

Introduction to Club Competitions

The club runs a number of internal competitions every session, some informal and some formal. Entering our club competitions really helps you to focus on improving the quality of your photography. You'll get feedback from an expert judge and will begin to set your own standards that will carry over into all your photography. Please note that all specific rules for our competitions can be found via the website information page. But hopefully the information below will help you to get an idea about all our competitions

Informal Competitions

Small Prints Competition

This is an informal event, judged by the members themselves. Maximum size of the print is A4 (including any mount) but they do not have to be mounted. Small prints are best stuck onto a piece of A4 card.

A maximum of 3 prints should be handed in to the Competition Secretary on the Hand-in night.

On the evening of the competition, all prints are numbered and displayed around the walls.

Members present on the evening choose their top 5 images and within these their 1st and 2nd choices. After voting has been completed, the prints are then given a critique by one of the club's senior members. The scores are added up and a winner decided.

Knock-out competition.

In this informal competition, images are paired up and voted for by the members in the audience. The winning image of each pair goes through to the next round till eventually we end up with the best two images competing in the final.

Each member may provide up to 4 digital projected images which are then entered into the draw. Images are arranged in alphabetical order of title and shown in pairs in sequence. So, for example: "A blustery day" might be paired with "Animal Antics". It's advisable to spread the titles of your own entries across the alphabet to avoid knocking yourself out.

Smartphone Competition

In light of the quality of images that can now be produced by smartphone cameras, we have introduced an informal competition where images entered must have been taken on a smartphone. In these early years of this competition, this has been run along the same lines as a Knockout competition but the format of the competition may develop as time progresses. Note that images taken on a smartphone may be also entered in **any** of our competitions and can compete alongside images taken with any other camera system.

Formal Competitions

Quig Quaich Competition

This is sponsored by Robert and Ann Quig. Robert nominates 6 topics at the start of the summer. Entrants submit 2 images (DPI or print) for each of your 3 chosen topics - so a full entry is 6 images. All images must have been taken in the summer recess of the year of the competition. (i.e. from the day after the AGM (usually April) to the day before the Hand-in night in September) Images should be handed to the Internal Competitions Secretary on the Hand-in night.

The competition is judged by Robert Quig, and the winner is the photographer who achieves the highest total score for their six images. It's a great competition to get you thinking and to try out new subjects for your photography.

Quaich entries are eligible for all other competitions.

The particular rules for each year's Quig Quaich competition is available via the link on the website's Information page.

Open Competitions

These count towards the club league. In an Open Competition there is no set subject and any type of image (e.g. landscape, wildlife, portrait, etc.) may be submitted. Each club member may submit up to 3 colour prints, 3 mono prints and 3 digital projected images (DPI). These should be handed to the Internal Competition Secretary on the Hand-in night. If you are submitting prints, you are asked to also provide a digital copy of the images to the Competitions Secretary.

The prints and DPIs are given to an external judge who reviews the images and scores them each out of a maximum of 20 marks. On the evening of the competition, the judge will present their critique and score for each image.

A winning image (or joint winners) for each section of colour, mono print and DPI will be selected by the judge. The overall winner from those sections will be awarded the trophy. Each member's top three scores will go towards their points in the club league.

The Rose Urie Competition also counts towards the club league. This works the same way as an open competition with the exception that there is a set theme or themes, chosen by club members at the end of the previous season. Previous themes have been e.g. Transport, Natural History, Landscapes, and Animals. Check the current Competition Rules for the current year's 'Rose Urie' themes.

The Annual Exhibition follows the very same format as the Open Competitions (again there is no set subject); however, an image which has been used in any of the earlier competitions may be used again in the Annual Exhibition. So, members will tend to enter their best images of the season, and hence, the Annual Exhibition is a showcase for the club's best photography from the year. It also counts towards the Club League. Depending on the number of images entered, the judging may take place over one or two evenings (with the same judge if at all possible).



Photo by Robert Quig

Be sure to read the current year's Competition Rules carefully – you will find them on the Club website's Information Page.

How to prepare your images for Competitions:

So, please get those entries in but make sure you get your images to fit in with the competition rules. This section gives some guidance on how to present your images for our competitions.

It may all sound a bit complicated to begin with but after a few trials, you will find it becomes quite a straightforward process. Please ask any committee member for help if you need it.

Before you get down to processing your image, there are a few basic things to check:

- Remove any blemishes such as sensor dust spots – zoom in to check
- Is the image sharp where you want it to be?
- Is the image straight? Especially important where there is water in the photo.

Each member entering will be given a unique competition number for identification.

Prints

Should be mounted (but not in a frame) and be no larger than 20 inches by 16 inches, including the mount (500 x 400 mm). Preferred minimum print size is 10 x 8 inches (250 X 200 mm).

All Entries may be single or multiple images (e.g. composites) but must be original and the member's own work. They may be commercially printed and mounted.

On the back of the print the title of the photograph and the member's competition number should be printed but no other identifying marks should be visible. The author's name should not be given.

Digital Projected Images

The new (2020) club projector is designed to project images of a maximum size of 1600 pixels wide by 1200 pixels high. Any image from a modern digital camera is much larger than this. So, reducing the size of your image will ensure the best reproduction of the image by the club projector. It also makes for easier file handling for the club and judges and allows you to send in your entry by e-mail, if you wish.

So, your competition entries must be JPEG images with a maximum width of 1600 pixels, and a maximum height of 1200 pixels.

- If your image is in a portrait format, then the height of 1200 pixels determines the size of the image.
- If your image is in landscape format, then the width of 1600 pixels determines the size of the image.
- If your image is in square format, it must be no more than 1200 by 1200 pixels

How to do it

A Reduce the Image Size

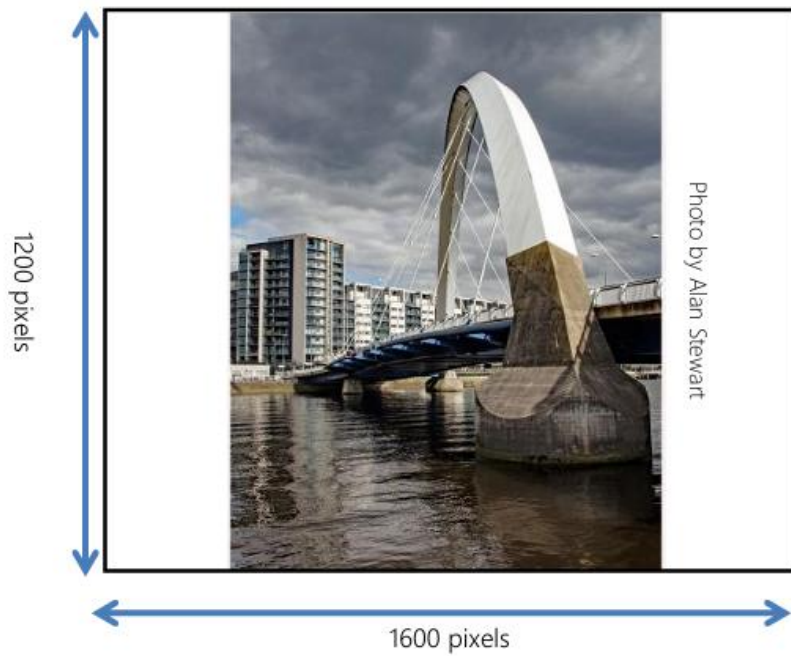
You can resize an image within any image editing program – even the basic Windows Paint program that comes with all versions of Windows, has a resizing option.

Here's how to use Photoshop™ or Photoshop Elements™ to reduce the size of your image for quality projection. Sizing should be done AFTER all adjustments have been made (except sharpening), and it is best not to sharpen your image until after it has been reduced.

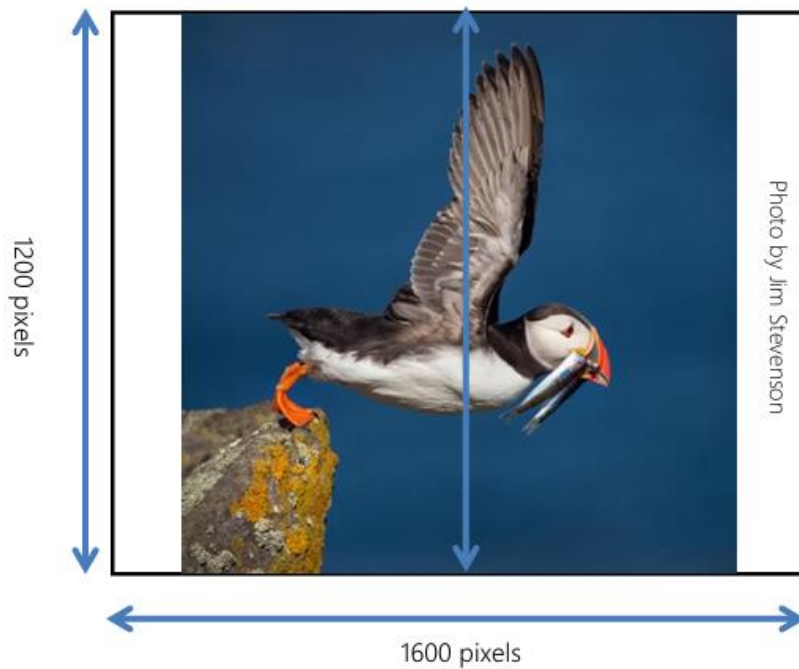
1. Open your image in Photoshop/Elements.
2. Under the 'Image' menu choose 'Resize' then 'Image Size'. A dialogue box opens.
3. At Pixels Dimensions, either a) change the 'Width' to 1600 pixels (for wide images – landscape formats), OR b) change the 'Height' to 1200 pixels (for tall images – portrait formats)
4. Check both that width doesn't exceed 1600 and that height doesn't exceed 1200 (the figure in "Resolution" doesn't matter)
5. From the five choices in the drop-down menu at the bottom, choose 'Bicubic Sharper for reduction' – for best quality.
6. Click 'OK'

If you wish to resize images in Lightroom, the following may be helpful

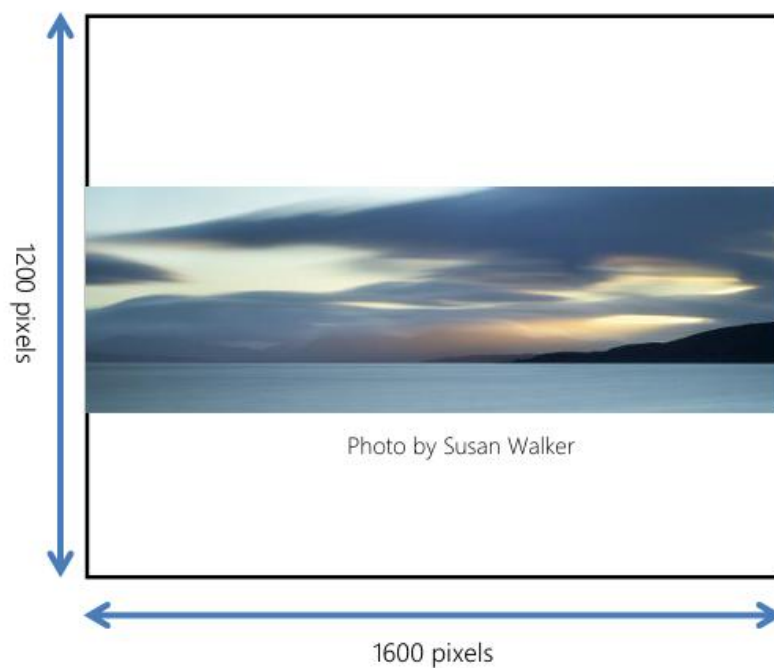
1. Resizing in Lr is done while exporting the image;
2. Open the Library module and select the image;
3. Choose "Export" at the bottom of the page;
4. Choose the destination folder where you are exporting the image to;
5. Under "file naming" choose "custom name" and add the title of the image;
6. Under "format" choose jpeg (for competition DPis)
7. Under "resize to fit" choose the option 'Width & Height' and enter put 1600 x 1200 pixels
8. As the images are to be projected the setting for resolution is irrelevant and can be set to any value.
9. At "Output Sharpening", it is best to select "sharpen for screen", as you are probably reducing the image size, and this will correct the sharpening for digital presentation.
10. Then "Export".



For portrait format, height should be 1200 pixels, so width will be less than 1600 pixels



For square format, height should be (no more than) 1200 pixels, so width will be 1200 pixels



For wide images, width should be 1600 pixels, so height will be no more than 1200 pixels

B Sharpen the Image

Having sized the image correctly it is now probably best time to sharpen the image before saving it (probably not required if resizing from Lightroom). Look at the image in its 'Actual Size' on screen (press Ctrl + 1) and sharpen the image carefully to your preferred degree preferably using 'Unsharp Mask' or 'Adjust Sharpness'. Don't over-sharpen.

Once you save the sharpened image, you can be assured that the image will be seen by the judge and projected on the club screen without any deterioration to your image quality.

C Save the Image

You'll normally save images using the 'Save as...' command under the File menu. All images should be saved as a high-quality Jpeg file.

Give the image a file name with your competition number followed by your chosen image title for example 201- Arran View.jpg

For formal competition entries, it is helpful to remove any personal identification from the file properties. This can be done in the export dialog within Lightroom, Photoshop, etc. (using the "Save for Web" option.) You can also remove personal information within File Properties. in Windows.

To recap.....

Submitting images

Digital image files are entered into the competitions either by bringing in the files on a USB flash drive, or alternatively by e-mailing them to the Internal Competitions Secretary (Check the correct email address) by the hand-in date. Prints should be handed to the Competitions Secretary on the hand-in date. If in doubt about image preparation or submission, please don't hesitate to ask for help.

Competition Rules

Competition Rules may occasionally be amended from year to year, perhaps even for individual competitions. So please keep an eye out for any amendments in the Weekly Bulletin

All entries must show the member's club number and title of the image (but not the Club member's name). DPs should be named e.g. 204-flower.jpg

Important: - By entering an image for competition, the member agrees to permit its selection and use as part of Kilmaurs Photographic Club's entry into any external competition. Images submitted must be eligible for such competitions without reservation.

Club League

League points will be scored in the Rose Urie, 1st and 2nd Opens, and the Annual Exhibition. The best 3 judged scores across all sections go towards an individual's total. So, if you enter 3 mono prints, 3 colour prints and 3 PDIs, only the highest three of your nine scores count towards the League.

Within the League, there is an Improver Section. This is intended to provide recognition for members who are developing their skills in their early years of competition photography. Separate awards and trophies may be given to Improvers for their best images. For up-to-date rules regarding the Club League and the Improver Section, please refer to the Competition Rules which can be found on the club website Information Page.

Sources of "how-to"

YouTube is full of information – some good, some funky, some dodgy and some downright bad - but usually there will be something that helps you achieve what you are trying to do.

Adobe TV on YouTube, and the main Adobe website is a comprehensive source of help and tutorials for Adobe products. Similarly other software manufacturers have help sections.

Facebook groups – there are as many groups as there are problems!

Other club members – just ask! If you don't know who to approach, ask one of the committee. They should be able to point you to the best person.

And finally

At the end of the day, it's your image. As long as you stay within the size parameters listed in this document, present it the way you think works best.

What a judge says about your image is their opinion. They may give you some ideas as to how to improve your image. Most judges have considerable experience and what they say may often be helpful. But not always!

Judging a photographic competition will always be subjective. An image one judge scores as 20/20 may only get 15/20 in the next competition! This guidance merely aims to give you the best chance.

© Kilmaurs Photographic Club