

PHOTOGRAPHY



PURPOSE

To evaluate each contestant's preparation for employment and to recognize outstanding students for excellence and professionalism in the field of (still) photography.

First, download and review the General Regulations at: updates.skillsusa.org.

ELIGIBILITY

Open to active SkillsUSA members enrolled in programs with photography as the occupational objective.

CLOTHING REQUIREMENT

For men: Official SkillsUSA white polo shirt with black dress slacks, black socks and black leather shoes.

For women: Official SkillsUSA white polo shirt with black dress slacks or skirt, black socks or black or skin-tone seamless hose and black leather shoes.

These regulations refer to clothing items that are pictured and described at: www.skillsusastore.org. If you have questions about clothing or other logo items, call 800-401-1560 or 703-956-3723.

Note: Contestants must wear their official contest clothing to the contest orientation meeting.

EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS

This is a minimum required equipment list. Any additional accessories are acceptable and up to the discretion of the student (e.g., on-camera flash, reflector, additional lenses, etc.). The technical committee supplies systems for Printing, Portrait Studio, Troubleshooting, Color Correction and Job Interview sections. Remember that all equipment brought on the "field assignment" must be carried by the student and fit in shared bus seating (in essence, one medium to large camera bag).

1. An approved camera is a dSLR or mirrorless camera with removable lens capabilities (bridge or compacts *not* accepted)
2. Minimum: two batteries with charger
3. Minimum: two 8GB memory cards
4. USB card reader or camera USB cable
5. Jump drive (minimum 8GB)
6. Computer with USB drive mandatory (laptop preferred). *Please record the school's login password for the student!*
7. Computer loaded with Adobe Photoshop and Bridge version CS4 or higher
8. Handheld light meter
9. Two images for Print Competition (see guidelines in "Scope of Contest")
10. All competitors must create a one-page résumé and submit a hard copy to the technical committee chair at orientation. Failure to do so will result in a 10-point penalty.

Note: Your contest may also require a hard copy of your résumé as part of the actual contest. Check the Contest Guidelines and/or the updates page on the SkillsUSA website at updates.skillsusa.org.

SCOPE OF THE CONTEST

The contest is defined by industry standards. The contest is divided into two parts: a written exam testing overall photographic knowledge and a skill performance.

Knowledge Performance

The contest will include a written knowledge exam that assesses the overall photographic knowledge through a series of multiple-choice questions.

Skill Performance

The contest will include a series of hands-on performance activities assessing overall photographic mechanics and techniques.

Contest Guidelines

1. **Field Assignment:** Students will be given a theme to follow when capturing images for this contest. Students must adhere to this theme and return to the contest site to produce a four-image contact sheet for judging.

2. **Conceptual Assignment:** Students will use Adobe Photoshop to combine a minimum of three images from their field assignment to product a creative conceptual piece of art.
3. **Portrait Studio:** Students will be evaluated on their use and understanding of studio lighting (strobes). Scoring is based on, but not limited to:
 - a. Standard studio portrait lighting patterns (e.g., split, hatchet, Rembrandt, loop, butterfly, broad, short)
 - b. Light Ratios (because of variety of teaching methods, students will be given a “main” light aperture setting [e.g., f/11] and a *stop* difference for the “fill” light [e.g., two stops])
 - c. Use of a hand-held light/flash meter
4. **Commercial Studio:** Because of the varying nature of subject, students’ commercial images will be evaluated on the final photograph. Judging is based on, but not limited to:
 - a. Product placement
 - b. Lighting of product
 - c. Clarity of product name
 - d. Use of props
 - e. Overall impact of image
5. **Photo Challenge:** This assignment evaluates the student’s knowledge of the relationship between camera settings and results. (This is an open-ended challenge that can include shutter speed, depth-of-field, flash, etc.)
6. **Digital editing** session to evaluate the knowledge of Adobe Photoshop techniques, including, but not limited to:
 - a. Selections and refine edge
 - b. Layer masks and adjustment layers
 - c. Color correction
7. **Troubleshooting** section to assess recognition of problems associated with digital imaging
8. **Print competition** of two submitted prints that follow the criteria listed in the standards and competencies section
9. **Job interview** to assess job preparedness

Print Competition

1. Each student will submit *two* photographs to be judged and displayed at the competition. Requirements for prints are as follows:
 - a. Print size *must* be an 11"x14"
 - b. All prints *must* be mounted to a 16"x20" black foam core board (¼" preferred) with a 16"x20" black over mat
 - c. The total thickness of the finished piece may be no thinner than ⅛" and no thicker than ½"
 - e. All prints must have a label placed on the back upper middle portion that includes the following information:
 1. Maker’s name
 2. Instructor’s name
 3. School name and address
 4. High school or college designation
 5. Maker’s cell phone
2. These prints *must* be brought to the first orientation meeting during the week of the contest. Prints received after the meeting will receive a penalty.

Standards and Competencies

P 1.0 — Apply and implement overall photographic knowledge through a multiple-choice written test

- 1.1 Identify advancements in photographic history
- 1.2 Define a variety of camera functions
- 1.3 Explain studio lighting patterns and settings
- 1.4 Define a variety of digital photographic terms and terminologies

P 2.0 — Apply the knowledge and skill needed to conduct a photographic field assignment and produce a contact sheet for judging

- 2.1 Demonstrate technical proficiency in the areas of proper manual exposure and focus
- 2.2 Demonstrate artistic ability through use of standard rules of art and design including, but not limited to: rule of thirds, balance, leading lines, worm’s/bird’s eye, etc.
- 2.3 Demonstrate an ability to capture images that adhere to the “theme” of the assignment

- 2.4 Demonstrate the ability to format, edit and save the contact sheet using contest guidelines

P 3.0 — Apply the artistic techniques to manipulate multiple images in a free-form conceptual assignment

- 3.1 Demonstrate the ability to use various manipulative tools in Adobe Photoshop
- 3.2 Show an ability to adhere to contest guidelines by using the minimum number of chosen “field assignment” images for this assignment stated by the chairperson
- 3.3 Show a creative relationship between the elements used in the assignment

P 4.0 — Apply the knowledge and skill needed to create a standard studio portrait or commercial image

- 4.1 Show an understanding of proper lighting patterns on a subject’s face in a head-and-shoulder portrait (e.g., split, Rembrandt, loop, butterfly, broad, short)
- 4.2 Demonstrate the ability to professionally light and capture a product for use in a commercial ad
- 4.3 Demonstrate correct placement of main and fill lights
- 4.4 Demonstrate correct lighting ratios by the setting of main and fill lights (i.e., main light = f/8 and fill light = f/4)
- 4.5 Demonstrate understanding of correct camera settings (e.g., white balance, ISO, aperture, shutter speed)
- 4.6 Demonstrate the ability to correctly crop the image in-camera (e.g., head/product placement, horizontal/vertical)
- 4.7 Demonstrate the ability to professionally pose a portrait subject
- 4.8 Demonstrate the ability to use creative compositional techniques in creating a commercial image

P 5.0 — Demonstrate the ability to use a variety of tools and techniques in Adobe Photoshop

- 5.1 Apply the knowledge of manipulating a digital image through several techniques, including:
 - 5.1.1 Change orientation of an image
 - 5.1.2 Change image size and/or crop
 - 5.1.3 Use selection tools
 - 5.1.4 Transform selections
 - 5.1.5 Create layer masks

- 5.1.6 Use adjustment layers
- 5.1.7 Make tonal adjustments
- 5.1.8 Save and correctly name file

P 6.0 — Show the ability to identify common problems in the processing and printing of digital images

- 6.1 Apply knowledge of troubleshooting digital images by distinguishing between a series of images. Examples may include:
 - 6.1.1 Identify over-exposure
 - 6.1.2 Identify blooming
 - 6.1.3 Identify aliasing
 - 6.1.4 Identify JPEG artifacts
 - 6.1.5 Identify noise
 - 6.1.6 Identify white balance incorrect setting
 - 6.1.7 Identify over-sharpening
 - 6.1.8 Identify color-fringing
 - 6.1.9 Identify posterization
 - 6.1.10 Identify under-exposure
 - 6.1.11 Identify camera shake
 - 6.1.12 Identify barrel distortion
 - 6.1.13 Identify halos
 - 6.1.14 Identify improper gamma
 - 6.1.15 Identify flash synch – too fast
 - 6.1.16 Identify over saturation
 - 6.1.17 Identify perspective shift (keystoning)
 - 6.1.18 Identify HDR (over done)
 - 6.1.19 Identify parallax
 - 6.1.20 Identify dirty sensor
 - 6.1.21 Identify clogged printer nozzle
 - 6.1.22 Identify lens vignetting

P 7.0 — Apply the knowledge and skill to submit two portfolio prints that are consistent with the following criteria:

- 7.1 Meet required image size of 11"x14"
- 7.2 Show ability to present all prints mounted to a *black* 16"x20" foam core board (¼" preferred)
- 7.3 Show ability to use *black* over mat on each print
- 7.4 Demonstrate technical proficiency through proper exposure, focus, etc.
- 7.5 Demonstrate artistic ability through use of standard rules of art and design such as rule of thirds, leading lines, texture and use of positive-negative space

P 8.0 — Demonstrate the knowledge skills necessary for a job interview

- 8.1 Present a résumé for the interview
- 8.2 Present a digital or print portfolio of photographic work
- 8.3 Demonstrate an ability to communicate knowledge of the field of photography
- 8.4 Demonstrate soft skills necessary for the workplace

Committee Identified Academic Skills

The technical committee has identified that the following academic skills are embedded in this contest.

Math Skills

- Use fractions to solve practical problems
- Use proportions and ratios to solve practical problems
- Use scientific notation
- Solve practical problems involving percents
- Apply transformations (rotate or turn, reflect or flip, translate or slide, and dilate or scale) to geometric figures
- Make predictions using knowledge of probability
- Make comparisons, predictions and inferences using graphs and charts
- Solve problems using proportions, formulas and functions

Science Skills

- Use knowledge of heat, light and sound energy
- Use knowledge of the nature and technological applications of light

Language Arts Skills

- Provide information in conversations and in group discussions
- Provide information in oral presentations
- Demonstrate use of such verbal communication skills as word choice, pitch, feeling, tone and voice
- Demonstrate use of such nonverbal communication skills as eye contact, posture and gestures using interviewing techniques to gain information

Connections to National Standards

State-level academic curriculum specialists identified the following connections to national academic standards.

Math Standards

- Numbers and operations
- Geometry
- Measurement
- Problem solving
- Communication
- Connections
- Representation

Source: NCTM Principles and Standards for School Mathematics. For more information, visit: <http://www.nctm.org>.

Science Standards

- Understands the structure and properties of matter
- Understands the sources and properties of energy
- Understands the nature of scientific inquiry

Source: McREL compendium of national science standards. To view and search the compendium, visit: <http://www2.mcrel.org/compendium/browse.asp>.

Language Arts Standards

- Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics)
- Students adjust their use of spoken, written and visual language (e.g., conventions, style, vocabulary) to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and for different purposes
- Students use spoken, written and visual language to accomplish their own purposes (e.g., for learning, enjoyment, persuasion and the exchange of information)

Source: IRA/NCTE Standards for the English Language Arts. To view the standards, visit: www.ncte.org/standards.