

# DISTRICT 8 4-H PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST



## *Description of Categories*

It is extremely important that 4-H members, project leaders, parents, and county Extension agents review the descriptions of each category very carefully. Please 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 will be disqualified.

TEXAS 4-H PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST 2025-2026 CATEGORIES (all descriptions have been revised/simplified)		
CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION	NOT ALLOWED
<b>Animals – Domestic</b>	Photos of domesticated animals adapted for human environments. Examples: dogs, cats, horses, pigs, chickens.	Wildlife, all waterfowl, zoo animals, or animals not under human care.
<b>Animals – Wildlife</b>	Photos of undomesticated animals in natural or zoo-like environments. Examples: deer, ducks, birds, snakes, whales.	Domesticated animals, livestock, or pets.
<b>Catch-All</b>	Photos that do not fit in any other category.	Duplicate entry of a photo already submitted in another category. Photo that belongs in another category.
<b>Details &amp; Macro</b>	Close-up photos highlighting fine details or making small objects appear larger than life. Examples: insect eyes, veins on a leaf, water droplets.	Standard close-ups that don't emphasize fine details; digitally created "macro look" (heavily cropped to simulate a close-up)
<b>Dominant Color</b>	Photos where one specific color is the primary visual element. Examples: a bowl of lemons in strong yellow light.	Black & white, sepia, duotone, or multiple equally dominant colors.
<b>Elements of Design</b>	Photos emphasizing line, shape, pattern, form, texture, or perspective. Examples: repeating tile patterns, ripples in water showing repeating patterns, a spiral staircase showing perspective, textured bark on a tree, etc.	Digitally created or computer-generated designs (Photoshop, Illustrator, etc.).
<b>Enhanced</b>	Photos significantly manipulated or created using editing techniques. Examples: composites, stitched panoramas, artistic filters.	Use of stock, AI-generated, or non-original images.
<b>Food</b>	Still-life style photos highlighting food for artistic or commercial effect. Examples: meals, cakes, fruits, table settings.	Alcoholic beverages or photos where food is not the main subject.
<b>Landscape &amp; Nature (Non-Animal)</b>	Photos of outdoor scenics and natural settings without animals as the main focus. Examples: gardens, seascapes, cityscapes.	People, man-made structures, or animals as the main subject.
<b>Leading Line</b>	Photos using lines to guide the viewer's eye toward the subject. Example: a river leading to a bridge.	Weak or implied lines that do not clearly guide the eye.
<b>Long Exposure</b>	Photos using extended shutter speeds to capture motion effects or low-light scenes. Examples: fireworks, night skies, light trails, waterfalls.	Images with artificial blur or digital effects simulating long exposure.
<b>Motion/Action</b>	Photos that capture and freeze movement. Examples: sports, running animals, spinning rides.	Images of objects that are typically stationary or slow-moving. Blurry or poorly focused photos unless intentionally artistic.
<b>People</b>	Photos of individuals or groups across all ages and activities. Examples: families, children, portraits, fashion, sports.	Photos without model consent; animals or objects as main subject.
<b>Plant/Flora</b>	Photos of a single flower, tree, bush, or plant as the primary subject. Examples: a rose, a tree's canopy. ( <i>Large landscapes with multiple plants belong in Landscape &amp; Nature.</i> )	Large landscapes where a single plant is not the central focus.

<b>Reflections</b>	Photos capturing mirrored images in water, glass, metal, or other reflective surfaces. Examples: lakes, puddles, water droplet, building facades.	Images where the reflection is not the primary subject.
<b>Shadow/ Silhouette</b>	Photos where a shadow or silhouette is the primary subject against a brighter background. Examples: shadows of people, animals, or structures.	Images where the shadow or silhouette is not the primary subject.
<b>Transportation</b>	Photos showcasing vehicles or modes of travel. Examples: bustling urban streets, cars, buses, trains, boats, bicycles, airplanes, and rockets.	Images where transportation is background only, not the subject.
<b>Theme – Volunteers in Action (New)</b>	Celebrate the heart of Texas 4-H by capturing volunteers in meaningful moments of service. From mentoring youth and leading workshops to organizing events and supporting communities, showcasing the dedication, passion, and behind-the-scenes efforts of 4-H volunteers who make a difference every day.	Posed portraits without volunteer activity shown; photos where the subject is not a 4-H volunteer.

## Judging Criteria

Each photograph will be evaluated against the following set of criteria. Based on total points awarded for each photograph, the participant will be awarded a blue, red, or white ribbon. The criteria for evaluating the photographs will be:

<b>IMPACT</b> (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.
<b>CREATIVITY</b> (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.
<b>TECHNICAL</b> (Max Points: 20)	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"><li>• allowable amounts of retouching and adjustments (removal of red eye, cropping, minor straightening)</li><li>• sharpness and correct color balance</li><li>• 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.</li><li>• Posing and capturing of the image</li></ul>
<b>DIFFICULTY</b> (Max Points: 5)	Difficulty is the level of challenge in capturing the image. It takes into account factors such as lighting conditions, subject movement, timing, and setting. Higher scores reflect images where the photographer successfully managed more complex or demanding conditions.
<b>COMPOSITION</b> (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.
<b>SUBJECT MATTER</b> (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.
<b>STORY TELLING</b> (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.

# DISTRICT 8 4-H PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST



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
<b>Impact</b> (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.	<b>0-15</b>	
<b>Creativity</b> (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.	<b>0-15</b>	
<b>Technical</b> (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"> <li>allowable amounts of retouching and adjustments (removal of red eye, cropping, minor straightening)</li> <li>sharpness and correct color balance.</li> <li>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.</li> <li>posing and capturing of the image.</li> </ul>	<b>0-25</b>	
<b>DIFFICULTY</b> (Max Points: 5)	Difficulty is the level of challenge in capturing the image. It takes into account factors such as lighting conditions, subject movement, timing, and setting. Higher scores reflect images where the photographer successfully managed more complex or demanding conditions.	<b>0-5</b>	
<b>Composition</b> (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.	<b>0-20</b>	
<b>Subject Matter</b> (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.	<b>0-15</b>	
<b>Story Telling</b> (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.	<b>0-10</b>	
<b>TOTAL POINTS AWARDED</b>			

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)
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JUDGES COMMENTS \_\_\_\_\_