

2009 STATE FAIR 4-H PHOTOGRAPHY GUIDELINES



*Exhibits must meet the guidelines below to be eligible to be displayed at State Fair.
Exhibits not meeting these guidelines will be disqualified.*

SUMMARY

PHOTOGRAPH AND MOUNTING REQUIREMENTS

- ❑ Photographs must be 11" x 14" or smaller.
- ❑ All photos must be mounted on an 11" x 14" mat board.
- ❑ The mat board may be any color - no more than 4 photos per mat board.
- ❑ Do not write on the photo or the mat board. No picture frames, wires, etc.
- ❑ Single window mats are permitted, if desired.
- ❑ Photos may be mounted to the mat board using corner mounts (with a single window mat) if they meet the requirements for archival quality.

SENDING TO STATE FAIR

- ❑ Photo exhibits should arrive at State Fair in a two-gallon "zip-lock style" bag, to protect them from dust, moisture and humidity.
- ❑ Exhibits are subject to the full State Fair Photography guidelines. They are on pages 2-4, and at <http://4h.missouri.edu/go/events/statefair/photo guidelines.pdf>.

COMMON REASONS FOR DISQUALIFICATION

- ❑ Photo is mounted on a material other than mat board – foam core, cardboard, etc.
- ❑ Photo is mounted on a window mat, not a solid mat board.
- ❑ Photo arrives in a picture frame, or with materials (string, ribbon, etc.) glued to it.
- ❑ Photo is not mounted on an 11" x 14" mat board.
- ❑ Photo is framed with a double window mat.

NOTES

- ❑ These guidelines have been established to:
 - Provide 4-H photographers experience in mounting and displaying their work in a professional manner.
 - Set a reasonable, attainable and consistent display standard.
 - Preserve the photograph and exhibit.
- ❑ This page is strictly a summary. Full guidelines and definitions are provided on pages 2-4, and at <http://4h.missouri.edu/go/events/statefair/photo guidelines.pdf>.
- ❑ County fairs establish their own rules for 4-H photography exhibits, which may be more or less restrictive and do not necessarily have to follow State Fair guidelines.
- ❑ Official guidelines specific to any contest or event will supersede those found in other sources, such as 4-H photography curricula.

FULL GUIDELINES

The following guidelines are requirements for State Fair 4-H photography exhibits. Exhibits that do not adhere to the guidelines will be disqualified:

Photograph Requirements

- Photographs may be 11" x 14" or smaller, at the discretion of the photographer.
 - Margins are at the discretion of the photographer.
 - Full 11" x 14" images can be mounted flush on the mat board, with or without a window mat.
 - A picture story of *no more than four photographs* can be mounted on the 11" x 14" board.

Mounting Requirements

- All photos, regardless of size, should be mounted on 11" x 14" mat board.
 - The mat board may be white, black, or of a color that accentuates the photograph effectively.
 - Double window mats are not acceptable, as the thickness of the finished exhibit makes it difficult to display.
 - Photographs may be mounted horizontally or vertically, at the discretion of the 4-H member, as determined by the photograph.
 - Do not write on the mat board. Let the photograph tell the story. Captions or titles should not be used.
 - No glass, wooden, brass, plastic, etc. may be used in the exhibit.
- Photographers may select from the following options for mounting the photograph to the 11" x 14" mat board.

Photographers who wish to display their photos in the most professional manner may use corner mounts.

- Corner mounts, if used, should be made from acid-free paper or other material of high archival quality (materials such as plastic are not acceptable corner mounts).
 - Corner mounts should be adhered directly to the mat board.
 - They should be secure and not allow the photograph to fall off the mat board. This is an issue due to humidity and the number of people handling the photographs.
 - If corner mounts are used, they should be covered by a window mat. Please see the window mat guidelines below.
 - Please note that many County Fair guidelines will not allow window mounts in County Fair 4-H photography exhibits.
- Photos not using corner mounts must be adhered directly to the mat board (using glue, rubber cement, spray adhesive, etc). The adhesive must hold the photo securely in place.

Additional Exhibit Options

- A single window mat may be placed over the mounted photo, at the discretion of the photographer. As with the mat board, the window mat may be white, black, or of a color that accentuates the photograph effectively.
 - If the window mat and mat board are separate pieces, they should be hinged together with clear acid-free tape. It is a good idea to run the hinge along one of the longest sides and reinforce the hinge with an additional strip of clear tape at both corners. Visible (“non-clear”) alternatives, such as staples or colored tape, are not permitted.
 - Photographs must be mounted on a mat board or reside in corner mounts adhered to a mat board. Photos may not be mounted on a window mat.

Photo Editing

Advances in technology have created accessible ways to enhance and edit digital photographs. Whether this creates issues of character depends on the type of event and its rules. For State Fair 4-H photography exhibits, techniques that can be performed in-camera or in a film darkroom are permissible in the "digital darkroom." The line is drawn between "enhancing" and "altering" a photo.

- *Enhancing:* Editing to enhance the qualities of a photo is permitted.
 - Examples include cropping, dodging, burning, contrast, and red eye reduction.
 - Please note that it is important to learn proper photographic techniques to avoid these things, without the need for editing.
- *Altering:* Editing to change the contents of a photo is not permitted.
 - Examples include adding a sunset, airbrushing, or removing a person from the shot.

The 4-H Center for Youth Development joins with you in celebrating the talents of our 4-H photographers, and wishes everyone success at the State Fair.

APPENDIX

Materials and Definitions

Mat Board: This is the required mounting material for State Fair photography exhibits. Mat board is not the same as cardboard, corrugated board, poster board, or foam core. These items are not acceptable for State Fair photography exhibits because they do not withstand humidity and handling, and can actually damage the photograph over time. Mat board gives a more professional look, does not bend as easily, and will support photographs for a longer period of time. It comes in different thicknesses and can be smooth or have a texture. It comes in many colors. Photography exhibits mounted on material other than mat board will be disqualified.

Window Mat: A window mat is a piece of mat board with a rectangular "window" cut from its center. This may lie over the photograph, overlapping the edges and covering the corner mounts if they are used. Please note that window mats often come packaged with a piece of cardboard for support. This cardboard is not the same as mat board and is not an acceptable mount board for State Fair photography exhibits. "Double mat" frames are two mat boards with cut windows that comes as one piece. When combined with the mount board, double-matted frames make the final exhibit too thick to conform to State Fair 4-H photography exhibit guidelines.

Archival Quality: This is the degree to which the photograph will not be damaged by the materials it is in contact with or the conditions in which it is stored. Youth who may wish to sell or preserve their exhibited photograph will want to strive for a higher level of archival quality than those who do not plan to keep the photograph for many years. Higher levels of archival quality is an option, not a requirement for State Fair 4-H photography exhibits.

Corner Mounts: If appropriate materials are used, this is an acceptable option for anchoring photographs to the mat board because it provides a higher level of archival quality. Corner mounts support the photograph without requiring it to come into contact with adhesive or other anchoring substances. In fair exhibits however, photographs often fall off the boards due to the humidity and number of people handling them. If used, corner mounts should be substantial, well-secured, and the exhibit itself should stay within the 1/8" thickness guideline (see below).

Choosing an Adhesive: Archival Quality Considerations

Rubber Cement: This is readily available in most stores, though it may compromise the photograph in around 20 years.

Double-sided Tape: This is good for temporary use and acid-free tape may be of high archival quality. However, it will likely not stand up to the rigors, heat and humidity of the State Fair.

Spray Adhesives: These are found in craft stores and art and frame shops. Spray adhesives may create yellowing of the photograph in the distant future (around 50 years), particularly if they come into contact with other adhesives. Spray adhesives are generally toxic, and should only be used outside with parental supervision.