

## Best practices for photographing artwork

The following are some general guidelines for helping you capture high-quality images of your paintings in preparation for submission in competitions, publications, or shows. Be sure to also refer to your phone or camera user guide or other resources for specific information on managing settings.

**1. Prepare your camera or phone to shoot your photos at the largest size possible.**

You may need to alter the image size settings in your phone or camera.

**2. Remove artwork from frame or glass if already framed.**

**3. Place your painting against a neutral background.**

A bright or intensely-colored background can influence the way the camera sees color, which requires more adjustment with your photo editing platform to better match your painting.

**4. Position your camera so your image is parallel both horizontally and vertically in your camera viewfinder.**

**5. A tripod may be useful to position your painting evenly in the picture frame.**

**6. Choose the best lighting.**

If you shoot your work indoors, do so in a room with plenty of natural light. Avoid artificial lighting that may alter color unless you have a professional light set-up.

If you shoot your work outside, choose an overcast day because indirect sunlight provides the best lighting circumstances and reduces glare and reflections. Avoid direct light.

## Best practices for photo editing

### 1. Software for editing.

There are many photo editing software apps available. Some are expensive, such as Photoshop, but many basic photo editing programs achieve most of what you'd typically need. Some options include Photoshop Elements, Adobe Lightroom, GIMP, and Pixlr Editor.

### 2. Follow photo editing best practices.

**3. Shoot your photos at the largest size available with your camera or phone.** You may need to alter the image size settings in your phone or camera.

**4. Save the photo as a jpegs (.jpg).** This may be the default setting for your device.

**5. It may be handy to save your files in several sizes** -- Large, Medium, or Small -- depending on need, though most call for entries have specific image dimension requirements. A small photo (72 dpi, screen resolution) is appropriate for your own online use.

- **Large files (5M or larger):** Usually for print publications. Save the file with a resolution of 300 pixels/inch. Choose the color option needed for the end use: Print requires CMYK (CMYK refers to the ink used to print an image - Cyan, Magenta, Yellow and Black). Online color is RGB (Red, Green, Blue)
- **Medium files:** 1M and above (these may be appropriate for show entries). Save the file with a resolution of 200 pixels/inch. Choose the color option RGB.
- **Small files:** 500K or higher (use these files for websites and online viewing) Save the file with a resolution of 72 pixel/inch. Choose the color option (RGB).

### 6. Check the rules for your entry.

**7. It is best to ask the recipient of your image what they require.** They often require a different format and a minimum and/or maximum file size for their needs. You will be able to adjust your largest file to meet the needs of the recipient.