RULES OF COMPETITION

Updated: May 21, 2026 v2

Questions and inquiries about contest rules or

recommendations for changes and modifications can be emailed to:

contactetobicokecameraclub@gmail.com

A. INTRODUCTION

Mission and Goals

Etobicoke Camera Club (ECC) exists so members can meet to enjoy a common interest in photography, share ideas, and improve their photographic and presentation abilities. ECC supports the promotion of photography in many forms.

Eligibility

Members who wish to compete must pay annual dues prior to submitting entries.

General Rules

1. Members may submit a maximum of three (3) different images to each competition.
2. Throughout this document, the word "images" could mean digital images, printed images or both.
3. Images may be derived from digital cameras, any mobile device or scanned from slides or negatives, as long as the original image and all image elements including digital manipulation and post processing are the work of the member.
4. Images may be enhanced using photo-editing software, provided the enhancement is the work of the member; however, attention needs to be paid to category criteria as restrictions apply in some categories.
5. Images that are electronically created with no photographic origin are prohibited from competition. Generative AI features (with or without text prompt) must not be used in whole or in part in the creation of any submitted image for competition.
6. Images, in whole or in part, taken from digital libraries, print publications or the internet are not eligible.
7. Images of another person's art which are two dimensional (paintings, murals, drawings, photographs) are not allowed unless it is obvious that they are not the centre of interest, such as someone examining a painting in an art gallery, wall paintings on a church dome, or part of a composite creative image. Three-dimensional art (statues, architecture) is permitted because it allows the photographer more opportunity to exercise imagination and skill.
8. Images or prints which display any image-maker identification such as the maker's name, watermarks, title or copyright on the face of the image, print or matting, or in the title will be disqualified.
9. The club's Image Evaluation Committee will review entries submitted and reject any image considered to be out of category.
10. Images or prints that have been entered in previous ECC competitions are not eligible.
11. The same image cannot be entered in both print and digital competitions.
12. By submitting entries, you give ECC the right to use the image for promotional purposes of the club.
13. For all potential winning images, the Director of Competitions may require an entrant to provide all the RAW, JPEG or source images used in creating an image.

14. By submitting an image or other work to ECC, the maker represents that the work does not violate the copyright or other intellectual property rights of any third party and agrees that the maker will hold harmless ECC from any intellectual property claims by a third party arising from the work.

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in ECC competitions

- Use of AI features that are not generative AI, such as Denoise, Sharpening, Masking, Remove Tool (without generative AI enabled), Subject Selection, and Resolution Enhancement of an image's size contained within a post processing application is permitted provided they comply with a competition's editing criteria.
- An image created in whole or in part with the use of generative AI is not considered to be a photographic image and is not permitted because it contains elements not captured by the entrant.
- The use of Adobe Firefly and similar programs is not allowed.
- Content-Aware options in post processing applications are allowed, but not Generative Fill or other generative AI features.
- Generative Fill, Generative Expand, Generative Remove, Generative Background, Generative text-to-image, Generative Erase, Generative Replace, Generative Swap, and other generative AI features WITH or WITHOUT TEXT PROMPTS MUST not be used.
- AI sky replacement is permitted provided that the new sky was captured by the entrant.
- Computational photography – as used in cell phones and mirrorless cameras, is allowed.
- The use of AI in photographic editing is constantly expanding and evolving. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the maker to ensure the image is compliant with AI restrictions contained in these Rules.
- The use of Generative AI features whether intentional or not, may result in an image being disqualified.

B. COMPETITION LEVELS

Starting with the 2025-2026 season, division names will be changed to Levels, those being Level One and Level Two. Members previously in Intermediate and Advanced divisions will now be in Level One and those previously in the Superset division will now be in Level Two. New members who have achieved standing in another camera club or photography-related organization may be placed directly in Level Two at the discretion of the Evaluation Review Committee.

1. **Level One:** for beginners to intermediate photographers.
2. **Level Two:** for members who have earned advancement or a new member able to provide evidence of skill and competition experience in another camera club or photography-related organization consistent with members competing in Level Two.

Advancing between Levels:

- The advancement process from Level One to Level Two, is based on the member's aggregate points total at the end of the club season. Members with the top 10-15% of aggregate points will automatically advance to the next Level.

- For purposes of advancement, aggregate points will be the total points earned, less the member's lowest category score. The example below shows how in a season with seven competitions, only the member's best six (6) out of the seven (7) competitions will be used to determine their aggregate total for Advancement. If there are 8 competitions in the season, then only the best 7 of 8 categories are included in the aggregate.
- Members may be moved to the next level at the discretion of the Competition Chair. If a member is moved up mid-season, the member's points for that year will be retained and applied to the new level.
- The number of competitions held, and the categories chosen may vary from year to year.
- There may also be additional "Friendly" competitions, such as the Christmas Friendly, Audio Visual and others, as decided from time to time, which are not included in the aggregate points for purposes of advancement. These competitions will be clearly identified as "Special" or "Friendly" and are not included in a members' aggregate points total.

Example: Calculating Year End Aggregate Points for Advancement					
	Competition Category	**Pts Earned**		**Competition Category**	**Pts Earned**
1	PC1	60	1	PC1	60
2	Prints	60	2	Prints	60
3	**Nature (lowest)**	**51**	**3**	Nature	60
4	Landscape	60	**4**	**Landscape (not entered)**	**0**
5	Altered-Reality	60	5	Altered-Reality	60
6	PC2 (Mono)	60	6	PC2 (Mono)	60
7	Theme - topic TBD	60	7	Theme - topic TBD	60
	Total Points	411		*Total Points*	360
		360 *		**Total Points minus Landscape**	**360 ***
The maker's lowest scoring category is Nature, so the Nature score is dropped from the aggregate total.			*The maker did not enter the Landscape category, so the Landscape score is dropped from the aggregate total.*		

C. COMPETITION CATEGORY DESCRIPTIONS

Competition categories will vary from year to year and are described below. Please read descriptions carefully to ensure that submitted entries meet category requirements and comply with the General Rules as outlined in Section D. If unsure whether an image fits a category, members are encouraged to submit the image into the Image Critique, and/or ask one or more of the Image Evaluators for clarification.

*It should be noted that there are four competition categories which are used on a rotation basis and those are **Landscape, People, Altered Reality** and **Architecture**. Each one of these competitions will appear for two years and then be dropped the third year. There may be occasions where the rotation is modified or adjusted. If found necessary, such modifications will be communicated to the membership.*

1. Photographer's Choice #1

- Subject matter is the member's choice; any form of manipulation is permitted (except the use of AI – see General Rules)

2. Photographer's Choice #2 (Monochrome)

- Subject matter is the member's choice.
- Image must be monochrome and may be toned or tinted with a single colour.
- A monochrome image is defined as having no more than one colour, but it may be any single colour.
- The toning/tinting MUST be a continuous tone throughout the image.
- e.g., a sepia-toned image, a yellow toned image, etc.
- Images may be converted to monochrome in any accepted digital manner.
- any form of manipulation is permitted (except the use of AI – see General Rules)

3. People

- Centre of interest **MUST** be one or more persons.
- The person(s) may be engaged in an activity, interacting with each other, or posed.
- Image may be planned, such as in a formal portrait, spontaneous or candid.
- In people photography, it is usually the facial expressions that hold viewer attention by conveying the emotion of the moment, e.g., joy between mother and child, a child's pride in a new pet, etc.
- Emotion can also be expressed by focusing on a single detail(s) of the person, such as hands folded in prayer, a backlit silhouette, the back of a person engaged in an activity or quietly reflecting, etc.
- Creative techniques such as panning to accentuate movement are also acceptable as a people image.
- Any form of image manipulation is permitted (except the use of AI – see General Rules) as long as the results look natural. If the image is highly or creatively altered it may be more suitable in a Photographers Choice or Altered Reality category if offered.

4. Architecture

- Architectural structures are permanent man-made buildings or parts thereof such as bridges, walls, etc. Interior structures are also included.
- People or animals may be included to indicate scale, provided they are not the centre of interest.
- The building(s) or structure(s) **MUST** dominate the image.
- Focus MUST be on the architectural aspect of the subject.
- Images that include significant amounts of natural surroundings such as shoreline, water, trees or other vegetation, reflections of buildings in water or a mass view of buildings may be considered pictorial and disqualified.
- Items such as furniture, flagpoles, skylines, artifacts, ornaments, ships, statues, and fences are ineligible if these provide the dominant subject of the image.
- Any form of image manipulation is permitted (except the use of AI – see General Rules) as long as the results look natural. If the image is highly or creatively altered it may be more suitable in a Photographers Choice or Altered Reality category if offered.

5. Altered Reality

Altered Reality images MUST begin as the member's image of a real subject, which has emphasized alteration that is obvious to the viewer. Artwork and computer graphics created by the member can be incorporated as long as the photographic content predominates.

6. Altered Reality images will display a departure from realism consisting of experimental and imaginatively creative images that tend toward the abstract in the interpretation of the subject. Further, these images are not normally seen by the naked eye and may engage the viewer in finding the meaning of the image. They will have been manipulated either in camera via conventional means (multiple exposure, special effects, filters, etc.) or by using more intensive digital editing or by application of the following types of techniques:

HDR	Posterization	Photograms	Negative Images
Texture	Solarization	Orton Effect	Multiple Images
Masking	Composites	Digital Filters	Brush Strokes
Distortion	Colour Toning	Motion Blur	Montage or Collage
Combination of Black & White & Colour			

7. The use of one or more of these techniques does not in itself qualify an image as acceptable for this competition.

8. In the Altered-Reality category, judges will look for clear signs of image manipulation.

9. Exercise your imagination using design elements, colour, and light in non-traditional ways to produce abstract, impressionistic, and experimental effects not achievable by standard photographic means.

10. **Image Titles** - For this competition, image titles will be read aloud when the image is projected for judging, making the title an important component of the evaluation process. Without suitable titles, judges may be at a loss to understand what the image is about – substantially harming its impact. You are encouraged to assign image titles that will assist the judges in assessing the subject or purpose of your image, or in an imaginative manner that will contribute to the creativity of the image presentation. **Not acceptable** - images that are merely black-and-white, infrared, or sepia, or images merely captured from an unusual angle or specialized lens, unless something more has been done to the image to exaggerate the effect, combine it with other effects and to alter its reality.

11. Nature

The purpose of a nature image is to emphasize a small aspect of nature and to portray a realistic representation of the story.

Birds:

- Any domesticated or wild bird is permitted. Example: ducks, geese, herons, raptors, songbirds, sea birds, shore birds, etc.

Animals:

- Any domesticated or wild animal is permitted. Example: mammals, amphibians, reptiles, invertebrates, crustaceans, fish, insects, family pets, etc.

Botany:

- Any domesticated or wild botany subject is permitted. Example: flowers, mushrooms, trees, seed pods, etc.

Geology:

- a small section of a pond, close-up of a rock formation or waterfall
- an observable Natural Phenomena such as germination, ice crystals, frost, snowflakes, etc.

The following will be allowed <u>as long as the results look natural</u>:

- Hand of Man
- Large areas of black/solid/manipulated background.
- Images shot in a studio, zoo, or the wild
- Artificial backgrounds either in studio or the wild
- Any form of image manipulation (except the use of AI – see General Rules)
- Creative techniques such as using a slow shutter speed for flowing water or panning to accentuate an animal's movement, or using a large aperture setting to blur the background are acceptable techniques in ECC's Nature category as long as the results look natural.

The following are not permitted and will be disqualified:

- Black & White or Monochrome images
- Artificial or taxidermy specimens
- Landscapes, seascapes, or scenic images
- Images considered overly creative. The intent is to have a realistic representation of the story.

Nature Titles:

- Nature titles will be read aloud and MUST be the common or scientific name of the subject. Failure to use common or scientific names may result in disqualification. Descriptive names as they pertain to the subject are allowed, however, refrain from giving pictorial like names to images in Nature categories, see examples below:
- **Acceptable**: "Upright Bindweed" or "Calystegia Spithamaea"
- **Not Acceptable**: "White Beauty"
- **Acceptable**: "Granite" or "Igneous Rock"
- **Not Acceptable**: "Rock"
- **Acceptable**: "Howler Monkey"
- **Not Acceptable**: "Just Hanging Around"

12. Landscape:

Landscape is an expanse of natural scenery. It refers to **an expansive, wide-open space, visually continuous and often panoramic view, an uninterrupted view or vista,** of the breadth and depth of a natural environment, focusing on scale, distance and atmosphere. It is a quintessential landscape image designed to transport the viewer to a specific place and showcase the grandeur of nature.

It is a scene that conveys a sense of space, scale, and breadth. The key idea is that the viewer feels the **breadth** of the environment rather than focusing on a single subject. Human elements including different types of buildings, cultivated land, roadways, footpaths, and structures are NOT permitted.

Landscape images are often captured with a wide-angle lens, as opposed to telephoto images common in nature. Transitory features such as lighting and weather add to the impact of a landscape image and help create a strong mood. Remember:

- A Landscape is a broad view and not a detail image (geological details qualify for the Nature category and do not fit Landscape). It typically captures a panoramic or wide-open area that can be seen from a single viewpoint. A successful "expanse" shot will emphasize how large the environment is.
- A Landscape image will often use a middle-ground anchor to connect the foreground to a distant background.
- People or animals may be included to indicate scale, provided they are not the centre of interest.
- Monochrome is permitted.
- Seascapes and Skyscapes qualify as Landscapes, but Cityscapes **DO NOT**.
- ECC defines Landscape to **EXCLUDE** images that would qualify in Nature or Architecture categories.

Any form of image manipulation is permitted (except the use of AI – see General Rules) as long as the results look natural. If the image is highly or creatively altered it may be more suitable in a Photographers Choice or Altered Reality category, if offered. In our Landscape competition, an **expanse of scenery** means the image should emphasize the **broad sweep of a landscape or scene** rather than a tight, intimate subject.

Foster Trophy

In years that the Landscape competition is held, ECC will award its Foster Trophy for Best Canadian Landscape. When uploading images for this competition, members should indicate whether their landscape is Canadian. Please submit your image with a "title"_CDN. Ie: "Mountain Range_CDN". To qualify as Canadian the centre of interest of the Landscape must lie within Canada's 200 km territorial limit.

13. Theme Competition – Topic: "WET"

- Images can be of any subject matter.
- This can be interpreted in many ways. WET can be a subject that is composed of liquid, or is covered or soaked in liquid, such as wet with rain or dew. It can be wet clothes on a line, wet pavement, or a wet dog. (description taken from viewfinder 2000-2001 season – signed Judy Griffin!)
- Any form of image manipulation is permitted (except the use of AI – see General Rules).

14. Print:

- Subject matter is the member's choice.
- Any form of image manipulation is permitted (except the use of AI – see General Rules)
- Members may enter a maximum of 3 prints in competition.
- The member's name, image title and competition level should be in the upper right corner on the back of the mount, together with an UP arrow to indicate the viewing orientation.
- One printed copy of the Print Competition Entry Form is to be completed and submitted to the Competition Chair together with the print on Competition Night. This can be downloaded from our website.
- Prints must be mounted on a firm backing board of either matt-board or foam core.
- Prints may be matted but the physical size of the matt board must be the same as the backing board.
- All entries will be judged together – there are no competition levels.

- Presentation size: (i.e., the outside dimensions of the mount, not the print)
  *Maximum 20" High x 24" Wide * Minimum 11" x 14" (either width or height).

The following are not permitted and may be disqualified:

- Prints or Images that have been entered in previous ECC competitions are not eligible. The same image cannot be entered in both print and digital competitions.
- Prints with frames, glass, wire hooks, sticky tape, electrical tape or other hanging devices, or which include the title, member's name, or any identifiers on the face of the image or the mat will be disqualified.
- Prints must be clear of any material (front or back) that could cause damage, stick to, or affect another print in any way. Prints not meeting these mounting standards will be disqualified.
- So that ECC has a reference to all images entered, a digital copy of each print entry MUST be submitted into our Visual Pursuits website no later than 12.00 midnight the day PRIOR to the competition, e.g. if the print competition is held on a Monday, the digital file must be submitted by 12:00 midnight Sunday.

D. GENERAL INFORMATION

Image Submission

- All competition entries must be submitted to the ECC Competition web site, no later than midnight by the deadline date, as noted in the Club Programme.

Image Sizing

- Image Format: JPG, sRBG colour space.
- File Size: the maximum file size is 4 MB.
- Image Size: Maximum image size is 1600 pixels wide by 1200 pixels high. Images may be smaller than the maximum but should be larger than 300,000 pixels in area.

Disqualifications

- Entries not meeting competition criteria may be disqualified even if the failure to meet criteria was inadvertent. Once disqualified, there is no option to submit a replacement image into the same competition.
- When possible, members will be notified via email if their image has been disqualified.
- Disqualified images may be submitted into future competitions if they meet the criteria of the competition they are being submitted to.
- ECC reserves the right to disqualify an image before, during or after the competition.

Image Review

"Image Reviews" are intended to be educational and to provide positive feedback or comments that the member can use to make enhancements, improvements, or revisions to their image prior to submitting it into competition.

Image reviews are also intended to help identify images that may not meet the criteria of the competition so that, when possible, disqualifications can be identified prior to the actual competition submission date and in time for the member to submit a different image into the actual competition.

- Reviews are scheduled prior to most regular digital competitions.
- Subject matter for each review corresponds to the next club competition.
- Image reviews are open to members from both levels.
- Digital images must be submitted one week prior the image review.
- Members may submit a maximum of 2 images for comments.
- Images must be submitted to ECC's web server.
- Critics will be selected by the Competition Chair and will usually be other ECC club members.
- Submitted images will be shown without identifying the member.
- Image makers may choose to identify themselves during discussion of their image.
- All members are encouraged to participate in image review discussions for any image.

Judging

- "**Live**" judging occurs when three external judges are invited to judge images "live" at an ECC meeting.
- "**Online**" judging occurs when three external judges will judge images online and not be present at an ECC meeting.
- Most ECC judging is "Online" however, some "Live" judging will occur at the discretion of the Competition Chair and will be announced in advance.
- All live judging and Salon evenings are open to members and guests.
- For all competitions, judges will be from outside ECC and are usually OCCC or CAPA certified.
- Each judge assigns a score with a maximum value of 10 points. The total score for an image is 30 points.
- Images will be randomly mixed and may be judged separately by level — or by combining all levels together into one group at the discretion of the Competition Chair.

Image Feedback, or Comments

- During competitions members will have the option to ask for judges' comments on one image.

Image Projection

- For Live judging, images will be projected onto a white matte screen and displayed with a dark background.

Ribbons

- Within each level, Gold and Silver Ribbons will be awarded to entries earning the highest and second highest scores. In addition, the Competition Chair will identify Honourable Mentions, usually representing 10-15% of the total number of accepted images in each level.

- After both levels have been judged, the judges will select a "Gold of the Month" from all Gold Ribbon winners.
- In the event of a tie, multiple Gold or Silver ribbons will be awarded.

Special Competitions

- Points received in special competitions such as the Christmas Friendly, or other such competitions as determined by the Competition Chair, will not count toward a member's year end aggregate score for purposes of advancement or towards other Year End Awards.
- The AV Competition has a dedicated year end award, but points earned are not included in other point totals.

E. AV Competition Rules

So that we may better plan and handle this competition, we will ask that you pre-register using the pre-registration form, which will be made available on our website.
Reminder: This is a friendly competition, while there is a trophy, scores earned will not count toward year end totals.

A wide range of AV applications are available to create an AV presentation.

Definition

- Open Theme – AV presentations submitted into this competition is completely open. It may be of any subject matter, it may be of a single subject, a memorable event, a travelogue of a recent trip or holiday, interviewing an interesting individual or presenting a topic of interest.
- The presentation must follow a theme or tell a story.
- Must include a separate "Competition-Entry-Form", which will be available on our website.
- Special Note: Any individual images previously receiving awards in ECC or any other club, may be included in the AV presentation.

Editing Criteria

- Open Editing – All different in-camera, on-camera and post-processing techniques may be used. This includes combining multiple images and elements in a final presentation.
- The entrant must have created or captured all components of the presentation, with the exception of the music. Credits for any music used must be given at the end of the show.
- "Special effects" and "backgrounds" which are part of the audio-visual software application are permitted. Digital frame, pin-line, borders, and mats are permitted.
- Clip Art is not allowed.

AV presentation MUST contain three elements:

1. Title page (title of presentation but no mention of the entrant's name);
2. Multiple slides and text if required;

3. The first slide and last MUST be black and be displayed for 3 to 4 seconds. Slide at the end of the presentation will contain the credits but MUST NOT contain the name of the entrant. Entrant name or image of entrant MUST NOT be displayed in any portion of the presentation.

Specifications

- One (1) entry only per member.
- Must NOT exceed 5 minutes.
- Filename on actual AV Presentation must ONLY be the TITLE of the presentation – Do not include the name of the Member in this filename.
- Filename on **ENTRY FORM**, must be named as: MEMBERS NAME_NAME OF PRESENTATION_MMM_YYYY (Month_Year).
- File can be saved in MP4, MPEG-4, MOV, MPEG, AVI, and WMV formats.
- Can contain video and/or time lapse or a succession of still images in rapid movement that produce a moving picture but must NOT exceed 20% of the total runtime of the presentation;
- Show must have been produced, edited, and photographed by the maker.
- No identifiable marks should appear on the show, i.e., name or any other information that identifies the maker.
- Must include a separate AV Competition-Entry-Form which will be available on our website;
- Send via electronic transfer methods, (such as the free WeTransfer application available from WeTransfer.com or Dropbox) to Lesley.kinch@sympatico.ca (note: limited to 2GB files).

AV Judging Criteria

Judges will review and assign a total score out of a maximum of 100 points based on the following categories and associated maximum points:

Photography:
- technical quality (0-10 points)
- appropriate to purpose (0-10 points)

Purpose:
- clarity of intent (0 to 10 points)
- theme development (0 to 10 points)

Audio/Text:
- sound quality (0 to 10 points)
- relevance of text (0-10 points)

Audience Appeal:
- originality & impact (0 to 10 points)
- maintenance of interest (0 to 10 pts)

Production:
- integration & flow (0 to 10 points
- structure & technique (0 – 10 points)

Image of the Year Competition

- The Image of the Year competition is held at the end of each competition season.
- A member may submit any image that earned either a Gold, Silver or Honourable Mention ribbon including digital representations of print entries. In addition, each member may submit 2

entries that earned a score of 18 or more points. All entries must have been submitted in the current competition year. For example, a member who received a total of 4 ribbons may submit a total of 6 entries (4 ribbon-winning images plus 2 other images which scored 18 or more points = 6 images).

- Images entered MUST be the same ribbon winning image that was entered into the original competition. Only minor alterations may be made e.g.; a twig in a corner or removing a dust spot. Any major changes as possibly suggested by the judges is not permissible. The title MUST remain the same.
- The maximum number of entries a member may submit to Image of the Year is 20 (6x3+2 = 20).
- Image of Year entries will be judged online, regardless of division, by an outside panel of judges.
- One winner, a Silver and honourable mentions will be selected from all entries.

F. YEAR END AWARDS

The following awards are presented for accomplishment in various categories as described below. The recipients of trophies will retain them for one year.

3M Award Trophy

- Will be Awarded to the member with the winning entry from the Image-of-the-Year Competition.

Photographer-of-the-Year Trophy

- Awarded to the member(s) earning the highest aggregate points, per level.
- For purposes of the Photographer of the Year Trophies, aggregate points will be the total points earned, less the members' lowest category score, the same as calculated when advancing between levels.
- Level One winner will receive the President's Trophy
- Level Two winner will receive the Ian Billington Trophy
  The W.J. McDonald Trophy has been retired.

Bob Campbell Award

- Awarded to the member(s) earning the highest scoring Nature image (any level).

Foster Trophy by Carling O'Keefe

- Awarded to the member(s) with the highest scoring Canadian Landscape image in the Landscape competition (any level), in years where a Landscape competition is held.

Don Dawson Memorial Award for Photographic Excellence

- Awarded to the member(s) with the highest scoring Print.

Art & Rita Tracey Memorial Audio Visual Award

- Awarded to the member(s) with the highest scoring Audio Visual presentation.

Award of Merit Certificates

- Awarded for each regular competition to the member(s) with the highest aggregate scores, from any level, including prints.

Ted Maginn Certificate

- **Awarded to the member(s) from any level, earning the highest point total of all competitions held during the season.**
- **Note:** For this award, the member's lowest scoring competition is not dropped from the total points calculation.
- Print competitions are included in point total.
- Special, "Friendly" or the AV competitions are not included in the point total.