

2026-2027 Rules of Competition

(Revision: April 30, 2026 By Art Rose/Janice Kane)

Section I. General Provisions

A. Competition Categories and Classes

NVPS will have ten (10) Class/Category combinations (shown in the table below); the Monochrome Digital and the Color Digital will be judged separately, while the Color and Monochrome Prints will be judged separately for the Advanced class and combined for Novice and Intermediate. Category refers to the physical media, ink, process or presentation method, where Class refers to the grouping of members by their skill level. Definitions for categories and classes are found in Sections II and III below.

Categories (Section II - B&C)	Classes (Section III - A)
Monochrome and Color Prints	Novice
Monochrome and Color Prints	Intermediate
Monochrome Prints	Advanced
Color Prints	Advanced
Monochrome Digital Images	Novice
Monochrome Digital Images	Intermediate
Monochrome Digital Images	Advanced
Color Digital Images	Novice
Color Digital Images	Intermediate
Color Digital Images	Advanced

1. At the end of the Club year, awards based on points will be given in each of the three classes for the best color digital photographer, the best monochrome digital photographer, and the best print photographer. For the Advanced class, this will be based on the combined points for Color and Monochrome prints.
2. Three Versatile Photographer of the Year awards—Novice, Intermediate, Advanced—shall be given to the club members who have accumulated the highest number of total points from all competition categories. Winners must have received at least one award in each of the categories. For Advanced, this includes Monochrome Prints or Color Prints, Color Digital Images, and Monochrome Digital Images). In Novice and Intermediate, this includes the Combined Color/Monochrome Prints, Color Digital Images, and Monochrome Digital Images. Should two (2) or more photographers have the same number of points, then each of those photographers shall be awarded Versatile Photographer of the Year.

B. Number of Competitions

During the Club year (September through May), NVPS will sponsor nine (9) monthly competitions.

1. Three or four of the nine monthly competitions, the number depending on the availability of local judges, will be in person at the Fire House. These will be “Print” competitions. Members may submit up to two images with these options: one digital and one print; or two prints. In all cases, the category must be one color and one monochrome in the respective classes (Novice, Intermediate, or Advanced). The same image cannot be submitted in both categories.
2. The remaining competitions will be all-digital submissions with judging conducted over the Zoom. Members may submit up to two images: one monochrome and one color in the respective classes (Novice, Intermediate, or Advanced).

C. Eligibility

1. Only NVPS Club members are eligible to enter Club competitions. The total number of images each member may enter in any one monthly competition is limited to two (2).
2. All entries must have been photographed by the entrant and must satisfy the definition of photograph in Section II-A. Plagiarism will result in disqualification of the image. No portion of an image, e.g., sky, may originate with another photographer and every portion of a photograph submitted by a photographer must originate from images captured by the photographer submitting the image to the competition.
3. All entries must be submitted prior to the start of the competition for the Category/Class in which it is being entered and must not, in the opinion of the Vice President (VP) of Competitions, interfere with the process of preparing a competition Class/Category for judging. Entrants should submit their print entries at least 30 minutes prior to the start of the meeting.
4. Digital entries must be uploaded into the system the Friday prior to the competition by 6:00 PM

D. Time Limit

1. All elements of competition entries must have been captured within three years of the monthly competition date. The only exception is the “No Time Limit” competition described in section E.1c
2. Textures that are overlaid on an image do not have a time limit. See section E.2.

E. Subject Matter

E.1 Themes

Per Section I-B, there are nine (9) scheduled competitions per year. At the beginning of the Club year the VP of Competitions will announce when the following two types of competitions will be held:

- a) Six (6) competitions are non-themed. The subject matter, theme, and artistic presentation are the choice of the photographer.
- b) Three (3) of the monthly competitions will have an assigned topic or theme. The subject of the image must be relevant to the theme. See Section IV-C for more information on eligibility and disqualification.
 - Each year the VPs of Competition will define the themes two (2) years in advance.
 - The theme title will include a few sentences which clarify the committee's intent for the stated theme.
 - The themes will be published in FotoFax, the club newsletter, no later than the summer issue and will also be posted on the Club's web site at that time.
- c) The last monthly competition, "No Time Limit" is so named because it does not have a three-year capture time constraint. The subject matter, theme, and artistic presentation are the choice of the photographer.

E.2 Textures

No time constraint will be applied for any secondary texture image added to a primary image. A secondary texture image is an image that is overlaid on the primary image in post-processing that, when adjusted via blend modes, opacity, etc., imparts a visual or tactile quality on the surface of the primary image through variations in shape, tone, and/or color depth.

A primary image of a texture (images of ripples in sand dunes, waves in water, tree bark, peeling paint on a worn surface, crinkled paper, rusty metal, etc.) must comply with the normal time constraint rule.

No portion of an image, e.g., sky, may originate with another photographer and every portion of a photograph submitted by a photographer must originate from images captured by the photographer submitting the image to the competition.

E.3 Prohibited Subject Matter

1. Images containing nudity/partial nudity (where a woman's nipple is exposed)/or genitalia.
2. Boudoir, Lingerie, or Swimsuit images that would be considered suggestive in the opinion of the Vice President for Competition.

E.4 Number of Submissions

The same image can be entered in only one Category/Class in a given Club year and can be entered no more than two (2) times within that Category/Class within the year. For example, if you have a digital image; you must decide for a given Club year whether to compete with it as a digital projected image or as a print.

Novice entries that did not receive an award may be re-entered for competition in the Intermediate in a subsequent year. Similarly, Intermediate entries that did not receive an award may be re-entered in Advanced in a subsequent year.

Once an image has received an award (first, second, or third place, or honorable mention), it may not be entered in subsequent monthly competitions in any Category/Class or year with the exception of the end-of-year competition. Additionally, a member may not submit a similar or derivative photograph of the same subject for which that member has already received an award in any subsequent competition. The determination of whether an image is similar will be made by the VPs of Competition. If the photographer has any question regarding whether an image is similar, they can discuss it with the VPs of Competition well in advance prior to submission.

F. Presentation of Prints

All prints must be mounted. Mounting is to consist of Polystyrene or Foam Core Backing Board either 1/8 or 3/16 in thickness, and a Mat Board of at least 4 ply thickness (.05 to .06 inches). The Mat Board must be white. Mounted prints must not exceed 20 inches in height and 40 inches in width to accommodate the light box. All prints and Mat Boards must be securely mounted to the Backing Board, so that the individual print(s) cannot become dislodged in the process of moving the print in/out of the light stand. A mount may contain more than one print, but all prints on the mount will be judged as one entry. Entries will not be eligible for competitions if they are not mounted as noted above, framed, have attached hardware, or could, in the opinion of the VP of Competitions, cause damage to other prints.

The name of the maker, the title of the print, the Class and Category in which it is being entered, and the capture date must appear on the back of the Backing Board, along with an arrow that indicates “this edge up.” Neither the name of the maker nor the title of the print may appear on the print or the Mat Board.

G. Presentation of Digitally Projected Images

All Digitally-Projected Images must adhere to the applicable rules in Section II, Definitions. In addition, images for the Digitally-Projected Categories/Classes must be provided in advance of the competition date. A separate set of guidelines that provides standards for the size, format, and submission procedures to be used for digital competitions will be maintained by the VP of Competitions and is provided on the NVPS website. Neither the name of the artist nor the title of the image may appear on the image.

H. Judging

During the judging, audience members must not make comments to the judge concerning the images being displayed. Any questions may be brought to the attention of the VP of Competitions who, at his/her discretion, may bring the question to the attention of the judge. The decisions of the judge and VP of Competitions shall be final.

I. Workshop Images

Members entering competitions are strongly encouraged to not submit images taken during workshops when the judge was also the workshop provider. If a judge can clearly associate the

member as the maker of the image, then the member should re-enter the image at a different monthly competition.

Section II. Definitions

A. Photograph

Photographs shall include images obtained using a light-capturing process. The capture may be done by a film or digital camera or by scanners and similar light-capturing devices.

B. Print Category

B.1. Color Prints Category

The Color Prints category shall include photographic images printed with either chemical dark-room techniques or with ink jet or other printers commonly used with personal computers or directly with digital cameras. The printing may be done either by the entrant him/herself or by a commercial facility.

The image must have been created by the entrant, and the origin of all the components must comply with the definition of a Photograph as described in Section II-A. No manipulation restrictions/criteria apply to the Color Prints category.

B.2. Monochrome Prints Category

All elements of the image must have been created by the entrant and the origin of all the components must comply with the definition of a Photograph as described in Section II-A. No manipulation restrictions/criteria apply to the Monochrome Prints category.

The following criteria also applies to the Monochrome Prints category.

Allowed	Not allowed
• Images in which only one color in varying shades is used; white is considered the absence of color rather than a color. Examples include: ○ black and white (grayscale) ○ brown and white (sepia) ○ any color and white	• Images that are partially toned; these are considered polychrome and must be entered in one of the Color prints categories.
• Fully de-saturated images	• Duotone unless one of the two colors is white

A more complete description for creating a toned monochrome image for competitions can be found on the NVPS website.

C. Digital Images Category

This category includes images that are submitted as digital projections rather than prints. Otherwise, the definition of this category is the same as the Print Categories.

Section III. Competition Classes

A. Classes

- Novice = Any Club member new to photography and in the process of learning the basic photographic skills, principles and concepts such as manual camera controls; composition; exposure; metering; etc.
- Intermediate = Any Club member that has demonstrated basic photographic skills and principles and has a sound understanding of the craft.
- Advanced = Any Club member who has demonstrated photographic skills at levels of consistently high quality and creativity or is a working professional photographer.

New members to NVPS are strongly encouraged to consult with the VP of Competitions prior to entering their first competition if they have questions about which class in which they might best compete.

Any Novice member may elect to exhibit in the Intermediate. Similarly, any Intermediate member may elect to exhibit in Advanced. Upon doing so, however, the member shall be permanently moved up to that class and will not be able to compete in the easier class from where he/she has come.

A member that self-selected their competition class, and never competed in a lower class, that wishes to drop back to the next lowest class (Advanced to Intermediate or Intermediate to Novice), and has not received any awards in any year within the current class, can request that they be dropped to the lower class by emailing the VPs of Competition with this request.

B. Promotion within Classes.

B.1. Promotion from Novice to Intermediate

Promotion for the following year is calculated at the end of the current year of completion. Promotion is automatic if, during any previous Club year, a member competed in Novice and finished among the highest 15% of all entrants in total competition points from all categories combined; and placed 1, 2, or 3 on one or more occasions.

The calculation is:

of entrants promoted to Intermediate = (total # of Novice entrants in all Categories during the year) × (.15)

Example: (30 entrants in Novice) × (.15) = 4.5

The resulting number, rounded down to the nearest integer, is the number of entrants that move to the next Class for that category. In the example above, the 4 entrants with the highest cumulative points would be promoted to Intermediate for the next competition year. If they are promoted to Intermediate, they are to enter as an Intermediate entrant in all categories.

B.2. Promotion from Intermediate to Advanced

Promotion for the following year is calculated at the end of current year of completion.

Promotion is automatic if, during any previous Club year, a member competed in Intermediate and finished among the highest 15% of all entrants in total competition points from all categories combined; and placed 1, 2, or 3 on one or more occasions.

The calculation is:

of entrants promoted to Advanced = (total # of Intermediate entrants in all Categories during the year) × (.15)

Example: (30 entrants in Intermediate × (.15) = 4.5

The resulting number, rounded down to the nearest integer, is the number of entrants moved to the next Class for that category. In the example above, the 4 entrants with the highest cumulative points would be promoted to Advanced for the next competition year. If they are promoted to Advanced, they are to enter as an Advanced entrant in all categories.

Section IV. Recognition

A. Award Allocation

In each Class/Category for which a monthly competition is held, the following awards will be made:

- < 4 entries Honorable Mention at the judge's discretion
- 4 entries 1st place
- 5–8 entries 1st place and 2nd place
- 9 or more entries 25% of all entries (with fractions rounded up) will be given awards: 1st place, 2nd place, 3rd place and appropriate number of honorable mentions

No awards will be shared.

Judges must make all awards specified by these rules.

B. Point System

Digital and print competition points will be awarded to all members who enter digital images or prints, as follows:

0 points = each entry that does not win an award

4 points = each honorable mention

6 points = 3rd place

8 points = 2nd place

10 points = 1st place

C. Questions of Eligibility and Disqualification

Images entered into monthly competitions must meet all of the eligibility requirements as presented in these rules. The VP of Competitions has the responsibility to disqualify images or to remove awarded points if he/she feels that any requirements have not been satisfied. In all cases, the decision by the VP of Competitions is final. The following lists additional circumstances/details and the consequences of a member/image not meeting eligibility.

1) Category: At times, an entrant may not be sure if they have chosen the correct category for their submission (per the definitions in Section II). If there is any question, it is the entrant's responsibility to discuss their choice with the VP of Competitions before submitting the image. If the wrong category is chosen by the entrant (for example, if a color image is incorrectly placed in the monochrome category or vice-versa), the VP of competitions may reach out to the entrant to move the image to the correct category, if possible. If the entrant cannot be reached or does not promptly respond, the VP of Competitions has the responsibility to disqualify the image. If the disqualification is determined after a Category/Class competition has been completed, the VP of Competitions will remove any points that may have been awarded for that image. However, all other ribbons and points shall remain as awarded by the judge.

2) Class: Members must only enter a print or digital image in their assigned Class for that competition year.

a) If a member inadvertently enters a print or digital image in a Class other than their assigned class for that year, the member can request that the image be eliminated or any awards refused and still preserve his/her Class status.

b) Otherwise, the entrant will be placed in the next Class for all Categories from that time forward.

3) Number and Category distribution of images per Class: See Section I-C.

a) Any member who enters more than the maximum allowed total entries in any month's competition (see Section I-C-1) forfeits ALL points for that month.

4) Themed competitions: Members must strive to submit images having subject matter that supports the theme.

a) Members who are uncertain about their themed image(s) are urged to consult with the VP of Competitions well in advance of competition night or digital upload.

b) The VP of Competitions shall remove non-compliant themed images from competition before judging.

5) Capture Time: See Section I-D. Except for the one themed competition, “No Time Limit,” the capture time for other competitions has a three-year time constraint. An image that is found to be non-compliant with the time limit prior to the competition will be removed by the VP of Competitions. If non-compliance is determined after the competition, the VP of competitions will forfeit any awards and points for the image.

Section V. End-of-Year Competition

A. Eligibility

All entries from the monthly competitions receiving at least an honorable mention are eligible for the end-of-year competition. Rules for monthly competitions apply, except that submissions will take place as prescribed by the VP of Competitions. Judging will take place in a separate location. Competitors may enter all of their award winners for the year, and results will be available at the end-of-year banquet.

Section VI. Other End-of-Year Awards

A. Photographers of the Year

These Awards shall be given to the photographer in each Class/Category who has accumulated the most points during the competition year in that Class/Category. In the event of a tie in the number of points, the award shall be shared.

- Novice Prints
- Intermediate Prints
- Advanced Color Prints
- Advanced Monochrome Prints
- Novice Color Digital Images
- Novice Monochrome Digital Images
- Intermediate Color Digital Images
- Intermediate Monochrome Digital Images
- Advanced Color Digital Images

- Advanced Monochrome Digital Images

B. Versatile Novice Photographer of the Year, Versatile Intermediate Photographer of the Year and Versatile Advanced Photographer of the Year

Three Versatile Photographer of the Year awards—Novice, Intermediate, Advanced—shall be given to the club members who have accumulated the highest number of total points from all competition categories. Winners must have received at least one award in each of the categories.

1. For Advanced, this includes Monochrome Prints or Color Prints, Color Digital Images, and Monochrome Digital Images.
2. In Novice and Intermediate, this includes the Combined Color/Monochrome Prints, Color Digital Images, and Monochrome Digital Images.
3. Should two (2) or more photographers have the same number of points, then each of those photographers shall be awarded Versatile Photographer of the Year.