

# SkillsUSA

MARYLAND

## Photography (update #2 4/2/26)

### Purpose

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

### Eligibility

Open to active SkillsUSA members enrolled in programs with photography as the occupational objective, or a component course within a broader digital media program.

### Clothing Requirements

**For men:** Official SkillsUSA white polo shirt with black dress slacks, black socks and black leather shoes. There must be NO accent colors in the slacks, socks and 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 closed-toe leather shoes. There must be NO accent colors in the slacks, skirt, socks, hose and shoes.

### Safety Requirements

The SkillsUSA Technical Committee and Judges are released from all responsibility relating to personal injury resulting from the use of the equipment. Contestants will be removed from competition if they are using the equipment in an unsafe manner.

### Equipment and Materials

#### Supplied by the competitor:

- a. Extension cord and power strip
- b. One - DSLR or Mirrorless camera with removable lens capabilities. (Bridge or Compact cameras NOT accepted!)
- c. Two - camera batteries with charger (min)
- d. Two - 32GB (or higher capacity) camera memory cards
- e. One - Speedlight flash with wireless transmitter (be sure they work together!)
- f. Computer (laptop preferred). **Please record the school's Login Password for the student!**
- g. SD card slot on computer, OR a USB card reader, OR a camera to USB cable. (File transfers)
- h. Adobe Photoshop & Lightroom (Be sure you have the updated Camera Raw plugin for Photoshop to open the camera's RAW files)
- i. Two - images for Print Competition (see guidelines in "Scope of Contest")

## **Resume Requirement**

Competitors must create a one-page resume. Failure to submit a resume will result in a points deduction penalty. In addition, the student's personal contact information including email and cell phone must be listed on the resume. Any advisor/school contact information, blackened out or bogus information will also result in point deductions.

## **Prohibited Devices**

Cell phones and/or other electronic and wearable devices are allowed in the contest site for contest purposes only. They are NOT allowed during important testing times.

## **Scope of the Competition**

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

## **Knowledge Performance**

This contest includes a written exam that will assess the contestant's photographic knowledge by using a series of multiple-choice questions.

## **Skill Performance**

This contest includes a series of hands-on performance activities that assesses the contestant's photographic mechanics and techniques.

## **Competition Guidelines**

1. **Written Test:** This test has a series of multiple choice questions that cover some of the following topics:
  - a. History of photography (iconic photographers and advancements in technology)
  - b. Exposure controls and their affects on the image
  - c. Lens choices given a photographic situation (sports, jewelry, studio portraits, etc.)
  - d. General terminology
  - e. Photoshop tools, workflow, processes, etc.
2. **Field Assignment:** This assignment evaluates the contestant's technical understanding, creative ability, and adherence to contest guidelines. Contestants are brought to an undisclosed location to capture images based on a theme chosen by the technical committee. Contestants will then choose their best images and apply global edits and light editing before producing a contact sheet for judging. Scoring is based on:
  - a. Technical: exposure and focus control.
  - b. Creative: overall use of composition, lighting, impact, etc.
  - c. Level of editing (edits must be global in nature and must not be over done.)
  - d. Contestants adherence to time limits, location and theme.

3. **Digital Editing:** Contestants are given images to manipulate in Adobe Photoshop. This contest evaluates the student's knowledge of professional editing techniques including, but not limited to:
  - a. Selections & Refine Edge
  - b. Layer Masks & Adjustment Layers
  - c. Green screen extractions
  - d. Color Corrections
  - e. Resizing layers
  - f. Correct naming and formatting
  
4. **Print competition:** Contestants must submit two prints produced before the competition in any category of their choice. Prints will be on public display and must NOT contain any questionable content including, but not limited to: drugs, sex, violence, illegal activity, etc. Prints must adhere to the following criteria:
  - a. Print sizes must be either 11x14 or 10x15.
  - b. Both prints must be mounted to a 16x20 **black** foam core board 1/4" thick.
  - c. Both prints must have a **black** picture mat with the outer edge equal to the 16x20 mount and the inner window measuring the proper size for the print.
  - d. Each print must have a label placed on the back upper middle section that includes the following information:
    1. Contestant # (given at the contest)
    2. Cell phone
  - e. **Bring prints to contest site on competition day.**
  
5. **OVERALL POINT STRUCTURE**

a.	Part 1: Written Test . . . . .	250 points
b.	Part 2: Field Assignment . . . . .	250 points
c.	Part 4: Digital Editing . . . . .	250 points
d.	<u>Part 5: Print Competition . . . . .</u>	<u>250 points</u>
e.	TOTAL:	1000 points

**IMPORTANT:** Please be sure to equip your student with the computer's password and authorization to save files to the hard drive. Also, practice using the student's smartphone hotspot feature to access your Adobe account to boot Photoshop and/or Lightroom. Wifi access on site is never a guarantee.

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