Rule of Thirds

The rule of thirds implies that most designs can be made more interesting by visually dividing the page into thirds vertically and/or horizontally and placing our most important elements within those thirds.

For the simplest practice of the rule of thirds, just position your subject at one of the intersections of the lines, or partway between one of the intersections and the center. It usually looks better when the extra space in the frame is in front of the subject.

http://desktoppub.about.com/library/weekly/aa052301e-thirdscentergrids.html

http://www.imagestation.com/magazine/tech/issue03/article02/sub1.html
The ancient Greeks recognized the rectangle for its pleasing qualities. They built some of civilization's most attractive structures in the shape of rectangles. The shape, as illustrated by the Parthenon, became known as the "golden rectangle". This shape has endured through the years. Today the shape is used for windows, doors, pictures, tables, and even the basic shape of people. The rectangle offers a variety in form.

http://harpy.uccs.edu/greek/parthenon.html

The golden rectangle has been the dominant design dimension. Derived from what mathematicians call the golden section, a formula that was a product of the revival of learning during the Renaissance in fourteenth and fifteenth century Europe. The golden section is a ratio that we have settled on standard sizes of 3x5, 4x6, 5x8 and so on. Generally, the most pleasing page size is considered to be: length = 1-1/2 x width.

Summary

In many ways the Rule of Thirds and the Golden Rectangle are very similar. They both view in rectangles. The basic shape of a rectangle is pleasing and variable. The Greeks saw the rectangle for its pleasing qualities. This is also a basic principle in the Rule of Thirds. The balance is not a symmetrical balance yet there is an overall balance when looking at both viewpoints. Both of these show a satisfying arrangement or proportion of parts or elements within each of their designs.

The Rule of Thirds is not mandatory. The view of the pictures is more pleasing with the arrangement of the main focus not being in the center of the photograph. Rules in photography or filming can and should be ignored at times depending on the message that is being sent. Where this is a visual preference, the Golden Rectangle is based on mathematical formulas. The formulas are a designated ratio that has been averaged into length x width that we can understand.
Resources


Standard

**TA Standard VII** - The desktop publishing teacher has the knowledge and skills needed to teach the Foundations, Information Acquisition, Work in Solving Problems, and Communication strands of the Technology Applications Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) in desktop publishing, in addition to the content described in Technology Applications Standards I-V.

(TA 7.32s) compare and contrast the rules of visual composition such as rule of thirds and the golden section/rectangle with respect to harmony and balance as well as discord and drama.