

BASICS OF BETTER UNDERWATER PHOTOGRAPHY

# STARTING CONCEPTS

**OPTICAL OCEAN SALES**  
UNDERWATER PHOTOGRAPHY EQUIPMENT



MAKE AN IMPACT

# GET CLOSE

Reducing the amount of water between you and the subject increases color and sharpness, as well as reducing backscatter.

For compact cameras, use the macro setting.  
For interchangeable lens cameras, a macro lens is a good first lens.





f/8 1/125, ISO 100, 16mm lens, strobe 75% power

To get close for large animals and reefscapes, use as wide a lens as possible and try to fill the frame.





# IT'S ALL ABOUT LIGHT

Be it natural or artificial, lighting  
can make or break your image.





With strobes, the goal is to paint the subject with light giving it a natural appearance.

Always consider the direction of the sun and natural light when approaching a subject.







HAVE A CONVERSATION

# MAKE EYE CONTACT

When shooting animals make "eye contact".  
This is what draws the viewer in.

Try to stay at eye level or even below your  
subject.



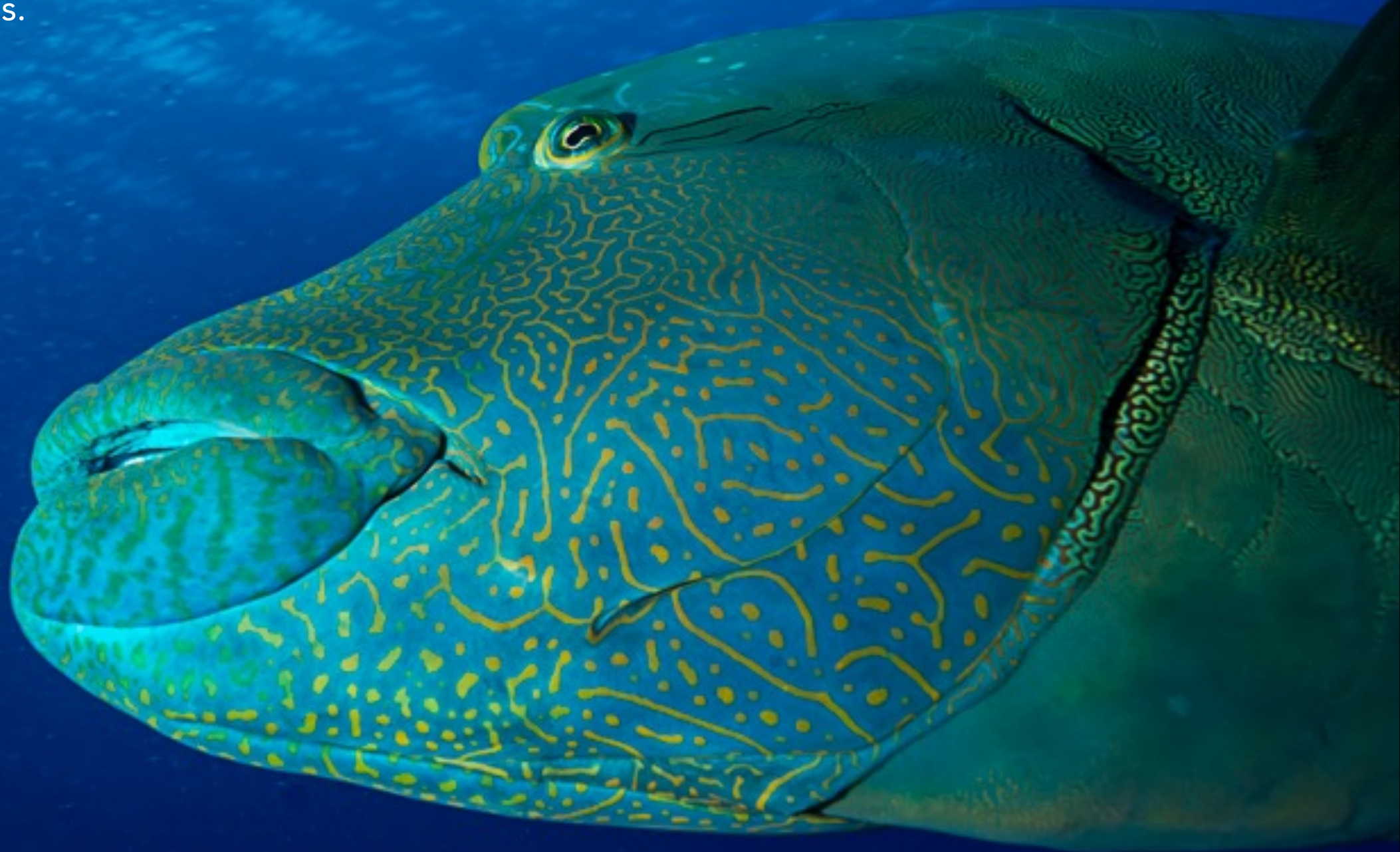


USE AVAILABLE LIGHT ABOVE YOU

# SHOOT UP

Shooting up at a subject is a more interesting and dynamic perspective.

Shooting up also helps use more natural lighting in your images.





CLOSE FOCUS WIDE ANGLE

# FILL THE FRAME

Fill the frame with your main subject, light it, while capturing the background with available light.



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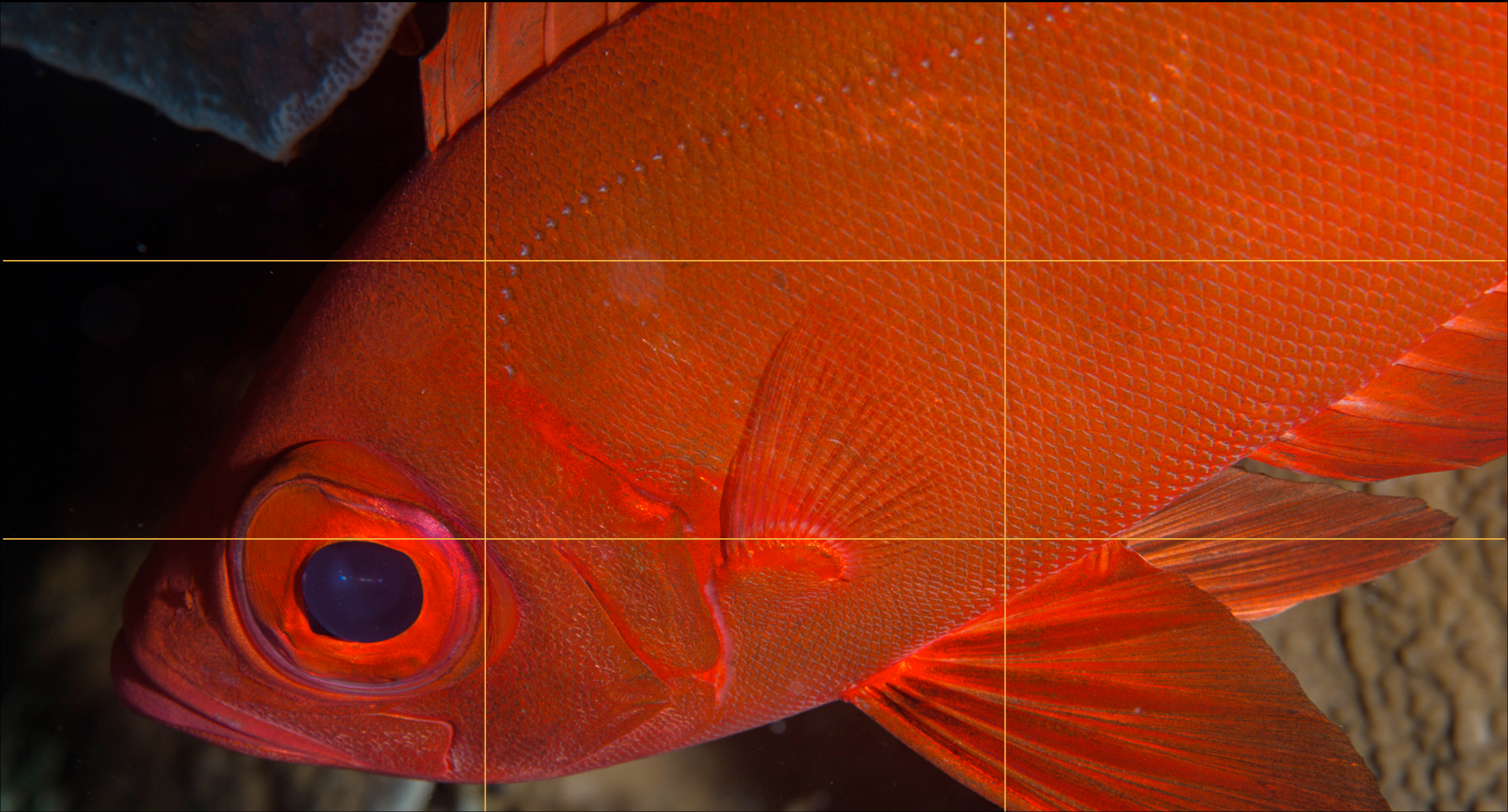
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KNOW THE RULE OF THIRDS

# COMPOSITION COUNTS

Imaginary lines are drawn dividing the image into thirds both horizontally and vertically. You place important elements of your composition where these lines intersect.





ADD MORE COLOR

# PICK YOUR BACKGROUND

It is not enough to have the perfect subject. To take your image to the next level, you need a great subject in a beautiful setting.





## TAKE YOUR TIME

Go in with a plan. Try to “pre-visualize” your photos. Never chase your subjects, let them come to you. Look for attractive settings, be patient and wait for a creature to enter the frame.

When they swim in front of the perfect coral head, then take your shot.





WAIT FOR THE MOMENT

# BEHAVIOR ENGAGES VIEWERS

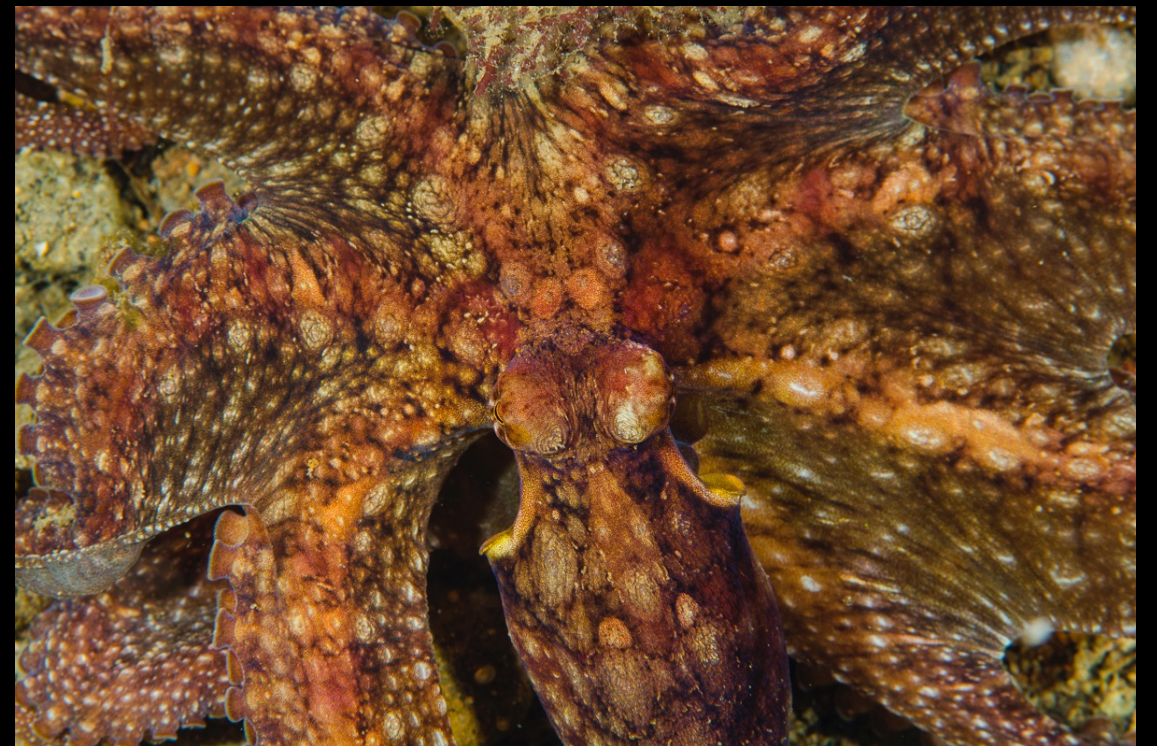
To capture behavior you have to take your time and be aware of their interactions with other animals and their surroundings.





# DON'T BE AFRAID TO BREAK THE RULES!

Example of shooting down and putting  
subject in center of photo



Example of uplighting







There is no "right" or "wrong"  
approach to uw photography, certainly  
no hard and fast rules.  
There is only your creative vision.  
Above all, shoot, shoot, and shoot  
more photos.





Part of the “Basics of UW Photography” Series

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