



Plano Photography Club

Competition Rules and Process

August 2026

PURPOSE OF COMPETITIONS

The purpose of PPC competitions is to encourage members to practice their art through monthly contests, to provide educational opportunities for improvement, and to reward members' photographic achievements. The PPC Executive Committee must approve changes to the rules governing the competition.

(Contest is used for a single event, such as "monthly contest." Competition refers to an extended event, such as the PPC yearly competition.)

COMPETITION YEAR

Contests are conducted monthly, beginning in May and continuing through the following March. There is no contest in December and April is for Special Interest Contests.

COMPETITION COMMITTEE

The President will annually appoint three club members competing at the Master Level to be the Competition Committee. At least one appointee shall not have served in the previous year.

The duties and responsibilities of this committee are described in this document.

IMAGE FORMATS

There are two image formats, electronic and print, but only one format is accepted for each monthly contest as defined by the Executive Committee.

ENTRY PROCESS

1. Entrants may submit one IMAGE for each monthly contest through the club website.
2. Image DIMENSIONS are a maximum of 4096 pixels wide and 2160 pixels high.
3. The Image FILE TYPE must be jpeg/jpg and the Image FILE SIZE not larger than 10 MB.
4. Each Image must have a TITLE that is no longer than 50 characters. The Image TITLE may NOT contain any information that could be used to identify the photographer.
5. Entries that do not adhere to the competition rules may be disqualified by the Contest Chair and withdrawn from the contest. The Contest Chair may notify the submitter and allow them to submit a different image.



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FURTHER STEPS FOR PRINTS

1. Print images must be mounted but not framed.
2. A top mat is optional.
3. The physical dimensions of the entry must be no larger than 16" x 24" including the mount and mat.
4. The physical size of the image must be no smaller than 64 square inches or 96 square inches for panoramas.
5. The aspect ratio of panoramas should be 2:1 or greater (3:1, 4:1, etc.).
6. Print entries must have a label on the back with the submitter's Competition Level, the image title. The label may contain the member ID number but not the submitter's name. Labels may be generated from the Competition website when submitting the digital version of the print.
7. A digital image file must also be provided for use in the judging slide show.
8. Prints must be physically submitted to the Contest Chair before the end of the monthly meeting.
9. Prints may not have any kind of hardware, such as that used for hanging, on the back.
10. Prints may not be enclosed in any kind of packaging including plastic sleeves, bubble wrap, etc. Prints that are mailed in will have packaging removed prior to submission to the judge.

COMPETITION LEVELS

Club members compete in one of four levels based on photography skills: **Entry (E)**, **Intermediate (I)**, **Advanced (A)**, and **Master (M)**.

- First-time competitors may choose to compete in either the Entry Level for those new to photography or competition or the Intermediate Level for those comfortable with their camera and photography fundamentals.
- A new member may petition the Competition Committee to begin in the Advanced Level. The Competition Committee must be familiar with the member's body of work, or the member must present a portfolio for consideration.
- Returning members (those who have not competed for at least a year) compete in the Level equivalent to their previous Level.
- A club member must compete in the same Level throughout the competition year.
- A member may choose to change Levels (to Entry or Intermediate) at the end of the competition year after consultation with the Competition Committee.

CONTEST THEMES

To encourage competing photographers to expand their skills and to try different subjects, themes are assigned to some of the months. Assigned themes and their definitions are approved by the Executive Committee. The calendar of themes is announced at Club meetings and is published on the Club website and in the Club newsletter.

Entries in the monthly contests should reflect the contest themes; in months designated as Open, images are not constrained to a theme.



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SPECIAL INTEREST CONTESTS

There may be special interest contests at the end of the competition year for those members who wish to photograph specific themes. These will be announced at Club meetings, on the Club website, and in the Club newsletter.

The special interest contests do not use the Competition Levels, and no points are assigned. The special interest contests will not contribute to Photographer of the Year or High Points Awards.

One entry per contest is allowed for the special interest contests. Image content and submission guidelines apply.

IMAGES

- Images may originate from any medium (film, electronic sensor, or future technology for recording photographic images).
- Images must originate as photographs created by the entrant. Post-processing, including composites of several original images, is allowed if produced by the entrant.
- Design elements may be added to the image if created by the entrant; however, images must not be solely computer-generated graphic art.
- Images must be the creation of the photographer and not solely an image capture of another's artwork. If another's artwork is included in an image, the photographer must contribute further insight with compositional elements, such as unique lighting or a unique perspective.
- Printed images may be printed by the entrant, another individual, or a commercial lab; however, alterations such as color correction and white balance must only be made by the entrant.
- Images must not depict the desecration of religious symbols.
- Images must not show more live female nudity than a bikini would show or more live male nudity than a swimsuit would show. See-through fabric is considered the same as exposed skin.
- Images must not contain any text, titles, or watermarks identifying the entrant.
- Images that were submitted to a PPC contest are eligible to be resubmitted to a later PPC contest, except as noted in the discussion of Retired Images.
- Entries that do not adhere to the competition rules may be disqualified by the Contest Chair and withdrawn from the contest. The Contest Chair may notify the submitter and allow them to submit a different image.

JUDGING

The judging of images is intended for the education of club members so they may improve their photography skills.

- Judges are selected by the Contest Chair. Only one judge is required for each contest; however, the number of judges is not limited to one.
- Judges are given the same theme and description that members receive.
- The photographer's name is not revealed to the judge during judging.
- Judges are asked to give helpful critiques for every submitted image.
- **Image scores are to be a minimum of 6 and a maximum of 15.**



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MONTHLY CONTESTS

These contests are intended to provide a competition platform for members with similar skill levels. The results of these competitions are used for advancement through competition levels.

MONTHLY SCORING FOR CONTESTS WITHIN COMPETITION LEVELS

Judge's Points (also called Image Points) are awarded by the judge based solely on the merits of the image and not in competition with other images. The judge considers impact, composition, and the technical aspects of the image in determining the point value. No image scores less than 6 points, and the maximum number of points is 15.

For each Competition Level, awards for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place are given if there are enough entries. Awarding up to two Honorable Mentions is at the Judge's discretion.

END OF THE YEAR – HIGHEST POINTS AWARD

At the end of the contest year, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place awards are given to the photographers within each level that have accumulated the highest total Judge's point counts.

The winners must have entered at least **six** of the monthly contests to be eligible.

In the case of ties, multiple awards will be given:

- If two people tie for 1st place, they both receive 1st place awards. Nobody receives a 2nd place award. The next highest score(s) receive(s) 3rd place awards(s).
- If three or more people tie for 1st place, 1st place awards are given to all members with the same point count. There are no 2nd or 3rd place awards.
- If two or more people tie for 2nd place, 2nd place awards are given to all members with the same point count. There are no 3rd place awards.
- If two or more people tie for 3rd place, 3rd place awards are given to all members with the same point count.

MONTHLY SCORING FOR PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR

The "Photographer of the Year" (POY) is the person whose work has been judged superior over all other work under like conditions in any competition year.

Each month the judge will be asked to make four additional awards, called POY awards, regardless of competition level. There is NO limitation on how many of these awards may come from an individual competition level.



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PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR (POY) POINTS

- | | |
|---|---|
| • 1 st place among all competitors | 5 |
| • 2 nd place among all competitors | 3 |
| • 3 rd place among all competitors | 2 |
| • Honorable Mention among all competitors | 1 |

At the end of the year, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place awards are given to the photographers that have the highest total POY point counts for the year.

The winners must have entered ALL the monthly contests to be eligible.

In the event of a tie, the year's total of Judge's Points will act as a tiebreaker. If there is still a tie, the number of 1st place finishes awarded in the current year's competitions will be used. If there is still a tie, multiple awards will be given.

ANNUAL CONTESTS

Digital Image of the Year – Selected by a judge from the digital images that won 1st, 2nd, or 3rd place in each competition level during the year. This process is done separately for each level.

Print Image of the Year – Selected by a judge from the print images that won 1st, 2nd, or 3rd place in each competition level during the year. This process is done separately for each level.

ADVANCEMENT PROCESS

- At the end of the competition year, the Competition Committee evaluates the standings in each level and recommends members for advancement to the next level.
- Advancement is determined based on Image and Place Points received during the full competition year.
- Competition performance over time is considered for advancement to the Master level.
- Participants who are invited to advance may choose to stay in the current class one time. If invited a second time, they must advance.
- The Competition Committee informs the participants who have been identified and selected for advancement and obtains consent from those to whom invitations were made.
- The final Level changes must be made to the Competition website before the May contest opens.



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RETIRED IMAGES

Images that have been awarded a 1st, 2nd, 3rd, or HM in any previous PPC contest (monthly or special interest) in any format or level are not eligible for succeeding contests (monthly or special interest).

This extends to any images created by the same entrant that are substantially similar to or derivatives of those that have earned awards. Derivatives are any images that are a modification to an ineligible image, including cropping, monochrome/color conversion, and aspect ratio.

The Competition Committee determines whether images are substantially similar. Images that have been entered in any contest but have not received an award may be entered in any future contest.

CHANGES

At times, the Contest Chair may find it necessary to change a process depending on available technology, resources, or people.

The Contest Chair should advise the PPC Executive Committee of process changes, but no approval is needed.

Changes in fundamental policy require a simple majority approval of the Executive Committee.