

2025 District 12 4-H Photography Rules and Guidelines

Rules and Procedures	
Participation Grades	Juniors, intermediates, senior age divisions (as of August 31, 2024) registered in 4-H Online will be allowed to participate.
Eligibility	All photos must be taken with a digital camera (smartphone cameras are included). Photos must be taken by participants between the dates of January 1, 2024 and the time of entry. Photos may be submitted only once and in only one category.
Photo Format	Muse be .jpeg, .jpg, or .png. Contestants may use any file naming structure. No raw files allowed.
Qualifying from County	Each county may enter only one entry per category (19) per age division. This will result in a total of 57 entries per county. Counties are highly encouraged to have a selection process (such as a contest) in place to determine who advances in that category. <i>*Please note, if there are TWO entries in one category and in one age division, both will be disqualified.</i>
Entry Fee	\$8.00 per photo
Registration	Online registration will open February 3, 2025, and will end March 7, 2025. The event name will be 2025 District 12 4-H Photography Contest. Payment must be made on 4-H Online at the time of registration submission. There will be no late entries for this contest.
Ratio and Size	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Files submitted may not be larger than 5,120k (5MB) • Photos must be a minimum of 300 dpi, and at least 1 MB • Must be 3:2 (4"x6") or 5:4 (8"x10") either landscape or portrait except for the PANORMAIC category.
Alterations (NEW!)	Color and Black & White photos are allowed in all categories. Although slight computer enhancements are allowed, such as cropping, minor adjustment of lighting, and red eye reduction; substantially altered photography, such as applying design styles, or using computer graphics will disqualify an entry. Any other alteration, manipulation, or edits to a photo would require the photo to be entered into the Enhanced category.
Text on Photographs (NEW!)	Photographs must not contain camera or user placed text. This includes such things as date stamps, comments, watermarks, or titles. Text or wording that is part of the original photograph (i.e. photo of a street sign, etc.) is acceptable.
Copyright/ Original Work of 4-H Member	The entry must be the original photographic work of the 4-H member and not a photo taken by family members, other 4-H members, or secured from any other printed/electronic source. Any photo proven to be found as not original work will result in disqualification of ALL the 4-H member's entries into the Photography Contest. Additionally, actions may be taken against the 4-H members in regard to the Consequences of Misbehavior and Code of Conduct signed by the 4-H member.
Awards, Display and Judging	
Awards, Display and Judging	Awards will be given out at least one week after the judging period concludes. Winners will be displayed at the District 12 4-H Facebook Page and at the District 12 Round-Up Educational Presentation + Event.
Awards and Recognition	<p><i>All awards will be announced after the judging period concludes. Judges determine the placings of each photography and</i></p> <p>Participation: All receive a certificate.</p> <p>Quality Awards: Blue, Red, and White quality awards will be given based on the total score value. Score ranges for each award are outlined on the attached score sheet.</p> <p>Best of Class: One class winner per category per age division will receive a rosette.</p>

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension is an equal opportunity employer and program provider.

The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas
Cooperating

	<p>Best of Show: A Best of Show will be awarded to one photo in each category. <i>The Photography Committee will determine the award, and it will be published with the release letter.</i></p> <p>Grand Champion: Grand Champion will be the overall winner of the District 12 Photography contest out of the Best of Shows. Only one will be selected by the judges. <i>The Photography Committee will determine the award, and it will be published with the release letter.</i></p>
Releases	
Content	Photos that are deemed obscene, vulgar, sexually-oriented, hateful, threatening, or otherwise violate any decency standards or laws are strictly prohibited. The District 12 4-H Youth Development Program reserves the right to determine and refuse inappropriate or unsuitable entries.
Display and Future Usage Rights	By entry, the participant grants permission to the Texas 4-H Youth Development Program, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, and any other public or private agency authorized by the Texas 4-H Youth Development Program, the use, and rights associated to the use of the photographic likeness, in promotional publications, and other media, without compensation. Certain photos may be used for 4-H program and marketing uses.
Model and Property Releases	It is required that each participant have sufficient permission granted to both the photographer and the District 12 4-H Youth Development Program to publish and use, as needed, any photo showing any recognizable locations or people photographed. Documentation should be retained by the participant and be available upon request from the District 12 4-H Youth Development Program.
Possible Reasons to Disqualify	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broken content rule. This includes inappropriate or unsuitable content. • Broken copyright rule. Photo is not the original work of the 4-H member. This action which is a major offense in the Texas 4-H Rules & Guidelines. • Broken display and future rights usage rule. • Broken model and property release rule. • Category: Does not meet category criteria, rules or guidelines. • Category: Multiple county entries into a category and age division. • Category: Same photo entered into multiple categories. • County did not select/certify photography to represent county by the deadline. • Entry fee not paid or only partial fee paid. • Extremely poor quality and/or low resolution causing the subject matter to be unrecognizable. • Manipulation of photo beyond what is allowed. <p>Disqualification for any reason will forfeit all entry fees. No refunds will be given.</p>
Category Selection	It is extremely important that 4-H members, project leaders, parents, and County Extension Agents review the descriptions of each category very carefully. Do not enter photographs into categories that are duplicates from other categories or ones that do not clearly meet the category description. Photographs that do not meet the description of the category may be disqualified (judge's discretion).

2025 EVALUATIVE CRITERIA

Each photograph will be judged against the following set of judging criteria, and not against photographs of your peers. Based on total points awarded for each photograph, the participant will be awarded both a blue, red, or white ribbon and a participation certificate. The elements for judging the photographs will be:

<p>IMPACT (Max Points: 15)</p>	<p>Impact is the sense one gets upon viewing an image for the first time. Compelling images evoke laughter, sadness, anger, pride, wonder or another intense emotion. There can be impact in any of these twelve elements.</p>
<p>CREATIVITY (Max Points: 15)</p>	<p>Creativity is the original, fresh, and external expression of the imagination of the maker by using the medium to convey an idea, message or thought.</p>
<p>TECHNICAL EXCELLENCE (Max Points: 25)</p>	<p>Technical is the quality of the image itself as it is presented for viewing, which includes the following aspects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • allowable amounts of retouching and adjustments (removal of red eye, cropping, minor straightening) • sharpness and correct color balance. • lighting, which includes the use and control of light. The use of lighting whether natural or man-made and its proper use to enhance the image. • Posing and capturing of the image
<p>COMPOSITION (Max Points: 20)</p>	<p>Composition is important to the design of an image, bringing all of the visual elements together in concert to express the purpose of the image. Proper composition holds the viewer in the image and prompts the viewer to look where the creator intends. Effective composition can be pleasing or disturbing, depending on the intent of the image maker.</p>
<p>SUBJECT MATTER (Max Points: 15)</p>	<p>Subject Matter should always be appropriate to the story being told (i.e. category the photo is entered into) in an image. Subject matter also includes the center of interest for the photograph or where the maker wants the viewer to stop, and they view the image.</p>
<p>STORY TELLING (Max Points: 10)</p>	<p>Story Telling refers to the image's ability to evoke imagination. One beautiful thing about art is that each viewer might collect his own message or read her own story in an image</p>

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension is an equal opportunity employer and program provider.

The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas
Cooperating

Texas 4-H Photography Contest Score Sheet



Name: _____ County: _____

Category: _____

You are competing against standards of excellence outlined below, not against your peers. Before preparing your entry for submission please carefully review the judging criteria. Based on total points awarded for each photograph, the participant will be awarded either a blue, red, white, or a participation ribbon.

JUDGES, PLEASE INDICATE POINTS AWARDED IN FAR RIGHT COLUMN:

CATEGORY	JUDGING ELEMENT	POINT RANGE	POINTS AWARDED
Impact (Max Points: 15)	Impact is the sense one gets upon viewing an image for the first time. Compelling images evoke laughter, sadness, anger, pride, wonder or another intense emotion. There can be impact in any of the judging elements.	0-15	
Creativity (Max Points: 15)	Creativity is the original, fresh, and external expression of the imagination of the maker by using the medium to convey an idea, message or thought.	0-15	
Technical (Max Points: 25)	Technical is the quality of the image itself as it is presented for viewing, which includes the following aspects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> allowable amounts of retouching and adjustments (removal of red eye, cropping, minor straightening) sharpness and correct color balance. lighting, which includes the use and control of light. The use of lighting whether natural or man-made and its proper use to enhance the image. posing and capturing of the image. 	0-25	
Composition (Max Points: 20)	Composition is important to the design of an image, bringing all of the visual elements together in concert to express the purpose of the image. Proper composition holds the viewer in the image and prompts the viewer to look where the creator intends. Effective composition can be pleasing or disturbing, depending on the intent of the image maker.	0-20	
Subject Matter (Max Points: 15)	Subject Matter should always be appropriate to the story being told (i.e. category the photo is entered into) in an image. Subject matter also includes the center of interest for the photograph or where the maker wants the viewer to stop and they view the image.	0-15	
Story Telling (Max Points: 10)	Story Telling refers to the image's ability to evoke imagination. One beautiful thing about art is that each viewer might collect his own message or read her own story in an image.	0-10	
TOTAL POINTS AWARDED			

AWARD (circle one)	Blue Award (100 points to 81 pts)	Red Award (80 to 51 pts)	White Award (50 to 31 pts)	Participant Award (30 to 0 pots)
-----------------------	--------------------------------------	-----------------------------	-------------------------------	-------------------------------------

JUDGES COMMENTS:

2025 District 12 4-H Photography Categories

2024-2025 Categories	
Animals – Domestic	<p>Photos focus on the various animals that have been tamed and made fit for a human environment. To be considered domesticated, the animal must have their behavior, life cycle, or physiology systemically altered as a result of being under human control for many generations.</p> <p>Examples: Chickens, cows, dogs, hamsters, horses, pigs, sheep, goats, etc. All waterfowl (ducks and geese) should be entered in Animals – Wildlife.</p>
Animals – Wildlife	<p>Category focuses on animals that are not typically tamed or domesticated and commonly found in the wilderness or bodies of water throughout the country and world. Photos can be of wildlife in nature, zoos, and/or petting zoos.</p> <p>Examples: Birds, deer, elephants, snakes, whales, etc.</p>
Catch-All	<p>Photos that do not fit into one of the other categories.</p> <p>Not allowed: A duplicate photo also entered in another category.</p>
Details & Macro	<p>Getting in VERY close is the name of the game for this category. The goal is to zoom in close to an object to see its finer details or to make small objects appear life-sized or larger than we do not normally get to see with the naked eye.</p> <p>Examples: Insect eyes, veins on a leaf, a reflection in a single water droplet, etc.</p>
Dominant Color (NEW)	<p>Photos with a dominant color. The dominant element in the image must be a specific color, such as red, yellow, blue, white, black, white, green, etc.</p> <p>Examples: Bowl of lemons, in a yellow bowl, on top of a yellow table covering, with a bright yellow tone sun lighting on it.</p> <p>Not allowed: Black & White photos and duotones.</p>
Elements of Design	<p>Images use of graphic elements of design. Photos that showcase line, shape, pattern, form, texture, perspective, etc. Photo can consist of any subject matter.</p> <p>Examples: Line, pattern, shape, etc.</p> <p>Not allowed: Digital creations or graphic designs made in software such as Photoshop, InDesign, or Illustrator.</p>
Enhanced	<p>A single photo that has been technically manipulated to be an abstract, panoramic, stitched, or composite image. Other variations are allowed as well.</p> <p>Examples: Software edited composites and creations, images greatly manipulated with a variety of filters, photos with artistic borders, photos stitched into a panoramic, etc.</p>
Food	<p>A still life specialization of photography, aimed at producing attractive photographs of food for use in such items of advertisements, packaging, menus and/or cookbooks.</p> <p>Examples: Cakes/pies, Easter eggs, fruits and place settings, ingredients, sandwiches, Thanksgiving dinner, etc.</p> <p>Not allowed: A photo of alcoholic beverages.</p>
Landscape & Nature (Non-Animal)	<p>The focus of this category includes landscapes, outdoor scenic, nature images, sunsets, urban landscapes, seascapes, cityscapes, and farms. Images focus on the beauty of the outdoors.</p> <p>Examples: Gardens/landscapes, outdoors, scenic, etc.</p> <p>Not allowed: Primary subject is a person or wildlife.</p>
Leading Line	<p>This image composition technique features lines that draw the viewer's eye from point A to point B, which is the primary subject.</p>

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension is an equal opportunity employer and program provider.

The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas
Cooperating



	Example: A river that begins in the foreground and draws your attention to a photogenic bridge in the background.
Long Exposure	Also known as time-exposure or slow-shutter, this technique involves using a long-duration shutter speed. It can be used to sharply capture stationary elements of an image while blurring, smearing, or obscuring the moving elements. It is also used in low-light conditions. Examples: Fireworks, moving water, light trails, Milky Way, light painting, night or low-light conditions, etc.
Motion/Action	The capture of movement within a single photo. The subject appears stopped or “frozen”. Examples: Ferris wheel spinning, sporting events, horse running across a field, etc.
People	Photos focus from all walks of life, parenting and family, children, babies, models/fashion, sports, and couples. All individuals in the photos must have provided consent and permission as a subject. If requested, a release will be needed from the photographer and subject. Examples: Babies, families, kids, portraits, models/fashion, etc.
Plant/Flora	Photos of interesting, unique, and beautiful flowers and flora. Photography can occur outdoors or indoors. The photo subject should be that of a single flower, plant, bush, tree, etc. Large collections of plant/flora should be considered for entry into the Landscape & Nature category. Examples: A rose, an upward shot of a tree, etc.
Reflections (NEW)	Focus on capturing reflections in various environments, such as water, mirrors, glass, or metallic surfaces. Highlight the symmetry and intriguing visual effects that reflections create, from serene landscapes mirrored in a lake to bustling cityscapes in puddles or building facades.
Shadow/ Silhouette	A silhouette is an outline that appears dark (typically a single color) with little or no details/features against a brighter background. Recording patterns of light and shade for a desired effect or emphasis is the definition of a shadow. The silhouette or shadow must be the primary subject and focus of the image. Examples: shadows/silhouettes of people, plants, animals, structures, architecture, or natural structures. Not allowed: reflections
Transportation (NEW)	Capture the essence of travel. From bustling city streets with cars and buses to serene rural scenes featuring bicycles and boats, this category celebrates the diversity of transportation methods that connect and move us through life. Examples: bustling urban streets, serene bicycle paths, busy waterways, trains, single vehicles, and even rockets!
Theme – PATRIOTISM	Showcase images that reflect national patriotism. Capture symbols, ceremonies, and landscapes that embody the spirit of our country, from flag displays and national monuments to patriotic events and celebrations.
Panoramic (Only offered in District 12)	An image that is in one of the following dimensions: 5x15, 8x24, or 12x36. The subject can be the photographer’s choice, but the image nor any portion of the image can be submitted in any other category.