, and beautifully illustrated. So, for historical interest and as a concise treatment of the subject, you will enjoy it, but there is unlikely to be anything unfamiliar to you. Far more useful to me was Martin Edge's "The Underwater Photographer."

This is an excellent book for anyone going into underwater photography! Jim explains and shows proper composition for taking photos in one of the most difficult areas and he does it with film cameras. I keep it as a reference and still refer back to it.

Jim Church was an astonishing photographer and those that have followed in his footsteps owe much to him. This book is one that I recommend to ALL divers starting off in underwater photography. Have you ever come home with a bunch of shots only to find that none of them really "grab you"?....this book is for you. Simply and clearly, the text and photo examples show you how to turn an ordinary shot into a "Wow!" shot.

Jim Church has written a concise guide to composition of underwater photos. These can be difficult to compose when compared to dry land photos and he simplifies the art well. An essential guide for aspiring UW photographers.

People come to photography by many strange and varied routes and my own is as different as the next - though I shall not bore you with that particular story here. Suffice to say that, my first photograph was published in 1974, my first underwater photograph in 1980 and, right at this time, my work has appeared (somewhere) every month since December 1998, I am in the process of completing my fourth book and my photography has even been purchased by National Geographic. The relevance of all this, however, is that I am largely self-taught and that always leaves me wondering if I am missing some of those basic lessons that would have been explained on the very first day of any professionally run photography course. "Jim Church's Essential Guide to Composition" goes a long way to fill any gaps there might be. This book has two outstanding qualities; Firstly, it is written by a man who really does know about every aspect of underwater photography. Secondly, and most important of all, however, Jim Church has the power to explain his knowledge in words we can all understand. In so doing he has produced a book for the

professional underwater photographer and the amateur diver alike. If you have just bought your first camera and are about to embark on a very expensive trip to try it out, this is your in-flight reading material. Believe me, you will come home with better pictures - I did."Jim Church's Essential Guide to Composition" is a 9in x 6in paperback book containing 136 pages, 80 colour photographs and 8 line drawings. Each photograph and drawing serves a purpose and are used to explain each of the many lessons involved with composing underwater pictures and, basically, the difference between taking a good photograph and not. All of which is, of course, supported by the non-technical information imparted in an easy-to-understand style. The book begins with absolute basics - and what could be more basic than explaining the function of the human eye and then adapting that information in order to provide a better understanding of the function of a camera lens. In short, this is a book about "stepping stones" and each time a relevant point has been explained and demonstrated, the book builds on this knowledge as we step forward onto another stone for even greater knowledge of the subject in hand. In Summary, this is one of the few books I have ever read which achieves exactly and precisely what it sets out to achieve and is made all the more valuable because the Author is a man who knows his stuff and is able to explain things without getting bogged down in technical jargon. Five Stars are not enough for this little gem. NM

When I started in underwater photography, I was told by a very wise and respected professional, "Composition cannot be taught ... it is not a concept or a method. The photographer is born with an eye for composition and it is an art." To which Jim Church's book has proven that statement to be "Hogwash, INDEED!" Composition may be a gift, but it is a gift that can be honed and trained, just as Jim Church has done with this book. He has given the reader all the tools, tricks and tips to develop that skill into an art. Liberally sprinkled with the Jim Church wit and humour, this book stands up to reading after reading after reading. This book stands alongside his "Guide to the Nikonos" and his "Underwater Video" books as "bibles" for the ardent underwater photographer. As for Jim Church's method of teaching and guidance, I can tell you that nine years ago I was using a disposable underwater camera. I have studied the books and travelled with Jim Church as often as possible and I am now a contributing editor and Photo Pro for an international dive magazine. So, if you ask me if Jim Church's methods work, I would resoundingly answer "YES." If you ask me if this is a book worth buying, I would answer resoundingly "YES!" No matter how many times you read this book and no matter what level of photographer you might be, there is always something new in this book that you can apply in your pursuit of great photos. These concepts of composition are NOT restricted to the ocean floor, either. The methods and concepts explained in this text --- in easy

to understand terms --- also apply to land photography. This Essential Guide is exactly that---- ESSENTIAL! I regret that five stars is the highest rank offered for this book. The only thing wrong with this book ---- it wasn't written sooner! I could have saved a lot of film on badly composed shots!!!!

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