

# Preparing Images for Competition

January 2010

All entries must conform to SRPS competition rules. This document is an extension of those rules. These preparation guidelines apply to all club competitions.

## DIGITAL IMAGES:

Digital images entered into competition must meet the following criteria:

<b>Maximum Height</b>	<b>1050 pixels</b>
<b>Maximum Width</b>	<b>1400 pixels</b>
<b>File Format</b>	<b>All files must be saved in JPEG format and must have the extension .jpg</b>
<b>Filename</b>	<b>The filename of the JPEG image you save on your computer should be simply your title for your image, such as “Sonoma Coast Sunset.” Please limit the name to approximately 30 characters. In the online entry system you will enter the image title (the part before the .jpg extension) as the name of your image to be used in the competition.</b>

Here is the procedure to prepare your image for submission using Photoshop. The steps will be different if you are using another software program, and menus may differ in some versions of Photoshop.

1. Make edits and adjustments to your image and save it for safekeeping.
2. Flatten all layers if necessary. Choose **Layer > Flatten Image**.
3. Resize your image to the proper size for display, **1400 pixels wide x 1050 pixels high**. There are several ways to size an image in Photoshop. You may use the **File > Automate > Fit Image** command, the **Image > Image Size** command or the Crop Tool with the proper preset. Think of the image size as a box within which your image must fit.

**It is no longer necessary to “pad” the image by adding a black background to fill out the size to the full 1400 x 1050.**

Image size is important due to the format of the projector. Images which are too large will be resized by the entry software but results may be better if done under your control.

Images which are too small will display on the screen correspondingly smaller than correctly sized images.

Resolution is not a factor for a JPEG being projected. The only thing that matters is the actual dimensions of the image in pixels.

4. If the maker chooses to use a stroke to delineate the image from the projector's black background, for Nature images it is limited to no more than two pixels in width. This is the only type of border allowed in Nature. After selecting a color for the border, do **Select > All** then go to **Edit > Stroke**. Set the **Location** to **Inside**.
5. If you are working with a 16 bits/channel image, convert it to 8 bits/channel by choosing **Image > Mode > 8 bits/channel**. You do not have the option of saving the file as a JPEG if it is in 16 bits/channel mode.
6. After the image is resized, choose an appropriate amount of sharpening. (Never sharpen an image until it has been resized for its final use -- print or screen.) Use **Filter > Sharpen > Unsharp Mask** or **Filter > Sharpen > Smart Sharpen**. For best results, do not use the other sharpening methods in Photoshop. You need to view the image at 100% magnification to see accurately the effect of sharpening. If sharpening is overdone it will degrade the appearance of the image.
7. Images should be in sRGB color space for the most accurate color rendition by the projector. If your image is not already in sRGB the entry software will convert it, but for the most control it is advised you do so before submission. Choose **Edit > Convert to Profile** and select the **sRGB** profile. (Do NOT use Assign Profile.) Then press **OK**. (In Photoshop CS and earlier, the command is **Image > Mode > Convert to Profile**).
8. Save the image as a JPEG file by choosing **File > Save As** and type your name for the image in front of the .jpg extension. (When you enter the image online, please enter the name as the same name you have given to the image file, without typing the .jpg extension. It is part of the filename but not the image name.) There is no longer a rigid limit to the file name but you are asked to limit it to approximately 30 characters.

If you are using a Mac, be careful not to erase the .jpg extension that the computer has added. If you do, a PC will not be able to read the file.

Choose the format **JPEG** and hit **Save**. On the JPEG Options Screen, a Quality level of 8 is recommended. Setting it higher will increase file size unnecessarily with no noticeable improvement in the projected image. The choice of format options is not critical. Progressive is used by web browsers and would not be relevant for projection.

If the Save As options do not include JPEG, you have neglected to convert a 16 bit image to 8 bit (step 5 above). After choosing the JPEG option, if you see a yellow exclamation point next to the Layers checkbox, you have not flattened the image. If you see one next to the Alpha Channels checkbox, you need to go to the Channels palette and delete any channels below the Red, Green and Blue channels, which represent saved selections and paths.

**Apple users:** You must assure that the .jpg extension is added to the file name. In **Photoshop**, go to **PREFERENCES: FILE HANDLING**, and set **APPEND FILE EXTENSION** to **ALWAYS**. If you are using **iPhoto** or some other program, please assure that the **.jpg** extension is the last part of your file names.

## **PRINTS:**

- Each print must have the following information on the back: name of maker, title of print (title should not exceed approximately 30 characters), category (Nature, Creative, or General), and level (B, A, AA, or Master).
- If the proper orientation of the print is not obvious, you should indicate the top. If an orientation is not obvious and is not marked, and the print is displayed incorrectly, **it will be judged as displayed and/or may be rejected.**
- The photographer's name must not be visible on the front of the print; if there it must be covered with tape.
- Prints are to be securely mounted to a mat board.
- Prints may be matted or framed.
- Minimum image size is 48 square inches excluding Polaroid transfers. Maximum image size is 320 square inches. No image side may be greater than 20 inches nor less than 6 inches, excluding Polaroid transfers. The maximum frame or mat size is 616 square inches.

## **CATEGORIES:**

It is your responsibility to ensure that your images meet the criteria for the category in which you are entering them. The Category Rules are found in Section, 3.0 of the Competition Rules, which are found on the SRPS website, [www.santarosaphotographicsociety.org](http://www.santarosaphotographicsociety.org). **The Competition Rules change from time to time. Please be sure you have a current copy.**

**Nature images must meet strict criteria for content and preparation. If a Nature image is found not to meet the criteria it will be rejected.** The rules for the Creative and General categories are not as strict as for Nature, however, images should be placed in the proper category according to the image's **appearance**.