

PHOTOGRAPHY

Department P
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Frequently Asked Questions...

Q: *Why did you eliminate the Black and White division?*

A: When film media defined photography, photographers generally favored one or the other. This dichotomy was necessary because black and white film techniques are very different from color film. Today, one has only to click a mouse to de-saturate a print, therefore; there is no photographic challenge regarding the two mediums. (The "Old School" Class was added to spark an interest in traditional black and white photography.)

Q: *How many pictures can I enter in the same class?*

A: Only one photograph may be entered per class. You may enter a total of three photos – each in a different class.

Q: *Can I enter the same photo three times in different classes?*

A: This has happened in the past and it is usually allowed, but the judges will notice any duplication and generally ignore the entry.

Q: *I can't make it to a drop off point. Can I mail my photos in?*

A: Yes. Please mail your photos (including your full name, address and phone number) to:

***Attn: Photography Exhibits
c/o Alaska State Fair, Inc.
2075 Glenn Highway
Palmer, AK 99345***

Mail in entries must include return postage and are mailed back to the entrant after the Fair. Include a stamped, self-addressed padded envelope with your entry. Be sure to include sufficient postage.

If you have not entered anything in the Alaska State Fair previously, you will be assigned a Lifetime Entrant number before your photos are submitted for entry. If you have participated in any of our exhibit competitions previously, please include your Lifetime Entrant number along with your other personal information. Be sure to label the back of each photo according to the instructions in the Photo Exhibitor Guide.

Q: *What exactly qualifies as a Digital Art? If I take a picture with a digital camera and use a computer program to clean up the image, would that fall under that division?*

A: If you spent more time manipulating your photo on a computer than you did setting up the shot, it may indeed be more art than original photo. However, this class is listed because photo art can be every bit as challenging and creative as classic photography. Entrants are encouraged to try his or her hand at this modern art form.

Q: *My photo is 8"X12". Do I have to crop it down to 8"X10"?*

A: No. Mount the photo on an 11"X14" foamcore board. The Photography Department receives so many entries each year that the standard sizes rule was implemented for ease of display and judging. Any entry that does not meet these two formats will not be displayed nor judged. (The Superintendent can make exceptions for children or persons who may need additional allowance and encouragement. Regardless, all entries submitted should be close to the display sizes specified.)

Q: I live in an outlying area and can't get my photos professionally shrink-wrapped. Can I still enter?

A: You may use clear plastic sleeves. They are not only acceptable, but often preferred by the judges and readily available via the Internet. Try an Internet search for "PLASTIC PROTECTIVE SLEEVES FOR 8x10 PHOTOS" (or 11X14) Local photo and framing businesses also carry clear sleeves and many provide shipping to outlying areas.

Q: I only shoot one style of photograph, why am I limited to only one entry per class?

A: Allowing any entrant to have more than one photo per class would put other entrants at an unfair disadvantage. You may, however enter one photo under Class 07 – Miscellaneous. A third photo may qualify for one of the other classes where it would be displayed and appreciated.

Q: Do I retain rights to the photos or what are the copyright conditions?

A: The Alaska State Fair reserves only the right to display your photo publicly and release your name in a press release should you win a premium. You must claim your entries at the end of the fair.

Q: What are the entry fees?

A: Alaska State Fair does not charge entry fees for exhibits.

Q: Are Sepia tone, color corrections or changing a color photo to black and white considered "Digital Art"?

A: Not necessarily. Modifications to tones, tint, and minor touch ups using photo-editing software are as much a part of modern photography as digital cameras. If you overdo a touch up, the judges may disregard the photo and move on to the next entry. Converting a photo to sepia, black and white, or high contrast is a part of the printing and display process. Entrants are encouraged to limit the amount of touching up done to a photo.

Q: Can my friend check in my photos and pick them up after the Fair?

A: Yes. Anyone picking up your entries must have the yellow claim slip you received when you entered your photographs.

Q: Do the photos have to be taken in Alaska?

A: No, any photo that falls within the Photography Department guidelines can be entered. A judge may favor an Alaska scene when choosing a winning entry between two photos of equal merit.

Q: Can I enter photos that I entered in other contest?

A: Yes, provided there are no copyright restrictions associated with the other competition.

Q: How does the judging work?

A: The Photography Superintendent is charged with securing qualified and considerate judges. Art is a challenge to evaluate and even though someone is an excellent photographer or instructor, he or she may not be a good judge.

This year, all the judges will use a 5-point checklist to evaluate the technical and aesthetic merit of each entry. Judging cards will be posted on the back of each photo. This will allow an entrant see how he or she scored and learn what skills may need improvement. Points are 1-5 (1 = poor, 5 = excellent) and include the following technical areas:

- First impression – does this photo capture your interest?
- Focal Point – is there a main point of interest that is in focus and dominant?
- Impact or Mood – photos should tell a story or evoke a mood or an emotion.
- Quality – technically correct in such areas as composition, exposure, focus, printing, and grain.
- Lighting/Contrast – proper lighting techniques define the art of photography.