

SPS Judges Quick Reference Guide

Much has been written about how to judge photographs. The SPS standards have great detail on each category. The following is a brief summary of key ideas that SPS judges can use for quick reference.

Look for: Visual impact, composition, storytelling (when appropriate) and technical excellence. Never try to guess how the photographer made the image. Simply judge the photo itself.

SPS Exhibition Categories

Digital Categories	Keys
Nature	Most restrictive category; must appear natural, no cloning, no “hand of man”, no domestic animals or flowers, no zoo animals.
General	Moderate restrictions. Minor cloning to <u>remove</u> distracting elements is O.K. HDR is permitted to represent the actual conditions. No <u>adding</u> elements (i.e. a sky) from an unrelated picture.
Artistic	Least restrictions. Most anything goes, except all elements must be from your own photos or your own post processing. No downloading of any material. Images should show uniqueness, creativity and imagination, not just skill with editing. No image should be eliminated from exhibition simply because it looks realistic, provided it shows originality of concept.
Black & White	Similar to General regarding cloning and content editing. However, we accept conversion techniques that provides various creative looks. In the extreme, they should be entered in Artistic. Inclusion of a color that is not on the gray scale is no longer permitted.
Challenge	Similar to Artistic. Presentation of the assigned theme is very important.
Prints	Similar to these Digital categories ...
Large and Small Color	General
Large and Small B&W	Black & White
Artistic Prints	Artistic
Challenge Prints	Challenge

SPS Exhibition Scores

Score	Guidelines
6	Do not use. No need for multiple levels of criticism.
7	C or Needs Improvement or Below Average. These images have at least one clear weakness.
8	B or Satisfactory or Average. These are good images, no glaring problems, but do not have the impact of the better pictures.
9	A or Excellent or Above Average. These pictures have strong impact, good use of light and composition, and have no technical issues.
10	A+ or Outstanding or one of the very best. These have great impact. Exceptional use of light and/or perspective.

In order to provide good feedback to the exhibitors, judges must use all of these scores each night. Do not be afraid to give 7's. At the same time, 10's should be used, but sparingly for the very best pictures. The 10 should not be reserved for your Image of the Year. If we use all four scores, the combined scores will range from 21 to 30 and we will succeed in providing the feedback our exhibitors need.