

Photo of the Month Competition and Advancement
Photography Club of Sun City Hilton Head
Guidelines and Rules Effective September 2022

A. Participation

1. You must be a paid member of the Photography Club to participate in any competition.
2. You must be present at the competition to enter your photo but there will be a one-time waiver of this rule during each competition year. Contact the Competition Committee to arrange the waiver.
3. A submitted photograph and **all** components of a composite photograph must have been photographed and edited by the member submitting it for competition.

Stock photos, textures, skies and all other stock backgrounds not photographed or created by the submitting member are not permitted.

Elements that are not photographs such as drawings and software programmed brushes that create shapes are not permitted.

The time limit for all components of a composite photo is the same as the original submitted photo.

All post processing (editing) must be done by the hand of the submitting member. You may receive and acquire feedback and critiques, but you must actually do the work yourself.

B. Photo Rules

1. You may submit only one (1) photo per competition.
2. Unless otherwise stated, photo must have been taken within the last 24 months.
3. Photos that have previously won a 1st, 2nd, or 3rd or Honorable Mention in the monthly competition may not be entered again.
4. Photos may be color, black and white, or sepia each month unless the called-for theme is specified to be color related or black and white/sepia specific.

C. Acceptable Images

1. A painting, photograph, statue, or work of art that is displayed in a museum, art gallery, or an indoor/outdoor art/craft show is considered copyrighted material and is in violation of competition rules. Statues or works of art in public areas such as parks are acceptable.
2. A key element of our club competition is creativity. In the spirit of creativity, exactly duplicating another person's painting, photograph or work of art is against club rules. You may be inspired by other artists images, adding your own interpretation.
3. **Novice images** are defined as ones that are produced using digital techniques to enhance color, contrast, brightness sharpening or retouching or using tools to eliminate red eye or distractions like glare, name tags, wires, branches etc. In these instances, information is eliminated or enhanced. Focus stacking, bracketing and HDR are acceptable.

Novice photos cannot use Composites techniques.

Definition of Composite: Photos that are made up of two or more distinct photos/parts of photos that are combined to create one image.

4. **Intermediate, Advanced and Experts can use all editing tools, including Composites.**

D. Competition Entry - Beginning in Sept. 2022, Both digital and print entries will be used.

1. Print. For print competitions, both a digital version and a printed version are required.
 - a. Submit the digital version by the deadline time and in accordance with the digital version guidelines below.
 - b. Bring your printed entry to the meeting. See Print Competition Entries below for more specifics.

2. Digital. For digital competitions, only a digital version is necessary for entry. However, a print will be required for display of all entries that win ribbons.
3. See Club Website for complete listing of each type of competition, themes and deadlines.

E. Entry Specifics

For Print Competition Entries: All photos must have a hard backing such as dry mounting, foam core (no thicker than ¼”) in order for the committee or judge to handle it. Mats are not required. If a mat is used, it must be either black or white. The picture cannot be framed. The photo may be any size or shape you like, but the final product must not exceed 20 inches on the long side.

Photo Identification - All photos must be labeled on the back with the following information:

1. Photographer’s name
2. Title of photograph
3. Level of photographer (i.e. Novice, Intermediate, Advanced or Expert).
4. Date photo was taken (must have been within the past two years) except for an open theme competition or otherwise specified.

The Sun City Photography Club website has a label template that can be used to identify your photo submission. The form can be found at pcschh.org. Then go to programs, competition, labels.

Digital Version (Required for both print and digital entries)

1. Submit your file **before Midnight on the Sunday prior to the Tuesday meeting** to enter your image. Entries after this deadline will not be accepted. You should receive email confirmation that your entry has been received.
2. Minimum file size is ONE (1) megabyte, or 1000 kilobytes and the maximum is five megabytes.
3. The submitted photo file attachment should be a JPG.
4. **Rename the photo file following this naming convention:**

Level – Photo title – Photographer’s name.jpg

Example: Novice – Blue Bird – John Doe.jpg

5. **Email your photo file as an attachment to <mailto:pcschh1@gmail.com>**

F. Studio Window Display of Winners

If your entry wins a first, second, third or honorable mention, it is eligible to be displayed in the studio window. Currently, only 8 x 10s can be used. If your winning entry is not this size **and you request it**, the club will print and mat your image **at cost**. You are also free to print and mat it yourself and then provide it for the window display.

G. Levels of Competition and Criteria for Advancement

1. **Initial Competition Level** – Typically a new member will begin competition at the NOVICE level. However, the club encourages all members to compete at a level appropriate with their photographic skill, not their relative newness to the club. Therefore, members who join the club with considerable prior photographic experience because of other club memberships, educational or professional activities, may request to compete at a level higher than NOVICE subject to review by the Competition Committee.
2. **Advancement Through Skill Levels** – Progression through skill levels is based on competency and every club member may not achieve the highest level. Moving to Advanced and Expert requires considerable technical and creative skills that some members may not have the time or inclination to pursue. The more a member participates, the greater the learning and the chance to move up.
3. **Points** – Beginning in the 2016 calendar year, progression through the levels will be accomplished by the accumulation of points from various wins. Every time a member moves up one level, the requirements of the new level apply, and the previous points are reset to zero.
4. **Club Competition Points** are achieved as follows:
 - a. First Place 9 points
 - b. Second Place 6 points
 - c. Third Place 3 points

- d. Honorable Mention 1 point

5. Points Required to Advance to a Higher Level

- a. Novice – A Photographer with a very basic understanding of photography.
12 Points are required to move from Novice to Intermediate.
- b. Intermediate – A photographer with some years of experience in photography who can use several shooting modes and understands the basic principles of photography.
18 points are required to move from Intermediate to Advanced. A first-place finish is also required in the intermediate category as part of the required 18 points.
- c. Advanced - A photographer with many years of experience in photography who knows how to achieve a creative and technically excellent image.
30 points required to move from Advanced to Expert. Two first-place finishes are also required in the Advanced category as part of the required 30 points.
- d. Expert - A photographer with many years of experience in photography who can teach at all levels and has mastered the technical aspects of photography and exhibits a solid portfolio.

6. Explanation of How Points are Totaled

- a. Any combination of award points is possible for advancement.
- b. A Novice must accumulate a total of 12 points to move to Intermediate.
- b. An Intermediate must accumulate the 18 points but one of those point values must be a first place to move to Advanced. Example: A first place (9 points) and three third place wins ($3 \times 3 = 9$ points) and has achieved 18 points and will move up to Advanced.
- c. An Advanced must accumulate 30 points but two of those point values must come from first place wins. As an example, two first place wins would accumulate 18 points, a second place would add 6 points for a total of 24 points and two third place wins would add an additional 6 points for a total of 30 points. The Advanced would then move to Expert.

7. Award Definitions

- a. A "WIN" is considered being awarded a 1st place, 2nd place, 3rd place or an Honorable Mention.
- b. Only "WINS" that were awarded from January 2008 forward will be counted towards advancement from one level to the next.

H. Competition Committee

1. The chairman of the Competition Committee will be responsible for tracking the "WINS" and notifying the Member by email when he/she is to advance to a new level of competition participation.
2. The Competition Committee will:
 - a. Develop photographic themes for monthly competition.
 - b. Be responsible for distribution of award ribbons.
 - c. Check in and organize photos for the print competition meetings.
 - d. Display the winning photos in studio window.
 - e. Advise the club leadership on competition matters.

I. Judging

At each meeting where there is a competition unless otherwise specified, only the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and Honorable Mentions will receive judge's comments.

In order for awards to be given, the following number of entries must be submitted:

- a. For a First Place, there must be three photos entered.
- b. For a Second Place, there must be six photos entered.
- c. For a Third Place, there must be nine photos entered.
- d. For an Honorable Mention, there must be 10 photos entered.

J. Awards and Displays

1. Ribbons will be awarded to 1st, 2nd, 3rd and Honorable Mention winners.
2. The 1st, 2nd, 3rd and Honorable Mention winners will be eligible for the photos to be displayed in the studio window until the next competition.

K. People's Choice Awards and Best of Year

1. All 1st place photos for the calendar year will be eligible to contend for these awards.
2. All members in good standing are eligible to vote for the awards and for the Best Photo of the Year
3. Method of voting will be announced in advance of the competition.