

# Competition check list

These are some of the questions that Judges ask themselves:

- What is the picture communicating (what is the message)? How effective is the composition? Where does my eye go?
- Does the image have any feelings, emotions, or moods?
- Is there a WOW factor or hook that makes this photograph special?
- If the image is of an often-photographed scene or subject, then what makes this image special?
- Does the camera technique suit the content? (Intentional Camera Movement should suit or enhance the subject).
- Are there any distracting details on the edge of frame or elsewhere that should have been corrected?
- Is the focus correctly on the subject?
- If the above levels have been achieved, then the final technical aspects in the image will be scrutinized: -
  - Correct colour balance and contrast for the subject.
  - No over sharpening (no halos),
  - No dust spots,
  - No banding. This is where an images exposure has been changed resulting a loss of the fine details between tones. Areas look pixelated from the crunching of the tonal range from over processing.
  - No obvious artifacts from cloning or stamping, (Finding repeating patterns or odd-looking artifacts in a file is a dead giveaway that work has been done without enough care)! “Attention to detail” is the final call cry.

The more that you get out of your comfort zone to enter competitions the more opportunity you will have to receive critical feedback and improve your photography.

Great photographs come from a mixture of appropriate technique, interesting ideas, and luck. The more that you photograph the luckier you will become.

Photo Competitions are essentially for you to compete against yourself .So beware of following trends and fashions and make life interesting.