

WHAT JUDGES LOOK FOR

Camera clubs have different procedures for competitions, but one procedure that many clubs follow is to award ribbons to 25 percent of the entries. Thus, a judge must eliminate 75 percent of all entries before ribbons can be given.

For example, if a competition category has 20 entries, then ribbons would be given to five entries (25%) -- 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and two honorable mentions. The judge first has to eliminate 15 entries (75%) -- no matter how good the images may be.

Reasons Given by Judges To Eliminate Images

No subject, no center of interest.

Subject not moving/looking into picture.

It needs a person.

No catch light in the eye(s).

Horizon in the center or not level.

Subject in center. Violates rule of thirds.

Leading line(s) lead to nowhere.

Building(s) falling over.

I have seen better sunrises, sunsets, etc.

There are more interesting images in this competition.

Light not good. Wrong time of day.

Not enough color, too much color, color not accurate.

Doesn't meet the theme.

Too busy/too dull. No wow factor.

Not in focus. Foreground not sharp.

Picture is over/under exposed.

Distracting background.

There is/are hot spot(s).

It's just a snapshot image or it's a post card image.

Tonal range exceeds capability of film/sensor.

Even number of objects.

I don't know what it is.

I like/don't like dogs, cats, orange, etc.

Placement/Spacing/Separation.

Total presentation, including matting.

That's art. OUT!

How to Take Better Pictures for Competition

Take your time when you photograph. *“The fastest way to become a better photographer is to slow down.”*

Think **before** you press the shutter. **Analyze** the image in the viewfinder. Get it right in the camera.

Don't rely on post camera capture methods to correct carelessness. Sometimes they can; sometimes they can't.

Use a tripod -- it is your most important accessory.

“God intended photographers to have five legs.”

It is not how many pictures you take -- rather how many **competition worthy** pictures you take.

Become Closely Involved With Your Viewfinder

It Will Become The Picture Space

Look For and Consider the Following within the Viewfinder

Lines

Shapes

Texture

Perspective

Camera Position

Focus

Depth of Field

Aperture Opening

Background/Foreground

Rhythm

Balance

Color

Tone

Imbalance

Contrast

Tonal Range/Exposure

Dominance

Proportion

Negative Space

Eye Movement

Placement

Separation

Spacing

What Happens If?

Is This The Best I Can Do?

If So, Press The Shutter