

Competition Levels and Advancement

Effective July 1st, 2015

To ensure fair and more effective competitions, we have established levels of competency for each participating member. The four levels progress from the beginning level of Novice, then to Intermediate, then to Advanced, and finally to Expert.

Initial Competition Level:

It is typical that many new club members will begin competition at the Novice level. However, there may be notable exceptions to this concept. Members with considerable prior photographic experience as a result of other club memberships, as well as educational or professional activities, may more appropriately begin at another level. Members having questions about their placement should contact the chair of the Competition Committee.

The initial competency level is self-determined by the member. As a guide to making that determination, the following questions are suggested:

- Have you been a member of another club in which you competed? At what level did you compete?
- Have you taken photography classes or attended professional photo workshop?
- Have you been employed as a photographer?
- Have you had some photographs published in the media?

If you answer any of the questions above as yes, you probably are not a Novice. You are at least an Intermediate or perhaps Advanced. In addition, you may wish to observe one competition and compare your work to that of the participants and judge your level accordingly.

Here are some brief definitions of each level of expertise to help you gauge the appropriate one for you:
Note: the term photography means the entire process from capture to print.

Novice: a photographer with very little knowledge of photography, little or no competition experience. Prefer to shoot in auto mode most of the time.

Intermediate: a photographer with a few years of experience in photography, has occasionally participated in competitions, has won a few ribbons, can use several shooting modes and understands the basic principles of photography.

Advanced: a photographer with many years of experience in photography, has participated in several competitions and won on many occasions. Has a fairly good knowledge and understanding of what makes a great image. The photographer has taken classes or workshops with a professional photographer to enhance his/her technical skills and overall knowledge.

Expert: a photographer with a lot of expertise and experience in photography, who can definitely teach at the novice or intermediate level. Masters the technical aspects of photography and can show a very solid portfolio.

Movement Through Levels:

It is important to understand that progression through the levels is based on competency and every club member may not achieve the highest level. Moving to Advanced and Expert requires considerable technical and creative skills that some members may not have the time or inclination to pursue. The more a member participates, the greater the learning and the chance to move through levels.

The progression through levels is accomplished by a combination of a minimum of awards requirement and points accumulated from various wins. Every time a member moves up one level, the requirements for the new level applies and previous awards and points are reset to zero. The system in place gives points for each level of ribbons as follow:

First place: 9 points Second place: 6 points Third place: 3 points Honorable mention: 1 point

Note: Honorable mention counts as one point but not as an award. Award is defined as 1st, 2nd & 3rd only.

From Novice to Intermediate: a club member must win at least one award (1st, 2nd or 3rd) and accumulate a total of 12 points.

Scenario A - a member won a first place (9) and a third place (3) for a total of 12 pts will move up.

Scenario B - a member won a second place (6), a third place (3) and 3 Honorable mentions (1) for a total of 12 pts will move up.

From Intermediate to Advanced: a club member must win at least one 1st place and accumulate a total of 18 points to move up.

From Advanced to Expert: a club member must win at least one 1st place and accumulate a total of 30 points to move up.

A club member will move up and compete at the next competition level upon completion of the required criteria and once an official notice from the Committee is received. The official notice will be individually announced by email and published in the Club Newsletter.

All members' levels will also be available on the web site.

In the event that a member thinks that the assigned competition level is inappropriate to their skill level the member may request a review by the Competition Committee.

The Competition Committee