APERTURE DEPTH CHOICE

Choose what needs to stay sharp.

Depth of field is a storytelling choice. Check the nearest and farthest details that carry the scene.

01	**One plane**	For one subject, a wider aperture can reduce competing detail. Confirm that the important features still fall within acceptable focus.
02	**More depth**	When foreground and background both matter, try a smaller aperture and inspect both. Subject distance and focal length also affect depth.
03	**Focus**	Focus on the priority subject, then check the other required planes. A fixed rule such as always focusing one third in is unreliable.
04	**Motion**	Stopping down admits less light. Check that the resulting shutter speed still suits subject movement and your support.
05	**Review**	Inspect the near and far details on a test frame. Change aperture, distance or focus if either essential plane is too soft.

Worked example

A chapel framed by leaves presents a choice: keep the leaves legible to describe the approach, or let them soften so the doorway leads. Decide which relationship matters before choosing the aperture.

Keep in mind

Many phones have a fixed optical aperture. Portrait-mode blur is simulated and needs an edge check; it does not reproduce every optical depth effect.

Your decision

Priority plane

near detail

far detail

tested aperture

shutter

result

Adapted from the PhotoMind source manuscript, section 4.4, pp. 51-54. Examples and worksheet are editorial applications. Technical cross-check: Nikon: aperture and depth of field.