

Club Competition Rules 2026

1. General

- 1.1 Club financial members (excluding social members) may participate in club photo competitions. Club dues are required by 26 January 2026. Note that you must be a financial member to submit images into a competition.
- 1.2 Each club member will be allocated a competition number when they join the club. This is used for administrative purposes and for setting up the competition software. When submitting images, there is no requirement to enter your member number or name with your images as the Contest Pro software will keep track of the information; you will only need the image title. (see 4.6 for image labelling instructions)
- 1.3 All images must be the original photographic work of the club member but may be digitally enhanced. No part of the image can be copied or imported from any source other than the club member's original work. Other photographic images by the same club member may be combined to make a new image. Please read the criteria for the Nature competition, which only allows cropping.
- 1.4 Apart from minor adjustments for printing, all manipulation of the image must be done by the club member. Post-production processing must be under the direct control of the photographer, whether that processing is manual such as cloning, painting, dodging, etc
- 1.5 Photographs of artwork (e.g. graffiti, sculpture or photos) may be submitted for competition as long as the photograph provides an interpretation of the artwork.
- 1.6 All photos submitted remain the property of the club member. The club claims no rights other than the ability to display the photos at club meetings including the end-of-year awards night, at other club, VAPS exhibitions, functions including interclub events, on the club website or public Facebook page and club publications.
- 1.7 Images taken at club workshops are not eligible to be entered into club competitions. However, images taken at club outings will be allowed.
- 1.8 Unless otherwise stated (e.g. in the Nature competition), post-processing techniques for altering exposure, dynamic range, colour, sharpness and noise are all acceptable. Similarly, unwanted objects may be removed by cloning or similar techniques.

Digital or print images submitted must have a photographic origin.

Unless otherwise specified, composite images that combine various elements into a single image are acceptable provided all the pixels included are the original work of the maker.

The following applications of AI tools are acceptable for images:

- Selection tools
- or automated such as using filters or plugins.
- Compositing tools, provided that all content is the work of the club member and not generated by computer prompts.

The following applications of AI tools are unacceptable for images:

- Any tool that introduces image elements not captured by the club member.
- Sky replacement using content not produced by the club member.
- Tools that alter the expression or physical dimensions of a portrait subject, human or animal.

- 'Generative Fill' or other processes that use content generated by software from written prompts or developed from the work of others is 'not acceptable'.

*Ref APS Australian Photographic Society Definition

<https://www.a-p-s.org.au/index.php/exhibition/aps-nat-exhib/aps-national-image-conditions>

2. Competition Classes

- 2.1 Club competitions will be split into novice and standard categories.
- 2.2 New club members can select their competition category. Club members must compete in all the competitions under the category that they have selected for that calendar year.
- 2.3 The novice class is intended to encourage club members who are new to the art of photography to enter monthly competitions while not competing against more experienced members.
- 2.4 Club members who win a club end-of-year aggregate award or who have previously nominated for the standard class cannot compete in the novice category the following year.
- 2.5 In some cases, the sub-committee (made up of the Competition Steward, President, Secretary and Treasurer) may request a member to transfer to a different class.

3. Monthly Competitions

- 3.1 Images for 2025 will be digital and print submissions.
- 3.2 You must be a financial member to enter the monthly competitions.
- 3.3 Themed competitions are held by the club each month.
- 3.4 Images that have already received awards may not be entered again into other monthly competitions unless you have rejected the original award.
- 3.5 Members may enter a maximum of six images per competition (i.e. 3 digital and 3 print), except where specified.
- 3.6 All digital images should be submitted using the competition entry application <http://www.photocontestpro.com>
- 3.7 You must be a registered user to use Photo Contest Pro.
- 3.8 Contact the Competition Steward if you are not registered, have difficulties or require detailed instructions.
- 3.9 Entries can be submitted via the shortcut application created on your computer, or via <http://www.photocontestpro.com>
 - Login to the site with your login credentials
 - Navigate to the Submit Images tab and select the appropriate method to load your images
 - It is recommended to use Method 2 as it is a simple process.

4. Digital and Print Images

- 4.1 Image size should not exceed 1920 pixels wide by 1080 pixels high. Note that the Contest Pro software will resize images if your images are not correctly sized.
- 4.2 Digital images must be submitted as JPEG files (*.jpg).

- 4.3 Digital image file size must not exceed 5000 KB (5 MB).
- 4.4 Each digital image must have a file title only of Max 30 characters.
- 4.5 Each print image must also be accompanied by a digital image.
- 4.6 Prints should be labelled on the back of the print in the top left corner with the image title only. The title should match the digital file name uploaded to the system. Note you don't need your member number on any images (see 1.2).
- 4.7 Prints must be provided to the Competition Steward at club meetings by being placed in the box appropriate to the print size prior to the cut-off date.

5. Prints Sizes and Mounting

- 5.1 Maximum print size is 40 × 50 cm (16 × 20 inches), including mount and matt.
- 5.2 Minimum print size is 20 × 25 cm (8 × 10 inches), including mount and matt.
- 5.3 Maximum thickness of entry is 5 mm, including matt, print and backing.
- 5.4 Prints must be presented on a cardboard mount board and should be backed by cardboard or foam core.
- 5.5 It is the club members' responsibility to pick up the print after the completion of the competition.
- 5.6 Uncollected prints will be disposed of two years after the original judging.

6. Responsibility of Competition Steward

- 6.1 The Competition Steward will decide on each entries compliance with these rules and the competition assignment subject (including any definition provided) and he/she reserves the right to reject an entry. If in doubt, the Competition Steward will consult an appointed sub-committee. These decisions will be accepted as final.
- 6.2 The Competition Steward will organise the selection of and communication with competition Judges for the year.
- 6.3 The Competition Steward will forward the accepted entries to the Judge so that they can review the entries before the judging date.
- 6.4 The Competition Steward will also provide the Judge with full details of the competition, including these rules and the subject for the competition and any definition.
- 6.5 The Steward will ensure that the Judge receives their payment for the night.

7. Responsibility of Judge

- 7.1 The Judge will decide on the merit of the entry and give awards to approximately 40% of the images entered in each category.
 - **HIGHLY COMMENDED** – Exceptional Image in concept, technique, and aesthetics, showing impact and originality.
 - **COMMENDED** – An image of above-average quality in concept, aesthetics, and technique with no major faults and shows appeal.
 - **MERIT** – An image that may require minor improvement but shows interesting approaches, inventive use of technique/s, or artistic value.

7.2 Judges are encouraged to critique each entry within the time allocated, with the intent of helping all members learn about photography and to encourage participation. Their awards are deemed final.

8. End-of-Year Aggregate Awards

8.1 Points will be allocated to entries that received awards as follows:

- HIGHLY COMMENDED: 3 points
- COMMENDED: 2 points
- MERIT: 1 point
- Each entry submitted per competition will receive 1 point.

Aggregate Points Awards will be determined based on adding up the points allocated to each member's entries.

8.2 End-of-Year Aggregate Points Awards will be presented to:

- Novice Images – 1st, 2nd and 3rd
- Standard Images – 1st, 2nd and 3rd

9. End-of-Year Individual Photo Awards

Individual Photo Award winners per category will be selected from images and prints entered in the following themes:

- Nature
- Portrait
- Scapes

All other awarded images throughout the year will be eligible for the Image of the Year award. The Steward will manage the digital images. Club members must supply any prints they want included.

10. End-of-Year Awards

The selected Judges will determine the individual award winners in the following categories:

- Best Novice Scape of the Year
- Best Standard Scape of the Year
- Best Novice Portrait of the Year
- Best Standard Portrait of the Year
- Best Novice Nature of the Year
- Best Standard Nature of the Year
- Best Novice Image of the Year
- Best Standard Image of the Year
- Presidents' Encouragement Award